

THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIANITY
AMONG THE DINKA OF SUDAN
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE
TO THE SONGS OF DINKA CHRISTIANS

by
Marc R. Nikkel

Doctor of Philosophy
The University of Edinburgh

1993



In memory of

John Malou Ater,

former Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Wau:

a respected *Ran Nhialic*,

exemplary “Dinka Priest”

and beloved friend

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

While I alone am responsible for the contents of this thesis, I am grateful to many individuals who have offered their insight and support along the way.

My former students and colleagues at Bishop Gwynne College, Southern Sudan, have shaped my thought in numerous ways, and so encouraged this undertaking; equally so, the many Dinka friends in cattle camp, village, and church who have welcomed and challenged me.

Numerous individuals have assisted with interviews, as noted in the text. I am especially appreciative for the long and fruitful hours with Fr Dominic Matong in Rome. Former CMS missionaries have generously shared their recollections and personal papers. Among them, Mrs Faith Sharland has kindly offered the writings of her late husband, Leonard; and Rev John Collinson, his narratives of the 'revival' in which he played so prominent a role.

For assistance with translations from Dinka language I am indebted to Mac Maika, Nichola Nyuol and Bek Awan; and with translations from Italian, Fathers Aidan Sharratt and Ricardo Tobanelli.

Father Trabucci, librarian with the Comboni Fathers in Rome, and Mrs Jane Hogan at the Sudan Archive, Durham University, have been especially gracious guides through many stacks and files.

For the practical means to continue this extended project I am indebted to Bishop Heath Light of the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia, to colleagues at the Episcopal Church Centre; and in Britain, to those who made the ORS Award available for my work.

Robin and Marianne Anker-Petersen have served as my surrogate family in Scotland. To them, as to my own father, sister and family at a much greater distance, I am grateful for encouragement and support.

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration.

August, 1993

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Marc R. Nikkel", written over a horizontal line.

Marc R Nikkel

ABSTRACT

This thesis documents the development of Christianity among the Dinka of Sudan both during and since the missionary era. It explores the major themes in the dialogue between the Dinka and Christian missions, Catholic and Protestant, and asks what, during each period, have been the reasons for Dinka resistance to evangelisation as well as motivations for conversion.

An introductory chapter addresses the problems of missionary translation and vocabulary, defines key Dinka terms, and examines theories of Dinka origins and early religious influences. Chapter II surveys the history of Dinka confrontations with foreigners during the 19th century, and asks how these encounters conditioned their responses to Christian missions.

Chapters III through V document three missionary ventures in Dinkaland asking what precedents each set for the Christian communities which later emerged. The mid 19th Century Austrian Catholic mission on the Upper Nile and in Northern Sudan is examined with interest in three notable Dinka converts of the period. Two chapters survey the 20th Century work of the Anglican, Church Missionary Society (CMS), and the Roman Catholic, Verona Fathers. What distinguished the approaches of each and what responses did they evoke? The contributions of key missionary figures and prominent Dinka Christians are evaluated. Of significance are the contrasting attitudes which Dinka converts developed toward their ancestral

divinities and the manner in which they related these to the divine persons of Christianity.

The final two chapters focus upon the thought and independent initiatives of Dinka Christians, contrasting developments among Catholics and Episcopalians. Translations from a selection of vernacular songs form the basis of Chapter VI, and reveal the distinctive vocabulary, metaphor and theology which have developed over five decades. The final chapter documents the emergence of an increasingly diverse indigenous Dinka church in independent Sudan, and evaluates the impact of civil conflict upon the rapid growth of the church in rural areas.

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	i
Abstract	iii
Contents	v
Chapters:	
I. THE “LOST TRIBE,” AN INTRODUCTION	1
A. Scope of this study	
B. Personal experience, resources and methodology	3
C. Introduction to the Dinka	6
D. The evolution of Dinka religious vocabulary	12
1. Dinka language and missionary linguists	
2. Words and concepts	14
a. Divinities and spiritual powers: <i>Nhialic, Aciek, jok and yath</i>	15
b. Primal ancestors and free-divinities	17
c. The ‘Breath of Life’: <i>wei, Wei Santo, tiep and piir</i>	20
d. Religious specialists: <i>beny bith, beny jok, tiet, acor and apeth:</i>	21
E. Nilotic origins, early religious influences, and Dinka Christian identity	25
Map: Dinka groups and their territories	35

II. “WHEN THE EARTH WAS SPOILED”: DINKA ENCOUNTERS WITH FOREIGNERS DURING THE 19TH CENTURY	36
A. Introduction	
B. Turkish-Egyptian expansion on the Southern frontier	37
C. The advent of private trade; Europeans on the Upper Nile	40
D. The expanding commercial networks of the <i>jellaba</i>	43
E. The <i>Mahdiyya</i> in Southern Sudan	46
F. Conclusion: first encounters	49
III. “WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN US?” 19TH CENTURY CHRISTIAN MISSION	52
A. Introduction	
B. The Vicariate of Central Africa	53
1. The ‘Austrian Mission’ in Northern Sudan	56
2. First encounters on the White Nile	60
C. Dialogue and death at Holy Cross	63
D. Education of African youth in Europe	77
1. “A work of stupendous charity”	
2. Caterina Zenab: “a highly skilled missionary”	80
E. Concepts of liberation and Dinka conversion	82
1. Father Daniel Sorur Farim Deng	83
2. Salim Charles Wilson	87
F. Conclusion	91
IV. <i>NHIALIC OF MACUOR:</i> THE GORDON MEMORIAL SOUDAN MISSION, 1906 - 1959	93
A. Introduction: Christian Mission under the Anglo-Egyptian Government	
B. GMSM pioneers on the Upper Nile	97
1. “Spiritual talk” and Dinka agnosticism	103
2. Disillusionment and withdrawal	106
C. Archibald Shaw: champion of the Dinka and mission strategist	110

1. Shaw's 'boys'	114
2. The first baptism: Jon Aruor e Thor	118
3. "Mass Movement Centres" versus the Dinka	120
D. Education, evangelisation and 'revival'	125
1. The mission school: "cradle of a Dinka Church"	
2. 'Revival' and 'awakening' in Dinkaland	129
3. The rise and decline of mission education	140
E. The emergence of an indigenous Dinka Church	147
1. Conflicts between culture and Church	
2. The first Sudanese Anglican Bishop: Daniel Deng Atong	153
F. Conclusion	159
Maps: Mission Stations	161
Mission Spheres	162
V. "CHILDREN OF THE FATHERS": THE VERONA FATHERS AMONG THE DINKA, 1924 - 1964	163
A. Introduction: the Dinka under Condominium rule	
B. Roman Catholic Restoration and Expansion	165
1. Kwajok: second Catholic mission in Dinkaland	171
2. Catholic expansion among the Dinka of Bahr el Ghazal	177
C. Catholic mission and theology in Dinkaland	181
1. Perceptions and misperceptions	
2. The Dinka and the "Word of God"	188
3. <i>Abundit</i> Arthur Nebel and the 'fulfilment' of Dinka religion	194
4. The integrative impulses of Dinka Catholics	197

D. Catholic authority and Dinka egalitarianism	201
1. Missionary teachers versus Dinka students	202
2. Toward indigenous leadership of the Church	205
a. Father Salvatore Awembil Atak	207
b. Sister Sidonia Aman	211
F. Conclusion	214
VI. "WHO ARE THOSE MARCHING ONCE AGAIN?" THE SONGS OF DINKA CHRISTIANS	216
A. Introduction: The missions and Dinka music	
B. The compositions of Dinka Catholics	218
1. Primal ancestors and the <i>Prayerbook</i>	219
2. 'Progress' and faith: 'school songs'	221
3. Indigenous song recreated: the compositions of Father Matong	225
4. <i>Abuna Athiaan Deng</i> : revolutionary poet	230
C. The compositions of Dinka Anglicans	236
1. Dinka music and the GSM	
2. <i>Nhialic</i> versus <i>jak</i> : <i>Songs of the Dinka</i>	239
3. Solidarity among aliens: <i>Songs of Praise</i>	249
4. Song amidst war: 1983-1993	253
a. Songs of celebration and growth	254
b. " <i>Songs of Suffering</i> "	260
c. " <i>Government Songs</i> "	267
D. Conclusion	276
VII. "DEATH HAS COME TO REVEAL THE FAITH": CIVIL WAR AND DINKA CHRISTIANITY, 1964 - 1993	279
A. Introduction	
B. Review of the missionary era, 1853 - 1964	280
C. Independence and civil war: historical background	284

D. New frontiers of Dinka Christianity	289
1. Northward migrations: the churches and the 'clubs'	
2. New ecclesiastical leadership	294
3. The diaspora and church growth in Northern cities	298
4. Ecumenism in Ethiopian refugee camps	301
5. The Dinka Church in the 'Liberated Areas'	304
E. Christians at war, spiritual and military	309
1. Christian conversion and the decline of the <i>jak</i>	310
2. Jesus Christ, reconciliation and armed resistance	317
 CONCLUSION	 323
 LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	 327
 GUIDE TO DINKA PRONUNCIATION	 329
 GLOSSARY OF ARABIC AND DINKA WORDS	 330
 APPENDIX 	
A. Rev Daniel Sorur Farim Deng, selections <i>Le Pene dei Negri Schiavi in Africa</i>	333
B. The Dinka Catechism, 1927 Teaching on Islam	338
C. Index to Dinka Songs, with original texts in Dinka and selected English translations	340
 SOURCES CONSULTED	 373

I. THE "LOST TRIBE":

AN INTRODUCTION

The Ethiopian's [Meroites] . . . are said to be the tallest and handsomest men in the whole world . . . they ate boiled flesh, and had for their drink nothing but milk.

Herodotus, *Book III, 1.21, 23*¹

There would seem to be quite a strong dash of some other blood in us, and there is, I understand, a theory to the effect that we are an offshoot of one of the Lost Tribes of Israel.

*Salim Wilson, Dinka, former slave and Christian evangelist*²

A. Scope of this study

From the time European missionaries first set foot in Southern Sudan, the evangelisation of the Dinka was among their foremost objectives. Because of their widespread population, their common language and apparent accessibility, the Dinka were selected for the mid-19th Century mission of the Austrian Catholics on the Upper Nile. In 1906 the Anglicans followed, opening their pioneer station among the Bor Dinka. The Dinka were also among the most promising of early Sudanese converts. In 1887 the first Catholic priest of Southern Sudanese descent, a liberated Dinka slave, was ordained. Among the Anglicans, the first Sudanese were made pastors in 1943, one of whom, a Dinka, was later consecrated the first

¹ Quoted by D Johnson, *History and Prophecy among the Nuer of the Southern Sudan*, unpublished thesis (1980) 53.

² S Wilson (Macar Cithiech), *I Was a Slave* (c 1939) 9.

Sudanese Anglican Bishop.³ Despite these advances missionaries came to see the Dinka as among the most 'prejudiced' and unresponsive of Southern Sudanese peoples. Disenamoured, they shifted their focus to more responsive ethnic groups.

This thesis will document the emergence and development of Christianity among the Dinka and ask how, after decades of apparent indifference to the institutions of Christianity, some Dinka communities have developed vigorous, rapidly growing indigenous churches. What are the major themes in the dialogue between the Dinka and the emissaries of Christianity, and what, during each period, have been the motivations for their conversion?⁴ What distinguished the approach of Catholic missionaries from that of their Anglican counterparts and what responses did each evoke? What has been the encounter between the spiritual 'powers' of indigenous religion and the divine persons of Christianity? Finally, what impact has civil conflict had on the expansion of Christianity among the Dinka? These are among the questions this thesis will address.

The present introductory chapter describes the position of the author relative to this material, and surveys the resources and methodology which have been employed. It then examines key Dinka words and concepts used in the religious context, the difficulties of translation, and the ways these have been adapted for use by Christians. A final section examines theories of Nilotic origins and early contacts which may have influenced Dinka religious thought, with particular interest in the views of Dinka Christians.

Chapter II surveys Dinka confrontations with the foreigners who sought to exploit their territories during the 19th century, and asks how these encounters influenced Dinka responses toward the emissaries of Christianity.

³ Bishop Daniel Deng Atong was Mandari by birth but grew up culturally as a Dinka, and was widely known as such.

⁴ As will be seen 'conversion' has been defined differently by various missions. Motivations for conversion in the Sudanese context may be complex and subtle. The term is here used in a broad and inclusive sense, those who 'have been converted' being any who themselves claim to be 'Christians.'

Chapters III through V recount three pioneering missionary ventures in Dinkaland. The 19th century mission of the Austrian Catholics on the Upper Nile and in Northern Sudan is examined, with special interest in three Dinka converts of the period. Two chapters then survey the 20th century work of the Anglican, Church Missionary Society (CMS), and the Roman Catholic, Verona Fathers, the missions which maintained the most extensive work among the Dinka during the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium.⁵

The final two chapters focus upon the thought and independent initiatives of Dinka Christians, contrasting developments among Catholics and Episcopalians. Translations from a selection of vernacular songs composed by Dinka Christians form the basis of Chapter VI, revealing the rich vocabulary, metaphor and theology which continue to evolve. The final chapter documents the unprecedented expansion of Dinka Christianity during the past three decades, a period marked by increasing social destabilisation.

B. Personal experience, resources and methodology

The central questions of this thesis first stirred during a brief conversation in 1982 on the steps of the Catholic Cathedral in Khartoum. Still in my first year as a tutor at an Anglican theological college, I happened to meet the Vatican's Pro-Nuncio to Sudan.⁶ I had recently been appointed College chaplain for students from the Episcopal Church's largely Dinka Diocese of Rumbek and mentioned my interest in learning something of Dinka culture and language. His response was brusque: "We have tried for over one hundred years among the Dinka with very little success. They are a *very* difficult people. I wish you good luck." Though the Pro-Nuncio had not himself lived in Dinka territory, his response typified the often dismissive attitudes of missionaries, Catholic and Protestant, who had.⁷

⁵ The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, 1899-1955.

⁶ I served the Episcopal Church in the Province of the Sudan as a tutor at Bishop Gwynne Theological College, then at Mundri, Equatoria Province, from 1981 to 1987.

⁷ Missionary perceptions often contrasted with those of anthropologists such as the Seligman who wrote after their 1910 sojourn: "The Dinka, and the kindred Nuer, are intensely religious, in our experience by far the most religious peoples in the Sudan, their worship being

If missionaries viewed the Dinka unsympathetically, many educated Dinka of the post independence era believed that missionaries had been unjustly prejudiced against their people. They characterised them as well-meaning, but naive foreigners, whom the Condominium Government employed to help 'pacify' native peoples by providing cheap and inferior education. Their endeavours were ill-conceived, short-lived and of little lasting relevance. Northern Sudanese described the residual influences of missionaries as divisive and detrimental to nationhood.⁸

My experience during the 1980s suggested that the Dinka and their interaction with the missions deserved further examination. In Northern cities, Southern towns, and in our college, I encountered Dinka who were receptive and enthusiastic Christians, profoundly committed to the Church. Their public prayers and vernacular songs revealed a resonant, creative and often introspective spirituality. Many were spontaneous evangelists who gathered their scattered people for worship, beginning self perpetuating congregations. At our College Dinka relations with students of other ethnic groups were generally constructive, the latter sometimes remarking that "these are not like ordinary Dinka."

In 1987 I was one of four expatriates abducted by soldiers of the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) with whom we trekked 150 miles across Southern Sudan through territory of the Bor Dinka, heartland of the early missions. There we heard accounts of the rapid growth of the Church. Even several well known Dinka religious specialists had professed Christian faith. SPLA troops who walked beside us sometimes sang the same vernacular Christian songs I had sung with Dinka students. At night several unwrapped vernacular New Testaments and taught themselves to read as they reflected on Scripture. During an increasingly

directed to a high god dwelling in or associated with the firmament and to a host of ancestral spirits." *The Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan* (1932) 178.

⁸ Notable critiques of Christian missions in Sudan have come from Mohamed Omer Beshir, *The Southern Sudan, Background to Conflict* (1968); J W Burton, 'Christians, Colonists and Conversion,' *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 23, 2 (1985) 349-69; and Hassan Makki Mohamed Ahmed, *Sudan, the Christian Design* (1989).

destabilising civil war unprecedented numbers of Dinka in diverse sectors of the population, urban and rural, were identifying themselves as Christians.

Given my background as a Christian teacher and minister in Southern Sudan, the present thesis cannot claim complete objectivity. I have worshipped and prayed, preached, sung and celebrated Communion with Dinka Christians amidst the vulnerability of civil war. I have been adopted into the *gol* of a Dinka clan.⁹ Most formatively, I have been “a hostage of the situation in Sudan,” and for a brief period endured some of the hunger, illness and desperation which is the daily fare of Sudanese civilians amidst civil war.¹⁰ These experiences served to cement my bond with the peoples of Sudan.

While this thesis is essentially historical in nature, studies in anthropology, theology, linguistics, liturgics and religious theory have played their part. A variety of methods have been employed to draw upon wide-ranging resources. The library and archive of the Comboni (Verona) Fathers in Rome provided a wealth of material as have the CMS Archives and the Sudan Archive at Durham. Several former CMS missionaries have generously allowed me to use their personal papers and many have provided interviews.

Missionary accounts have been balanced with the perceptions and interpretations of Dinka Christians, lay and ordained, who possess direct experience of mission or church. Extended interviews were conducted in Britain, Italy and East Africa. Other Sudanese responded to questionnaires, one of which was designed for each denomination. Numerous friends have tape recorded Dinka songs or sent me their hand written drafts of new lyrics. Since documentation in Italian has proved less accessible than that in English, the chapter on the Verona Fathers has relied more heavily upon interview material than that on the CMS.

⁹ *Gol*, pl *gal*, literally, the dung fire around which people gather in cattle camp; designates an agnatic descent group and the cattle its members possess.

¹⁰ This phrase was used by SPLA commander, Colonel Dr John Garang, when he was asked by a BBC reporter why the SPLA had taken ‘hostages.’

Because this study examines the missionary encounter with several Dinka tribes, studies of Dinka ethnography and religious thought provide essential background.¹¹ This is, then, a multi-disciplinary study undergirded by personal experience.

C. Introduction to the Dinka

The Dinka comprise the largest ethnic group in the Republic of Sudan, their population estimated at between one and two million.¹² While more than 24 tribal groupings may be distinguished among them, they are more striking for their widespread cultural and linguistic homogeneity. They share their closest physical and cultural affinities with neighbouring Nilotic peoples, the Nuer and Shilluk, and like them supplement pastoral pursuits with seasonal cultivation. Cattle are integral to the economic, social and religious life of the Dinka, and provide the basic metaphors of self understanding. Their stature, among the tallest peoples in the world, is complemented by a proud and fiercely independent spirit, expressed in their self designation as *Moinyjieng*, 'the man of men.'¹³

Lying between twelve and six degrees north latitude, Dinka territories fall within the Southern Sudanese provinces of Bahr el Ghazal, Lakes, Jonglei and Upper Nile, only the enclave of the Ngok Dinka extending into the Northern Province of Kordofan. These vast regions fan outward from the swamps of the

¹¹ Most notable are G Lienhardt, *Divinity and Experience* (1961) and Francis M Deng, *Tradition and Modernization* (1971) *Africans of Two Worlds* (1978) and *Dinka Cosmology* (1980). Also relevant, among others, are E E Evans Pritchard, *Nuer Religion* (1956) and J W Burton, *God's Ants: A study of Atuot Religion* (1981) and *A Nilotic World* (1987).

¹² Traditionally the Dinka say that, 'One does not ask a man the number of his cattle or the number of his children,' a factor that mitigates against accurate statistics. In 1961 Lienhardt used a figure of 900,000, based on *The Report of the Jonglei Investigation Team* (*Divinity*, i). In 1978 F M Deng estimated nearly three million (*Two Worlds*, xiii); The 1956 census described a country with 14 million inhabitants comprising 572 ethnic groups of whom the Dinka numbered about two million. The 1983 census set the national population at 25 million with 2 million Dinka. Effects of civil war make precise estimates difficult.

¹³ They know themselves as *Jieng*, or *Moinyjieng*, a name redolent with pride and superiority, meaning 'people of the Jieng nation,' or, alternatively, 'husband of the people.' It has been suggested that the name *Dinka* derives from the Arabic *Dinkawi*, a travellers' distortion of the word *Jienge*, commonly used by non-Dinka. Alternatively it may derive from *Deng kok*, 'the people of Deng.' A Nebel, Introduction to *Dictionary* (1979). FM Deng, (1972) 2.

central Nile basin encompassing nearly 150,000 square miles. Flat savannah grasslands dominate the terrain, interspersed with forest and laced with rivers and streams converging toward the Nile. With rains often heavy between May and October permanent homesteads are constructed only on the highest ground and even there may be isolated by flooding for several months each year. Much of the population maintains a regular cycle of transhumance between dry and wet season pasture lands.

Natural resources are few and the material culture of the Dinka simple. A wide range of artefacts are made from cattle hides, including sleeping mats, tethering ropes, bracelets, and women's loin cloths. Until modern times iron was rare and reserved for special purposes, such as the sacred spears of ritual priests. With imported metals the Dinka have more recently fashioned a range of tools, weapons and items of personal adornment. Houses, constructed of mud, wood and thatch, are, like other acquisitions, unlikely to last beyond a single lifetime. Virtually the only material possessions which the Dinka are able to bequeath to their progeny are, then, their cherished cattle and the ancestral lands they graze.

The Dinka, confronting a harsh environment, living on a narrow margin of subsistence and vulnerable to disease and natural disaster, have evolved a highly egalitarian and independent manner of life. Prior to the advent of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium no individual possessed the overarching political authority suggested by the term 'chief,' though some 'spear-masters' or priests, exerted considerable influence. Many Dinka distinguish two categories of clans, those of the *bany*, or priests, and those of *kic*, the commoners or warrior clans, with dual authority theoretically shared between spear-master and the war-leader.¹⁴ Dinka life is focused in the cattle camp (*wut*), with people normally assembled in their permanent homesteads (*baai*) only during planting and harvest. Political organisation therefore relies upon terminology of the cattle camp, *wut* designating a cattle-camp, section, subtribe, or tribe. The term *gol*, literally referring to the

¹⁴ Not all Dinka possess spear-masters in the classical sense. Differences exist both in organisation and terminology, a factor further considered below.

cattle-hearth, designates the agnatic descent group, but may refer equally to groupings of men or cattle.¹⁵

The Dinka exist with their cattle in a virtually symbiotic relationship, neither able to survive, let alone flourish, in an inhospitable land apart from the other. With almost every aspect of material life derived from cattle, and the cycle of seasonal migration keeping man and beast in unbroken contact, cattle are in many ways perceived as a reflection of the human community. Each animal is known by name, according to such characteristics as sex, colour, markings, or the shape of its horns. Its lineage and previous owners are recalled and are often recited during negotiations.

An entire aesthetic universe derives from cattle, the metaphors of colour, beauty and power, as well as the intrigue of folklore. Identifying themselves with their herds and their shared history, men and women often bear the names of individual oxen. While dancing young people hold their arms above their heads, imitating the curve of bovine horns. In his finely groomed and muscular display ox a young man discerns his alter ego, one whom he parades, singing songs which testify to the prowess and beauty which distinguishes man and beast together. Social standing and self-esteem are, for the Dinka, intimately linked to the ownership of cattle. Indeed, without them one can hardly be considered a person according to the criteria of Dinka society. From birth to death the soul of a man in his social, economic, political, and spiritual experience is concerned with and sustained by his ownership of cattle.

Foremost among the social uses of cattle is the bride price, the only acceptable form in which payment may be made. After intense negotiations, a marriage is consolidated when a number of oxen has been agreed, and a down payment transferred from the kinsmen of the groom to those of the bride. Far from an agreement between two individuals, Dinka marriage is secured and maintained by two extended families, each concerned for its own prestige and wealth as

¹⁵ For a thorough discussion of kinship groups, sections, lineages, clan and sub-clan, tribe and sub-tribe, see Lienhardt, *Divinity 7ff*; F M Deng, *Tradition and Modernization*, (1987) 3-22.

expressed in cattle. The bearing of children through multiple marriages is the sole means through which a man may assure the continuity of his name beyond his lifetime. It is as well the nearest proximation the Dinka possess to the concept of 'eternal life' after death. Since the size of one's herds is directly related to the number of children one may hope to produce, the acquisition of cattle wealth is of supreme importance. Given the complexity and volatility of these exchanges the Dinka have developed sophisticated codes of customary law and systems of local courts to maintain order.¹⁶

The moral identification between the Dinka and their cattle means that, in legal and religious spheres, oxen alone are able to serve as substitutes for human life. So highly are they esteemed that they were not, until recent times, available for sale nor were they slaughtered except for worthy ritual purposes. "One does not just kill and eat for no reason," say the Dinka. Recompense in cattle is required for a wide range of social offences including homicide, elopement, adultery and bodily injury.

The central religious ceremony of the Dinka is blood sacrifice. In the eyes of the Dinka their oxen, selected according to colour symbolism, sex, and age, are perfectly suited as sacrificial victims. Ceremonies occur most frequently during the Autumn when life is more relaxed, the harvest is finished and grain plentiful for the brewing of beer. While some sacrifices are performed annually for the welfare of an entire community, others attach to immediate needs for purification, healing, absolution and the lifting of guilt, reconciliation and restoration of peace. Given the interdependence between human and cattle life, these rights generally seek the well-being of both together. In sacrifice an ox represents all of those who have assembled for the rite, its very flesh becoming a tangible expression of their ordered social relationships. Meat is apportioned to various groups according to

¹⁶ Dinka customary law is described in F M Deng, *Tradition and Modernization* (1971), *Dynamics of Identification* (1973), and J W Makec, *The Customary Law of the Dinka People of Sudan* (1988).

status, sex and age, a portion being reserved for the wider community as well. Not to be neglected are various divinities whose portions are placed at their shrines.¹⁷

The expressive art form of the Dinka is, pre-eminently in the composition and performance of song. Thoroughly portable, compositions rich in metaphor, social comment, and visual imagery, may arise in virtually any situation. Songs of praise list the attributes of great people, contemporary and mythological, while songs of mockery and abuse deride the foolhardy. Mothers sing lullabies to infants, and battle songs invigorate young warriors. Songs chanted antiphonally, figure prominently in religious ceremonies. Some, having circulated for generations, provide vehicles for communal praise and petition before unseen spiritual powers. Most well known are the ox songs created by young men in praise of the name-oxen with whom they identify. Produced spontaneously or through painstaking rehearsal for special presentation, sung alone on the savannah or in villages, unaccompanied or with drums, song expresses the spiritual and communal values of Dinka life.

In an inhospitable landscape where man could not exist without benefit of cattle and cattle could not survive without the nurture and protection of man, the Dinka have evolved a highly integrated order of life in which each component is dependent upon the others. Far more than mere survival, they possess aesthetic, spiritual and moral values of which they are profoundly proud and which they are determined to preserve. Dr Francis Deng has aptly written that in their self perception,

the Dinka represent the standard of what is ideally human and therefore best. Others may have superior technology or greater wealth in monetary terms, but all things considered, Dinkaland is the most beautiful, the Dinka race the perfect example of creation, Dinka cattle the ideal wealth, and Dinka ways the best models of dignity.¹⁸

¹⁷ For full discussion of sacrifice and the ritual division of meat among the Rek see Lienhardt, *Divinity*, 23-5.

¹⁸ F M Deng, 1978, 70.

So integral is their land to their identity that travel abroad was considered disgraceful, a form of social suicide, until the proliferation of formal education. While outsiders may judge them anomalous and idiosyncratic, they see themselves as the standard of what is normal for all peoples.

This ethnocentrism means that the Dinka are broadly dismissive of other peoples and their cultures, particularly those who possess no cattle. Nevertheless, when aliens enter their land they are received with respect and hospitality, and if they persevere on Dinka terms, may ultimately be integrated into society. In this the Dinka betray no note of racism, for all people--African, Arab and European--are judged according to merit, and received openly, providing they treat their hosts respectfully. The ruthless egalitarianism of the Dinka means they cannot tolerate foreigners who assume superior status or seek to exert authority over them.

While the Dinka possess a high degree of homogeneity, an examination of Christian mission must take some account of distinctions between the sub-tribes among whom the various Christian denominations and European nationalities sought to work. Condominium authorities assigned each mission to work within a prescribed 'missionary sphere,' most of Dinkaland falling within territories assigned to the British CMS and the predominantly Italian Verona Fathers.

However, the north-eastern reaches of Dinkaland came under other Protestant groups, not examined here. The domain of the Dongjo, Paloc and Abialang Dinka fell to the Australian Sudan United Mission (SUM), from whom they later passed to the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM), and the Presbyterian 'American Mission.'¹⁹ Thus the numerous sub-divisions of the Dinka were overlaid by five missionary societies composed of as many nationalities.

¹⁹ The Australian SUM established two small stations in North-eastern Dinkaland: Melut in 1914, among the Paloich had a small school of sorts; work at Rom began in 1924 among the Dunjol. In 1939 Melut was transferred to the evangelical SIM who opened new stations among the Northmost Dinka at Abaiyat for the Paloich, and at Bangjang, just south of Renk, for the Abialang. Dinka chiefs supplied students reluctantly, SIM lacked a trained educationalist, conflicts with the Government were frequent, and the schools foundered. By 1945 several had closed and Rom was taken by the American Presbyterians. See Sanderson (1981) 240-5.

Of interest are the cultural and religious distinctions between the Bor, Agar and Rek Dinka, each of which was an important focus of Christian mission. Of all Dinka groups the Rek and Bor are among the least similar, while the Agar possess characteristics common to the other two. Through Godfrey Lienhard's study of Dinka religion, the Rek of Western Bahr el Ghazal are among the best known of Dinka peoples.²⁰ They were among the last Southern Sudanese peoples to be subdued by Condominium forces and rigorously sought to preserve their heritage. Many observers considered them to be among the most conservative of Dinka groups, maintaining the least diluted forms of language and tradition.²¹

The Bor Dinka, on the Nile's east bank, fell within the 'CMS sphere.' In contrast with the Rek, they have undergone considerable evolution in their religious concepts and institutions. Long subject to the disruption of merchants and military, they are somewhat more responsive to innovation than Western Dinka. Since the territories of the Rek and Bor were, respectively, the centres of Catholic and Anglican mission, each evolved a distinct chemistry of Dinka-European relationships.

Our study involves much more than the exchange between emissaries of one Western missionary society and a single African ethnic group. We will document the encounter between people of several cultures, Dinka and European, concerned with the institutions of two Christian denominations, tracing their development during a century and a half of dramatic social and political change.

²⁰ The other widely known group are the Ngok of Southern Kordofan, well known through the writings by Francis Mading Deng. No major anthropological study has been published on either the Bor or Agar.

²¹ "The Rek may have been the original stem," wrote Catholic Missionary Arthur Nebel. Their "dialect has kept some more archaic characters, and is both more melodious and richer in inflexions . . ." A Nebel, Introduction, *Dictionary*, (1979).

D. The evolution of Dinka religious vocabulary

1. Dinka language and missionary linguists

Language was essential to the missionary endeavour. From their arrival, missionaries of each denomination engaged in linguistic work, setting vernacular languages to writing. This section examines some of the difficulties as this process was undertaken in Dinkaland. The succeeding four sections survey key Dinka words and concepts related to religion and theology and the ways these have evolved or been adapted for Christian use.

Because Dinka was spoken by widespread populations it was given priority as a 'group language' by the Rejaf Language Conference of 1929.²² A standard orthography was agreed, and unifying dialects designated. However, because each missionary sphere contained several dialects and missionary translators generally worked in isolation from one another, they developed distinct styles, replete not only with dialectical differences but with their own theological and ecclesiastical vocabularies.

Needing to translate concepts not found in vernacular Dinka the Verona Fathers borrowed many words from Latin, with English as a secondary source. CMS missionaries frequently relied on the inclination of Dinka translation assistants, either constructing new terms from existing Dinka words or transliterating from Arabic or English. When translating the Bible they also transliterated words from Hebrew and Greek. Over the years the Verona Fathers focused their linguistic efforts on production of Dinka educational, linguistic and liturgical materials, while the CMS saw Bible translation as their foremost priority.²³

²² Organised by the Anglo-Egyptian Government, the Conference selected Dinka as one of six 'group languages' in the South. Where the Dinka predominated, pupils from smaller, neighbouring tribes, such as the Acholi and Jur, also received primary education in Dinka.

²³ Fr A Nebel published an edition of a *Dinka-Dictionary with Abridged Grammar* in 1936, with separate, expanded editions of each in succeeding years. Numerous educational materials were published. While the Verona Fathers produced a small synthesis of Gospel stories the entire New Testament was never provided. CMS missionaries completed versions of the Gospels by 1917 and published the entire New Testament in Bor dialect in 1952. 100 selections from the Old

Since Sudanese Independence vernacular languages have often been undermined and declining academic standards have meant that few younger Dinka have been adequately taught to read and write their language. Little new Dinka literature has been produced and patterns established during the missionary era have, until recently, gone unchallenged. Only in the 1980s have groups of translators begun to work toward a unified Dinka orthography and a new translation of the Bible.²⁴ However, no system has yet become widely known or accepted.

Chapter VI of this thesis contains English translations of Dinka songs with the original Dinka texts provided in the Appendix. These songs derive from at least four dialects of Dinka in both the Catholic and Protestant spheres. Their composers are of different backgrounds, some having meagre knowledge of written Dinka. Though spelling patterns sometimes vary, songs appear much as they were received, with few attempts at standardisation.²⁵

2. Words and concepts

In the sphere of Dinka religious concepts, translation of vernacular words is complicated not only by regional variations among the Dinka but by the various groups, European and Dinka, who provide translations. Where anthropologists have sought precise English equivalents to reflect Dinka categories of thought, unprejudiced by Western theological presuppositions, Christian missionaries have frequently used English terms biased by Christian doctrine. Similarly, educated Dinka may provide translations quite different from those of newly converted Dinka Christians who tend toward more theologically literalist translations. Furthermore, several key words have, after decades of use among indigenous Christians, acquired meanings previously unknown. Due to this variation in

Testament were published as *Pioc de Lek Theer* in 1950. Translation of the entire Old Testament was completed in the 1960s but never published.

²⁴ Primary mover toward a new Dinka orthography has been Job D Malou, *Thuongjang, An Explanation of Dinka Orthography*, 1992. Translation groups uniting several dialects have been facilitated by the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

²⁵ For a guide to pronunciation of Dinka words please see the Appendix.

translated meanings selected terms appear in the text in Dinka, and the definitions appropriate to several contexts are outlined below.

a. Divinities and spiritual powers:

Nhialic, Aciek, jok, and yath

Dr Godfrey Lienhardt, working among the more 'classical' Rek Dinka, distinguished several categories of spiritual powers and provided English equivalents for each.²⁶ While these categories are helpful tools, the Dinka are, as Lienhardt acknowledged, seldom dogmatic or doctrinal in spheres of religious thought. Rather, they tend toward creative associations within accepted parameters. Few, certainly in recent decades, make such precise distinctions as Lienhardt, nor do all Dinka groups share precisely the same beliefs or use vocabulary in identical ways.

Those spiritual beings Lienhardt described as "that widest class of ultra-human agency" are the *jak* (singular, *jok*), which he called 'Powers.' Dinka use the word generically to speak of an order of forces higher in the scale of being than mankind and functioning outside the parameters of space and time experienced by man. As individuals or as groups they participate in human experience and influence it for good or evil. Of terms referring to spiritual beings *jak* is the least specific and can be used inclusively to describe the entire range of Powers. *Jok* can also describe a kind or quality of being. On observing a peculiarity such as a deformed animal the Dinka might say, 'ee *jok*,' 'it is *jok*,' affirming not that the animal is itself a *jok*, but that it reveals some manifestation of *jok*.

The term *nhialic* is commonly used to refer to the 'Supreme Being' of the Dinka. Literally the name is the locative form of *nhial*, meaning 'up,' 'above' or 'sky.' The Dinka direct invocations to this 'one in the above' as *nhialic aciek*, 'creator god' or as *nhialic wa*, '*nhialic* of my father' or 'of my grandfather,' all of which identify him as masculine and personal. As Supreme Being he is by nature

²⁶ G Lienhardt, *Divinity* 28ff.

omnipotent and just. Like natural forces, such as the rains and rivers, through which he frequently manifests himself, he brings blessing upon humankind, but may also inflict suffering. Dinka accept that he is universal and so is known to other peoples who call him by other names.

Lienhardt notes characteristics which distinguish him from Western conceptions associated with 'God' and so employs the term 'Divinity' in referring to *Nhialic*. The Dinka affirm resolutely that *nhialic ee tok*, "God is one," but also state occasionally that *jak ee nhialic*, suggesting that all lesser Powers are created by him, exist by his authority, and are constituted within his singular supreme identity. *Nhialic* is, then, inclusive, both singular and plural. Like the word *jak*, it also describes a *kind* and quality of being as in the statement '*ee nhialic*,' 'it is *nhialic*,' a manifestation of his presence.²⁷

For their participation with *nhialic* and accessibility to mankind the category of *jak* termed *yeeth* (singular *yath*) are of great importance to the Dinka. Calling them 'divinities' Lienhardt described two kinds of *yeeth*.²⁸ The first are 'clan-divinities,' powers adhering to Dinka descent-groups from which the clan derives the particular qualities associated with their agnatic descent group. These are usually represented in physical form by an 'emblem' or 'totem,' often in the form of an animal, plant or, less often, an inanimate object. The clan-divinity

²⁷ J Malou Ater wrote that "*Jok* are distinguished absolutely from God [*Nhialic*] in that they have no power to save. They may only act as God's agents," and quotes Agar *beny bith*, Makuer Gol Mayen, as saying, "*Jok* are *atiep* [shades, spirits]. One cannot see *Jok*. God [*Nhialic*] combines them all." Ater Dut Majok, Pabut elder near Rumbek, said, "*Nhialic* is not the God of an individual but of the community as a whole. He is not for the Dinka only but for other nations as well. The origin of *Nhialic* is unknown, and the time and place where he was created. God is one, not many. The minor gods are messengers." *The Dinka Priesthood*, unpublished master's thesis, Beirut, (1976) 14, 115, 116.

²⁸ My own experience tends to confirm Lienhardt's more inclusive use of the category *jak*, under which the *yeeth*, clan divinities, form a sub-category. F M Deng tends toward a stronger dichotomy in which *yeeth* "are essentially virtuous" and the *jak* "essentially evil and destructive." 'The Pursuit of Well-being' in W James & D Johnson, *Vernacular Christianity*, (1988) 159. In his study of the *Dinka Priesthood* J A Malou described the *jak* in several contexts. While it is clear that he read Lienhardt he did not employ so definite a distinction between clan-divinities and free-divinities. Malou writes only that "Dinka religion itself is concerned only with the worship of *Nhialic*, *Aciek* and *yath* (totem)," *Priesthood*, 105. However, he often distinguishes between *jak* rooted in Dinka tradition, and those often malign *jak*, subject to human manipulation and thought to have been purchased from neighbouring peoples.

serves as a type of agnatic ancestor while their emblems suggest a type of fellow clansman. If a clan is 'related to' a type of tree as the emblem of its divinity, its members will not violate it by plucking or eating its fruit, neither will they cut or burn its wood. Animals to which one is related cannot be killed or their meat eaten by those who 'respect' (*theek*) them. Among the Bor Dinka notable clan-divinities include Fire (*Mac*) associated with Flesh (*Ring*), spears such as the venerable Lirpiou, and the divinity, Garang, whose emblem is a species of snake.

A second category of *yeeth*, Lienhardt calls 'free-divinities' which are, by Dinka definition, 'Powers which are related to people' (*yeeth ee jong e ruai ke koc*). Rather than relating to an entire descent-group, they develop special relationships, sometimes imposing themselves upon particular individuals through whom they relate to a family or clan. These are known by name, the most important, such as Deng and Garang, being widely known across Dinkaland. They may reveal themselves through dreams, trances or through the illnesses they bring. Through possession of those with whom they relate they make their demands known to the wider community.

In daily life the Dinka encounter and experience the effects of the *jak* as living agents. In his analysis Lienhardt demonstrates how 'powers,' conceived as both 'in men' and 'in the above' can be understood as images "evoked by certain configurations of experience contingent upon the Dinkas' reaction to their physical and social environment." The imagery associated with a particular divinity derives from recurring experiences common in daily life. The *yeeth* provide both the description as well as interpretation of that experience. Thus the free divinities provide "a link between moral and physical experience, integrating experience of the human and ultra-human in the world."²⁹

²⁹ Lienhardt, *Divinity*, 28f, 147.

b. Dinka primal ancestors and free-divinities

Across Dinkaland there are numerous 'free-divinities,' certain ones taking prominence in each region. Known to the mythology of all Dinka are the primal ancestors, Abuk, Deng, and Garang. These are especially well articulated and revered among the Rek where Roman Catholic missionaries encountered them.³⁰ According to some narratives Abuk, the primal mother, is wife of Garang and Deng is their son. In others, the males are reversed, Deng taking the place of the primal father. Within their loose confederation they are the revered progenitors of humankind.

Problematic to Western thought is the fluidity of Dinka categories whereby these ancestral names also identify prominent free-divinities widely known among the Dinka.³¹ While each is believed to have been a human ancestor, they are far more than this. As *jak* or *yeeth* they are intimately related to *nhialic* and believed highly efficacious in contemporary human experience.

Abuk, the archetypal woman and mother, is most prominent of Dinka female divinities. She presides over activities of the home, is associated with the harvest, and with the waters of the river. By contrast, Garang is a divinity associated with the affairs of men. Though a free-divinity, he often ranks among clan-divinities in Western Dinkaland.

Of the three, Deng is the most multi-faceted and deeply rooted historically. Lienhardt notes his wide-ranging associations with natural phenomena 'in the above': thunder, lightning, and especially the first rains of the season, so fundamental to survival and fertility for both people and cattle. The Dinka often affirm that "Dengdit ('great Deng') is *Nhialic* itself," and so is the divinity most closely associated with *Nhialic* in its totality. As a clan-divinity he assumes a

³⁰ For a complete discussion of these free-divinities see Lienhardt, *Divinity*, 83-97. Of interest regarding the Bor Dinka, Johnston, R T, 'The Religious and Spiritual Beliefs of the Bor Dinka,' *SNR*, XVIII (1934) 124-8. Dengdit is discussed by FM Deng (1978) 51ff.

³¹ Arthur Nebel writes of the 'contradictory' nature of Dinka responses to religious questions, explaining that "their beliefs are not fixed into clear patterns of questions and answers as in our catechisms." *I Dinca Sono Così* (1968) 194-5.

variety of names: *Deng yath*, *Deng wa* (father Deng), *Dengda* (our Deng), *Deng Nhialic*, but most often he is *Dengdit*.

At the south-eastern perimeter of the Dinka, among the Bor, Lirpiou, the *jok* of 'a cool heart' has long retained a place as the most powerful clan divinity. In 1910 the Seligmans observed that it was "far from typical, for Lirpio is both a spirit--one of the most powerful of the *jok*--immanent in every rain-maker of the Bor tribe and a spear said to have fallen from the sky six generations ago."³² The cult of Lirpiou was encountered by Anglican missionaries early in the century and still figured prominently eight decades later. Other prominent divinities will become apparent in the chapters below.

Of importance is the claim, made by many Dinka, that long ago they knew only *Nhialic*, accompanied by Deng who is '*Nhialic* himself,' and mediating clan-divinities. Most powerful of divinities were those of the clans of the spear masters, who alone mediated between *Nhialic* and their tribes and sub-tribes.

The words *jok* and *nhialic* are, then, capable in Dinka usage, of a degree of flexibility according to context. Neither Catholic or Protestant missionary translators hesitated to use *Nhialic* as an equivalent for the 'God' of Scripture. *Aciek* was easily accepted as a direct translation for 'Creator.' Perceptive missionaries acknowledged that the Dinka were 'monotheistic' but sought to reshape the concept, disassociating it from other Dinka divinities.³³

The word *jak*, proved controversial, however. Missionaries understood its general, generic meaning: the Catholic Catechism declared that *Nhialic* has no body, '*yen e jok*,' intending 'he is a spirit.' Fr Nebel wrote that,

³² The Seligmans use 'rain-maker' interchangeably with *beny bith* and see this as his most prominent role, an emphasis not shared by later anthropologists. Seligmans, *Pagan Tribes*, (1932) 150. Lirpiou is not a fishing spear but a hunting spear; for a description see Lienhardt, *Divinity*, 52n.

³³ Writing in the post missionary era, J A Malou, tends toward the position assumed by some Roman Catholic missionaries: "sub-deities hardly play a role of greater importance than that of patron saints in the Christian world. They are, at most, messengers." *Priesthood*, 2.

These spirits [*jak*] are not fully independent from God, they are His creatures as well . . . the Dinka consider these spirits as bad only as far as they cause trouble for them and not because they are intrinsically bad like the demons of Christian conceptualisation.³⁴

The more circumspect CMS said *Nhialic ee Jongdit*, meaning he is ‘a Great Spirit,’ but never used the unqualified *jok*, uncapitalised, to describe *Nhialic*. Among Anglican missionaries and their converts *jok jak* assumed negative connotations as a description of ‘demons,’ ‘evil spirits’ (*jong rac*), the allies of Satan, the Devil (*Catan, Durieth*) and opponents of *Nhialic*. Since all divinities, both ‘free’ and ‘clan,’ were universally condemned as evil by Anglican missionaries, they were commonly referred to as *jak*, meaning ‘evil spirits.’ When translating contemporary vernacular hymns many ECS Dinka Christians translate *jok* as ‘evil spirit’ without qualification.

c. The ‘Breath of Life’: *wei, Wei Santo, tiep and piir*

In Dinka usage the word *wei* literally means both ‘life’ and ‘breath,’ the most fundamental life force animating living creatures. Biblical languages similarly combine these meanings in what might be called ‘the breath of life.’ The Dinka seek *wei* when they petition *Nhialic* to endow their clan and their cattle with health and fertility. A powerful bull is endowed with a super-abundance of *wei* and it is this which ascends to *nhialic* for the benefit of the community when it is released in sacrifice.

Both Catholic and Anglican missionaries adapted *wei* as the closest approximation for the human ‘soul.’ Efforts were made to redefine its usage, narrowing it to the human sphere and endowing it with attributes of individual personality, moral judgement and continuity after death. Dinka Christians naturally learned to identify its meaning according to context.³⁵

³⁴ Nebel, *I Dinca Sono Così* 193.

³⁵ For a thorough discussion of *wei*, see Lienhardt, *The Dinka and Catholicism*, (1982) 90; *Self: public, private. Some African Representations*, (1980). Lienhardt observed, “But though Christian doctrine would require a Dinka Christian to assert that an ox had no ‘soul,’ I doubt if even the most scrupulous Christian Dinka would ever be able to assert that an ox had no *wei*, since this is

In translating 'Holy Spirit' the Catholics used *Wei Santo*, a Dinka-Italian construct which would have been virtually incomprehensible to common Dinka, and seems to have found little spontaneous usage among Catholic Christians. CMS missionaries used a qualified form of *jok* in *Jongdit Lajik*, the 'Great and Holy (or Pure) Spirit' which has found wide acceptance in indigenous songs.

Piir is the common word for 'life' or 'the living' which missionaries used to introduce the concept of 'eternal life,' *piir atheer*.

In indigenous usage the word *atiep* (plural *atiip*) refers to the soul of a dead person, a 'shade' or 'ghost.' Protestant missionaries frequently used it to describe the soul of a living person as distinguished from his body, and to refer to unseen beings such as angels (for which the CMS employed the Arabic, *malaikai*).

d. Religious specialists:

beny bith, beny jok, tiet, acor and apeth

The Dinka possess a number of religious functionaries, some of whom assume greater prominence in one region than others. Two categories may be broadly distinguished. Discussed below, and in a class apart, are the *baany bith*, popularly known as 'masters of the fishing spear.' These are hereditary specialists whose primary allegiance is to *Nhialic* and to clan-divinities closely allied with him.

A second group comprises a variety of practitioners of lower status, who are less often hereditary and may acquire their skills by individual choice. The name *tiit* (singular, *tiet*) is widely applied to specialists who serve as diviners and healers. Valued for their occult knowledge and power, they are sought to diagnose illness and bring about cures, usually involving sacrifice. They are especially gifted in counteracting witchcraft, and are believed able to remove foreign substances implanted by witches from the bodies of their clients. Some may intercede before *Nhialic* but most call upon clan-divinities of the descent-groups

what the strong animal has in superabundance, far more than human beings, and what is released to give them the power and vitality they ask for when the beast is sacrificed." *Divinity*, 206-7.

concerned. Their influence and reputation vary greatly. Those most highly regarded are capable of possession by a prominent free-divinity, while the least respected are themselves suspected of deception, witchcraft or sorcery. Often the Arabic term, *kojur*, is used to describe them with little discrimination between these and other specialists.

The *ran wal* or 'person of medicine' is a specialist whose power is in the manipulation of fetish bundles. In Dinkaland the most widely known of these is *Mathiang Gok*, which, like others, is said to have originated from neighbouring peoples.³⁶ Anyone may purchase and learn to manipulate these medicines and seek remuneration for his skills. Also of dubious reputation is *acoor* (from the term for blindness), a diviner and magician. Most hated and feared is *apeth*, the malign witch who possesses the 'evil eye,' and is capable of inflicting injury.³⁷

Thoroughly distinct from these is the *beny bith*, (plural, *baany bith*), whose office, vested with political and religious authority, is passed on through revered priestly clans.³⁸ The title *beny*, meaning 'master' or 'chief' can be applied to any prominent or wealthy man. The 'fishing spear' or *bith*, is a symbol deriving from the legendary Aiwel Longar, first of the *baany bith* who held authority over river waters so essential to Dinka survival. The life of the *beny bith*, endowed with a super-abundance of *wei*, is essential to the welfare and prosperity of his people. He is one, say the Dinka, who 'carries (or supports) our *wei*' (*muk weikua*); he is one who "has the land of the tribe."

Uniquely gifted with discernment into the essential truths of a situation, he is the source of wisdom and light for his people. He alone has unrestrained authority to act as mediator, interceding daily before *Nhialic* on behalf of his people and their cattle. When most powerful his words, whether before the human

³⁶ For a thorough discussion of *Mathiang Gok* see *Divinity* 64-68. See also V H Fergusson, "'Mathiang Goh' Witchcraft" *SNR*, vi (1923) 112-114. Various authors have spelled the name as *Gok*, *Goh* and *Guk*.

³⁷ J A Malou, an Agar Dinka, translated *tiet* as 'magician' and *ran wal* as 'medicine man.' In addition to terms listed here he listed *ran alueng*, 'witch'; and *ran cau*, 'witchdoctor.' *Priesthood*, 25.

³⁸ For a thorough discussion of *baany bith*, see 'The Myths of the Spear-Masters,' *Divinity*, 171ff.

community or Divinity, are *kec*, poignant and penetrating. He offers sacrifices in time of sickness, disaster and war. His seasonal offerings and invocations bring the prosperity assured by rain. As peace-maker he is valued for his impartiality, a mediator between hostile factions, but when his people are at war his intercessions are essential to victory. While his word bestows blessing, he is feared for his capacity to curse and destroy. Thus commoners maintain a respectful distance from his radiant power.

In some regions the *Baany Ring* and *Baany Arop*, Masters of 'Flesh' and 'Ashes,' both representative of powerful divinities, possess authority paralleling that of the spear-masters. A small number of *baany bith*, notably individuals like Ciirdit and Ariandhit, have exhibited unique prophetic powers as the mouthpieces of *Nhialic*. These have been universally acknowledged not only as priests but as prophets and as such were designated *ran Nhialic*, 'person of *Nhialic*' or *ran Aciek*, 'person of Creator.'

For most Dinka the *baany bith* are distinct and superior to other practitioners. Affirming this status, John Malou catalogued numerous factors which distinguish the 'Dinka priest.'³⁹ The *beny bith* takes up his call, often reluctantly, at the mandate of *Nhialic* and is, as Dinka say, 'caught by *Nhialic*' (*Aci Nhialic dour*), for it is *Nhialic* that grasps and possesses him. Thus his priesthood belongs not to himself but to the community. All priestly ministrations are, then, directed to *Nhialic* and to the *yeeth*, conceived as 'extensions' of his being.

Priestly petition is marked by humility and expectation before *Nhialic*. Aware of his own fallibility, the priest must be self-controlled and 'cool hearted,' able to deal circumspectly with offenders. His sacrifices are offered for his sins as well as those of his people. The *tiet*, by contrast, is generally pragmatic and

³⁹ John Malou drew numerous parallels between the Dinka *beny bith* and biblical concepts of priesthood, both Hebrew and Christian. To my knowledge he is the only Dinka clergyman, Protestant or Catholic, to have done so. See especially *Priesthood*, 27ff.

diagnostic; his motivations may be selfish and vengeful. Contrasting the two, an Agar elder declared that the work of a *Beny Bith* "is creation, not destruction."⁴⁰

Observers affirm that the Dinka resort to magic less than other African peoples. Still, the popularity of the *tiet* and related specialists, appears to have increased in recent decades, a trend observed by Lienhardt as early as the 1950s. Complimenting this in some regions has been a decline in the status and authority of the *baany bith*.

The more classical manifestations of the *baany bith* described above exist among the Rek and Agar, both centres of early missions. In contrast are the Bor Dinka of the East Bank who retain myths describing the founding of spear-master clans, but have not in recent history had figures of the stature of the classical *baany bith*.⁴¹ Rather, the powerful cults of clan-divinities are maintained by men described as *baany jok*, 'masters (or keepers) of *jok*' or designated by their *jok*'s name as in '*Beny Lirpiou*.' Though Lirpiou is acknowledged as merely the 'creature of *Nhialic*' he evokes widespread veneration and reveals his insights and demands through those whom he possesses. Only very rarely have individuals arisen in Bor who exhibit the moral superiority and divinely inspired insight associated with *beny bith*. John Malou believed that this represented a deficiency for without the *beny bith* no sacrifices are offered which encompass and unify the entire community. According to him 'magical practices' are, in compensation, more common among the Bor.⁴²

⁴⁰ Ater Dut Majok, J A Malou, *Priesthood*, 127. Malou quoted spear master Makuer Gol Mayen: "The *tiet* is a cunning deceiver of the people. If he is lucky, his words meet the situation, but he is often proved to be a liar. The medicine man is the same. I have to do what they cannot, because God [*Nhialic*] accepts my words because they are directed towards him. . . . The difference between me and the *tiet* is that he is paid for what he does. He claims to be able to cure the sick, but demands money for his help. On the other hand I pray to God and demand nothing in return. If a person is restored to health, it is because God has accepted my words." *Priesthood*, 124.

⁴¹ Unfortunately no thorough anthropological study has been conducted among the Bor in recent years. The observations of the Seligmans derive from their 1910 visit. On Bor myths see *Divinity*, 190, 196.

⁴² By this he apparently meant the ministrations of *tiet*. Coming from an Agar Dinka this judgement may reveal a degree of prejudice. J A Malou, *Priesthood*, 107. See also *Divinity*, 190.

Several missionaries, Catholic and Protestant, who stayed longest in Dinkaland, came to know prominent religious specialists and understood the unique status accorded the *baany bith*. Where some Catholics came to affirm the ministrations of the spear-masters, little is known of the distinctions made by CMS missionaries. Converts recall that they condemned and derided the *tiet* and lesser specialists, but tended to remain silent with regard to the *baany bith*. In the experience of the present writer it is common for Episcopal converts to use the terms *tiet*, *beny bith* and 'witchdoctor' interchangeably and with little discrimination in clearly negative terms.

E. Nilotic origins, early religious influences, and Dinka Christian identity

This thesis is concerned primarily with the Dinka encounter with Christian missions since the mid 19th Century. There are, however, intimations, supported by anthropologists, that Nilotic religion has, since earliest times, been influenced by Near Eastern thought.⁴³ Prospects that their ancestors had links with the ancient Hebrews have tantalised several generations of Dinka Christians. Related also are the primal origins and earliest migrations of Nilotic peoples. Among educated Dinka these are more than mere conjecture, but issues essential to their identity in a national context often polarised by issues of religion and ethnicity. Who were the first inhabitants of Sudanese territories? What is the derivation of ancestral religion and what is its legitimacy among world religions? Drawing upon Dinka oral tradition as well as scientific hypotheses, this section will reflect on the self understanding of the Dinka within this broadest historical and religious context.

Because historical data is limited to several hundred years and archaeological and linguistic studies are still somewhat fragmentary, reconstructions of Nilotic pre-history remain inconclusive. Several earlier theories

⁴³ E E Evans-Pritchard made frequent comparisons and noted missionary observations that, "the religions of those two peoples [Dinka and Nuer] resemble less other Negro religions than some of the historic religions. They have features which bring to mind the Hebrews of the Old Testament." *Nuer Religion* (1977) vii.

suggested that today's Nilotic populations originated outside contemporary Sudanese borders. The Seligmans, basing their argument on physical similarities between the Nilotes and certain East African ethnic groups, suggested that the 'cradle land' of the Nilotes lay West of the Lacustrine region of East Africa. From there populations slowly migrated northward, depositing, in their wake, small but distinguishable communities, the forebears of contemporary Sudanese tribal groups.⁴⁴

The Dinka historian, Lazarus Leek Mawut, believes such theories are dubious and have often been propagated for political motivations.⁴⁵ He notes the assertion of the Northern Sudanese scholar, Omer Bashir, who used the Seligmans' propositions, among others, to suggest that virtually all of Southern Sudan's present inhabitants, including the Nilotes, had originated outside present Sudanese borders. Since their migrations had continued until comparatively recent times, wrote Bashir, "These tribes therefore have no more claim to be the original people of the Sudan than the Arab tribes who emigrated to the North."⁴⁶ Made at the height of civil war this statement was especially provocative.

Today theories which place the Nilotic 'cradle land' within the borders of modern Sudan receive broad scholarly support. The missionary scholar, J P Crazzolara was among the first to site Nilotic origins within their present orb. Basing his argument primarily upon oral traditions, he posited the Lakes region of Eastern Bahr el Ghazal as the dispersion point from which Shilluk and Dinka

⁴⁴ *Pagan Tribes* 18.

⁴⁵ Lazarus Leek Mawut is a Christian from the Nyarweng Dinka north of Bor. He believes H A MacMichael was among British authorities who used these concepts to encourage Southern Sudanese identification with East Africa, the ultimate objective being the annexation of their territories. In the post independence era Southern nationalist parties exploited imagery of the ancient kingdom of Azania, in their bid for a separate East African state. *Dinka Resistance to Condominium Rule, 1902-1932*, Khartoum, (1983) 2-3, citing H A Macmichael, *A History of the Arabs in the Sudan* 2nd Ed, Vol I (1967) 16.

⁴⁶ Mawut (1983) 3, quoting M O Beshir, *The Southern Sudan: Background to Conflict* (1968) 5-6.

peoples spread northward to their present locations while the Luo groups migrated southward into East Africa.⁴⁷

More recent reconstructions, based primarily on linguistic data, suggest that the Upper Nile Basin has been under continuous occupation for several millennia by small, scattered but linguistically related groups.⁴⁸ Categorized broadly under the Eastern Sudanic family of languages, there have, according to this hypothesis, been wide-ranging population movements marked by a constant process of differentiation and assimilation. Smaller clusters have broken away from parent groups to be attracted toward and assimilated into, new, culturally dominant communities. This theory is supported by the fact that, comprising the major ethnic groups which today inhabit Southern Sudan, there are smaller communities, like the Thain Dinka, with their own traditions, legends of origin, and physical characteristics.⁴⁹

It has been suggested that the Nilotes first differentiated from Eastern Sudanic communities no later than the middle of the third millennium B C in a region East of the Nile and South of the Sobat. This area is known to have been continuously occupied by their descendants for several centuries. The earliest Nilotic cluster divided into three groups prior to the second millennium B C. These were the Western, Eastern and Southern Nilotes. They then began their migration along the East bank of the Nile to inhabit territory from the South bank of the Sobat to the Northern reaches of the Lacustrine region. The further differentiation of the Western Nilotic languages into Dinka and Nuer was probably

⁴⁷ J P Crazzolara, *The Luo Migrations*, I (1950) 31-32. In support of this theory Mawut, (1983) 2, cites B A Ogot, *History of the Southern Luo*, vol I; G P Murdock, *Africa: Its People and their Culture History*, (1959) 333.

⁴⁸ For a more thorough discussion of this material see D H Johnson, *History and Prophecy* (1980) 53-83.

⁴⁹ D Johnson cites the blacksmiths of the Cic, Gok and Aliab Dinka, as well as the *Moiny Thain*, Dinka fishing peoples, as examples of these distinct subgroups. Both they and their neighbours acknowledge that their origins are different from those of other Dinka. D Johnson (1980) 58-59.

well underway by the first millennium BC⁵⁰ This sequence would establish the Nilotes and their ancestors undisputedly as the earliest inhabitants of the regions they now occupy.

Nevertheless, Lazarus Mawut, among others, places Nilotic origins still further to the North in the "Khartoum area, Kassala and the Red Sea region," territories now occupied by Arabised, Muslim peoples.⁵¹ Citing Arkel's work of the 1940s he observes that "excavations in Khartoum Area have established that the inhabitants of early Khartoum were negroes who resembled the Dinka and the Nuer in some of their ways of life."⁵² As proof he employs the belief, held by many Dinka, that a number of place names in Northern Sudan actually have Dinka origins. For example, the name 'Khartoum' is said to derive from the Dinka *Kiertyuom*, meaning the 'meeting of the rivers.'

Numerous oral traditions from across Dinkaland suggest that the Dinka migrated from regions to the North and East of their present territory. Citing the narratives of elders from several regions, Francis Deng concludes that "Dinka versions of their source-country always imply that they had once settled further North in less grassy areas, and some even mention names of Northern areas they are supposed to have once inhabited." He quotes a Ngok Dinka elder who asserted that the region of Sennar was his ancestral homeland.⁵³ Similarly, Mawut quotes an elder saying that, prior to the advent of the 'Arabs,' the Dinka inhabited the region of Kassala and Port Sudan. According to this tradition the Dinka trekked

⁵⁰ Based on studies of internal glotto-chronology by C Ehret, 'Nile-Congo Watershed,' 92. J McLaughlin, 'Tentative Time Depths in Nuer, Dinka and Anuak,' *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, V/1 (1967) 24-27.

⁵¹ L L Mawut (1983) 3. Because of the long history of migrations and intermarriage between immigrant 'Arab' and Black African peoples there are few Sudanese who might be termed true Arabs in a racial sense. Throughout this thesis we will refer to 'Arabised peoples' or use 'Arab' with this qualification.

⁵² Arkel wrote, "It is clear that the early inhabitants ['Mesolithic period'] were living, possibly only for part of the year, on a low sand-bank at the edge of the Blue Nile. In this respect they resemble some present-day Nilotes, such as the Dinka of Bor District, who camp on the edge of the Nile . . . [however] . . . Being 'people of the bow,' hunters and fishermen, there is no sign of the domestication of cattle nor any evidence of agriculture, so central to Nilotic life today. A J Arkell, *Early Khartoum*, (1949) 107-8. Mawut (1983) 3.

⁵³ F M Deng (1978) 126-7.

Southward passing Shendi and Khartoum. Entering the Upper Nile region, they divided into two groups, one crossing to the Bahr el Ghazal through Anyop (Shambe), the other following the East bank.⁵⁴

Rev John Malou quoted the Agar *Beny Bith*, Makuer Gol, in support of Eastern origins: "The Dinka tribe came from where the white man was created. When I was a child, I heard of this place as Kamuk. Later, the people crossed the Ciir, and people came from Korcok, which is Shambe."⁵⁵ Yet another elder asserted that the Dinka came from across *Adekdit*, identified as the Red Sea, having landed at Swakin and Port Sudan.⁵⁶

As with other forms of oral literature, Dinka narratives of migration evolve somewhat fluidly. Francis Deng observed that elders,

... are less interested in the factual details, and far less in the apparent logic of those details and facts, than they are in their theoretical value and its relevance to current objectives. ... Implicit in their explanation of migration as a search for grass is a kind of self-justification and exaltation of their present land as the best.⁵⁷

Nevertheless, assertions of Northern origins are so widespread that they cannot be dismissed out of hand. Certainly they affirm an ancestral bond, a sense of prior ownership, toward the northern territories. From these some Christian thinkers extrapolate early contacts still further North and East.

For many Sudanese Christians religion is crucial to their heritage and identity. Dinka writers Salim Wilson, Rev John Malou, Lazarus Mawut, and Francis Deng have all invoked anthropologists to emphasise the indisputable parallels between Dinka and Near Eastern religious thought.⁵⁸ In seeking to establish these links they have emphasised the high moral tone and theological

⁵⁴ Mawut (1983) 3, citing Santino Deng Teng, "Legends about the Origin of the Dinka," tape no 1497, IAAS, Khartoum.

⁵⁵ Observing how "all agree that mankind was created in the East" Malou pushes the theory to its limit. Since some Dinka names resemble those of the Thai, is it possible, he asks, if the Dinka originated as far East as Malaysia and Singapore? *Priesthood*, 114.

⁵⁶ Quoting Cier Rehan Nuer of Gogrial, *Priesthood*, xiii.

⁵⁷ F M Deng, (1978) 127.

⁵⁸ F M Deng, J A Malou, L L Mawut, and S Wilson have all drawn supporting quotations from the Seligmans, Evans-Pritchard or Lienhardt.

complexity of their indigenous religion, so challenging the negative judgements levelled by European missionaries and Sudanese Muslims alike.

Early in the century the liberated Dinka slave, Salim Wilson, recalled the religious rites performed by his father and asked if the Dinka might not “be an offshoot from one of the Lost Tribes of Israel.”⁵⁹ This seemed feasible, as he saw it, because both invoke an infinitely powerful Divinity who is also Creator. Both receive life through “the air, which we drink in or breathe” (*wei*), and both maintain spiritual authority through the patriarchy.⁶⁰

Four decades later the Episcopal priest and later Bishop, John Malou, wrote that, “It is very probable that much of the similarity between the Dinka and the Old Testament religion can be explained through some previous contact with the Hebrews.”⁶¹ Believing it is possible to “trace the history of the Dinka to North East Africa and even the Middle East,” Lazarus Mawut, also sees the influences of the great monotheistic religions:

It is my conviction that when the Dinka were farther north and in contact with these eastern religions, they adopted some of their beliefs and practices. These were subsequently integrated and became part of the indigenous Dinka culture. Its Jewish, Christian or Islamic aspect was gradually shedded [*sic*] leaving it as an original African belief.⁶²

For John Malou it was the monotheism of the Dinka which allied them with Near Eastern religions while distinguishing them from the polytheism and animism which he saw as inherent in many African belief systems. He wrote that “the Dinkas’ knowledge of the one God, variously called by them *Nhialic*, *Wen Madhol*, *Kedeke Nhom*, has received contributions from all three monotheistic

⁵⁹ See introductory quotation. S Wilson, *I Was a Slave*, (c 1939) 9. D Johnson, ‘Divinity Abroad,’ *Vernacular Christianity* (1988) 174-8. In an earlier book Wilson wrote, “It has been surmised that, prior to the Exodus, some Israelites escaped from Egyptian bondage and migrated to the district now inhabited by the Dinkas; if so, they would have retained many Jewish ideas and usages which in course of time have lost their original force and exactitude.” S Wilson, *Jehovah-Nissi, the Life Story of Hatashil Masha Kathish* (1901) 17.

⁶⁰ For a more thorough study of Wilson see Johnson, ‘Divinity Abroad’ 177-78, citing S Wilson, *The Ethiopia Valley: The Story of the People Called the Dinkas* (c 1908) 46.

⁶¹ He also acknowledged that influences may have come via “Islamic traders who came to capture slaves.” J A Malou, (1976) 75.

⁶² L L Mawut (1983) 5.

religions.” Malou reaffirmed the assertion often made by the Dinka that magical practices did not originate with the Dinka but were adopted from other peoples more orientated toward witchcraft and deception. This underlies Malou’s quotation from a famous ‘Chief of the Ashes’ who declared that “he is nearer to the Christians than to the magicians.”⁶³ In part, it has been this self-assured reliance upon the *Nhialic* of their ancestors, that made the Dinka resistant to the teachings of foreign religion.

Also used as confirmation of these early contacts are the numerous accounts in Dinka oral literature, which appear to align with Biblical and Koranic narratives. Dr Deng provides a number of these myths which, he believes, pre-date 20th Century missionary contacts.⁶⁴ Christian missionaries were often bewildered to find that the Dinka already possessed what seemed versions of biblical stories.

Of widespread interest to Dinka Christians are the Biblical passages which speak of Sudan. The prophecy against Kush in Isaiah 18, has frequently been interpreted in sermons as a prediction of post-independence civil war in Sudan. John Malou, like many others, asked if the prophet might not be referring to the Dinka when he wrote of this “people tall and smooth-skinned, . . . feared far and wide, an aggressive nation of strange speech whose land is divided by rivers.”⁶⁵ As pastors draw upon this and related passages history is condensed, and ancient prophecies take on immediate and urgent relevance within the Sudanese context.

⁶³ J Malou (1976) 101.

⁶⁴ F M Deng notes that men who recounted these myths in the early 1970s were in their 60s and 70s, having been told them as children by their elders. F M Deng, (1978), 48, 81. Among narratives resembling Biblical and Koranic stories Dr Deng lists: God creates the first man from the mud of the earth and woman from the rib of man; the forbidden tree; the first woman is deceived to eat forbidden fruit by a serpent; death is introduced to human existence through the disobedience of the woman; punishment inflicted on human beings involves suffering and hard work; the snake is cursed to crawl on its belly; adversity between the woman and the snake will endure into the future; the first man and woman bear a child, of whom God says, “your child will die, but after fifteen days he will return”; people build a great tower in an attempt to reach Deng, the divinity of the sky; a divine leader makes waters separate so that his people can cross over; a prophet is born of a woman without a biological father; miracles are performed by the prophet and his message is conveyed across the world; and finally, water which is transferred to new pots turns into beer. These are contained in Deng, ‘The Origin of Things,’ *Two Worlds*, (1978) 46-128; especially 48, 52, 51, 78.

⁶⁵ From Isaiah 18:2, NIV, referred to in J A Malou, *Priesthood* (1976).

The 'Ethiopian' eunuch, emissary of the Kandake of Meroe, described in Acts 8, also evokes frequent speculation. Linking him with Dinka Christianity, Lazarus Mawut wrote:

On his return it could be assumed that he did convert some Ethiopians (Sudanese), including the Nilotes. As time passed, some of the Bible stories mingled with African stories which eventually led to their assimilation and absorption into Dinka culture.⁶⁶

For many Sudanese Christians these passages are a source of affirmation in a context where ancestral religion has been denigrated together with their present Christian faith. Through invoking biblical accounts their identity is confirmed in the broadest historical, social and theological context.

Conjectures concerning biblical narratives also merge with those surrounding the rise and fall of Nubian Christianity in Northern Sudan. By the second century Christianity was an important element in the life of Egypt and by 540 it had been embraced by some Nubian rulers. While Coptic Christianity probably penetrated Sudanese territories well before this time no definite links with the Acts narrative have been established.⁶⁷ By the 14th century Nubian Christianity was in decline due to political instability and the encroachment of Islam. Nevertheless, a millennium of Nubian Christianity leaves ample space for speculation concerning early influences upon the Nilotes. The Catholic missionary linguist, Fr Arthur Nebel, having examined Dinka oral literature, could not discount Nilotic connections either with the ancient Hebrews or with Nubian Christianity.⁶⁸

Theories of Nilotic links with ancient monotheistic religions have been employed to reinforce the distinctiveness of Nilotic identity and religion. They

⁶⁶ L L Mawut (1983) 7.

⁶⁷ For a discussion of the Nubian Church see P L Shinnie, 'Christian Nubia,' *Cambridge History of Africa*, Vol 2, 556-88.

⁶⁸ "The legends concerning the creation . . . allow us to assume that in the distant past there must have been a Hebrew influence probably going back to the early centuries of our era when some of the ancestors of the Nilotic tribes were living in the North where there were some Hebrew colonies with proselytes." Nebel, *I Dinca Sona Così* (1968) 189.

have also been used to emphasise the similarities of origin and culture which have, from earliest times, bound African and 'Arab' together. If it is true that neither lived in isolation from the other, but rather share a common history, there is, suggests Dr Francis Deng, a basis for constructive co-existence:

If the theory of South-North mutual isolation prior to the nineteenth-century hostilities is dismissed, it goes without saying that Islam, Christianity and perhaps Judaism have been features of Sudanese civilization from the earliest times and therefore evidence of these classic religions among the Southern peoples should not be surprising. The acceptance of ethnic, cultural, and religious linkage underlying the history of South-North relations should also mean that no clear-cut racial or cultural dichotomy can be drawn between the two parts of the country.⁶⁹

Dr Deng suggests that centuries of social intercourse in terms of culture, religion and ethnicity between the Nilotes and their Northern neighbours provide a broad basis for mutual identification.⁷⁰

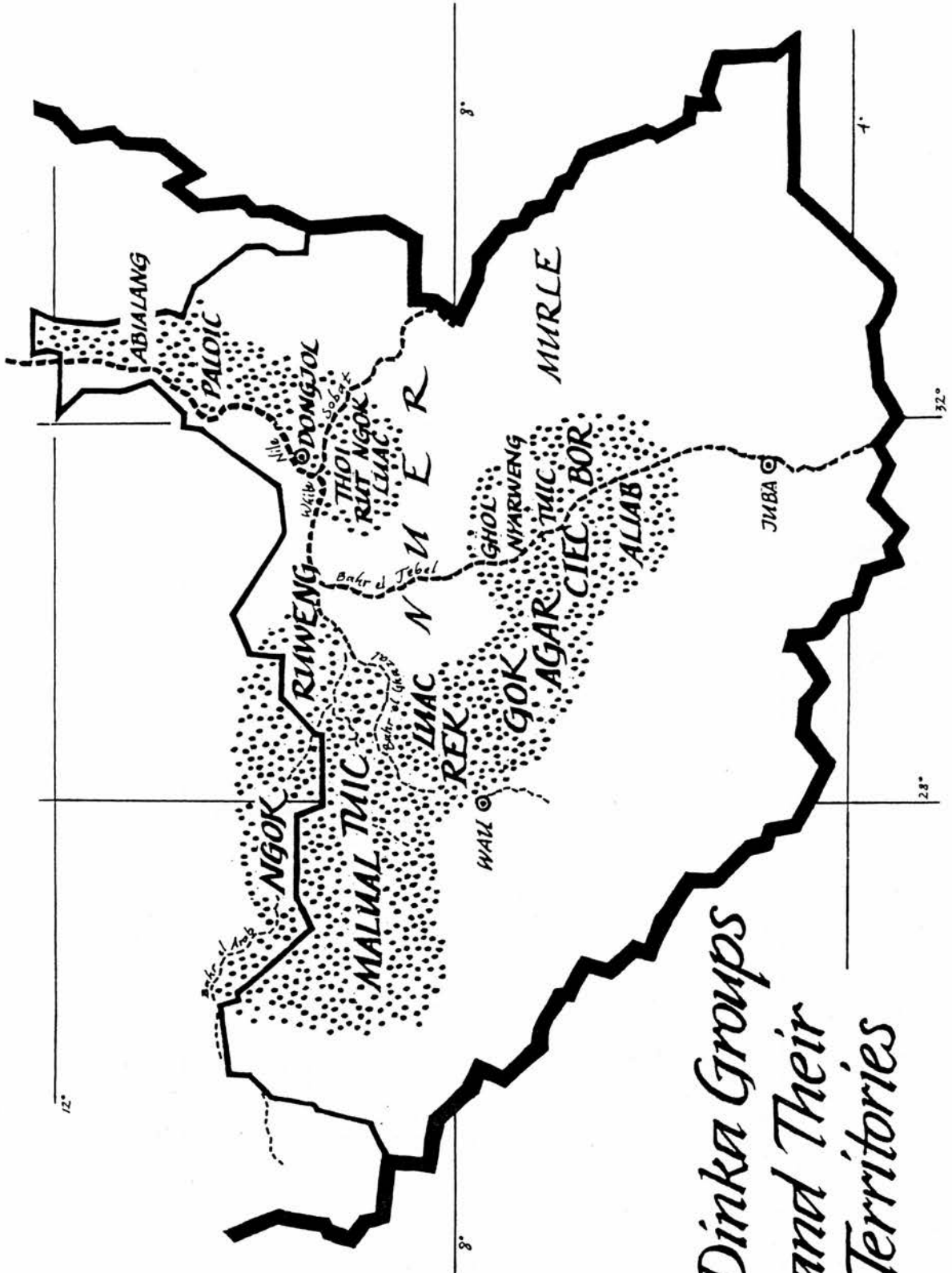
However, amidst the polarisation and hostility of post independence civil war most Dinka tend rather to enumerate the distinctions between themselves and the 'Arabs.' A succession of Muslim governments have, in recent times, sought to undermine the cultural and religious integrity of the Dinka and encouraged the depopulation of their territories. They have provided arms for militia among the traditional enemies of Dinka peoples who have brought death, destruction, and enslavement across wide swaths of Dinka territories. By withholding much needed relief assistance they have encouraged large scale population movements.⁷¹

⁶⁹ F M Deng, the son of a renowned paramount Chief, has sought, on the national level, to cultivate the peaceful co-existence between 'Arab' and African for which his father and grandfather were renowned. With their territories on the Northern frontier of Dinkaland, the Ngok are among Dinka peoples with the most intimate contact with Arabised nomadic peoples. F M Deng, (1978) 6. By the same author see *A Man Called Deng Majok* (1986).

⁷⁰ As further evidence Dr Deng notes the 'non-Negroid' features of the Nilotes which to him suggest an early blend of racial types. Certain traditional Dinka practices--the burial rites reserved for revered spear-masters, and the artificial curvature of the horns of prize oxen--are remarkably similar to ancient Egyptian practices. F M Deng (1978) xiii.

⁷¹ Exemplary were statements made in Parliament by Prime Minister Sadiq el Mahdi during 1987 and 1988 declaring that provision of relief food for the Dinka was merely a manner of fueling the civil war. During the same period government armed 'tribal militias' brought devastation to many regions of Dinkaland.

In this national context, Christian identity has not so much supplanted, as become allied with ancestral religion, extending solidarity beyond clan or tribe to other groups within the Sudanese nation as well toward an international community. Theologically, it provides hope of divine intervention in the context of a universal covenant. Nilotic assertions that their ancestors first migrated from the North make the Dinka the predecessors of the 'Arabs,' and so the true owners of the land, just as assertions of links with the ancient Hebrews affirm that the Dinka are heir to religious traditions which pre-date and surpass Islam. For these reasons, the ramifications of this study extend well beyond a century of encounter between European missionaries and the highly 'conservative' Dinka. It documents the evolving identity of a people and their determination to survive in a complex social, political, and multi-religious environment.



II. "WHEN THE EARTH WAS SPOILED"
DINKA ENCOUNTERS WITH FOREIGNERS
DURING THE 19TH CENTURY

My children, be very careful not to provoke these strangers. You do not realise where they come from. You think they are sons of the earth like yourselves while in truth the sky is their father whose all-seeing eye watches every step you take. They have showered gifts on you. Nobody, poor or rich, man or woman, child or old man but has been sitting in the presence of Magandit.

Ciec Dinka elder, 1854¹

... How many times has our home in the South been destroyed?
 How many times has our land of Sudan been thrown into confusion?
 It began with the coming of the white foreigner,
 the one who sailed upon the river ...

lyrics by Deng Kuot, SPLA liberation song, c. mid 1980s

A. Introduction

The oral tradition of the Dinka recalls a time of harmony when the world was at peace and mankind flourished with vast herds of cattle. This idyllic state of contentment and relative isolation was irrevocably altered with the advent of the *Turuk*, a term still used to refer to light skinned foreigners. Across Dinkaland their arrival and the disruption it brought, is described as "the time when the earth was spoiled."²

¹ Caution given by a Dinka elder to his people regarding White Nile traders, as recorded by the French trader J-A Vayssiere, 11 April, 1854 in "Ivory-buying on the White Nile, The Journal of J.-A. Vayssiere, 1853-4," Santi and Hill, *The Europeans in the Sudan, 1834-1878*, (1980) 168.

² The expression is employed across Dinkaland as in the words of Chief Makuei Billkuei, "Mahdi was the man who brought destruction. . . . That is what is called the spoiling of the world." F M Deng, *Africans of Two Worlds* (1978), 133.

The soldiers of the Turkish-Egyptian government were among the first in a succession of Arab, European, Arabised Sudanese, and Levantine adventurers, who sought to exploit Southern Sudan during the 19th century. To the present day Nilotic attitudes toward aliens and the Nilotic interpretation of history are conditioned by these encounters. This chapter will reflect upon the impact of three waves of intruders, those of the *Turkiyya*, the merchants, and the Mahdists. We will ask how they and their actions influenced the responses of the Dinka toward foreigners, among whom were Christian missionaries, then and in succeeding generations.

B. Turkish-Egyptian expansion on the Southern frontier

While Northern Sudan had long existed on the periphery of major civilisations, Sub-Saharan regions comprised an isolated backwater, penetrated only with difficulty. Nevertheless, it had served, since the time of the Pharaohs, as a reservoir for ivory and slaves. In about AD 66 a Roman expeditionary force set sail up the White Nile, but retreated when faced with the obstructions of the Sudd. Like their predecessors, the Kingdoms of Christian Nubia relied upon slaves from the southern territories to sustain their economy and to lubricate political liaisons.

By the 19th century slavery was essential to the commerce and economy of Egypt, its slave markets supplied through five East African networks. Caravan routes had developed which spanned Darfur, Sennar and Bornu, while Ethiopian and East African routes relied primarily upon transport by sea.³ The sultans of Sennar had long extracted captives from the Nuba Mountains and Ethiopia, and from the late 18th century began sending expeditions into the North-eastern territories of the

³ Early in the 19th Century it was estimated that between 6,000 and 12,000 slaves were reaching Egypt by the caravan route from Darfur. G Baer, 'Slavery in Nineteenth Century Egypt', *Journal of African History* VIII (1967), 424, 426, citing G Lapanouse, *Description de l'Egypte, Etat Moderne*, II, 632, 637. M J Lapanouse, 'Memoire sur les caravanes qui arrivent du royaume de Darfurth ...', *Memoires sur l'Egypte*, IV, 81-2.

Dinka.⁴ The caravan routes traversing Southern Sudan constituted the last of these networks to be developed and was the shortest in duration.

In 1811 Mohammed 'Ali, Pasha of the Ottoman Province of Egypt and its dependencies, overthrew the powerful Mamluke aristocracy. Soon he was seeking to extend his authority through annexation and occupation of the Upper Nile Valley, which was then still an indistinct political entity. From this vast territory he hoped to extract untold mineral wealth and gain access to reservoirs of slave labour, Egyptian manpower having been severely depleted during recent military campaigns.⁵ With the Northern Sudanese economy already dependent on slavery, trade networks were established to meet Egypt's urgent domestic, commercial and military needs.⁶

In 1820 Mohammed Ali dispatched his son, Ismail, on an expedition which by stages led to the conquest of Sudan. Thousands of slaves were captured and marched the arduous route to military camps, many perishing en route. Ismail's advance into Nilotic territories on the Blue Nile met violent resistance, news of which stimulated defiance in other regions. Ismail's death in 1823 resulted in two years of brutal retribution across the Nile Valley, during which Egyptian authority was consolidated.⁷

A centralised administration and army brought a degree of unification to the occupied Sudan, but inspired little popular loyalty. Nevertheless, some Sudanese tribes such as the Danaqla and the J'aliyin found they could benefit from the new regime by participating in government *razzias* into the South. In western regions the independently minded nomadic peoples, the Beja, Baqqara and Kababish, were

⁴ M F Shukry, *The Khedive Ismail and Slavery in the Sudan, 1863-79* (Cairo, 1937). Richard Gray, *A History of the Southern Sudan 1839-1889*, (1961) 44-5. Baer 425.

⁵ Shukry 55.

⁶ In 1814, prior to Egyptian occupation of Sudanese territories, Burckhardt noted that "600 to 800 slaves are bought up annually by the Turkish officers in Egypt" whom he described as among the most brutal of slave masters. J L Burckhardt, *Travels in Nubia*, 2nd ed, (1822), 306.

⁷ R O Collins, *The Southern Sudan, 1883-1898, A Struggle for Control*, (1962), 9.

seldom acquiescent. However, they too joined government expeditions against the cattle herding Nilotes with whom they had long competed for grazing lands.

Mohammed Ali Pasha envisioned a vast military machine composed primarily of forcibly conscripted black men, a slave army to police his expanding Turkish-Egyptian territories. Unlike the majority of Egyptian peasants, Africans had proved themselves skilled in combat and adaptable to military organisation.⁸ Camps, such as the barracks built at Aswan in 1821, assimilated Africans into Egyptian military life.⁹ New recruits were vaccinated and provided with calico vests. They were instructed in the rituals of Islam, given Muslim names and circumcised en masse.¹⁰ As these Arabised troops took wives on their Southern marches and established garrison communities, they transformed pockets of Southern society, themselves becoming the *Turkiyya's* most effective mechanism for Islamisation.

By 1837 two regiments were predominantly Black with a few of the brightest men having received commissions. The annual slaving expeditions became the self-perpetuating exercise of the regular infantry which took as many as 5,000 captives on a single expedition. Of these half were retained for the government while the remainder were paid to soldiers in lieu of wages, often to be resold to merchants.¹¹ The 1830s saw increasing advances into Nilotic territories. From 1839 the ships of the Turkish sailor, Salim Qabudan, opened the White Nile, the first of many to penetrate the territories of the Bari, and the Bor and Ciec Dinka.

Slaving expeditions were not always successful. The Dinka were more adept than many ethnic groups in withstanding penetration, and became known for their violent retaliation. Frequently they proved themselves "strong and warlike and have

⁸ Skilled soldiers, the Shakiya were a notable exception. Richard Hill, *Egypt in the Sudan, 1820-1881* (1959), 7.

⁹ Shukry 55-6.

¹⁰ Richard Hill, *On the Frontiers of Islam, 1822-1845* (1970), 190-1. Hill, *Egypt* 25.

¹¹ Gray 5.

several times defeated the Arabs, as occurred during the annual raids of 1827 when government troops, assisted by several hundred Abu Ruf Arabs, tried to capture 500 Dinka.¹² Alternately, the Dinka could retreat with their cattle into inaccessible swamplands when it appeared advantageous.¹³ Some ethnic groups of Western Bahr el Ghazal, were prized for their docile character and adaptability as domestic slaves. By contrast, the Nilotes were valued for their aggressiveness, their instincts for self preservation, and prowess under attack. Despite the dangers inherent in subduing them, they were valuable military conscripts.

From its inception, the Turkish-Egyptian administration in Sudan relied almost exclusively upon the army to sustain its authority. With an estimated 180,000 conscripts in 1852, the military as well as the civilian economy was thoroughly dependent upon a steady flow of fresh captives.¹⁴

C. The advent of private trade: Europeans on the Upper Nile

Under Mohammed Ali strict government monopolies were maintained over the Egyptian economy. These extended even into the Upper Nile region which was penetrated annually by government trading expeditions. When in 1848 these restrictions were relaxed, European merchants, attracted by the promise of large, untapped reservoirs of ivory, were among the first to set sail.¹⁵ By 1856 merchants were penetrating the waterways of the Bahr el Ghazal and entering the plains of the Dinka.¹⁶

¹² An anonymous journalist, writing from Khartoum, vividly described the 'remarkable courage' of northeastern Dinka. Richard Hill, *On the Frontiers of Islam*, (1970), 34. Khurshid Agha's Raids, 1826-28, 7-8.

¹³ Shukry 42 citing *Bulletin de la Societe Khediviale de Geographie, Caire* (1887), 611.

¹⁴ Shukry 95 citing Staat, Arch. Gen. Cons. 1848-1860 No. 657 Alex. 21-9-1852.

¹⁵ The Savoyard merchant, Antoine Brun-Rollet, having earlier attempted clandestine voyages, was the first to set sail when restrictions were relaxed. Shukry 93.

¹⁶ In 1855 Habashi, commanding one of John Petherick's boats, was the first to discover the main channel of the Bahr el Ghazal. Shukry 104. Gray 58.

Staging posts, or *zaribas*, were soon constructed along land routes to facilitate movement of goods. Normally a merchant would establish an alliance with a chief who was willing to allow him to develop a staging post alongside his village. These commercial centres often outgrew the original village as the merchant, with his *bazingers*, or armed slave soldiers, eclipsed indigenous authority. Through agents new agreements were formed to extend the trading network.¹⁷

Initially Southern peoples brought large quantities of accumulated ivory in exchange for cheap imported European goods. However, as ivory supplies dwindled and interest in foreign goods waned, their demand increased for payment in grain and cattle, commodities traditionally esteemed as wealth. As the basis of trade shifted, merchants sought to manipulate existing hostilities to their profit. Supporting their allies with armed soldiers, they co-operated in carrying out raids for cattle and grain which could then be traded for ivory and used in payment to their retainers. Captives were traded back to their people for ivory or forced to serve as carriers who themselves were sold at journey's end.¹⁸

Illustrative of the dependencies that developed were those at Rumbek, a staging post for ivory and slave caravans on the northward route from Equatoria. From 1857 the Frenchman, Alfonse de Malzak, formed alliances with Ciec and Agar Dinka against the neighbouring Lau Dinka.¹⁹ Upon de Malzak's death the *zariba* was purchased by the Transylvanian, Franz Binder who, on arrival, was met by Dinka chiefs, anxious to renew their alliances. Agreements restored, Binder was to

¹⁷ Gray 59.

¹⁸ Ibid, 148.

¹⁹ Once attaché to the French Consul, de Malzak (died 1860) was notorious as the first European to aggressively raid for cattle and slaves. Emin Pasha quoted Lejean who described him as 'a monster of iniquity' and Heuglin, 'a slave-hunter of the worst type.' Petherick, once de Malzak's partner, was more charitable. G Schweinfurth *Emin Pasha in Central Africa* (1888) 335.

supply 110 armed men to march alongside 1,000 Dinka warriors as they executed raids upon neighbouring peoples.²⁰

In an alien environment with profit margins narrow, Europeans and their Northern assistants spared little patience for uncooperative and hostile tribesmen. The years between 1848 and 1854 saw a steady escalation in hostilities and, encouraged by factors in Cairo, Khartoum and the South, an increased reliance on slave hunting.²¹ Since the 1840s Egyptian taxation of cattle had encouraged nomadic groups to raid Southward for slaves which they in turn traded to replenish their herds.²² The death of Viceroy Abbas I saw a weakening of Egyptian authority, slackness in Khartoum, and decreased enforcement of restrictions on the frontier.²³ Isolated and dependent on an economic and social order in which slavery was endemic, most merchants colluded in practices which, from 1854, began to dominate life across the Bahr el Ghazal, the White Nile and the Sobat.²⁴

Europeans did not, however, endure for long. Plagued by disease, lacking sufficient capital, and facing clashes with indigenous peoples, most had withdrawn by 1860, having sold out to Copts, Syrians or well connected and prosperous Arabs like the 'Aqqad brothers.²⁵ Only a few retired as wealthy men.²⁶

²⁰ Gray 48, citing E Kurt Binder, *Reisen und Erlebnisse eines Siebenburger Sachsen um die Mitte des vorigen Jahrhunderts im Orient und in Afrika*, (1930).

²¹ The tenor of violence was exemplified for many, when Sardinian Pro-Consul and ivory trader, Alexander Vaudey, his nephew and 15 crewmen were killed by some 4,000 Bari whom Vaudey had provoked. Gray 42-3.

²² Shukry 73-4.

²³ 'Abbas Hilmi Pasha (1813-54), Shukry 93.

²⁴ The Dinka had long taken captives during raids on the neighbouring Shilluk and Nuer who, if retained, had rights to marry and were assimilated within Dinka society. Vayssiere notes Jur and other children sold by the Dinka and describes how, during periods of famine Dinka parents surrendered their own children to merchants hoping to ensure their survival. Santi & Hill 137. During the *Mahdiyya* there is record of the abortive journey of 30 Danaqla and Rizigat who were going to purchase slaves from a chief among the northern Dinka. Santi & Hill 165.

²⁵ Gray 72.

²⁶ Credit provided by Egyptian Copts in Khartoum demanded high rates of interest while American and European firms based in Cairo and Alexandria withdrew their support for precarious endeavours on the Sudanese frontier. Only a few, like Binder and Lafargue, retired with a comfortable profit.

D. The expanding commercial networks of the *jellaba*

Supporting the wealthy merchants who moved South were growing numbers of *jellaba*, the Danaqla, Arabised Nubians of the Dongola region, and the J'aliyin, as well as the Shakiya Arabs. Long involved in commerce on Northern routes, some had already penetrated Western Bahr el Ghazal with the support of Baqqara posting stations. As existing trading networks were extended and armies of *bazingers* increased, powerful merchant princes began to dominate the Southern frontier, unhindered by central government. By the 1870s the vast plains from the Nile, south-west to the Congo watershed and beyond Darfur to Wadai were being exploited for ivory and slaves.

For three decades this new merchant class competed for dominance over the increasingly destabilised inhabitants of Southern Sudan. By the 1850s much of the Upper Nile and the Bahr el Ghazal were under the sway of Abou Amouri and the Copt, Habashi. Across the entire lower course of the river Tonj the wealthy Copt, Ghattas, executed cattle raids upon the Dinka. Herds as large as 10,000, were used as reservoirs and looted at will for barter further to the interior.²⁷ In succeeding years Zubair Pasha established himself as virtual master of the entire Bahr el Ghazal.²⁸ The hostility harboured across Dinka territories intensified during the raiding seasons of the 1860s when particularly large numbers of Dinka were taken captive.²⁹ Nevertheless, Dinka on major trading routes continued to enter into alliances with the new overlords from which they too gained a degree of security and wealth.

²⁷ During the 1860s the *zaribas* of Ghattas were typical of those in the borderlands between the Dinka and the Azande where 'the whole country was occupied, at intervals of five or six leagues, with the settlements of the Khartoomers in their palisaded *Zaribas*.' Northwest from the Rhol river to the Lol the land was dotted with more than 80 stations. Gray 61 citing Schweinfurth, *Heart of Africa*, I:226-8; II:141.

²⁸ Zubair Pasha Rahma Mansur (1830-1913), based at Daim Zubair, was succeeded by his son, Sulaiman.

²⁹ Hill, *Egypt* 111. John Petherick, *Travels in Central Africa* I, 95.

In 1881 Rumbek, having passed through a succession of owners, was described by Emin Pasha as, "a fearful place, as bad as brandy, syphilis, the slave-trade, and debauchery of every sort could make it." According to him, government appointees were themselves at the forefront of exploitation, and, with their cohorts comprised a 'parasitic' community of some 1,500. The total number of slaves prior to Emin's arrival was estimated at 3,000.³⁰ Armed servants had established themselves in outlying villages, plundering ever more aggressively to maintain supplies of grain, cattle, ivory and slaves. The killing of native people was a daily occurrence. Once prosperous Dinka regions were stripped of people and cattle as large tracts of arable land returned to bush. With cattle depleted Agar bride-price dropped from 50 to 60 head, to 8 or 10. Some Agar chiefs, having grown dependent upon exploitative institutions, supported the merchants, and secreted slaves from Emin's view.³¹

Emin Pasha was, nevertheless, impressed that, "the habits and customs of the Agar have remained completely unaffected." They were highly conservative and polite, refrained, so far as possible, from contact with foreigners, and refused to allow their daughters to marry non Dinka. They survived as much because of their rigid conservatism as their aggressiveness.³²

By the 1880s a number of merchants had obtained appointments under the Turkish-Egyptian government ostensibly to assist administration of the Southern territories.³³ Powerful mercantile companies were endowed with partial

³⁰ Emin Pasha (Eduard Schnitzer; 1840-92), quoted here, was Governor of Equatoria under C G Gordon, and therefore not a thoroughly unbiased observer. Schweinfurth, *Emin* 330, 334, 336, 412. Gray 48.

³¹ Schweinfurth, *Emin* 411-12. Gray 150.

³² Schweinfurth, *Emin* 336, 412.

³³ On the White Nile the Dinka and Bari were decimated by the presence of three notorious slave dealers. Northward, Mohammed Khair and Wad Ibrahim, sought authorisation to administer the territories of the Dinka and Shilluk. Shukry 120, 125.

government monopolies.³⁴ Company agents levied taxes and tribute, and transported slaves under the guise of legitimate trade. Authorised for exploitation, some of the most brutal slave-trading overlords were in the employ of Khartoum. During the second half of the 19th Century the merchants on the Southern frontier, with their agents, soldiers, and retinue grew to become a colonising presence of between 50,000 and 100,000. Progressively the Khartoum government had forfeited any legitimate administration it might once have maintained over the entire Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile basins.

However, with anti-slavery lobbies increasingly influential in Europe during the second half of the 19th Century, pressure intensified upon Egypt to halt its slave traffic. Unfortunately, Cairo's initiatives usually proved ambivalent and ultimately ineffective on the Sudanese frontier.³⁵ Only after 1863, under Khedive Ismail, was the White Nile forcibly policed, *zaribas* purchased by government mandate, slave merchants fined, and the trade, at least for an interval, suppressed.³⁶ However, it became increasingly apparent that Egyptian and Turkish administrators responsible for implementing Cairo's prohibitions in the outlying provinces were themselves prone to complicity with the traders.

Determined to employ officials who were free from these entanglements Khedive Ismail began to rely upon European, primarily British, administrators, to govern and police the Southern provinces. The much touted expeditions of Sir Samuel Baker (1869-1873), had little positive or lasting impact.³⁷ Following him, Charles Gordon, assisted by a largely European staff, was appointed governor-

³⁴ Among the largest, 'Aqqad and Company was the combined creation of several merchants with trading houses in Khartoum and Cairo. It gained control of 90,000 square miles from the Bahr el Ghazal to the White Nile and southward beyond Gondokoro. Shukry 145.

³⁵ In 1854 the Vali Sa'id "instructed the Governors of the Southern Provinces to prevent in future the introduction of slaves . . . into Egypt across the Southern frontier", while he himself continued to require slave recruits. Gray 52. Baer 430.

³⁶ In 1877, the British and Egyptian Governments signed a joint convention agreeing that slave commerce in Sudan would terminate by 1889. Shukry 122, 132, 136, 145.

³⁷ Shukry 167.

general of Equatoria.³⁸ Though they gained sporadic successes, their efforts were likewise undermined by reliance upon unreliable officials on the frontier.³⁹ In 1879 Khedive Ismail was deposed and within two years a new force had arisen to challenge the Egyptian administration in the Sudan.

E. The *Mahdiyya* in Southern Sudan

In 1881 Mohammed Ahmad announced his divine mission as *the Mahdi* and, calling Sudanese to genuine Islamic piety, soon declared a *jihad* against the infidel Turks. Coinciding with growing discontent among Sudanese peoples, his movement was to attract support even on the Southern frontier.⁴⁰ By 1884 the Mahdists were overrunning Bahr el Ghazal Province, uniting diverse peoples in opposition to the Turkish-Egyptian regime. The Danaqla, with many other Northern Sudanese, sought the expulsion of the administration so they could return to an unrestricted slave economy.⁴¹ Allied with them were the arabised peoples of the West, by then dependent on the *jellaba* economy.

More remarkable was the response of the Nilotes who had little affinity with Northern Sudanese and none to Islam, but shared their antipathy for the Egyptian Government. Western Dinka were hostile due to losses incurred during Romolo Gessi's 1879 campaign against Sulaiman Bey, and eastern Dinka were embittered by the ruthless methods of taxation employed by government officials.⁴²

³⁸ These included the Italian Romolo Gessi, the American Chaille-Long; and the German, Eduard Schnitzer (Emin Pasha), a Muslim convert. Gordon submitted his resignation in 1876, but in 1877 became governor-general of the entire Sudan, his powers vastly increased. He was again assisted by Gessi and Emin Pasha who administered the Provinces of Bahr el Ghazal and Equatoria, respectively.

³⁹ Baer 435.

⁴⁰ Mohammed Ahmad (1844-85) a native of Dunqula, established himself on Aba Island, south of Khartoum, where he gained a following. The Mahdist prophecies described a divinely inspired Muslim leader who would bring equity and justice and whose advent would herald the end of the world.

⁴¹ Collins (1962) 22.

⁴² Sulaiman Bei, son of Zubair Pasha, was made vice-governor of Bahr el Ghazal, later declared a rebel and executed by R Gessi.

Frank Miller Lupton, newly appointed British Governor of Bahr el Ghazal, had few trustworthy officers and little leverage to correct official abuses against native peoples.⁴³ Attempts to suppress sporadic raids of the eastern Dinka resulted in increasingly violent skirmishes and by 1883 the Dinka were in full scale anti-government revolt.⁴⁴ The Agar, provoked by raids inflicted by the local *mamur*, joined in, destroying the government station at Rumbek.⁴⁵

As early as November 1883 Lupton reported hearing Dinka shouting the war cry of the Mahdists as they entered battle, and observed them carrying a green flag, ensign of the Ansar troops.⁴⁶ Northern Dinka had been exhilarated to learn of Ansar victories over government forces, and a number of their leaders in Kordofan had travelled for a personal audience with the 'Guided One.' Soon the Mahdi was himself embraced as a divinity among Northern Dinka, and revered in song as "the son of Deng Acuuk."⁴⁷ Having united wide-ranging peoples and defeated a common foe, the Mahdi revealed powers which could only be attributed to 'the one above.' The fact that some groups incorporated the Mahdi among their ancestral divinities did not, however, imply that they had converted to Islam. Rather, they confirmed their new military liaisons while seeking divine blessing to supplement their own spiritual tradition.

In 1884 Lupton led 2,000 troops against a Dinka coalition estimated at some 50,000 warriors. Though the Dinka suffered heavy losses in successive skirmishes, they proved one of the most formidable obstacles to Lupton's administrative efforts.

⁴³ Frank Miller Lupton (1854-88) British administrator, succeeded R Gessi as governor of the Bahr el Ghazal from 1880; captured by the Mahdi and died in detention. Collins (1962) 26.

⁴⁴ Collins (1962) 30.

⁴⁵ Collins (1962) 34, citing Lupton to Junker, July 19, 1883.

⁴⁶ Collins (1962) 37, citing Lupton to Malcom Lupton, Nov 6 1883: "Mr. Frank Lupton's Geographical Observations."

⁴⁷ The Ngok chief Arob Biong, was among those who went to meet the Mahdi and was impressed by his piety. Francis Mading Deng, *Tradition and Modernization*, 2nd ed, (1987), 48-49. Deng, *Two Worlds* 131. Godfrey Lienhardt provides a translation of a song honouring the Mahdi from the north-western Dinka. *Divinity* (1978), 164-5.

The Mahdists received a groundswell of support as successive government expeditions were humiliatingly defeated by the Ansar. With his men deserting to join the burgeoning opposition, Lupton was at last forced to capitulate.⁴⁸

The advent of Mahdist administration in Bahr el Ghazal did not, however, bring the liberties anticipated, certainly among the Dinka. Like their predecessors, they required tribute, preferably paid in slaves, to expand the Mahdist forces, the *jihadiyya*. When their demands went unmet they treated the inhabitants with contempt, killed hereditary chiefs, and plundered food, cattle and slaves. Unlike their predecessors they zealously tried to force conversion to Islam, so reversing advances made through decades of gradual Islamic assimilation.

The Dinka grew embittered and distrustful. When the Ansar attempted a show of force in Bahr el Ghazal the Dinka virtually annihilated them.⁴⁹ Even then, however, the Mahdi, as divinity, was venerated and invoked as the Dinka entered into combat with the *jihadiyya*.⁵⁰

By the end of 1885, following the sudden death of the Mahdi, the Ansar withdrew from Bahr el Ghazal, for a time leaving northern Dinka to themselves.

During succeeding years the Mahdists tried to extend their authority in Equatoria Province where they confronted troops of the Congo Free State.⁵¹ By 1897 the demoralised Ansar were in retreat, trying to consolidate themselves near Bor. Desperate for supplies they stripped the countryside of *dhura* and cattle, engaging the Bor, Ciec and Aliab Dinka in pitched battles. This provoked the Bor chiefs who established new alliances and voluntarily reported Ansar movements to the Congolese forces stationed at Rejaf.⁵² By the time the Mahdist state collapsed in

⁴⁸ The Austrian Governor of Darfur, Rudolf Slatin Bey, surrendered in December 1883.

⁴⁹ Collins (1962) 140.

⁵⁰ Deng, *Tradition* 48.

⁵¹ On the Upper Nile encounters with aliens tended to be more sporadic, contingent on the cycles of dry season grazing and the shifting islands which in many areas prohibited maintenance of permanent river stations. Gray 34.

⁵² Collins (1962) 167-8.

1898 any vestiges of Western style administration had been eradicated from the Southern territories. Gradually authority reverted to time honoured, but much undermined, tribal institutions.

F. Conclusion: first encounters

The 'opening' of the Nile basin during the 19th Century left most Nilotic peoples embittered, hostile and extremely wary of light skinned aliens. Nevertheless, intensive foreign exploitation came late relative to other regions of Black Africa, its impact and intensity varying during different periods. Slaving expeditions into Dinka territory are known to have occurred during the 18th Century but gained momentum only in the 1830s, and then tended toward more accessible regions. The extensive exploitation co-ordinated by the *jellaba* and Northern merchants greatly undermined indigenous institutions but was sustained for barely three decades. In 1881 came the followers of the Mahdi who executed sporadic and brutal forays upon the Dinka, but were never sufficiently numerous to impose a cohesive Southern administration.

The Dinka were among the most skilled of Southern Sudanese in defending their land and properties and retaliated violently when they did not retreat into inaccessible swamplands. In regions where aliens established outposts the Dinka avoided contact and tried to maintain their religious and social institutions in isolation. Those leaders who entered into liaisons with the merchants sought to manipulate them to their own ends, and, like all Dinka, wanted ultimately only to be left alone.

The 'spoiling' of Dinkaland by aliens from afar was further exacerbated by hostilities near at hand during the second half of the 19th Century. Simultaneously conflicts between the northern Dinka, the Shilluk and Arabised nomadic tribes were escalating. From the east came the incursions of the Murle and Nuer, and

internecine fighting between Dinka further undermined stability. Destabilising as these conflicts were, they did not bear the stigma of the invasions of the armed *Turuk*, so vividly recalled in Dinka oral literature.⁵³

With vulnerability came new religious phenomena, the proliferation of 'free-divinities' and a multiplication of self-proclaimed religious authorities. Late in the century charismatic prophetic figures arose to unite increasingly fragmented Nilotic peoples.

When the Dinka first encountered the light skinned aliens, they appear to have interpreted their advent in essentially religious terms. Records suggest that the foreigners were first received with cautious veneration as manifestations of Creator.⁵⁴ During a pioneering voyage of the Upper Nile in 1839 Thibaut described sacrifices, occasioned by their arrival: "We were worshipped, and we had the good sense to respect them." In propitiatory gestures the crew were presented with gifts of cattle.⁵⁵ Certainly, the Nilotes were in awe not only of the appearance and technology of the strangers, but of the power of their 'fire sticks.'

Fourteen years later the Frenchman Vayssiere, having established his trading liaisons, listened as an elder counselled his people to act with forbearance toward foreigners over whom *Nhialic* himself was watching.⁵⁶ Later a Ciec Dinka elder blessed Vayssiere and interceded for the safety and success of his 'white brothers': "May his father whose glance encompasses the four points of the horizon protect him from peril and give us, his brothers, many tusks."⁵⁷ During the same period the

⁵³ For descriptions of the *Turkiyya* and *Mahdiyya* by Dinka chiefs and elders see Deng, *Two Worlds* 132-4.

⁵⁴ Dinka of the East Bank have long described light skinned aliens as *koc Aciek*, 'people of Creator' both because of their peculiar appearance and their incomprehensible technology, qualities which could only derive from Creator.

⁵⁵ Tragically, violence was soon to follow. Gray 16, citing Thibaut, 'Expedition a la recherche des Sources du Nil (1839-1840)', *Nouvelles Ann. des Voyages*, Paris, (1856) 65-83.

⁵⁶ See the quotation which opens this chapter and footnote 1 which accompanies it.

⁵⁷ Vayssiere, C G Gordon and J Petherick all describe the blessings with water or spittle they received, often with some discomfort, from Dinka elders. Santi & Hill 163. Gordon (1874) 121; Petherick, *Travels* I, 364.

missionaries were honoured as men of unique spiritual authority. Three decades later some northern Dinka acknowledged that the divinity, Deng, had 'fallen' in foreign lands and embraced the Mahdi not only as prophet but as divinity.

In each of these instances the aliens had been received according to the most honourable protocol of the Dinka. They had been incorporated within the universe of divine powers, as manifestations of Creator. When it was apparent that they were mortals, they were acknowledged as brothers, fellow children of Creator. The violence and brutality which ensued was all the more appalling, given these essentially religious responses. Most foreigners violated the codes of honour and morality which characterised Dinka society even in war, and revealed themselves as irrational beings, by Nilotic standards, 'less than human.'⁵⁸ In an environment where the order of relationships, human and divine, were being thrown into chaos, the coming of yet other aliens bringing a message of divine salvation could only appear deceitful and repellant.

⁵⁸ The phrases *ace raan*, 'he is not a person'; or *ace koc*, 'they are not people' are commonly used to refer to those who behave with cruelty and disregard human dignity. Sometimes it is said that *Jelaab ace koc*, 'The *jellaba* are not people,' in the sense that they lack humanity. Discussed in John Malou, *Priesthood*, 90.



III. "WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN US?"

19TH CENTURY CHRISTIAN MISSION

... since the wicked perpetrators of such horrible crimes are not generally of their own race but are foreigners, so these unfortunate savages, accustomed to being betrayed by everyone and mistreated in the cruellest of ways, sometimes regard the missionary with distrust and horror because he is a foreigner. In this way the Africans may appear to him as barbarous, stupid, ungrateful and brutal. Consequently he must, rather than expecting to receive an encouraging response of affection, resign himself to hostile resistance, saddening inconstancy and dark betrayal.

Bishop Daniel Comboni, 1871¹

Even Jesus Christ himself felt the bitter pains of abandonment . . . we say the same when we cry out to our brothers in Christ Jesus and to those who had the good fortune of being born in the heart of the Holy Roman Church and who seem to have forsaken us. *Fratres nostri ut quid dereliquistis nos?*

Fr Daniel Surur, 1891²

A. Introduction

This chapter will document the earliest encounters of the Dinka with the emissaries of the Catholic Vicariate of Central Africa asking what residual impact the 'Austrian Mission' may have had in Dinka territories. We will examine the first mission station among Dinka on the Upper Nile, as well as educational efforts in Northern Sudan, devoted primarily to liberated slaves. Several Dinka were prominent

¹ From chapter X, "Norms and directives intended to develop the spirit and virtue of the students of the Institute" in "Rules of the Institute for the Missions of Africa" cited by Pietro Chiocchetta, *Daniel Comboni: Papers for the Evangelization of Africa* (1982), 261-2. Daniele Comboni (1831-81) born near Brescia, was educated in the institute of Don Mazza at Verona, ordained priest in 1854; first arrived in Sudan in 1857; made vicar apostolic of Central Africa in 1877.

² Daniele Surur Pharim Deng, *Le Pene dei Negri Schiavi in Africa* [c. 1891], in *Euntes Docete XVII* (1964) 80.

among African children educated in Europe, three of whom will be discussed. We will ask how they integrated the new religion with the experiences of their youth.

B. The Vicariate of Central Africa

This and the succeeding section describe the beginning of the Catholic Mission in Northern Sudan, central to which was the education of liberated slaves. It was here that Dinka children, severed from their families, first encountered the white foreigners.

In 1845 Canon Annetto Casolani proposed that the Roman Catholic Church undertake an exploration of North and Central Africa.³ His plan, approved by Propaganda Fide, Rome's missionary congregation, was submitted to Pope Gregory XVI. The following year the Church laid spiritual claim to a vast swath of the African continent through creation of the 'Apostolic Vicariate of Central Africa.'⁴ As conceived in Rome the 'Mission to Central Africa' was intended to accomplish three objectives: to bring about conversion of African peoples; to provide spiritual support for Christians residing in the region, mostly traders and officials; and to encourage the abolition of the slave trade.⁵

To describe 'Central Africa' churchmen often employed the term *Nigrizia*, much as medieval Arab geographers' spoke of *al-Bilad al-Sudan*, to mean the 'land of the Blacks.' With regard both to the oppression of its inhabitants and sufferings endured by missionaries who went to these "man-devouring lands," *Nigrizia* took on poignant theological and historical associations. Bishop Daniel Comboni would

³ Dorothea McEwan, *A Catholic Sudan Dream, Mission, Reality* (1987) 13-15.

⁴ In the north this encompassed Algeria, Tripolitania and Egypt stretching to the Red Sea and Abyssinia; and in the south, the two Guineas and the Sahara, eastward to the Mountains of the Moon. Propaganda Fide stipulated that the expedition must exceed mere reconnaissance, resulting in initial evangelisation of indigenous peoples. In the final draft the boundaries of the Vicariate were extended to include the Eastern section of Sudan under Egyptian administration to facilitate missionary transport up the Nile. McEwan 10.

⁵ The Apostolic Letter of Pope Gregory XVI had condemned the slave trade in 1839. Chiochetta, *Papers* 75.

describe his Vicariate as that region, "twice the size of Europe," "oppressed by the gravest of evils," "inhabited by more than one hundred million descendants of Ham," "the most abandoned and unfortunate souls in the world!" For him they became, "my poor black peoples."⁶ Of the two outposts missionaries founded on the African frontier Holy Cross was to serve "the most extensive nation in the White Nile area," the Dinka.⁷

Entrusted with responsibility for the Mission was Father Maximilian Ryllo, a Slovene appointed Pro-Vicar, to be assisted by Fr Angelo Vinco of the Mazza Institute in Verona.⁸ Also among the initial party of 13 were two graduates of Propaganda Fide, Dr Ignaz Knoblecher and Fr Emanuele Pedemonte.

The missionaries were graciously received by the Ottoman Viceroy and officials in Cairo who, by their liberality, hoped to encourage European investment in their territories. Permission was granted for their venture with the stipulation that Muslims should not be proselytised. Prepared with letters of introduction the missionaries arrived in Khartoum in February, 1848, but were initially greeted with suspicion and annoyance.⁹ Turks, Egyptians and Europeans alike benefited from the institutions of slavery and did not welcome ecclesiastical interference.¹⁰ It was a Muslim merchant, al Sharif Hasan, who invited the missionaries to camp on the banks of the Blue Nile and later helped them obtain a plot inside the town.

⁶ Comboni often used superlatives: In 1878 he wrote of his Vicariate as "the most arduous, laboursome and important in the universe." Chiocchetta, *Papers* 120. "This vicariate is the most vast and populated in the universe." J M Lozano, *The Spirituality of Daniel Comboni* (1989) 17.

⁷ Fr Anton Kaufmann in Toniolo & Hill (1974) 150.

⁸ Casolani was initially assigned to lead the Mission but conflicts in Propaganda Fide saw authority transferred to Ryllo. McEwan 17. Erich Schmid, *Alle Origini Della Missione Dell' Africa Centrale, 1846-1862* (1987) 64.

⁹ An alternate date of 4th January, 1848 is noted in Roemheld, noted by Fr Ciappa, McEwan 19.

¹⁰ As early as 1842 a Vincentian missionary, Fr Luigi Montuori, fleeing persecution in Ethiopia, tried to establish Catholic work in Khartoum but was forced to withdraw, due primarily to the opposition of Europeans who wanted no interference with the institutions of slavery. Toniolo & Hill, 1. Even the Consul of Sardinia, Nicola Ulivi, was a renowned slave trader. McEwan 32.

To facilitate communications with Europe and later, with the African interior, Ryllo chose Khartoum as the primary base for the Mission. There the missionaries opened their first church on Pentecost day, 1848. Buildings were constructed, an admirable garden cultivated, and a school opened. Primarily for children purchased from the slave markets, the school also educated the children of Khartoum's Christian families. Soon, however, the missionaries experienced ill health and ran severely short of funds. Within four months Ryllo died and his responsibilities as Pro-Vicar passed to Ignaz Knoblecher.¹¹

The ascendancy of Abbas I as Viceroy brought policies which diminished European freedoms in Turkish-Egyptian territories. In Khartoum the Mission's right to care for the "poor populations of the African interior" were restricted as Muslim officials became apprehensive about the rapid growth of the mission school.¹² Determined to secure the standing of his Mission, Knoblecher went to Europe to raise support and to seek the consular protection of the Austrian Government.¹³ In March, 1852, he, with new Jesuit recruits, arrived in Khartoum aboard the *Stella Matutina*, an iron barque he had purchased in Egypt. Now under Austrian patronage, the party was welcomed with a display of fireworks over the White Nile and proclaimed a "symbol of the coming enlightenment of its inhabitants."

¹¹ Ignaz Knoblecher (1819-58), a Slovene, later founded a society to assist the Mission, the Marien Verein zur Beforderung der Katholischen Mission in Central Afrika.

¹² Soliman Pasha, Mudir of Khartoum, had some children withdrawn from the school. Pleading for Austrian protection Knoblecher wanted the right to work, "without being harassed in this matter by the often rough government officials here." McEwan 22 citing Knoblecher in Khartoum to Laurin, HHStA, aR, F27-8. 20 July 1848.

¹³ He obtained support from the "State Fund for the Redemption of Slaves" and founded the Society of Mary with the help of influential Austrians. In 1851 Dr Konstantin Reitz was appointed Austrian consul in Khartoum. Ritter von Laurin, Austrian Consul-General in Alexandria, wrote that the arrangement was "for the glory of Austria's name and for the spreading of Christian civilisation in the Sudan." Report from Humber in Alexandria. McEwan 23, 25, 31, citing HHStA, aR, F27-8, 6 Oct 1851.

1. The 'Austrian Mission' in Northern Sudan

Despite chronic illnesses, and high mortality in an inhospitable climate, the missionaries achieved commendable results and gained the respect of many of Khartoum's residents. Describing the mission in Khartoum the Welsh trader, John Petherick, wrote:

The only stone edifice is that occupied by the Roman Catholic Mission for the intended conversion of the negroes. . . . It is handsomely constructed and contains a neat church and schoolroom. The former is attended during Divine Services by members of the institution and the Europeans. The school is for the education of the negro children, who have been principally supplied from negro families on the White Nile. A few of the Europeans, and Copts, who have families, availed themselves of this establishment for their children's education.¹⁴

Mid 19th Century Khartoum had a population of about 15,000, most of whom were slaves or domestic servants.¹⁵ By liberating and educating the most vulnerable of these the missionaries hoped ultimately to convey the blessings of Christian faith and Western civilisation to the African interior, a strategy later recalled by Bishop Comboni:

In 1848 the missionaries bought in the slave market many youths who looked intelligent. . . . They started to teach them the simplest things that would be useful to them in their country, among their tribesmen, whom they would have to lead to security.¹⁶

Initially the missionaries had little credibility among Khartoum's slave communities because of their association with the Austrian consul and so with the Turkish-Egyptian administration.¹⁷ Rumours also circulated among slaves as Fr Daniel Sorur recalled, "I had sensed several times from other slaves, that it was

¹⁴ Writing in 1850, quoted by Toniolo & Hill 4.

¹⁵ In 1853 Fr Giovanna Beltrame, classified seven groups among Khartoum's residents. There was a small population of Turks, a larger community of Arabs, mostly from Upper Egypt, and 40 or 50 Europeans. A small number of Copts, served mostly as clerks, and the *Feki*, taught Islam to Muslim children. A sixth group comprised Egyptian artisans. The largest was composed of Dongolese, *jellaba*, and Black ex-soldiers who served in the government military or were employed on boats in the White Nile trade. Beltrame in Hill, *Egypt in Sudan* 127.

¹⁶ Comboni writing 20 years later, quoted by Toniolo & Hill 4.

¹⁷ McEwan, 83.

dangerous to take refuge with Christians because people said they were cannibals."¹⁸ Nevertheless, the station at Khartoum, and others after it, attracted increasing numbers of escaped slaves, many of them lads who had been intended for military service.¹⁹ As the White Nile stations developed, orphans and children purchased from the traders also arrived.

Difficulties later emerged as growing numbers sought asylum in the missions. During 1862 Fr Fabian Pfeifer, Superior in Khartoum, struggled to protect female slaves hunted by government police, arguing that slaves previously surrendered had been killed.²⁰ So congested did the compound become that three missionaries petitioned for consular intervention saying they could no longer live according to the rules of their order.²¹ The right of the missions to provide asylum remained at issue during succeeding decades despite frequent negotiations between Turkish-Egyptian and European officials, and the intervention of the Roman Church.²²

From their first year in Khartoum the missionaries anticipated their future work on the African frontier. Making themselves the students of their African charges they compiled vocabulary lists and made ethnographic notes relevant to the tribes of Southern Sudan. To their pupils they taught literacy, arithmetic and music along with skills which, it was expected, would be useful among their own people: handicrafts, agriculture and technical subjects. In 1850 Melly wrote that the school,

¹⁸ A rumour also recalled by Salim Wilson. Daniel Sorur, "Un Nero della nostra Missione fatto Sacerdote," in *Nigrizia* (1887) 120.

¹⁹ "... a school of 50 pupils existed at al-Khandaq in 1858; the creation of a school in the governate of the White Nile; and the Berber school, which drew its pupils chiefly from negro boys seized from the slave traders and intended for the army." Richard Hill, *Egypt in the Sudan, 1820-1881* (1959) 127.

²⁰ McEwan 74, 84, citing ff192, HHStA, aR, KF27-12, 4 Nov 1862, report from Angelo Castel Bolognese to Schreiner in Alexandria. HHStA, aR, F27-12, 4.8.1865.

²¹ McEwan 74 citing ff193; HHStA, aR, F27-12, 31.1.1863, petition from three missionaries to the Austrian Consulate in Khartoum.

²² In 1879 the Mission at Khartoum, under Fr Bonomi, provided asylum refusing to notify either Consular or government officials of new arrivals. McEwan 100, from the annual reports of the Consulate in Khartoum, 1879-80.

... consisted of about twenty boys in various costumes and of almost as many hues. Many of them are children of the European residents. Some can speak a little French and Italian, and nearly all can read and write.

Despite occasional objections from merchants and slave owners, the school appeared to be successfully creating a new community of Christianised, Europeanised Africans.

School teacher M Hansel wrote enthusiastically of his successes:

The final examination in August gave me much satisfaction. It was gratifying to go see these little boys neatly dressed and disciplined. They could answer freely in Arabic (which was not their mother tongue) questions about many things which were unknown even to their chiefs. They could read the Arabic and Roman alphabets, write in Arabic and Italian, and do arithmetical exercises on the blackboard. At the end of their examination the pupils sang beautiful songs with much precision.²³

Another teacher, responsible for technical training, was extolled for his skill:

The Khartoum mission presents a picture of active life. Fr Milharcic who has a gift for managing children is in charge of the boys' school. Its forty pupils keep their master very busy.²⁴

So promising was the academic progress by 1855 that plans were underway to send some students abroad for further studies. The annual report of a Viennese missionary journal expressed high expectations:

The number of the school boys is now twenty-eight. Two of them have already gone to Malta with Mgr. Casolani; one has left for Holy Cross with Fr. Mozgan; seven are learning arts and crafts; four are preparing for higher studies; the others attend the school with several day-boys. Father Pro-Vicar thinks it would be good to send our best pupils to Europe for education. . . . but in any case they will be sent in pairs so that they will not forget their native language or feel homesick.²⁵

Such opportunities were the privilege of only a few, however. Twenty years later the majority of the 200 men employed at the Khartoum dockyard were former pupils of the mission school who had acquired rudimentary Italian.²⁶

By 1873 the number of students required construction of a new brick building and the curriculum was soon expanded to include a range of crafts and practical skills: ". . . boys were taught, according to their aptitudes, carpentry, black-smithing,

²³ Toniolo & Hill 11.

²⁴ Hill, *Egypt in Sudan* 127.

²⁵ Marien-Verein quoted in Toniolo & Hill 10-11.

²⁶ Hill, *Egypt in Sudan* 127.

tailoring and shoe-making by experts specially brought from Italy." By 1877 girls were also receiving education:

... 200 day-girls and nearly 300 boys attended the school. Besides these, eighty negro girls and some hundred boys were fed, clothed and educated till they grew up, entirely at the expense of the mission.²⁷

Nevertheless, the results of missionary education fell short of expectations. Teaching staff were often in short supply and existing personnel were forced to travel for extended periods. Frequent illnesses and missionary mortality meant that standards fluctuated and students often went unsupervised. The hope that educated young people would return to improve the standard of life in their place of origin proved ill founded. Having become accustomed to the town, few had any impulse to return and those who did often accompanied further disruption as employees of the traders. Austrian consul Natterer was among those who criticised the Mission, declaring that not one of the Africans who completed its course remained a Christian or earned an honest living. The students were:

... inclined by nature to idleness, to which other vices were soon added, and then ripening to adolescence the space of the mission becomes too small for them; contact with outside have long been taken up; they run away and begin stealing--usually from the Mission itself before their flight, convert to Islam, are proud and over weaning on account of the little they have learned, reluctant to work and, therefore, incapable of earning their living. . . . These are realities which must at last be understood in Vienna and, it is to be hoped, will have the withdrawal of the Mission as a consequence.²⁸

The Austrian explorer, Ernst Marno, giving an equally damning critique even argued against redemption of slaves. According to him, the missionaries:

with regard to slavery frequently exercise misconceived humanity. Escaped slaves take shelter there in all circumstances and turn Christian in order to be fed and to live in idleness, as they are so glad to do.²⁹

²⁷ Toniolo & Hill 23, citing Licurgo Santoni, an Italian postal official in the Egyptian service writing in 1878.

²⁸ McEwan 72 citing Report from Natterer in Khartoum to Schreiner, HHStA, aR, F27-12, 25 May 1865.

²⁹ McEwan 68-69 citing Ernst Marno, *Reisen im Gebeitedes blauen und weissen Nil* (1874) 472-3.

Observers like Marno believed that liberated slaves educated by the missionaries were little more than opportunists who would have done better to endure the normal processes of assimilation in Sudanese society. Even the positive values which children retained from early life were eroded in the context of the mission. Nevertheless, Khartoum's mission school survived during succeeding decades, even when all other stations were closed. During his tour in the 1870s Samuel Baker observed that Khartoum was the only remaining mission school "swarming with little African boys from the various White Nile tribes."³⁰

2. First Encounters on the White Nile

While the Mission provided education and the Church's sacraments for residents of Khartoum, its primary objective remained among the "harassed populations" of the Southern frontier. In 1848, with few means at his disposal, Knoblecher negotiated with Khartoum's Governor General for permission to accompany the ships of the annual trading expedition up the White Nile. The Pasha consented, even relaxing his monopoly to allow the missionaries to purchase ivory in order to outfit their ship and finance the charter.³¹

Knoblecher, Vinco and Pedemonte, set sail with an expedition of seven ships in November, 1849, sailing as far south as Bari territory, passing en route the Baqqara, Nuer and Shilluk, the Ciec, Bor and Aliab Dinka. Pedimonte wrote that the Bari were "most intelligent," and "courteous of all the native people living on the river banks," while the Aliab and Bari appeared "happy and carefree." On their return journey in January, 1850, they docked among the Bari near a site which later became the first mission on the White Nile, Gondokoro.

³⁰ Toniolo & Hill 18 quoting Samuel Baker.

³¹ At this time the Turkish-Egyptian Government monopoly prohibited any merchant from sailing into the far reaches of the White Nile without a government escort which he was required to finance. Toniolo & Hill 56.

With a view toward establishing a preliminary base, the missionaries were intent on building constructive ties with the people. Equally determined were the 'Turks' with whom they sailed, to poison relationships, secretly stirring fears among the Bari that the Europeans were "evil sorcerers," while telling the missionaries that the savages would massacre them.³² Only near the end of their voyage did Vinco discover that "the Pasha had secretly ordered that the three Europeans should be brought back to Khartoum at all costs," leaving no outpost outside his direct control.³³ When the three returned to Khartoum, the Pro Vicar was determined to "settle the question of the freedom and independence of the Mission from our sworn enemies the Turks."³⁴

Throughout their journey Knoblecher invested his office and authority in restraining the traders from taking captives and in releasing any he discovered in their possession. On the return journey the pattern of abduction became clear:

When we got to the Aliab [Dinka] country I noticed that the natives were much shyer of us than they had been on the outward journey. The sailors explained to me that former expeditions had stolen boys and girls on their return journey and taken them in slavery to Khartoum. That was why, as one of the ships drew near the villages and houses on the opposite shore, women, girls, boys and cattle were running away inland for safety. They need not have feared that fate this year as my presence would have hindered the Turks in any such undertakings, and I myself had made a point of setting free various boys who had been captured.³⁵

Repeatedly the missionaries found signs of the brutality of the merchants. In one area it was initially difficult to understand the attitude of the riverain Aliab:

. . . the inhabitants of the villages . . . showed their discontent by waving the boats away. The boat leaders decided to leave the inhabitants in peace . . . The following day, it became clear why the natives had not desired our presence, for a little further along the remains of a burnt-out village were seen. This village had been set on fire by the Turks during one of their previous expeditions.³⁶

³² Knoblecher's Official Journal of the Missionary Expedition in 1849-1850, Toniolo & Hill 51-52, 66.

³³ Pedemonte, Toniolo & Hill 73.

³⁴ Knoblecher, Toniolo & Hill 54.

³⁵ Knoblecher, 23 Jan 1849, Toniolo & Hill 54.

³⁶ Pedemonte, Toniolo & Hill 62

Native peoples could not initially distinguish the missionaries from other aliens. Not only did they arrive together but Knoblecher and his colleagues wore white turbans and long North African robes. Only as friendships developed did their manner and intentions mark them apart. Vinco recounted how, during a voyage a year later, he disembarked, despite the fearful protestations of his captain, to speak with a group of Nuer whose chief reportedly said:

I will consider you a traitor if you do not pay me another visit on your return, provided, of course, that you are not accompanied by Turks, with whom I want no dealings.³⁷

The Ciec chief, later known to Vinco as Tusicvien [*sic.*], showed a peculiar affection for Pedimonte who at 58 years was the eldest of their party. Often taking his hand, the chief followed him closely. In time it became clear that the white bearded, bespectacled missionary was thought to be "a very solemn and distinguished magician." Having explained that they were not merchants the chief perceived them in religious terms as his requests confirmed. Pedemonte recounted:

Instead of leaving us in the traditional style of the natives, that is by asking for some presents, he asked for some effective talisman to make four of his dearest wishes come true. In the first place, he wished for numerous children; secondly, he wished for the death of the people who had killed his father and injured him (he had, in fact, a long open wound on his head which he had received three months earlier from a spear, and which gave off an unbearable smell); thirdly, he wished to emerge victorious from any battle with his enemies, and fourthly, he wished his wound would heal. . . .

As soon as his head had been dressed, the chief pressed for the other three wishes. The missionaries had some difficulty in answering him because of the limited intelligence of both the chief and the dragoman. Suddenly it occurred to the Pro-Vicar to give him a medal of the Blessed Virgin, and the chief allowed this to be tied around his neck. He appeared quite satisfied, and asked whether, in case of need, the medal would speak to him. The Pro-Vicar answered that it would help him in his needs. On the return journey we found that the chief was no longer wearing the long wide garment we had previously seen on him, but that he still wore the medal around his neck.³⁸

The expectations the chief placed on the missionaries encompassed his basic notions of well being. He desired progeny, revenge, victory and health. The forms of

³⁷ Vinco in Toniolo & Hill 75.

³⁸ Pedemonte, 13 December, Toniolo & Hill 60-61.

assistance received did not diminish his hopes nor decrease his perception of the alien's spiritual authority. When Vinco met the chief a year later he still wore the medallion. Respectfully, he presented Vinco with an ox.³⁹

The three missionaries returned to Khartoum confirmed of the great potential for their Mission on the Upper Nile. Seven months later Angelo Vinco returned with the ivory trader, Brun-Rollet, having negotiated to act as his agent among the Bari. For 14 months Vinco trekked Bari territory, the first extended stay of a missionary among a people of the White Nile. Having learnt their language, treated their wounds, and mediated in local disputes he established friendships extolled in the songs of the Bari long after his death three years later.⁴⁰

C. Dialogue and death at Holy Cross

At the end of 1852 Knoblecher, with Frs Dovjak, Tabant and Mozgan, again sailed to Bari territory, negotiated for a plot of land and founded Gondokoro, the first mission station on the Upper Nile.⁴¹ The months that followed saw an infusion of new life with the arrival of eight new missionary recruits, but enthusiasm subsided as almost an equal number of missionaries died.⁴²

In 1854 Fr Bartolomaeus Mozgan was sent to establish a second station among the riverain Ciec on the banks of the Nile between Shambe and Bor. Called *Heiligenkreuz*, it was the first mission station in Dinka territory.⁴³ Unlike later years when it was unthinkable for foreigners to move among the Dinka unless heavily

³⁹ Vinco, Toniolo & Hill 72.

⁴⁰ Vinco was the first missionary to die on the frontier. James Hamilton and Vayssiere, among others, mention Bari hymns in praise of Vinco. *Sinai, the Hedjaz and Soudan*, (1857). Vayssiere, Santi & Hill, 58, 148.

⁴¹ Dedicated 'to Our Lady of Love.' Kohler 'Early Study' 88. Toniolo & Hill 7.

⁴² In Khartoum Frs Kocijancic, Castagnaro and Kohl died; at Gondokoro Frs Trabant and Dovjak.

⁴³ Bartholomaeus Mozgan (1823-1858) according to Santandrea produced the *Instructio Elementaris*, the catechism, and the *Brevis Doctrina Christiania*, in Latin and Dinka; as well as other notes on Dinka language. *Heiligenkreuz*, also *Santa Croce* or Holy Cross later became known by the Arabic, *Kanisa* (church). Since the 1960s the site has been submerged by the waters of the Nile.

armed, Mozgan roamed easily in their territories accompanied by only two or three guides.

At both river stations missionaries sought to establish close ties with native peoples, often challenging the abuses of passing traders. Amidst intense famine during 1854 Knoblecher arrived at Gondokoro with two boatloads of *dhura* as provision for the Bari. Vayssiere, derided the "forbearance preached by the Austrian Mission [which] could not fail to be detrimental to trade. It remains to be seen," he wrote, "if the priests have not had second thoughts on granting the Blacks their protection . . ." ⁴⁴

New missionary recruits, arriving in 1856, were greeted with news of more deaths. Frs Francis Morlang and Pircher were sent to Holy Cross where Pircher died soon after arrival. Morlang continued on to Gondokoro to be joined a year later by Fr Anton Kaufmann. Fr J Lanz was sent to Holy Cross where he set to work on translation work in Dinka.

With the report of so many deaths reaching Europe Marien-Verein partially withdrew support for the Mission. Knoblecher, already ill with fever, began a journey to Europe to negotiate the future of the Mission. Father Beltrame met him en route. With him were five new missionaries from Verona, among them Frs Oliboni and the young Daniel Comboni. ⁴⁵ Knoblecher told Beltrame:

I recommend to you the Verona mission, of which you are taking charge. Orders have already been given that you and your companions will be welcome at Holy Cross. You will stay there for some time to explore the country, record the customs of the inhabitants, and study their language. You will then choose a suitable site to found your mission. . . . I do not know whether we shall ever meet again. I am worn out. I feel that I shall soon die. ⁴⁶

⁴⁴ "Ivory-buying on the White Nile, the Journal of J.-A. Vayssiere, 1853-4," Santi & Hill 141-2. His point here was to emphasise the incongruity between the pacifist stance of the Mission and its own reliance on armed defences against the natives. His argument falls down, however, for, as Hill notes, the small 'canons' Vayssiere refers to were mere signal guns. The missionaries possessed nothing but hunting rifles.

⁴⁵ Giovanni Beltrame (1824-1906), Italian priest and linguist, who made a considerable contribution to Dinka linguistics, translation and ethnography.

⁴⁶ Toniolo & Hill 12.

In 1858 Knoblecher died at Naples, age 38. Entrusted with authority, Kirchner and the new recruits sailed for Holy Cross where they found Lanz mourning the death of Fr Mozgan. Continuing to Gondokoro Kirchner found Ueberbacher dead. Again at Holy Cross, he met missionaries mourning Oliboni. Young Daniel Comboni, age 21, was among those deeply moved by the dying man's injunction to,

Go on with the work you have begun, and if it should happen that only one of you be left, let him not lose confidence or withdraw.⁴⁷

Though ill, Comboni endured 11 months at Holy Cross, his early writings revealing the discomfort of a rural Italian among those he described as "tigers," their lives marked by "barbarity."⁴⁸ On an early encounter with the Shilluk he perceived them as "dissembling, cruel and rapacious, exhibiting the greatest brutishness that human beings can come to without religion and civilisation." Nevertheless, he struggled toward objectivity:

I see that I find myself in a world very different from that of Europe. I will be saying little when I state that this people, the savages with whom I have to deal, are ignorant, unfeeling, rude whatever you wish. There is little difference between them and beasts. But it seems to me that the reports of travellers of Africa are exaggerated. It is true that these savages kill, and are cruel towards whites, but only when they are provoked.⁴⁹

The Europeans set to work, first constructing dwellings for themselves for "the five of us had been installed in one small hut, which had until then lodged the cows."⁵⁰ Led by Lanz they built a thatched church 22 meters long and twelve meters high. They made notes on Dinka language from which Beltrame produced a Dinka grammar and an Italian-dictionary of about 2,000 words.⁵¹ Lanz set to translating a

⁴⁷ Aldo Gilli, *Daniel Comboni, the Man and His Message*, 2nd ed (1980).

⁴⁸ Lozano 41, citing *Scritti* 77, letter to his parents, 1/18/1858.

⁴⁹ Lozano 41, citing *Scritti* 92, letter to his father, 3/5/1858.

⁵⁰ Comboni in Toniolo & Hill 14.

⁵¹ In collaboration with J C Mitterutzner Beltrame published "Grammatica della lingua Denca," *The Bulletin of the Italian Geographical Society* (Florence: 1869). In 1859 Beltrame wrote, "The modest results of my work on this language consist of a dictionary of 2,692 words from Italian into Dinka and of 2,212 words from Dinka into Italian, the latter accented and with illustrated examples; Exercises and Dialogues, on the habits of the Cic, and General rules of Grammar. With this work, carried out over a period of two years, I have tried to organise the Dinka language as spoken by so many tribes." Quoted in Toniolo Hill 136.

Latin catechism of some 300 pages.⁵² Soon a school offered literacy to the "unlettered and brutalized savages who live in the most abominable and degrading fetishism." From Holy Cross Comboni wrote optimistically:

The whole was the fruit of the common labour of Lanz, Melotto, Beltrame and myself. . . . We have explored the country of the Dinka, where we have investigated their habits, customs and beliefs. In a short time these regions will yield to Christianity, if the ministry can be continued. The foot of the trees are our pulpit, which is always surrounded by chiefs and naked Africans armed with spears. They listen to God's word with great eagerness.⁵³

These hopeful words contrast with the more solemn evaluation of Matthaus Kirchner at the time of Knoblecher's death in 1858. He observed that the real fruits of the Mission:

. . . were, indeed, meagre, but, nevertheless, proportionate to the moral level of that barbaric people and to the number of missionaries which continually diminished because of the murderous climate."⁵⁴

Despite the struggle for survival, their extended absences and frequent illness, a wealth of geographical, linguistic and ethnographic records were compiled during ten years at Holy Cross. Missionary journals, notably those of Beltrame and Kaufmann, leave extensive observations of the Dinka which could only be gained through intimate contact.⁵⁵ Dinka beliefs and behaviour at times seemed paradoxical, and challenge Catholic Christian assumptions.⁵⁶

Kaufmann found the Dinka "most handsome among the Negroes of the White Nile," their looks "milder than those of other tribes." Their warriors, "tall, agile, slim, heads adorned with ostrich-feathers, and equipped with bows and spears--present a

⁵² The handwritten Latin-Dinka manuscript in parallel columns is kept at the Comboni Archives, Rome.

⁵³ Toniolo & Hill 14.

⁵⁴ McEwan 57, ff 140, citing APF, SC, Kirchner to Barnabo, *Africa Centralis*, 8.6.1858.

⁵⁵ Beltrame, (1824-1906) went to Holy Cross in 1857 and published *Di un viaggio sul Fiume Bianco*, Verona 1861, "Brevi cenni sui Denca e sulla loro origine" in *Rivista Orientale*, VIII, (1867) 791-806; "Le stagioni presso i Denca e loro denominazioni" in *Boll. Soc. Geogr. Ital.* (1868) 294-298. Kaufmann was at Gondokoro and Holy Cross between 1856 and 1860, published *Das Gebeit des Weissen Flusses und dessen Bewohner*, (1861), 55-140.

⁵⁶ Kaufmann, Toniolo & Hill 150.

handsome sight." Yet their refusal to wear clothes seemed immoral.⁵⁷ When offered clothes Dinka men retorted by asking if the Europeans thought them to be women. Not for 30 cows, declared one chief, would he wear clothes. Young Comboni responded with a blend of pity and revulsion, perceiving the Africans as among the,

. . . most abandoned: completely naked men and women who must be clothed before they are baptized, whole peoples who must be educated, and a hundred million unbelievers who must be won for Jesus Christ.⁵⁸

Kaufmann observed that,

With such poverty, squandering of the harvest, extravagance and complete nakedness, which extends to unmarried girls of twenty, it is little wonder that there is not much morality to be found here. They live among the cattle, are like the cattle, and think like the cattle. Food, women, cows and dances, these are the sole topics of conversations.⁵⁹

Having described what seemed bestial existence and declared that the Dinka have "no idea of modesty," Kaufmann later came to respect the self-control which typified Dinka sexual behaviour:

They . . . are nevertheless reserved in the presence of strangers. After living among them for three years, I must say that I never witnessed or heard anything immoral, although there were many groups of young boys and girls. Very rarely does one hear that a girl has been seduced.⁶⁰

The Europeans observed the "sublime happiness" the Dinka experienced in relation to their cattle, a preoccupation which seemed to surpass their spiritual values.

Kaufmann calculated that the Dinka,

. . . would be rich if they had their goods in Europe. Their entire wealth consists of cattle and this is indeed the only thing these African people think of in terms of riches. They know no other wealth; other goods are considered to be of secondary and transitory importance. The wealth of cattle presents something stable to them.⁶¹

Yet, the refusal of the Dinka to sell or slaughter their cattle, even in times of famine, was difficult to comprehend. Though Dinka men cared scrupulously for their herds,

⁵⁷ Kaufmann, Toniolo & Hill 153-4.

⁵⁸ Chiochetta, *Papers* 210, to Bishop Joseph Girardin, 5/3/1877. Lozano 37 citing *Scritti* 2023.

⁵⁹ Kaufmann, Toniolo & Hill 158.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 159.

they acted as if they were above manual labour and seemed quite lazy.⁶² Only small plots of land were cultivated though potential for high yields appeared to be good. What food the Dinka possessed and were willing to part with was consumed without any apparent concern for the future. They practised what Kaufmann described as a sort of communism, showing hospitality to kinsmen and strangers alike, giving freely of all they possessed--fruit, grain, tobacco, anything apart from cattle--until nothing remained. When one man's resources were exhausted, he and his guests went to another to drain his stores. Kaufmann saw dangers in the participation of missionaries in this demanding style of generosity:

Like all Africans, they are extravagant; there is no question of thankfulness or gratitude; indeed, everyone believes he has a right and the more one gives, the more is taken and requested. If something is given, more is asked for; because he thinks that his friendship is being sought. As a friend, he considers himself to have the right to ask for more, and if we make him a present he thinks that we are afraid of him and, consequently, expects another. This is a serious obstacle to missionary work, because if we give them something, many more come begging; and if we give them nothing, the missionary is regarded as a miser with a heart of flint. For instance, many Africans bring us sheep and goats, outwardly as a sign of respect, but in reality to cultivate our friendship. Obviously, we could not accept such gifts, as with such friends our goods would become common property.⁶³

As the trust of the Dinka grew, so did expectations which the Europeans found intrusive. Among the Nilotes friendship implied absorption of the newcomer into their society, and thus a high degree of reciprocity. Vayssiere described his discomfort with new liaisons among the Dinka:

Several notables of the district make themselves at home in our boat where they are ensconced until evening. . . . These men repose on our beds and as good as turn us out of our cabins. But behind all this is possibly a good intention in what they do, and by the evening we are the best of friends in the world.⁶⁴

The defining of ownership and the manner of distribution was a continual challenge at Holy Cross. How were missionaries to respond when the Dinka, possessing

⁶² Kaufmann translated a cattle owner as saying, "Am I a slave? Being the owner of so many cows, it would be shameful for me to work. I am powerful! Therefore, that gives me the right to do nothing." Kaufmann in Toniolo & Hill 155.

⁶³ Kaufmann, Toniolo & Hill 157.

⁶⁴ Vayssiere, Santi & Hill 147.

plentiful herds of livestock, begged for food from the Mission's limited stores? Missionaries did not doubt that their ministries should include care for the poor and the hungry. Indeed, Kaufmann and his colleagues believed that care for physical needs was essential to spiritual ministry:

The native must be helped materially if he is to be rescued from his poverty and hunger, because it is useless to describe the kingdom of God to hunger-stricken people: words alone cannot abate those pangs. Only when the African has been restored to a fit state can it be hoped that they will aspire to something higher which, for the moment, does not even enter his mind.⁶⁵

The missionaries provided maize and sesame seeds for cultivation and introduced a fast-growing strain of *dhura*. They attempted to teach more productive methods of agriculture to those willing, like the Thain Dinka, to adapt, and expected that formal education would lead to more stable livelihood. Dinka laziness and extravagance aside, Kaufmann found their patient endurance admirable:

This great tribe is neither wild nor cruel by nature, but rather meek and patient in the face of poverty. We were able to observe this among the Cic in the vicinity of the Mission. Throughout the whole of last year the poor fishermen, who live near the Mission's garden, although faced with the greatest poverty, did not steal a single thing.⁶⁶

Throughout their stay the missionaries tried to understand the existing religious conceptions of the Dinka. In 1854 Vayssiere noted that,

The priests of the Mission claim to have discovered at last the basis of the religion of the local people. All their beliefs are limited to references to two principal elements one of whom inhabits the sky and the other the centre of the earth.⁶⁷

While trying to grasp the Dinka's intangible religious assumptions the missionaries found it more difficult to comprehend the spiritual and social significance of cattle. Lamenting the reluctance of the Ciec Dinka to slaughter their cattle Kaufmann wrote:

Their usefulness as regards meat is also limited because the cows are held as sacred, and may not be killed. They are allowed to live until they die of old-age or illness. . . . Oxen are killed, but only for ceremonial occasions such as the

⁶⁵ Kaufmann, Toniolo & Hill 157.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 154-5.

⁶⁷ Vayssiere, Santi & Hill 150.

concluding of a peace, wedding feasts, funeral feasts, and in cases of epidemics among men or animals.⁶⁸

Like many of his missionary successors, Kaufmann seemed unable to grasp the pervasive spiritual reality which the Dinka affirmed through blood sacrifice: "The Africans are quite indifferent to anything supernatural. Their idea of sublime happiness is to own a lot of cows."⁶⁹

He nevertheless described Dinka beliefs in invisible spirits, some of which abide with God and are called *adjok*, and bad spirits, the *Djvok* [sic.], "who live on the earth and cause evil for mankind." No missionary seems to have conceived of parallels between Dinka sacrifice and Jewish sacrificial traditions of the Old Testament. Certainly Kaufmann was unable to suggest any link between communal participation in blood sacrifice and the imagery of the Christian Eucharist. Describing the sacrifice of an ox to *jok*, he derided the efficacy of an offering in which the *jok* receives only "the smell of the sacrifice" while most of the meat is consumed by the participants. In his understanding, Dinka sacrifice is concerned solely with the propitiation of evil spirits.

... they know of God, and call him Den-Did. They also know that he was the Creator of everything. But as God is good, and can only be good; they take no notice of Him and do not fear Him. They maintain that evil can only come from the devil, and fear him greatly. Whenever, any misfortune occurs, the devil is responsible. They believe that everything ends with death; they do not believe in the immortality of the soul.⁷⁰

The lack of a conception of an afterlife was of abiding concern to the missionaries. To illustrate the futility of the Dinka with regard to eternity Kaufmann recorded a translation of a Ciec song:

*The day that God created all things,
He created the sun;
The sun rises, sets and returns again;
He created the moon;
The moon rises, sets and returns again;
He created the stars;*

⁶⁸ Kaufmann, Toniolo & Hill 159-60.

⁶⁹ Kaufmann writing on Dinka *Religious Conceptions*, Toniolo & Hill 170.

⁷⁰ Toniolo & Hill 170.

*The stars rise and set and return again;
He created men;
Men are born, are buried and never return.*⁷¹

Since the greatest benefit of the Catholic faith was assurance of eternal life and the Dinka had no conception of life after death nor of their need for it, Kaufmann foresaw that evangelisation would be an arduous process:

... according to native belief, man will never come back again, and, as far as he is concerned everything ends with death. It can be seen from this how difficult it is to convert them. They believe only what they can actually see and feel. The Mission will consequently be faced with a long, hard task, and many years will have to elapse before they can be able to have much faith in the preachings of the missionaries.⁷²

Catholic missionaries, like the Protestants after them, reflected on Dinka myths as well as song in their efforts to understand religious conceptions. Fastening upon a narrative, versions of which are found across Dinkaland, Kaufmann believed he had come across, "something which helps the missionaries to combine their preachings with native beliefs":

"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. There was much dancing and beer and everybody was happy in Paradise. As time went on, however, the rope broke and now no one can climb to Paradise again, and it remains closed to all men." (the Cic say: 'A little bluebird pecked away at the rope and snapped it.')

⁷³

This myth provided hope that, since the Dinka believed there had been an original state of 'paradise,' they had some basis for apprehending the Christian concept of heaven, attainable through Christ. Nevertheless, they were, in Kaufmann's perception, sadly deficient in most areas of religious knowledge. Apparently oblivious to fundamental aspects of Dinka religion he wrote that, "They know of no

⁷¹ Kaufmann also includes his transcription of the original Dinka. Toniolo & Hill 170.

⁷² Toniolo & Hill 171.

⁷³ Ibid. Versions of this myth were 'discovered' by CMS missionaries 50 years later and used evangelistically among the Bor Dinka. For alternative versions from northern and western Dinka see Lienhardt, *Divinity and Experience* 33-34.

prayer to God or to Jok. They observe no feast days, whether national or religious. To them every day is the same."⁷⁴

The Europeans were not the only ones appalled by ignorance of spiritual realities. When Fr Mozgan, founder of Holy Cross, slaughtered a calf to provide meat for the mission, he was "sharply rebuked" by Dinka who compared him with "the hyenas, eating cows' flesh."⁷⁵ Dinka observers were more horrified when Europeans killed large snakes like the python, in one case hanging up the writhing carcass for skinning. Among most Dinka the python is respected, and in some regions venerated as an emblem of divinity. Far from harming them, pythons may be the recipients of sacrifice.⁷⁶ If the missionaries were revolted by the spiritual blindness and vulgarity of the Dinka, the feeling was reciprocal. It is not known to what extent Christian concepts were conveyed, but certainly few adults were willing to be baptised.

When it appeared that the missionaries would finally evacuate Holy Cross, few of their innovations had taken root, apart from a few new crops and agricultural techniques they had introduced. Even these were limited to the peripheral Moiny Thain, derided by most Dinka for their lack of cattle. Dependent on fishing and cultivation, some had built huts near the mission gardens and imbibed new skills. Kaufmann recalled how,

... the moment had come for us to leave them, and on hearing this they were very sad. They tried to persuade us to remain with them and brought sheep and goats as gifts. They were beginning to realize why we had come amongst them, whereas at first they had taken us for traders. In short, the fruits of the Mission were beginning to appear. While we cannot say that we achieved much we can no longer say that it is impossible to civilise these peoples. But the supreme grace is not yet visibly spread among the Africans, which is urgently required if they are to change from pagans to good Christians.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Toniolo & Hill 172-3.

⁷⁵ A Kaufmann in Toniolo & Hill 160.

⁷⁶ Kaufmann, Toniolo & Hill 171. Vayssiere, Santi & Hill 149. Further mention of the python occurs in song DJ49, Chapter V; see accompanying note.

⁷⁷ Toniolo & Hill 178.

With the missionaries in poor health it was decided to abandon Holy Cross, "a mission too unhealthy and, moreover, too close to the trading stations." While most foreigners denigrated the riverain Dinka for their brutality and deceit, the missionaries blamed rapidly degenerating moral standards upon the merchants. Samuel Baker wrote disparagingly of the Dinka as he described Morlang's work at Holy Cross:

He had worked with much zeal for many years, but the natives were utterly impractical people, lying and deceitful to a superlative degree. The more they receive the more they desire. . . . It is a pitiable sight to witness the self-sacrifice that many noble men have made in these frightful countries without any good result.⁷⁸

Contradicting such evaluations Kaufmann described the integrity and trustworthiness of the Thain Dinka, continuing, "This must also have been the case with the Bor, Tuic and Aliab, before becoming embittered against the white men through the underhand dealings of the merchants who abducted men and beasts from them."⁷⁹ Increasingly, during the decade the missionaries inhabited their Upper Nile stations, the traders encroached on mission property, stole children, and raided property. Comboni likewise saw the foreigners as a corrupting influence which forced withdrawal to Kordofan:

During the first period of the Vicariate the Africans of the White Nile were found to have been corrupted by the traders . . . I therefore thought it best to avail myself of the inland routes and establish a mission between the White Nile and the Niger. It seemed to me that the inland regions were in less danger of corruption.⁸⁰

When J H Speke visited Morlang and his Franciscan companions at Holy Cross during the early 1860s his evaluation also put the onus upon the merchants:

The missionaries never had occasion to complain of these Africans, and to this day they would doubtless have been kindly inclined towards Europeans, had the White Nile traders not brought the devil amongst them. . . . The shell of the brick church at Gondokoro and the cross on the top of a native-built hut in Kich, are all

⁷⁸ Samuel Baker quoted by Toniolo & Hill 17.

⁷⁹ Kaufmann in Toniolo & Hill 154-5.

⁸⁰ Chiocchetta, *Papers* 1. Lozano 14.

that will remain to bear testimony to these Christian exertions to improve the condition of these heathens.⁸¹

Beltrame, Melotto, and Comboni left Holy Cross in January, 1859. En route to Khartoum they sailed up the Sobat River trying unsuccessfully to locate a site for a new station. The following month Beltrame and Melotto selected a location in the region of the Abialang Dinka. Back in Khartoum, April saw the deaths of Melotto and the chief carpenter, Kleinheinz. Comboni returned to Italy with the Ferrarese trader, Angelo Castelbolognese, who told him of his travels to the Bahr el Ghazal. Confirming that the Upper Nile stations must be closed Kirchner sent Beltrame, "to recall the missionaries, to take with them such of the black pupils as prudence would suggest, and to withdraw all furniture that could be of any use in the new house at el Shallal."⁸²

Arriving at Holy Cross Beltrame ordered preparations for evacuation and continued with Lanz to Gondokoro where Morlang had remained alone. The withdrawal from the stations was traumatic. At Gondokoro the Bari rushed into the buildings to take for themselves what properties remained. At Holy Cross the Dinka wept over the departure of the missionaries reportedly saying:

If you abandon us, who will defend us from the Danagla armed men, when they come to take away our children? You have helped our poor and cared for our sick; who will console and cure us?⁸³

Despite such sentiments, most children who had attended the schools at Holy Cross and Gondokoro were afraid to accompany the foreigners and disappeared as time for departure approached. Nevertheless, six girls and four boys sailed with the missionaries who planned to teach them at a new school at el Shallal.⁸⁴ In Khartoum Lanz died within a few days of their arrival in March, 1860.

⁸¹ Toniolo & Hill 17 citing J H Speke, *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (1863) 600.

⁸² 'Shallal el Nil' was opposite the Isle of Philae near Assuan, Egypt. Toniolo & Hill 15.

⁸³ Toniolo & Hill 16.

⁸⁴ Morlang lists the boys as Hayaya, Kaciual, Aman, and Luigi; the girls as Bagara, Zenab, Adut, Magoi, Ceri. By their names, it would appear that five of these were Dinka. Francesco Morlang,

At Propaganda Fide the death of so many young missionaries increased doubts about the wisdom of maintaining the Mission. In Khartoum the new Pro-Vicar, Fr Josef Gostner died, age 36. Between 1851 and 1858 22 missionaries had died, with several repatriated because of poor health. The Prefect of Propaganda Fide determined that, "After so many sacrifices we shall have to give up this mission."⁸⁵ A plea for perseverance came from Professor Mitterutzner who had supported the Mission financially and helped produce the first Dinka and Bari grammars.⁸⁶ Closure was again delayed and a reluctant Fr Matthias Kirchner was appointed the Mission's fifth Pro-Vicar.

At the end of 1860 Kirchner asked Frs Morlang, Kofler and the Franciscan, Fr Johannes de Dukla Reinhaller, to maintain the White Nile stations until the Mission's future was clarified by Propaganda Fide. At Holy Cross Kofler soon died, his companions returning in June 1861. The Upper Nile posts were closed and Frs Beltrame, Kaufmann and Morlang were posted to el Shallal.⁸⁷

There appeared few alternatives for the mission's survival unless a religious order assumed responsibility. Reinhaller was appointed new Pro Vicar and promptly undertook an ill conceived effort to reinvigorate the Mission under Jesuite administration. Of the 51 workers he recruited 22 were dead within months. As survivors retreated to Europe, the Austrian vice-consul, offered his bleak and uninformed view:

I consider it a matter of conscience to recommend the urgent withdrawal of the Mission, which has no results to show, not a single Christian for 12 years of activity, in order not to sacrifice any further lives.⁸⁸

Missione in Africa Centrale, Diario 1855-1863, (1973) 239. McEwan 69-70. Tenth Report of the Society of Mary 3.

⁸⁵ Toniolo & Hill 14.

⁸⁶ Johann C J Mitterutzner (1818-) published *Die Dinka-Sprache* (Brixen, 1866). His assistant at Brixen and Verona during 1864-5 was Anton Kaciual (Kakwal), a Dinka Gok boy baptised by Mosgen in 1855, one of ten children taken to Khartoum in 1860 where he attended the mission school. Morlang, *Missione* 239n, 281n, 299. Hill, *Dictionary* 195.

⁸⁷ McEwan 70. Schmid 190.

⁸⁸ Natterer's report, 22 May 1865, McEwan 72.

Again, the end of the Mission seemed imminent and it was entrusted to the care of the Vicar Apostolic of Egypt. Leaving el Shallal Morlang returned again to Holy Cross where he and two Franciscans persevered with their Dinka flock against the increasing brutality of the merchants until March, 1863. When the White Nile stations and el Shallal were finally closed, Khartoum, in the care of two Franciscans, was the only station remaining.

In its first 15 years, 1847 to 1862, the Apostolic Vicariate of Central Africa lost 46 missionaries and lay assistants, many of whom were young and well educated. Out of the 21 priests and 44 lay people who went to Sudan only two priests and 25 lay helpers survived. Recording these losses, the annals of Propaganda Fide concluded, "each mission station of the Vicariate is marked by several graves, and more tombs mark the road from el Shallal to Gondokoro. The day will come when life will arise from these graves."⁸⁹

Among Dinka of the Upper Nile the sacrifice of European lives and the Church's financial investment had little residual impact.⁹⁰ While the foreigners had been openly received as men of spiritual authority, their actions had often appeared contradictory or repugnant. The friendship, nurture and advocacy of the missionaries had been limited to the environs of Holy Cross where perhaps a dozen Dinka had been baptised.⁹¹ While the few converts they left behind did not maintain a church, it was, nevertheless, noted, some three decades later, that several Dinka bore Christian names and still recalled Bible stories they were told. For most Dinka who encountered them, the missionaries were hardly distinguishable from the waves of

⁸⁹ Those who survived did so largely because of their early retreat to Europe. McEwan 70, 79.

⁹⁰ William F Butler described Charles Gordon's 1874 voyage past the site of Holy Cross where 15 missionary priests "were lying buried under the banana trees, whose long leaves were now the sole relic of the mission." *Charles George Gordon*, (1889) 9-100.

⁹¹ This, out of a total of some 100 baptisms, according to McEwan, 70.

foreigners who traumatised their land and brought death to their people in numbers that, unlike the missionaries', would never be recorded.

D. Education of African youth in Europe

1. A "work of stupendous charity"

Few accounts survive of the lives of individual Dinka converted during the 19th Century. Those which do are primarily those who, when young, assisted the missionaries or who were educated in Europe. The institutions and ideas that shaped their lives are the subject of this and the last sections of this chapter.

As emissaries of the Vicariate of Central Africa penetrated the interior of *Nigrizia*, complementary clusters of young Africans flowed toward Europe. Even before the founding of the Mission to Central Africa, Europeans, convinced of the evils of slavery, sought to ransom African children, transport them to Europe and provide them with Christian education in what was assumed to be a secure European environment. Not unlike Muslims in Khartoum, well intentioned Catholics believed that the cause of Africa was best served when Black children were given opportunity to imbibe the precepts of true religion in the context of civilised culture. Like his successors Pro Vicar Knoblecher took Sudanese children on his return journeys to Europe.⁹² With the suppression of slavery in Khartoum, considerable numbers of African youngsters were liberated, but remained largely disenfranchised. The Mission, lacking facilities and personnel, could absorb only a few of their number.

To raise funds for the ransom and transport of young slaves Fr Nicholas Olivieri founded "Opera del Riscatto," having himself made numerous journeys to Africa and ransomed some 810 girls and an undetermined number of boys. Across Italy, France and Germany, religious societies were petitioned to receive, support and

⁹² In 1856 Knoblechar also sent eight youths to Europe for theological training.

educate African children.⁹³ However, with the abolition of slavery under the Treaty of Paris in 1856 suspicions proliferated concerning European collusion in slave traffic, travel restrictions were tightened, and efforts like Olivieri's were increasingly restricted.⁹⁴

In Europe this "work of stupendous charity," as Comboni later described it, also proved problematic. Many children, thrust into a strange climate and culture, became ill soon after arrival and an inordinate number died, their illness often described as cholera.⁹⁵

The future of African children who survived to be educated and enculturated in Europe was also of concern. In 1846 Olivieri petitioned missionary institutes to accept African students believing such training could equip them to return to their countries as fellow-labourers with European missionaries. As it became apparent that Europeans could not survive in the African interior such notions found growing appeal.⁹⁶ To this end Fr da Casoria founded the Institute for African Negroes in Naples and Nicholas Mazza opened two colleges for Africans as part of his Institute at Verona.⁹⁷

In 1859 Daniel Comboni, age 28, returned to Italy from Holy Cross. The first task he was assigned after his recuperation was the education of African boys at the

⁹³ Olivieri (d 1864), native of Genoa, was famed for his sanctity. The majority of children taken to Europe were girls destined for female convents. Similar abolitionist organisations emerged with, "Verein zur Unterstützung der armen Negerkinder," the "Societas ad redimendos et educandos Nigrorum infantes" and later the "Cologne Society." Chiochetta, *Papers* 75. McEwan 59 citing Report from Schreiner in Alexandria, 5.9.1859, HHS5A, aR, F27-8.

⁹⁴ In succession Olivieri sought protection from Sardinian, Neapolitan and Austrian authorities, each of which withdrew their support. McEwan 59-60.

⁹⁵ Typical were two girls, Rosina, age 14, from Jada in Ethiopia and Bachita, age 12, from Khartoum, whom Olivieri brought to Tyrol after a year of preparatory correspondence. They were received in the Dominican Convent of St. Peter at Bludenz in 1856 but by 1858 both had died. Accounts of the girls are in the Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, McEwan 59-60.

⁹⁶ In Verona Fr Nicholas Mazza was asked to receive a number of Africans into his girls school. By 1848 he sought permission to open another school especially for such girls. In 1854 Olivieri applied to Fr Ludovic da Casoria regarding the institution at Palma near Naples. Students were also sent to institutions in Bailleul, Vienna, Cologne, Paris and Lyons. Lozano 3.

⁹⁷ McEwan 53 citing Mitterutzner to Mazza, 4.6.1856.

Mazza Institute of Verona. The following year Mazza sent him to Aden to ransom a group of young slaves and escort them to Verona, a task requiring all Comboni's diplomatic skills. On return he became Vice-Rector of the African colleges where for three years he oversaw the education of African students.⁹⁸

Among those from Sudan were several young men considered suitable for training for holy orders at a time when genuine theological education was inconceivable outside Europe.⁹⁹ Earliest among Sudanese who studied in Italy was Bonaventura Habashi. Of Coptic origins, he was priested in 1865, and followed by a succession of others.¹⁰⁰ In 1876 Comboni brought two young men from Sudan, Arthur Morsal and Daniel Sorur Farim Deng, whom he encouraged in their studies at the prestigious Urban College of Propaganda Fide in Rome.

While there were some notable exceptions, it was only a small minority of African graduates, male or female, who fulfilled the expectations placed upon them by Europeans. Most experienced difficulties of adjustment either in Europe or upon return to Africa.¹⁰¹ Amidst conflicts of culture and faith many lost interest in Christianity and the Church. In 1864, Comboni lamented that,

. . . in Europe Africans cannot receive a complete Catholic education which enables them subsequently to be dependable, in body and soul, in promoting in their native land the propagation of the faith. This is because either they cannot live in Europe, or by the time they return to Africa, they have become unsuitable for the continent because of the European habits which have become almost second nature to them, habits which become repugnant and harmful in the conditions of African life. . .¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Comboni faced considerable difficulties getting his charges past Egyptian authorities. Lozano xviii, 8. Gilli 19.

⁹⁹ Lozano 62. Schmid 184.

¹⁰⁰ Habashi (born about 1838), from Khartoum, attended mission school; studied in Verona and Naples, ministered and died in Palestine. Louis Philip Farag, ransomed slave possibly from Darfur, ordained about 1868, ministered and died in Naples, 1898. Pius Joseph Hadrian, purchased by Olivieri, age 6 or 7, taken to Italy; priested 1872; died in el Obeid, 1873. V. Dellagiacomia, *Sudanese Catholic Clergy*, 3rd ed. (1988).

¹⁰¹ Exemplifying the problems of Sudanese seminarians were two of Daniel's peers. Arthur Morsal withdrew from religious training while John Farag became mentally ill and died in hospital at Verona. *La Nigrizia* V (1887) 116ff, especially 123. McEwan 53.

¹⁰² This experience was further confirmed by letter to Propaganda Fide from the President of the "Marien verein," Frederick Hurther (July 26, 1858) and by conversation in Cairo with the Pro-Vicar,

Such deterrents aside, there remained that small number who, having imbibed European culture and education, and aware of the contradictions of European Christianity, determined to serve their people as Christians.

2. Caterina Zenab, "a highly skilled missionary"

Exemplary among girls who studied at Verona was the Ciec Dinka, Caterina Zenab, who, initially at least, fulfilled the hopes of European Catholics. Among the hundreds of children educated in Europe during the 19th century she is the only Dinka known to have fulfilled Comboni's vision for the evangelisation of 'Africa by Africans.' Probably the first Dinka evangelist, he described her in 1873 as *una gran missionaria abilissima* (a highly skilled missionary).¹⁰³

Born about 1848, the daughter of Manyan e Agol, chief of the Ciec village of Gog near Holy Cross, she was one of ten children who accompanied the missionaries as they evacuated to el Shallal in 1860.¹⁰⁴ The same year Zenab was baptised and received the name Caterina. An able linguist, she assisted Fr Beltrame in Cairo with the compilation of a Dinka grammar and dictionary, and translation of "a bulky catechism containing the matter of dogma and Catholic morals."¹⁰⁵

In 1862 Caterina was sent to study in Verona where she was confirmed. Fluent in Arabic, Italian and Dinka, she later returned to Cairo where she served in the newly formed Missionary Institutes. Again in Khartoum, she was specially assigned to teach and prepare baptismal candidates among her people, where she became known as an enthusiastic evangelist. In 1874 she married an Italian carpenter, Cesare Ongano, with whom she bore a daughter. She was, however,

Matthew Kirchner. Mother Javouhey, Libermann and Mazza confirmed: ". . . in Europe Africans cannot receive a complete Catholic education which enables them subsequently to be dependable, in body and soul, in promoting in their native land the propagation of the faith." Chiocchetta, *Papers* 196, 'Summary of the new Project,' 1864; in Lozano 53. Schmid 179. Comboni to Fr Mazza, 6 Jan 1861.

¹⁰³ 'Divinity Abroad' 173.

¹⁰⁴ F Morlang, *Missione* 278. Hill, *Dictionary* 232. Johnson 'Divinity Abroad' 172-4.

¹⁰⁵ 'Divinity Abroad' 173.

widowed the following year, and returned to live and work at the Mission, where her daughter died in 1878.

Two years later Caterina went to live with the Italian explorer, Ernst Marno, until his death in 1883. With him she bore a son, Jacob Ernst, baptised in Khartoum in 1881. Surviving the Mahdist siege of Khartoum with her son, she served the Mission as interpreter while it was being re-established. However, returning missionaries appear to have seen her as something of a disappointment. Her unblessed liaison with Marno raised doubts as to moral character, and rumours circulated that she was among those who had renounced their faith under pressure from the Mahdists. She finally withdrew from formal Christian work, and lived on a grant provided her by the Egyptian Government as Marno's widow, until her death in 1921.¹⁰⁶

Little more is known of Caterina, her early motivations for leaving her people, or the Christian themes that inspired her ministry. Though she was never a slave, she witnessed the disruption of life on the Upper Nile. Teaching and evangelising among the sizeable immigrant and slave communities in Cairo, Khartoum and Omdurman, we may assume that imagery of the Church as refuge and Christ as suffering Saviour figured prominently.

An intelligent, multi-lingual woman who combined the influences of several cultures, Caterina was also aware of the contradictions of European Christianity. Here she bears similarities with later Dinka converts who, having grown up in the rarefied environment of mission schools, returned to their own peoples to confront conflicting expectations surrounding culture, race and faith. Certainly, her life reveals deficiencies in the "work of stupendous charity."

¹⁰⁶ Even C Gordon denounced her as a 'bad lot.' 'Divinity Abroad' 173, citing Richard Hill, *Gordon: Yet Another Assessment*, Durham: Sudan Studies Society in UK (1987) 26.

E. Concepts of liberation and Dinka conversion

This final section will examine the theology which evolved in a context where liberation from tangible slavery was closely linked with Christian conversion. Under consideration is the thought of Bishop Daniel Comboni and two Dinka Christians, former slaves, freed during the 19th century.

Among the relationships with Sudanese which Daniel Comboni developed during his early years, it appears that those with the Dinka were particularly influential in the formation of his theology and strategy for mission. His only extended experience living among an indigenous Black African people in their own territory consisted of 11 months among the Ciec Dinka.¹⁰⁷ With them his initial revulsion toward "ignorant savages" was tempered by growing compassion for "the most abandoned people in the world." In Ciec territory he first witnessed the destruction and exploitation of Sudanese peoples. Among those Sudanese Christians with whom Comboni lived and worked in Northern Sudan and in Europe the Dinka were also prominent and in several of these he glimpsed the fulfilment of his vision for a liberated, literate and Christian *Nigrizia*.¹⁰⁸

A visionary among Roman Catholic missionaries of his day, Comboni came to believe that Africans not only had the capacity for their own advancement but also possessed an identity and heritage worthy of renewal. As he developed his *Plan for the Conversion of Africa* he substituted 'regeneration' for 'conversion,' suggesting that the work of African Mission must be one of renewal, restoration, and fulfilment of something which had been severely distorted. He had come to know Africans, not as exotic "savages" but as his own kinsmen, "unfortunate brothers" as he called them,

¹⁰⁷ Comboni arrived at Holy Cross on 14 February, 1858 and departed on 14 January, 1859. Of ethnic groups mentioned in collected writings, *Scritti*, references to the Dinka groups comprise the large majority.

¹⁰⁸ Among these were Caterina Zenab, Anton Kaciuel, and most notably Daniel Deng Sorur. A Dinka catechist said to have worked as Comboni's guide and interpreter, was Peter Karala Alah. From Panaru, he was killed by hostile Dinka. Fr D Matong says his life was described in a booklet in Dinka by A Nebel (about 1966), interview, 1989.

endowed with a common human dignity.¹⁰⁹ Comboni's *Plan* envisioned communities of literate Africans, educated, skilled and self supporting. Toward this end he established two residential colleges for Africans in Cairo.¹¹⁰

Comboni's theology developed during decades when the Sudanese slave industry was at its height, but under increasing assault by those demanding abolition. Comboni employed a variety of phrases to describe the subjection of his "poor Africans," "the brutalised savages," the "souls languishing in darkness and the shadow of death."¹¹¹ Often his imagery of spiritual oppression merged with descriptions of tangible enslavement. For him divine salvation was constituted in Christ's victory over sin and death on the spiritual plane, while in concrete, tangible terms, it anticipated liberation from enslavement. As Christ identified with sinful human beings, Comboni and his missionary colleagues saw themselves identifying with the sufferings of enslaved Africans. For him the passion of Christ was being daily played out in *Nigrizia*. If such bold imagery was embraced by Comboni it was even more fundamental to young Sudanese whose conversion and baptism were virtually simultaneous with their liberation from slavery.

1. Fr Daniel Sorur Farim Deng¹¹²

Foremost among Comboni's adoptive Sudanese 'sons' was Daniel Sorur, a Dinka who entered Holy Orders in 1886, becoming the first Catholic priest from

¹⁰⁹ As Chiocchetta demonstrates, the *Piano per la regenerazione dell'Africa*, went through numerous revisions after its first 1864 version as *Disegno della Societa dei Sacri Cuori gesu e di Maria per la conversione della Nigrizia*. *Papers* 46, 87. Lozano 11, 49.

¹¹⁰ Also in 1867 Comboni began the Institute for African Missions at Verona, followed by the Institute for Missionary Sisters. In 1872 he was appointed Pro-Vicar Apostolic of Central Africa and Pope Pius entrusted the African Mission to his Institute; in 1877 he became Vicar Apostolic of Central Africa. Comboni died in 1881, mourned in Khartoum by people of every race, especially slaves and the poor. His death coincided with the dawn of the *Mahdiyya* and its persecution of the Church in Sudan.

¹¹¹ Others included were, "the most abandoned and unfortunate souls of the world," "the lost flock of Africans," "those unhappy sons of Adam," "people bowed beneath Satan's power." Chiocchetta, *Papers* 210, 106, 197, 196, 193, 101, 97.

¹¹² An alternative Italian spelling is Daniele Surur Pharim Den.

Southern Sudan.¹¹³ In 1871, when Daniel was about age 12, his village on the Bahr el 'Arab had been attacked by *jellaba* slavers and he, his widowed mother and sisters, were abducted as slaves. Mother and son were taken to El Obeid where he was purchased by a camel merchant whom he served for two years.¹¹⁴ Hearing that he was to be unjustly punished, Daniel escaped, but was uncertain where to take refuge. In his desperation he heard a voice advising him to go to "the house of the white Christians," a terrifying option given the rumours that they were cannibals. At the Mission compound he met Daniel Comboni who asked who had sent him. 'God,' came the answer.¹¹⁵ Though his former master made repeated attempts to retrieve the lad, neither Comboni nor Daniel acquiesced.

After catechetical training Daniel was baptised in 1874, and attended school in Khartoum. Observing his gifts, Bishop Comboni sent him to study at Verona, followed by seminary at the Urban University of Propaganda Fide in Rome, 1877-83.¹¹⁶ After a brief period in Cairo he attended the Jesuit University in Beirut, 1883-86, where he also taught French and Italian. On his return to Egypt Daniel was assigned to instruct African men at the Mission Institute. In Cairo his ordination was greeted with city-wide celebration:

For you must know that a black man had never before been ordained priest in Cairo--I was the first. When so many Catholics in that great city got wind of the event they were filled with pleasure and joy. This was why so many people from outside, both religious and common citizens, attended the ceremony. The Blacks also came forward--to see one of their own made priest--they were half mad with joy.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ See note 106 above relating to Bonaventure Habashi.

¹¹⁴ The region near the border between Bahr el Ghazal and Kordufan had been increasingly exploited by Baqqara and *jellaba* slavers. Daniel's village had been attacked three times, his people having once defeated their attackers. 'Un Nero della nostra Missione fatto Sacerdote', *Nigrizia* V (1887) 116-17.

¹¹⁵ Both Daniel Sorur and Salim Wilson had heard rumours of European cannibalism. *Nigrizia* V (1887) 119, Wilson, *Jehovah* 40.

¹¹⁶ During this time Comboni maintained close contact, offering support and guidance. Chiocchetta, *Papers* 81, citing *Scritture riferite nei Congressi dell'Africa Centrale*, VII, fol. 1409. .

¹¹⁷ *Nigrizia* V (1887) 123.

The writings of Daniel Sorur reveal a man deeply committed to his Catholic faith and articulate in the religious idioms of his day. Having studied in several countries and with fluency in Italian, French, Latin and Arabic, he must have adapted quite readily to new cultural environments.

The value he placed on his own identity as an African is more difficult to assess. His *Memories* of the Dinka, published in 1887, appear stilted, void of subjectivity or commitment. Descriptions of religious rites are vague and apparently inaccurate. A section on the 'sacred cow' (*La vacca sacra*) says that the cow is "among the objects worshipped." Interjecting a distinctly Christian concept he writes 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*)."¹¹⁸ Daniel several times acknowledged that he did not remember certain details, a factor which might be attributed to the early age at which he was abducted. One wonders, however, to what degree his recollections as well as respect for his culture of origin, had been repressed after years in a European environment.

In contrast with his *Memories* is a document emerging from Daniel's European fund raising tour for the Mission to Central Africa. Written between 1889-91 when the *Mahdiyya* was sweeping Sudan and destroying both Mission and Church, the tenor of *Le Pene dei Negri Schiavi in Africa* is impassioned and specific.¹¹⁹ 'Our perpetual enslavement' (chapter I) briefly surveys black slavery from Greece to the Americas, asserting that, wherever Christ's cross and the Catholic church have gone, Black people and white have been seen as equals and slavery has been abolished.

¹¹⁸ The article was written at the invitation of an editor, who asks, "that the reader will be indulgent towards any blemish he might find here considering the writer is an African and from central Africa." Remarkably, the article makes only one passing reference to divinity. 'Memorie scritte dal R. P. Daniele Sorur Pharim Den,' *Nigrizia* V, (1887) 146-52. An English translation appears in Toniolo & Hill 196-203.

¹¹⁹ Daniele Surur Pharim Deng, *Le Pene dei Negri Schiavi in Africa* [c. 1891], in *Euntes Docete* XVII (1964) 51-95. 'The Distress of Black Slaves in Africa' consists of 18 brief chapters.

Daniel drew upon his own experience to vividly describe the dehumanisation of Black slaves, their abduction, separation from families, inadequate food, forced labour, killing, burial, and "utter abandonment." In "The double death" (chapter X) he lamented those who not only die in physical misery after a wretched life, but then, prohibited from embracing the Christian gospel, are cast into hell fire. Never were they allowed to know Christ, to confess, or enter the Church. For Daniel the damnation of these souls is embodied, first, in physical bondage and, secondly, in forced conversion to Islam. While Daniel's subtext seems to challenge the lethargy, duplicity and racism of Western Christendom, his plea is "for the sake of everything you hold dear in the world, have compassion, pray, help and give donations."¹²⁰

Le Pene suggests that the basis of Daniel's identity lay not in his Dinka childhood, but in his experience as a liberated, converted slave. His alienation from his society of origin may be linked not only to his enculturation in Europe but to the fact that his mother tried to coerce him to return to his slavemaster. When he refused she was "deeply outraged" and told him he would never see her again. Recalling that event he wrote,

. . . But the Lord smiled on me and gave me strength enough to sustain this terrible blow, though I had not yet begun to follow him. That was the moment chosen by divine providence to give me the freedom of the children of God, and my unshakeable strength was entirely his gift.-

His defiance of his mother and liberation from slavery mark his acceptance of Christ's salvation. Having severed himself from his previous life, he embraced Comboni and the Church. When Comboni died in 1881 Daniel remembered him as, "my liberator, my father--everything good, I had and would have, after God, I owed to Mons

¹²⁰ Sorur, *Schiave* 78.

¹²¹ She tried to coerce him and lied to him saying his sisters, having been carried into slavery, were waiting to see him. *Nigrizia* V (1887) 121.

Comboni."- Though substantially severed from his cultural roots Daniel's oft-repeated goal was to return to his people:

Being a priest is not enough for me, I must also be a missionary, I must save souls, I must convert my own compatriots who are very numerous. Woe is me if I do not wear myself out in this vast field and gather great sheaves to present to the Master.¹²³

For Fr Sorur the conversion of his compatriots anticipated their salvation from sin and death, from the deception of Islam and liberation from slavery. As he confronted the Church, however, one senses his distress regarding the disparity between the gospel of equality and freedom as he knew it, and the reality of its inaction and the lack of compassion among Western Christians. Daniel was never able to return to his people. Frequently ill, he died in Egypt in 1899, about 40 years of age.

2. Salim Charles Wilson

Another former slave who became an articulate spokesman among European Christians was Salim Wilson, described by his Anglican benefactor in 1882 as "the first Dinka Christian."¹²⁴ A contemporary of Daniel Sorur, Salim's life was equally transformed upon liberation.¹²⁵ In three autobiographical books Salim revealed his self understanding as a Dinka, a liberated slave, and a Christian. Like Fr Sorur he sought to publicise the plight of his people but his books, published after the advent of Condominium rule, do not convey the urgency of *Le Pene*.¹²⁶

¹²² So close was their relationship that Sorur was taken to visit Comboni's father at Limone, to attend his episcopal consecration, and to personally meet Pope Pius IX. *Nigrizia* V (1887) 122.

¹²³ *Nigrizia* V (1887) 124.

¹²⁴ As a Protestant convert prior to the advent of Protestant missions in Sudan, Salim's life is something of an anomaly in the 19th Century. Still, his autobiography provides valuable comparisons with records of Fr Sorur. C T Wilson wrote a brief article describing Salim, "The First Dinka Christian," *The Church Missionary Gleaner* (1882). I am indebted to Douglas H Johnson for his work on Salim Wilson and Caterina Zenab, 'Divinity Abroad,' *Vernacular Christianity* (1988) 172-79.

¹²⁵ Daniel was a slave for about two years, Salim for three.

¹²⁶ Salim's first book was intended for English children in the style of 'adventure stories'; later books were also intended for adults. Salim C Wilson, *I Was A Slave*, (c. 1939). '*Jehova Nissi*': *The Life Story of Hatashil-Kathish, of the Dinka Tribe, Soudan* (1901) 2nd edn.

Salim was born in 1859 as Atobhil Macar Cithiec (which he transcribed as *Hatashil Masha Kathis*), son of a Gok Dinka chief. During the 1870s Salim witnessed the destruction of his village and the death of his father at the hands of *jellaba* slavers. A clever lad, he was abducted and purchased by a succession of masters to work as a 'donkey boy' until, in 1880, he was among the slaves liberated by Romolo Gessi. However, with his homeland in desolation and kinsmen dead, the young man had no place to return to.

About 21 years of age, Salim opted to enter the service of Charles Wilson, a CMS missionary en route from Uganda. Together they travelled to England where Salim attended school and, with "the teaching of God's Holy Spirit," confessed Christian faith.¹²⁷ Baptised in 1882, he felt called to be an evangelist and attended Hume Cliff Missionary Training College in Derbyshire. When British interest was stirred during the Mahdist conflicts of 1884-85, Salim toured northern England with the superintendent of the college. Wearing a leopard skin, *jallabiyya* and turban, he exemplified a Sudanese who had been redeemed by Christ. By 1901 he had become widely known as "the black evangelist of the north."

Salim's writings recall the dignity and familial affection which distinguish the Dinka who once, "tilled the soil and hunted in a sort of earthly paradise."¹²⁹ He reflected upon the links he saw between the ancient Hebrews and the Dinka, examining their patriarchal and priestly traditions, their rites of blood sacrifice, and their recourse to a single supreme Creator. Most importantly, he wrote that both possess an "extreme faith . . . in the Supreme Being's power to help to victory and to

¹²⁷ The Holy Spirit, he spontaneously associated with *wei* which he later said the Dinka knew as "the cause of life," existing 'in the air, which we drink in or breathe.' *The Ethiopia Valley* 46, cited in 'Divinity Abroad' 176. Wilson, *Slave* 48.

¹²⁸ Salim corrected the translation of the Gospel of St Luke for the British and Foreign Bible Society, based on JC Mitterutzner's version of 1866.

¹²⁹ Such lines reveal Salim's identification with a time "before the world was spoiled." Employing imagery from the Prophet Joel he likens the Arabs to locusts who found a fertile land like 'Eden' and "left behind them a desolate wilderness." *Slave* 29, 154.

deliver [them] from danger."¹³⁰ Associating the divine beings of the two traditions Salim recalled his vision of his father:

... with uplifted hands, he cried: "O, Thou Great Eternal, Unknown Creator of Heaven and Earth. . . ." Suddenly I burst into tears once more, and while I wept I prayed fervently to the God of my Fathers, the mighty Yasth [*yath*], beseeching Him to see and to consider my affliction, and to send me relief from it. So I prayed to the only God I knew, but I believe that those prayers were wafted straight to the One True God, and that He heard them. Certainly the answer came with remarkable swiftness!¹³¹

Salim did not apparently recall Dinka conceptions of *Nhialic* nor did he explicitly assert that the 'One True God' was identical with *yath*. He did, however, affirm that this God was present to his ancestors and upon him, they ultimately relied. Unlike Sorur, memories of his Dinka upbringing are integral to Salim's apprehension of Christian theology. It was through his father's death that he understood such evangelical passages as John 3:16:

My Father had died for me. . . . he might have escaped if it had not been for me. To deliver me from slavery he braved a cruel death and perished before my eyes. Thus I saw that Christ had died for me--to deliver me from eternal death, and to rescue me from the bondage of sin.¹³²

Christ's salvation from sin and death is, like Sorur's, closely tied with Salim's deliverance from slavery. What Salim experienced of God's tangible liberation he extended to his enslaved kinsmen, who, in one passage, he compared with Christian martyrs. In the tenor of Sorur he wrote:

Poor victims of Arab cruelty! There is no peace for them by day; no rest for them by night. Life is a burden, and yet Death flees from them. "HOW LONG, Oh, Lord?" ask the souls of martyred Saints, in the Book of Revelation, as they feel that the Divine vengeance due to their Persecutor, is so long delayed.¹³³

In childhood at play Salim had imitated the sacrificial rites performed by his father. The fact that he stood in this ancestral line, possibly the son of a *beny bith*, helped determine his decision to become a Christian evangelist, proclaiming the sacrifice of

¹³⁰ *Slave* 12

¹³¹ *Slave* 186.

¹³² While Salim clearly recalled a father whom he emulated, Sorur had only a widowed mother. Separated from her Comboni became his model. *Slave* 49.

¹³³ *Jehova Nissi* 28.

Christ. Like Daniel Sorur, Salim's experience as a liberated slave contributed much to his theological understanding; both were greatly shaped by the European forms of Christianity they encountered. Nevertheless, Salim's self conception remained fundamentally Dinka. He adopted what he, on the terms of his childhood formation, found of value in the new culture and religion.

Salim's self assurance as a Dinka in an ancient line of spiritual leaders meant that he did not readily acquiesce to the subordinate role usually offered him by European Christians. During 1887-88 Salim and the evangelist, Graham Wilmot Brooke, set out on a missionary venture to the Congo, Salim hoping ultimately to find his way toward Sudan where he would minister among the Zande and Dinka. Differences seem to have arisen, in part over authority and Salim's unwillingness to take a subordinate role. Ultimately the two parted ways and each returned independently, Salim never having entered Sudan. Describing Salim, the evangelical F F Allison wrote,

I believed him to be a Christian man but he was so very full of life--& so excitable that he was not the quiet sober minded man whom I have met with in other Africans. . . He is a clever man no doubt.¹³⁴

Indeed, Salim did not perceive either himself or the Dinka to be like other Africans. He had imbibed Victorian notions of 'heathenism' with its imagery of degraded humanity, and used these terms to describe the practices of other African peoples. The anecdotes he recounts from his mission among Congolese peoples are uniformly negative. In the Dinka, however, he saw similarities with the priestly, patriarchal and monotheistic traditions of the Hebrews. Unlike Daniel Sorur who embraced Bishop Comboni as father, Salim carried his own priestly father vitally within him and in his line invoked the biblical Jehovah as divinity of the Dinka.¹³⁵

¹³⁴ D Johnson citing the letter of F F Allison, 1 Feb 1905, Bible Society Archives. For a more thorough discussion, see 'Divinity Abroad' 177-78.

¹³⁵ Salim Wilson married an English widow, lived in the English towns of Wakefield, Barnsley and Scunthorpe and died in the 1940s.

F. Conclusion

The emissaries of the Mission to Central Africa comprised but one small cluster among the influx of foreigners who surged into Sudanese territories during the 19th Century. Unwelcomed and often compromised, confronted with an oppressive climate both physically and socially, their endeavours required great sacrifice.

Missionary impact upon the Dinka was marginal. During a decade on the Upper Nile, beleaguered by merchants and slavers, they imparted little of the gospel, or of European civilisation, as they had hoped. What was intended as a message of salvation and eternal 'paradise' arrived amidst violence and enslavement. Dinka were appalled by foreigners who slaughtered sacred animals and devoured cattle reserved for sacrifice. Only among the poor and peripheral Thain Dinka did missionaries succeed in introducing a few innovations, and it was they especially who mourned the mission's closure.

Missionary education in the North brought more apparent successes, but not without qualification. As Southern children, severed from their societies, imbibed yet another overlay of alien culture, they emerged as an ambiguous class in an abrasive environment where missionary prescriptions had little enduring influence. The few who rose to prominence in missionary institutions were those who, like Daniel Sorur and Caterina Zenab, had been most isolated from Sudanese society through education in the institutes of Europe and Cairo.

For all their limitations, the missionaries had brought some benefits, primarily to the orphaned, disenfranchised, and enslaved. By the end of the century Christian converts formed a small minority of Sudanese. The most devout saw Christ as a source of security and liberation; for others the Mission was itself a form alien oppression. The writings of both Fr Daniel Sorur and Salim Wilson reveal the degree to which they saw their conversion to Christianity as virtually synonymous with

liberation from slavery. Among European Christians they tried to forge alliances for the liberation of their people which was both tangible and spiritual. The two also reveal distinct ways of relating their Dinka heritage with the precepts of Christianity.

For the vast majority of Dinka, contact with foreigners did little but confirm the superiority of ancestral religion. Nevertheless, it appears that the Father's Bible stories continued to circulate. Dinka slaves liberated and repatriated to their homelands under the Condominium may also have had some impact. Having received teaching in Northern towns from vernacular evangelists like Caterina Zenab, it is feasible that they returned South, adding biblical narratives to the existing pool of Dinka oral literature.¹³⁶ If so, this served largely to enhance confidence in the adequacy of their own heritage, further immunising them against alien evangelism. Six decades would, however, elapse after the abandonment of *Heiligenkreuz* before a second Catholic mission was founded on Dinka soil.

¹³⁶ Douglas Johnson proposed this as the source of biblical narratives among the Dinka. Missionaries used Arabic as well as vernacular languages in Khartoum. This would explain the use of distorted Arabic names in Dinka myths quoted by F M Deng (1978) 84. 'Divinity Abroad' (1988) 174. This theory does not, however, discount still earlier influences from Nubian and Near Eastern sources.

IV. "NHIALIC OF MACUOR":

THE GORDON MEMORIAL SOUDAN MISSION, 1906 - 1959

There is no possible reason against a mission station, but it is a most deadly country and very few could possibly stand the climate--it is only fit for a man who is sick of life, has no ties, and longs and yearns for death. Now these men are not common.

--General Charles Gordon, 1887¹

Years ago, before the white men came, when the Dinkas wished to send an important message, they chose the strongest and bravest warriors to go. And when you first brought the message of the Gospel to us you sent your strongest and bravest warriors like Archdeacon Shaw and Bishop Gwynne.

--Tribute by Jon Aruor e Thoor, first GSM convert, 1946²

A. Introduction: Christian Missions under the Anglo-Egyptian Government

This chapter will document the work of the Anglican Church Missionary Society among the Dinka, beginning with the abortive efforts of its first young pioneers. An abiding theme concerns the prejudices and misconceptions which typified European-Dinka relationships, over against the distinctive approach of Archibald Shaw who left an enduring legacy among the Dinka. An extended section reflects upon the hopes and disappointments of mission schools as the "cradle of a Dinka Church," and examines the circumstances surrounding the 1939 'revival.' A final section examines the complex tensions of culture and faith which confronted early Dinka Christians, foremost being the first Sudanese to be consecrated an Anglican Bishop.

¹ Quoted in Gordon Hewitt, *The Problems of Success, a History of the CMS, 1910-1942*, Vol 1 (1971) 331.

² "From M Willoughby H Carey," *Southern Sudan Mail Bag*, No. 5, (Sept, 1947) 26. Tribute at Diocesan Council and ordination in Juba.

If the memory and writings of Bishop Daniel Comboni inspired generations of Catholic missionaries in Sudan, those of General Charles Gordon assumed a similar role among Anglicans serving under the Church Missionary Society. The memoirs of Llewellyn Gwynne, first Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Egypt and the Sudan, drew nearly as much upon the words of Gordon as they did from Holy Scripture.³ Even in the 1940s Rev Donald Casson, writing from his station among the Dinka, headed his circular letters with Gordon's prayer: "May He be glorified, the world and the people of the Sudan blessed, and may I be dust under His feet."⁴ As it had for first emissaries of the 'Gordon Memorial Mission to the Egyptian Soudan' three decades earlier, the piety of the British 'martyr' often helped relieve the pain of apparent failure.⁵

Through passionate homilies describing African peoples degraded by slavery, Charles Gordon was the first to stimulate the imagination of English Protestants toward Christian mission on the Upper Nile. In 1878 he subsidised a CMS venture and encouraged their party to found mission stations as they sailed southward to Uganda.⁶ If these incentives were insufficient Gordon's death on Sudanese soil in 1885 was the ultimate stimulus. Within weeks after the fall of Khartoum, CMS called a meeting at Exeter Hall, London, resolving, "to undertake a Gordon Memorial Mission to the Soudan, with Khartoum if possible as the headquarters."⁷

The sum of £2,714, far from adequate for the task envisioned, was collected to launch the Mission. Between 1886 and 1891 two reconnaissance surveys were

³ Said Gwynne, "I believe that the Mission in the South and the political service in the Sudan were answers to the prayer of Gordon. . . . when he looked at the poor Sudanese in the South who had been enslaved, he prayed that God would send out missionaries. That was the answer to slavery, to spread the knowledge of God through Jesus Christ." L H Gwynne at the 'Jubilee of the GSM,' *SDR* 24, Vol 9, (March, 1956).

⁴ Donald T Casson wrote 11 circular letters from Malek between 12 Jan, 1942 and 1 Nov 1944. Papers of the author, CCL.

⁵ In its early months the name was changed to the "Gordon Memorial Soudan Mission"; in 1912 two regional missions were distinguished: 'The Gordon Memorial Mission to the Northern Sudan' and 'The Gordon Memorial Mission to the Upper Nile.' Baylis to Gwynne, 17 Nov 1905; 6 Mar. 1906. Manley to Shaw, 20 Dec, 1912 (CMSA G3 S L1). The name continued in use, at least within the Mission, until the early 1960s.

⁶ Felkin, R W, "Up the Nile to Uganda", *The Church Missionary Gleaner*, (June 1879) 63.

⁷ "Selections from Proceedings of Committee," *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, 36 (1885) 385.

conducted in the Red Sea under Major General F T Haig, an evangelical officer of the Indian Army.⁸ During Haig's second journey Dr F J Harper, a medical missionary from Egypt, founded the first CMS medical and educational work in Sudan. However, being based in the Islamic enclave of Suakin, the endeavour proved ill-conceived and Harper soon withdrew.⁹

Nevertheless, the call for a Mission to Sudan was sustained. Amidst rumours of an imminent Anglo-Egyptian defeat of the Mahdists, Haig submitted new proposals to Consul General Cromer in Egypt, to which he received a cool response.¹⁰ With Kitchener's decisive victory in 1898, CMS, both in London and Cairo, rallied to pressure the government for immediate access to Sudan.

The initial Exeter Hall resolution anticipated a mission based in Khartoum where its focus would be upon the conversion of Arabs, only laterally extending its ministries to African peoples. Many supporters believed that only a mission among the Muslims of Khartoum--where Gordon had been slain--could vindicate his sacrifice.

Among officials of the emerging Anglo-Egyptian Government, the prospect of releasing Christian evangelical zeal among the volatile Mahdists, so recently suppressed, was untenable.¹¹ Nevertheless, missionary communities, Protestant and Catholic, amassed increasing political pressure and Cromer soon found himself, "vigorously assaulted on all sides to allow active proselytism in the Sudan." Concessions were at last made that missions could begin work in the non-Muslim Southern settlement of Fashoda where a garrison had been established.

By February 1901 the Catholics had begun work among the Shilluk at Lul, just upstream from Fashoda, and in five years were achieving modest but commendable results. By March, 1902, the American United Presbyterian Mission had founded a station at Doleib Hill and their pragmatic approach was making progress in agriculture and education even among the inhospitable Nuer.

⁸ "General Haig's Expedition to the Red Sea," *The Church Missionary Gleaner*, XIII, No 155 (Nov 1886).

⁹ R O Collins, *Land Beyond the Rivers, The Southern Sudan, 1889-1918* (1971) 282.

¹⁰ Adney to CMS Headquarters, 28 March, 1896 (CMSA G2 E/P1).

¹¹ H C Jackson, *Pastor on the Nile*, (1960) 72.

The Anglicans were, however, reluctant to readjust their original vision. If work was to be in the South it was, in the view of CMS, merely a tactical move for, "Fashoda was but a detour on the way to . . . the Muslims of Khartoum."¹² When Dr Harpur and Rev Llewelyn H Gwynne of the CMS, were given permission to enter Khartoum in December, 1898, it was only with stringent warnings not to "speak to Muslims about religion."¹³ CMS was, furthermore, suffering a severe financial shortfall which, by 1906, meant that no new recruits were to be posted unless full funding had been specially raised.¹⁴

Gwynne, an unpretentious Welshman, gained the respect of Wingate, newly appointed governor-general in Khartoum. In an effort to divert Gwynne's enthusiasm for Muslim evangelism, Wingate saw to his appointment as chaplain to the British forces. Gwynne, nevertheless, maintained pressure, and by 1903 gained permission, with certain stipulations, to begin a CMS school in Khartoum open to Muslims and Christians alike.

Gwynne was also convinced of the validity of work on the Southern frontier, having himself volunteered to pioneer at Fashoda in 1899. With no move underway by 1903, he began to question the reluctance of CMS headquarters.¹⁵ Wingate and Cromer were also becoming uneasy about the lack of an Anglican initiative. Having allowed the Austrian Catholics to establish themselves, they were anxious lest their expansion lead to a missionary monopoly over which Britain could exert little control.¹⁶ Throughout 1903 Wingate pressed Gwynne and together they discussed possible sites for a Southern mission, all of which were vetoed by CMS headquarters.

In an effort to contain Catholic expansion and guard against future conflicts between rival missions, the government delineated several missionary 'spheres' in 1905. Apportioning a large tract of the South to the Catholics, and a smaller portion

¹² Sanderson (1981) 30.

¹³ "Selections from Proceedings of Committee," Cromer to Lord Salisbury, *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, 50 (1899): 156, quoted in Sanderson (1981) 29.

¹⁴ In 1893 the Mission had experienced its first deficit with a short fall of £3,713. By 1899 this had increased to £30,100. While the Centenary Appeal of 1899/1900 brought the budget into balance, the Society soon faced a deficit of £42,882, a liability which increased in succeeding decades.

¹⁵ Gwynne to Baylis, 1 Jan, 1899, (CMSA E/O2).

¹⁶ Cromer's Khartoum speech was fully reported in *The Times*, 26 January, 1903; Cf Sanderson, (1981) 51.

to the Presbyterians, the Government publicly offered a vast territory to the 'British missionary societies.' Simultaneously a private invitation was made to CMS. This was a tactical measure on Cromer's part, designed to force the hand of the Anglicans to accept an offer so extensive that it could not be refused without loss of credibility. By January 1905 CMS had declared its intention to commence work in Southern Sudan and soon Wingate, Gwynne and officers of CMS met to plan the venture.

Stressing technical and agricultural training, the Government's primary objective was to employ the missions as agents of secular education in Southern Sudan.¹⁷ During his visit Cromer had been impressed by the hardworking, practical approach of the Presbyterians and the technical education of the Catholics, "doing [as he thought] little to press religious doctrine on the people, by being keen to get into close terms with them by their life and industries".¹⁸ In 1904 he informed CMS that the government,

would welcome the co-operation of missionaries in the work of civilization now being undertaken [in the South]. This is more especially the case as regards education. I . . . hope that, in any work undertaken by your Society, special attention will be paid to some simple forms of industrial and agricultural instruction.¹⁹

Cromer hoped the missions would help "to win the confidence of the people for the new regime" by teaching them the "elements of common sense, good behaviour and obedience to government authority."²⁰ While the CMS would assent to these objectives, they were, in addition, committed to "prosecuting their work for distinctly spiritual ends."²¹

B. GSM Missionaries on the Upper Nile

In 1904, 19 years after the founding of the Gordon Memorial Soudan Mission, six young men sat on the platform at Exeter Hall, the focus of a stirring missionary meeting called to raise support for a pioneering venture in the Sudan. With CMS

¹⁷ Minutes of meeting, 14 July, 1905 (CMSA G3, S/01, 1912).

¹⁸ From Sanderson (1981) 43, citing Jackson to Cromer, 15 June, 1900.

¹⁹ Cromer to Secretary CMS, 23 Dec, 1904 cited in Sanderson (1981) 39.

²⁰ Annual Report for 1905; CMS E/P2, Minute of Meeting between Wingate and CMS, 14 July 1905) cited by Sanderson (1981) 43.

²¹ 'Instructions of the Committee to Missionaries Proceeding to the Gordon Memorial Soudan Mission,' 5 Oct. 1905 (CMSA G3 S/L1).

already severely in debt, the congregation was encouraged to give generously and "ladies threw their rings and ornaments of value" into the offering.²² The men were destined to begin work among African peoples inhabiting the banks of the Upper Nile in the vast sphere newly assigned to the CMS. This endeavour, was, from its inception "conceived and cradled in prayer," deriving, as Dr Cook recalled, from the "earliest supplications of the Hero of the Sudan as he stood at his beleaguered post and his gaze wandered towards the Equatorial Provinces of the Sudan."²³

The missionaries, all in their 20s, had been selected as a team. There were three clergymen: Archibald Shaw, F B Hadow and Arthur M Thom, who was also to serve as linguist. Two men, R C J S Wilmot, a carpenter, and J Comeley, were to take responsibility for construction, agriculture and technical training. Dr E Lloyd would care for their physical well-being and found a mission hospital. Archdeacon Gwynne was to accompany the team on their maiden voyage, see them established, and return to Khartoum to serve as Chairman of the Conference.²⁴ The party was to be met by Dr Cook, who would serve as the first Secretary of the Mission and field representative for the Parent Committee in London. As founder of the Namirembe Hospital with 15 years in Uganda, Cook was the only member with extensive experience among sub-Saharan peoples. After six months he would return to Uganda and his responsibilities pass to Hadow. The men had contracted for four years of service, but due to climate, furloughs could be extended.

Given the similarities in African cultures and climate the Upper Nile mission would be closely identified with the flourishing CMS work in Uganda. On this model a completed mission station would comprise a school, a hospital, an industrial centre, and a church. From this base itinerant ministries would emerge and outposts be established, relying upon largely self supporting 'native agents' to extend evangelisation.

Having arrived in Khartoum on All Saints Day, 1905, the six men, supported by Gwynne, followed the logistical guidance of Wingate. At £500 a *gyassa* was

²² Leonard Sharland, *Memories of Archibald Shaw*, Unpublished manuscript, rough typescript, 3, SPP.

²³ Dr A R Cook, *Report of Gordon Memorial Mission to the Sudan*, (1906).

²⁴ Instructions of the Committee, op cit.

purchased and an additional £100 saw it fitted out by Wilmot to serve as a house boat until adequate lodging was constructed. Christened *The Endeavour*, it accommodated the missionaries, their servants, a Dongolese captain, a crew of eight, poultry and supplies. Two cows, a calf and additional grain were aboard the *Abu Klea*, a Government steamer which towed this 'Noah's Ark'.²⁵ After a brief commissioning service in Khartoum attended by Wingate and other dignitaries the *Endeavour* moved up the Nile on 8th December, 1905.

Dr Cook, accompanied by 60 porters, travelled 600 miles to be met at Mongalla on 20th December by Angus Cameron, Provincial Governor, and Captain Logan, commandant of the Sudanese troops. An initially cordial welcome wore thin as Cook sought food for his retinue in the midst of widespread famine, and all but 20 of his men were sent back to Uganda.²⁶ As he awaited his CMS colleagues the Doctor was warned against evangelising Muslim soldiers at the garrison, nor was he allowed to treat the local Bari population while he studied their language. Cook was told to renounce any hope of a mission among the Bari at Mongalla and encouraged to plan for a site among the Dinka near Bor.²⁷

When, on the 8th of January, 1906, the *Endeavour* was towed into Mongalla the missionaries were told to proceed 90 miles downstream to a site nine miles south of Bor. Disconcerted, Gwynne "told Cameron plainly that he was condemning the missionaries for a year to a most unhealthy place and with but few people to work amongst."²⁸ Cameron assured the Archdeacon that the site would avail them to a population of some 2,000,000 Dinka.

Arriving at a location first called 'Melwal' they were received by Dinka elders, some of whom spoke Arabic and translated for Gwynne. After negotiations a site was selected near the bank of the Nile equidistant from three Dinka villages, where, it was hoped, they would not be confused with personnel at the government *mudiriyya* seven

²⁵ Not intended as a transport vessel, the craft was furnished with Bentwood chairs, shuttered windows with mosquito wire netting, cupboards and stalls. The lower storey comprised a large room, 18 by 28 feet. A narrow staircase led to the upper deck, roofed with an awning to serve as a bedroom. A small room at the entry functioned as a dispensary. A R Cook, *Uganda Memories* (1942) 220.

²⁶ A R Cook, *Uganda Memories*, 217.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 219.

²⁸ Cook to Baylis, CMS, March 1906, (CMSA G3 S/01).

and a half miles away. After securing the *Endeavour*, clearing and burning the bush and pitching their tents, the missionaries gathered, on the 30th of January, for a solemn ceremony to inaugurate their Mission on Southern Sudanese soil.

Land was promptly cleared for gardens, the construction of temporary housing begun, and Dinka boys of eight to twelve years hired as 'servants' for each of the Britons. It was hoped that close association with the people they employed as labourers would lead to rapid acquisition of the language and lay foundations for evangelism. Dr Cook, with experience in Nilotic languages, found the Dinka grammar "very simple" and by March had translated drafts of *The Lord's Prayer*, the *Creed*, and the *Ten Commandments* with preparations underway for the printing of reading sheets and a grammar. By October a grammar and vocabulary of 2,000 words and a first reading sheet were being published in Cairo.²⁹

In early April Wilmot planned to teach Dinka lads to make windows, doors, and other structures necessary for the permanent buildings of the mission station.³⁰ The Dinka were found to "avail themselves of medical help with astonishing readiness," and Lloyd served outpatients daily in a temporary clinic.³¹ The livestock multiplied and were further supplemented from Khartoum, soon consisting of three broods of chickens, geese, sheep and goats. Three donkeys were imported with saddles and several oxen were trained to pull carts.

Missionary explorations in neighbouring areas suggested several sites for other stations. Biordit, a man presumed to be a 'chief' received them at Gwalla, a village some eleven miles inland from the river station. In May the *Mudir* granted permission to establish a permanent base at Gwalla and Lloyd was soon receiving a steady stream of patients there. Unfortunately, the rains submerged the entire site in mud and water. In July Shaw left his colleagues to establish himself at a location under Chief Shoka then called 'Meluk,' on the river about 30 minutes by canoe from Bor. Shaw's new base offered access to a good population, was less prone to

²⁹ A Dinka manuscript of St. Luke's Gospel translated by Austrian Catholics half a century earlier served as a resource for vocabulary. "The Great Soudan," *The Church Missionary Gleaner*, XXXIII/394 (October 1906).

³⁰ Minutes of Mission Council, 2 April, 1906 (CMSA G3 S/01).

³¹ Cook to Baylis, 3 April, 1906 (CMSA G3 S/01).

flooding, and thought somewhat healthier than the main river settlement. There he built several huts, worked conscientiously on the language and developed cordial relationships with Dinka neighbours. By August Gwynne wrote confidently from Khartoum that, "the missionaries are doing more than any other Englishmen to develop their part of the Soudan."³²

The Dinka, often anointed with a layer of ashes and seeming at first like "animated corpses," soon became known as distinct individuals. Though universally friendly, these tall, lean, unclothed people often proved enigmatic to the Britons. They were remarkably generous, sharing possessions freely with one another. They possessed well defined sexual mores which kept them from promiscuity. Preoccupied with cattle, they were given to "much litigation." Adults willingly adopted orphans and treated their children affectionately, seldom abusing them in word or action. So impressed was Hadow that he wrote, "Possibly England herself has something to learn from these naked savages."³³

Nevertheless, other forms of behaviour were profoundly shocking. Dinka were quarrelsome, ever given to infighting. They were "beggars," "thieves," and bold faced liars when it came to mission supplies gone missing. They were perceived as callous toward the aged, infirm and helpless, for "life with them has little value and of course no Sanctity."³⁴ Gwynne was horrified when an early conversation with Biordit, revealed, as he understood it, that old women were sent into the forest ahead of young warriors to serve as decoys for elephants, and often killed.³⁵ Particularly disturbing was the laziness of Dinka men and the subservient role of women.

The Europeans were disconcerted by the indifference of the Dinka toward their demands for labour. Dr Cook's sturdy Ganda porters had walked 48 days, but the Dinka were inclined neither to carry European baggage nor work as household

³² Gwynne to Baylis, 16 Aug. 1906, (CMSA G3 S/01).

³³ *Journal of the Rev F.B. Hadow*, No 9, May, 1906. Most of Hadow's monthly, published journals are at Durham Sudan Archives.

³⁴ Hadow's Journal, No 15, Oct, 1906.

³⁵ Gwynne's journal; also cited in H C Jackson, *Pastor on the Nile* (1960) 87-98. Gwynne's account stands in contradiction both to anthropological studies and to Shaw's later writings about the Dinka, leading one to wonder what Gwynne and his companions were predisposed to understand. Gwynne's conversation with Biordit was in Arabic.

servants. When eight Dinka men were at last persuaded to serve as porters for Gwynne and Cook they carried but half the capacity of the Ganda, and often feigned exhaustion.³⁶

What seemed generous wages in cloth, bangles and beads, often proved inconsequential to Dinka. The best incentive, observed Cook, was not wages but game shot on trek. Employment, he conjectured, would demand the stimulation of new desires for such items as soap, salt, and sugar; varieties of clothes should be put on offer, and later, "fez caps and iron hoes." For the present, however, "Clothes they had none, the blessings of civilization they did not appreciate."³⁷ Cook commended Dinka women whose demands for beads and cloth coerced their husbands into spurts of labour on the mission compound.³⁸

Thievery, as the missionaries understood it, was endemic. During the first year grain often disappeared from locked stores, and occasionally even cooked food went missing from the pot. Comeley wrote, "We have suffered a good deal from thefts, chiefly by the small boys who wait on us. My *tukhl* was broken into twice, two of our *dhura* stores were broken into, besides many petty thefts."³⁹ Little did the Britons conceive alternative notions of ownership.

By the end of 1906 the mission employed 50 or 60 men and women who did thatching and a variety of manual tasks. Hadow reported that there was no use in visiting outlying villages, "for all the people are at work in our camp."⁴⁰ Employment, however, was erratic, and often ceased when hunger was satisfied or the *dhura*, used as payment, failed to arrive by barge from Khartoum.⁴¹ Confusion struck when the first rains came and all workers, young and old, vanished without notice. Agriculturist Comeley wrote that "The harvest came in July. When the corn was ripe all our boys, without exception, left us. I had cows and goats to see to as well as do my own cooking, etc."⁴²

³⁶ A R Cook, *Uganda Memories* (1942) 224. Shaw's Journal, 30 Jan, 1906 (CMSA 111/F3).

³⁷ Cook, *Uganda Memories*, 227.

³⁸ Cook, *Uganda Memories*, 228.

³⁹ Annual Letter by Comeley, Nov, 1907, *Extracts from Annual Letters*, 102.

⁴⁰ Hadow to Baylis, 29 Dec, 1906, (CMSA G3 01).

⁴¹ Jackson, *Pastor*, 89.

⁴² *Ibid.*

Through the first year, the missionaries often contradicted their earlier assessments. Writing in February, 1906, Hadow stated that, "The Dinka we have seen are tall, lazy and poor. They have no idea of sowing crops."⁴³ With the advent of the rains he wrote that, "it is difficult to do any work among the people, as the *dhura* is ten or twelve feet high, and huts can only be found with the aid of a guide." The Britons, unable to perceive cattle as a form of wealth and prestige, continually wrote of the poverty of the Dinka. However, they described the "magnificent" Dinka bulls, and the unavailability of men out "with enormous herds of cattle."⁴⁴ Though the missionaries sometimes undermined Dinka husbandry Comely came to believe there was nothing he could teach them about the growing of corn or the rearing of cattle superior to their existing knowledge.⁴⁵

1. "Spiritual talk" and Dinka agnosticism

Practical concerns aside, the pre-eminent goal of the GSM was evangelism. From their early days the missionaries anticipated that a ready harvest of souls awaited them as the Dinka encountered the blessings of Christian civilization. Cook surmised that both Islam and African religion would be found lacking before the Gospel of Christ:

It must be remembered that in these pagan countries of Central Africa there is no entrenched and rooted national religious bigotry to overcome for they have not yet been Islamised, indeed their whole experience of Mohammedanism has been such as to make them loathe it, for as they plaintively say, first the Arabs came and then the Dervishes both promising protection and friendship but both pillaging, raiding, and destroying carrying off their women and children for slaves and wiping out whole districts. Their simple nature worship will probably offer but slight resistance when fairly contrasted with the Gospel of the Grace of God which offers a true liberty not only of the body but of the spirit and points the way to a life beyond the grave.⁴⁶

Hopes of "slight resistance" among the Dinka were soon eroded. Within two months Hadow showed his consternation in a blunt letter to Salisbury Square:

As to evangelistic work that will be very slow indeed. The mental capacity of a Denka at the present moment is very small and full of cow and corn. He cannot listen for more than a few moments and when you have made him to tell you

⁴³ Hadow to Baylis, Feb, 1906 (CMSA G3 S/01).

⁴⁴ Hadow to Baylis, 24 July, 1906, doc 36 (CMSA G3 S/01).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Cook, 'Report of Gordon Memorial Mission to the Sudan' (1906).

back what you have told him he then asks for some corn or tobacco because hunger is hurting. It will be a long time before we use our gross of slates!⁴⁷

Despite their own linguistic limitations and the apparent deficiencies of the Dinka, Hadow and Comely began a Sunday evening 'lantern service' from January, 1907. Four Dinka labourers were invited and asked to sit around a dungfire in the centre of Hadow's new hut. After telling them "about God and about Jesus the Son of God", a hymn, *Do No Sinful Action*, was explained and sung. The missionaries kneeled as Hadow "offered a short prayer in very faltering Denka" and found the group imitating his posture. As Hadow prayed the *Lord's Prayer*, the Dinka were heard,

mumbling beside me, as though they would join in the prayer but without knowing the words. It was really very touching. Verily they seemed to be feeling after God.

The lantern pictures drew detailed observations from the Dinka, "far more so than an English audience," and the service was concluded with another hymn. The services continued for several months, with about six usually different men, attending each time.⁴⁸

Generally, however, the Dinka were found intensely 'prejudiced' against all things foreign. Amidst increasing disillusionment Hadow strained for a hopeful note:

At present the Bor Denkas are amongst the lowest in point of civilization of all the tribes on the earth, but there are not wanting signs that they are capable of being made a fine people, in whom the grace of God will be manifest. But the work will be very slow.⁴⁹

Dinka 'prejudice' aside, it would appear that the missionaries failed to discern or take seriously what became one of the most formidable obstacles to their work. Among the first men to meet the *Endeavour* on its arrival was Biordit, an elder of Gwalla, with whom they had continuing and frequent contact. Hadow described him as,

... an old man, tall and very lean. It is almost impossible to understand what he says for he has a bullet wound in the mouth which is a remnant of the Dervish days. It seems to have carried away the whole of the jaw on the right side of his mouth.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Hadow to Baylis, 1 Dec, 1906 (CMSA G3 S/01).

⁴⁸ Hadow's *Journal*, No 17, Jan, 1907, 5-6.

⁴⁹ Hadow, Annual Letter, in *Extracts from the Annual Letters*, CMS (1907) 101.

⁵⁰ The Seligmans provided Biordit's photograph in Plate XIII, No 3, of *Pagan Tribes*.

An early entry remarks that 'Sheikh Beor' was sitting beside Hadow in his tent at Gwalla. Decker in red cloak, turban, fez and bracelets, the elder was intrigued by Hadow's typewriter and asked if it came 'from above.'⁵¹ A man of means, Hadow estimated that Bior possessed a thousand head of cattle. Though Bior presented the missionaries with a cockerel, gave them "a most hearty invitation to settle down among them," and suggested a suitable site near Gwalla, he was often perceived, like other chiefs, as a beggar and something of a nuisance.⁵²

Hadow took up residence at Gwalla but it was some time before he grasped the authority which adhered to Bior. At dusk one day a number of Hadow's acquaintances from the river station appeared, bedecked in ceremonial regalia to ask "Sheikh Bior to put fish in the river." The missionary was disquieted to find they had brought some 50 bracelets, earned from the Mission, to present to Bior. That night "the whole male population from the riverside villages" seemed to flood into Gwalla for a dance and sacrifice.⁵³ Hadow later described the fear which people felt toward Bior and his "evil eye," readily submitting to his demands for cattle.⁵⁴ Only in March, 1907, did Hadow write:

We find now that he is not the real sheikh and never has been, or if he has it was only for a little while. He is apparently the chief magician, and the people go to him to make rain for them, and to put fish in the river. He is said to have a spirit whom he has to consult, and this spirit of his is supposed to take the form of a thunderbolt or a shooting star. He has been very distressed for some months because the Government erected a wind vane outside our camp at Gwalla. It is to this that he attributes the lack of rain at Gwalla. At the river he blames the telegraph line as being the cause of the long drought.

GMSM missionaries had established their central station under the eye of Biordit, a *beny jok*, keeper of Lirpiou, most renowned of all *jak* of the Bor Dinka. As it became understood that the foreigners wanted to collect and teach young boys, and that they saw themselves in competition with indigenous spiritual authority, relations seem to have soured on both sides, as Hadow implied,

He is rather a wicked old man. Last year he told the Gwalla boys not to work for us. He said 'the Government have taken the tax this year in bull calves. Next year they will take boys like the Dervishes of old, and if you serve the English

⁵¹ Hadow's *Journal*, No 5.

⁵² Hadow's *Journal*, No 7, April, 1906.

⁵³ Hadow's *Journal*, No 12, August, 1906, 7-8.

⁵⁴ Hadow's *Journal*, No 22, June, 1907, 2.

they will take you first because you are better and more useful than the other boys.⁵⁵

The missionaries had not yet distinguished themselves from Government officials, nor the slave merchants of previous decades, at least not when fears were aroused. Numbers seeking medical treatment dwindled and the work of young 'servants' continued to be erratic. Abel Alier, a native of Gwalla, believed that this early antagonism lay at the heart of eight decades of Bor Dinka resistance to Christian evangelism.⁵⁶ Hadow described several elaborate sacrifices and recorded conversations in which he gained some insight into Dinka spiritual beliefs. Nevertheless, he denigrated them as mere superstition and heathen blindness. Nor did the Dinka, satisfied with ancestral divinities, reveal any impulse to learn from Hadow:

They take up the position of an Agnostic to a certain extent and say 'We do not know. What you say about God and prayer and Heaven may be alright for you, but we do not know.' Unfortunately they show no desire for knowledge. They will listen while you talk, and in the middle of what you fondly think is almost spiritual talk they will suddenly ask for some tobacco to chew.⁵⁷

Like missionaries who succeeded him, Hadow was little able to grasp the 'spiritual' or social significance of cattle, nor the positive dimensions of 'ownership' as practised by the Dinka. A decade later another missionary described them as,

... some of the very hardest and most conservative people in the world, who do not want us, nor our Gospel, nor anything we bring, except our money and our goods, and these they want for nothing, if only they could get them.⁵⁸

Dinka 'agnosticism,' rather than revealing the contentment of a people with their sacrificial traditions and the adequacy of the beliefs that underpinned them, seemed evidence of the terrible spiritual void of an arrogant people hardened to eternal truth.

2. Disillusionment and Withdrawal

Having initially heard reports, confirmed in Mongalla, that the Dinka number as many as two million there was disappointment at the thinness of population in the

⁵⁵ Hadow's *Journal*, No 19, March, 1907, 8.

⁵⁶ Interview with Abel Alier, leading politician, (b about 1930). Lirpiou has remained the most prominent of Bor *jak* into the 1980s.

⁵⁷ Hadow's *Journal*, No 21, May, 1907, 3.

⁵⁸ *Sudan Notes*, No 14, January, 1918.

mission sphere. Revised estimates suggested that numbers might be as low as 50,000. "Where are the people?" the missionaries had asked each day on trek. Hadow recorded how,

The people are scattered up and down in large and small clearings in the forest, and you would have to tramp for many a mile and enter a great many huts before you could ever say that your eyes had looked upon 500 different people. I don't suppose I have seen as many as 300 different faces since we landed here last January.⁵⁹

Regardless of his negative premonitions, Hadow, in his Annual Letter of 1906, looked forward to expansion beyond the Dinka:

I have heard some people suggest that the Mission to the Denkas should be abandoned, as not being worth while. This must never be. The C.M.S. can never turn back now. It is true that the people are few and scattered in the small district which we now occupy, but the day is coming when a much larger district will be open to us, and we ought to be prepared to occupy it.⁶⁰

As the months wore on prospects among the Dinka seemed increasingly bleak. With few patients attending the clinic the missionaries doubted if there would ever be need for a hospital.⁶¹ With no boys available to teach and no timber to cut a technical school was out of the question for many years to come. Uncertain how their energies should be invested, Hadow called for immediate geographical expansion. Unless the government extended the CMS sphere, all but two missionaries should be transferred to Uganda, where missionary manpower was in demand.⁶² At the end of their first year he wrote gloomily that "the Mission can adequately be worked by one man."⁶³ Shaw disagreed, convinced that at least three men could be put to effective use among the Dinka.

When the Sirdar encouraged the men to invest time in language study, Hadow griped that riverain language was tainted with Arabic and useless in the interior. He wrote further,

⁵⁹ Hadow's *Journal*, No. 14, Oct., 1906, 10.

⁶⁰ Hadow, Annual Letter, 1906, undated.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Hadow to Baylis, 1 Dec, 1906 (CMSA G3 S/P1)

I would humbly submit that you cannot learn a language such as this when you have to pick it up from the lips of the people unless you are in constant contact with a large number of people . . . We have found that the best way of learning the language is by getting about and seeing plenty of fresh people.⁶⁴

Only Shaw at Malek had settled into a worthwhile routine of daily language study.

Concern for the young pioneers was mounting at Salisbury Square. After responding to a barrage of Hadow's queries, Baylis wrote, "Your mission seems, I am sorry to say, to be almost developing a habit of setting us problems which we find ourselves unable to solve."⁶⁵ And later, "at present your accounts show us perhaps more of your difficulties than of your hopeful prospects. You must not fail to let us know of your hopes lest we discourage the Committee as to the possibilities before your Mission."⁶⁶

Rev Thom was the first to capitulate to illness and by December, 1906, returned to England, later assisting Gwynne as Chaplain in Khartoum.⁶⁷ Both Wilmot and Comeley were uncertain how to adapt their technical knowledge, disheartened by lack of response to evangelism and frequently ill. Returning from a three month leave in Uganda they suffered chronic illness and worked lethargically.

Inter personal conflicts further undercut effectiveness. Wilmot chafed against Hadow's authority as Mission Secretary while Hadow complained that Wilmot was clearly lacking adequate preparation as a missionary.⁶⁸ Gwynne's negative assessment of Wilmot and Comely saw their contracts terminated by CMS at the end of 1907.⁶⁹ The recruits on the Upper Nile had also contested Gwynne's long distance mediation between them and the government authorities, preferring to deal directly

⁶⁴ Hadow to Baylis, 30 March, 1907 (CMSA G3 S P1).

⁶⁵ Baylis to Hadow, 12 Oct, 1906, (CMSA G3 S L1).

⁶⁶ Baylis to Hadow, 30 Nov, 1906, (CMSA G3 S L1).

⁶⁷ Hadow to Baylis, 29 Dec, 1906, (CMSA G3 S 01).

⁶⁸ Baylis to Wilmot, 6 July, 1906 (CMSA G3 S L1); Wilmot to Baylis, 7 April, 1907, doc 22 (CMSA G3 S-01).

⁶⁹ Gwynne to Baylis, 2 May, 1907, doc 26 (CMSA G3 S 01); Comely left the GSM and went to serve in Uganda where he had a successful missionary career.

with officials in the South.⁷⁰ Gwynne, to the contrary, believed tensions between the Society and the government could best be avoided if final authority rested with CMS in London and himself in Khartoum.

The desire to marry was a further distraction. Hadow and Comely applied for permission to marry knowing that European women were prohibited from living on the Upper Nile. Hadow's leave to marry was granted together with his transfer to the CMS Mission in Egypt. In April Wilmot returned to England due to poor health, followed by Hadow and Comeley in the Autumn. Lloyd's commitment continued, but Salisbury Square questioned if so qualified a doctor should remain in a region so lacking in scope for medical work. By March, 1908, Lloyd was taken ill and transferred to open medical work in Khartoum.⁷¹

Only Shaw remained among the Dinka, himself long overdue for home leave. At Salisbury Square the awkward decision was taken in April, 1908, for the "temporary suspension" of the Mission. Baylis wrote Gwynne, "We quite realize that we shall seem to have stultified ourselves to some extent in not being able to keep anyone in the mission after saying that we had too many."⁷² Gwynne was mortified. Having wrestled numerous concessions from Wingate he was now forced to request government help in guarding mission properties at deserted Southern stations.⁷³ Wingate had carried the mission from its inception, often defending its cause before British officials, North and South. He had preserved a sizeable sphere for the Anglicans while fending off the advances of the Catholics. His countrymen had proved a great disappointment. Gwynne tried diplomatically to salvage some dignity for his recruits, explaining that they,

. . . are very much younger than the missionaries of the American United Presbyterians and the Italian Roman Catholics. This accounts for the amount of

⁷⁰ Cook to Baylis, 31 May, 1906 (CMSA G3 S/01). Cook to Baylis, 3 April, 1906 (CMSA G3 S/01). Gwynne to Baylis, 6 June, 1907 (CMSA G3 S/01).

⁷¹ Baylis to Hadow, 7 June, 1907 (CMSA G3 S L1).

⁷² Baylis to Gwynne, 10 April, 1908, (CMSA G3 S L1).

⁷³ Gwynne to Wingate, 20 April, 1908 (WP 282/4).

illness, for the mistakes, for the errors in judgment which indeed one must expect from men of their age, men who left home for the first time 18 months ago . . . Mistakes have been made--had to be made by such young men in so great an enterprise, but they are mistakes of good, holy men who have the highest and noblest aims, ideals of duty.⁷⁴

The Anglicans had endured little more than two years. Of the early recruits only one man was sufficiently committed to the Dinka to return.

C. Archibald Shaw: champion of the Dinka and mission strategist

The singularity and tenacity of Archibald Shaw had been a mystery to his colleagues. Hadow, describing the prospects of the Mission and its staff, reported that "It is difficult to know how Shaw really is. He keeps things very dark."⁷⁵ Several months later Shaw's competence was apparent, Hadow declaring that he was "just the man for this place above anyone else in our party."⁷⁶ On learning of Shaw's move to a new site Gwynne was uneasy, believing the men should always work "two and two."⁷⁷ Nevertheless, Shaw's independence was established and he continued at Malek, occasionally accompanied by Lloyd, through his first term.

Hadow's suggestions that Shaw needed an early furlough due to illness met with Shaw's refusal, and when CMS finally declared that the Mission must "suspend operations" he offered to remain alone, forgoing his furlough altogether. By 1915 his tenor had not changed; Shaw abbreviated his furlough for an early return. Manley of CMS felt it necessary to write Bishop Mac Innes that "I am straining every nerve to keep him in England . . . and I feel sure that you will help me to save him from killing himself."⁷⁸ Such "stickability" as a colleague called it, was to become a hallmark of Shaw's career, at times a lifeline for the GSM, and a prerequisite for work among the Dinka.

⁷⁴ Gwynne to Baylis, 2 May, 1907 (CMSA G3, S/01).

⁷⁵ Hadow to Baylis, 7 April, 1907 (CMSA G3 SL1). Archibald Shaw (1879-1956) was educated at Bromsgrove School and Emmanuel College, Cambridge; served as Secretary of the GSM, 1907-36 and as Archdeacon of the Southern Sudan, 1922-40.

⁷⁶ Hadow to Baylis, 30 March, 1907 (CMSA G3 SL1).

⁷⁷ Gwynne to Hadow, CMSA 16 Aug, 1906.

⁷⁸ Manley, CMS, London to Bishop Mac Innes, 15 Dec. 1915 (CMSA S G3 O).

During furlough Shaw continued language study in England, a habit which, in the form of translation, would undergird his ministry for the rest of his life. His fluency in the language helped win the trust of the Dinka and gave him growing insight into their values and beliefs. Academic analysis was encouraged by the Seligmans, anthropologists whom Shaw assisted as interpreter in 1910.⁷⁹

Shaw, aged 29, returned to Malek in October, 1908, accompanied by a new recruit, W H Scamell. Six years would lapse before the Mission returned to its original number of staff, its sphere by then much expanded. Like his colleagues, Shaw acknowledged the challenges of work with the highly 'conservative' Dinka:

The people are very primitive and ignorant with deep tribal prejudices against foreigners of any kind. Unlimited patience and years of labour, are humanly speaking, necessary before these people can be won for Christ.⁸⁰

Nevertheless, Shaw rapidly moved beyond stereotypes toward reciprocal friendships. During his first year he wrote, "I am getting daily more fond of the Dinkas up here [at Gwalla] . . . Some of the younger men, who come every day, and work for us in various ways, I begin to look upon as real friends, and I believe they reciprocate the feeling towards us."⁸¹ In contrast to his colleagues he observed that "The majority of them are fine, upstanding fellows, as straight as darts . . ." ⁸² As a single man Shaw formed something of a surrogate family among the Dinka. Given his bond with his own mother, it was perhaps in empathy, that he observed how Dinka men, "have the greatest affection for their mothers, and are not ashamed to show it after they are grown up."⁸³ Following an exchange with one of the "patriarchs of the village" he reflected, "I often have to admonish some venerable person and feel as if I was being

⁷⁹ The Seligmans wrote of Shaw as one of those who, "helped us in the most generous and unselfish manner, freely putting at our disposal their great experience and the contents of their notebooks." Seligmans, *Pagan Tribes*, (1932) xiii. During his first decade at Malek he produced four articles on Dinka language, fables and song for *Man*. His written reflections diminished, however, as his administrative responsibilities increased. Seligman to Shaw, 19 May, 1910, (CMSA 111/F3).

⁸⁰ Shaw, "General Report on British Mission Sphere of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan," undated, about 1911, (CMSA 111/F2)

⁸¹ Shaw to Home, 26 May, 1906 (CMSA 111/F3).

⁸² Shaw's Journal, 9 April 1906 (CMSA 111/F2).

⁸³ Shaw's Journal, 25 March, 1913 (CMSA 111/F2) This and other comments contradict Gwynne's earlier diatribes against Dinka practice toward their elders.

impertinent to my grandfather."⁸⁴ Whether as son or as elder, Shaw's willingness to enter into intimate relationships was fundamental to his acceptance.

The very qualities of tenacity, naked honesty and competitiveness which often provoked Shaw's European colleagues were among his assets with the Dinka. With his "commanding appearance" and determined character, he was, in many respects, able to meet them on their own terms. Like them he was articulate and argumentative, revelling in sustained debate. When a Dinka elder, Alier Bol, commandeered one of his bulls, believing a foreigner unworthy of the fine beast, Shaw pursued him relentlessly. In his early years Shaw wrestled with young Dinka men on their own terms, sustaining a dislocated hip which became the stuff of Dinka legend.

The herd of cattle at Malek was an economic necessity for the mission which served to boost Shaw's personal prestige. With the Dinka initially unwilling to sell their cattle, the nucleus for a herd had come from Khartoum and Uganda or as gifts from British officials.⁸⁵ Shaw repeatedly appealed to CMS for money to purchase cattle to pay the workmen whom he contracted.⁸⁶ Opportunity to earn wages accruing toward a cow was a valuable incentive for impoverished young Dinkas. "As 10 cows are required to buy a wife," wrote Shaw, "it may be imagined that there are plenty of bachelors about. On no account will a Dinka part with even the smallest of his cattle." One missionary colleague estimated that by the 1930s the herd at Malek contained some 500 head.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Shaw's Journal, 1 Dec, 1909, (CMSA 111/F2).

⁸⁵ Cook, *Uganda* 210. Jackson, *Pastor* 75. Personal letter from Dr Liam Manwel to author, May, 1989. Shaw mentions the gift in a letter home, 4 Aug, 1907, (CMSA 111/F3). Major Matthews, Governor among the Shilluk, contributed cattle. Describing early attempts to procure cattle, Shaw wrote, "We have offered the most tempting baits, but it is of no use, as the Government officials have found, and warned us." Shaw's Journal, 9 April, 1906 (CMSA 111/F3).

⁸⁶ Shaw to Baylis, 29 Dec, 1909 (CMSA G3 SL1).

⁸⁷ Personal communication, Rev D Casson. It is noteworthy that Shaw even entered into cattle litigation on behalf of one of his adoptive sons. As a boy the orphaned Gordon Apec was cheated out of his cattle by an uncle, Marongdit. Shaw pursued the uncle to court obtaining the return of about eight head to help support the boy. Interview with Dr Thomas Madit Ayom, Sept, 1992.

For his wealth, integrity and generosity on their terms the Bor Dinka came to respect Shaw. According to custom he was given an ox name, after a fine bull the colour of the grey vulture, *cuor*, which he possessed. It was solely as *Macuor*, or *Cuor Beny*, 'chief Macuor' that Shaw came to be known across Dinkaland.⁸⁸

Shaw's respect for the Dinka was underscored by his willingness to entrust himself to their care. Once, as the Governor General broke his Nile passage at Malek he found Shaw, the solitary European, quite ill and ordered that he be evacuated to Khartoum for treatment. Shaw refused, preferring to be nursed at Malek by a faithful Dinka friend. For years serving the Dinka as medical dresser Shaw gained an appreciation for their indigenous herbal treatments, which he employed to the consternation of European doctors.⁸⁹ The respect which Shaw had gained among wide-ranging Dinka was revealed when, immediately after the Aliab rising of 1920, their leaders sent emissaries to ask him to represent their case before government authorities.⁹⁰

For all his willingness to learn and adapt Shaw was fundamentally an Anglican evangelical who assumed biblical authority and envisioned the emergence of distinctly English forms of Christian worship and faith among the Dinka. Though there is little record of his dialogue with religious specialists such as Biordit, he appears to have met them with respect.⁹¹ After an encounter with a *tiet* he wrote:

... I am sure our best plan with regard to native superstitions and false beliefs is to seek to give the people the Truth as God has revealed it rather than to set about destroying their faith in what they have hitherto held sacred, to give positive rather than negative teaching. When Christ the Truth is known shams and lying professions will be exposed and destroyed.⁹²

⁸⁸ Sharland, *Memories of Archibald Shaw*, draft of unpublished manuscript, 2, SPP.

⁸⁹ Sharland, *Memories* 12.

⁹⁰ Shaw, Malek, 6 Jan 1920 (CMSA G3 S/P1). Major C Stigand, Governor of Mongalla Province, Major RF White and 23 troops had been killed in the rising on 8 December.

⁹¹ The fact the Seligman's cited Shaw so frequently with regard to Dinka religious material suggests the extent of his knowledge, exemplified in the their meeting with Wal, the *Beny Deng* of the Aliab, Seligman's, *Pagan Tribes*, 188-90.

⁹² Shaw's Journal, 17 Jan, 1910 (CMSA 111/F3).

Shaw did not, like Gwynne during his first forays on the Upper Nile, attempt to force immediate changes in Nilotic belief or practice, nor was he encumbered by the weight of established Mission structures and expectations as were his successors. Uniquely among GSM missionaries among the Dinka, Shaw was able, both by inclination and circumstance, to meet the Dinka on their terms.

1. Shaw's 'boys'

Europeans who expected Africans to be obedient, willing and able to work for them found the Dinka a constant trial. Few Dinka men cared to lower themselves as servants to foreigners and those who did were motivated by needs of the moment. They were given to complaining, demanded what seemed exorbitant increases in wages and often struck at the most vulnerable moments. Even Shaw, who did better than most in maintaining loyal working friendships, was startled among the Zande by the "new & pleasant experience" of men who volunteered as porters, "an abomination to a Jieng."⁹³

On the mission compound boys were taken on as servants and taught to fetch water, cook, clean, wash and iron clothes. However, few stayed as long as Shaw's first boy, an eight year old named Chat, who endured for at least six months.⁹⁴ Gwynne was angry that servants were not brought from Khartoum as he first advised, noting that, "with the exception of Mr. Shaw, every Missionary has a change of boys every few weeks, and has to do most of his own house-work."⁹⁵ When every other Dinka worker, young and old, disappeared, it was Shaw's two boys alone who continued in service.⁹⁶ Lloyd and Hadow capitulated and brought servants from Khartoum hoping that they might "before long be a means of educating a native

⁹³ Shaw's Journal, 25 March, 1913 (CMSA 111/F3).

⁹⁴ Shaw's Journal, 30 Jan, 26 May, 1906 (CMSA 111/F3).

⁹⁵ Gwynne to Baylis, 2 May, 1907, (CMSA G3 SL1).

⁹⁶ Hadow to Baylis, July 24. 1906 (CMSA G3 SL1).

Dinka servant class," this, despite anxiety that as Muslims they might undermine Christian evangelism.⁹⁷

One of Shaw's first 'boys' was Malim, a lad who came voluntarily in search of work. Only 11 years old he was "so capable, one forgets he is so young." Shaw became "really fond" of Malim, "a treasure and a really useful servant, though only six weeks from naked slavery."⁹⁸ Shaw found himself drawn into Malim's family, when, five months on, a government court sentenced Malim's brother-in-law to death for murder. The boy, instructed by his sister, informed Shaw that he would have to terminate his work and go to live with her. Shaw pleaded unsuccessfully to have him stay. He wrote that:

He is much above the average dinka, and had learnt nearly all I could teach him, as a household & travelling servant. He could do the cooking, make good bread, wash the clothes, and overlook little Chat in laying the table, etc., and I had begun to trust him with all sorts of things. But apart from his material worth to me as a servant, he has many really good traits in his character, and I had great hopes, (I have now) of his future.⁹⁹

With Malim's departure Shaw gained insight into the complexity of Dinka family relations along with their perceptions of his own extended 'family.' It emerged that Malim's brother-in-law was merely imprisoned and not to be executed. Malim's sister hoped to use the boy's bond with Shaw to force the missionary to plead for her husband's release before his 'brother,' the *Mudir*. For Shaw this was "of necessity out of the question."¹⁰⁰ Prohibited from entering into 'political' affairs, Shaw was encouraged by Dinka elders to seek the intervention of Chief Aiyol of Malim's village. After an arduous and fruitless 60 mile trek, Shaw returned to find Malim at the mission. For a short period he was again employed by Shaw, but again departed. After a later return Shaw reflected on the formation of Malim's character:

I feel it [Malim's return] is a direct answer to the prayers that have been offered for him, and hope friends will continue to pray earnestly for him. There is so much in the Dinka character, that can only be altered by the working of the Holy Spirit. . . . He is the most capable and intelligent boy I have yet found, but the

⁹⁷ Minutes of Mission Council, Bor, 2 April, 1906 (CMSA G3 S/P1).

⁹⁸ Shaw in letters home, 1 Feb, 1 Aug, 1906 (CMSA 111/F3).

⁹⁹ Shaw in letter home, 26 May, 1906 (CMSA 111/F3).

¹⁰⁰ Shaw in letter home, 1 Feb, 1906, (CMSA 111/F3).

Dinka's character is so unstable, that nothing but the Grace of God can enable him to turn out well.¹⁰¹

The last mention of Malim occurred three years later in 1909 when, having briefly returned again, he appeared in a list of Shaw's 'boys'.¹⁰² This early relationship typifies numerous others that developed over succeeding decades. Kok, Kur, Alier, Arna and Ayom are mentioned in Shaw's early letters as are Gordon, Daniel, John and Philip in later years. Shaw's own family were often enlisted to pray that "our influence over these boys will be strengthened." Nevertheless, Shaw's hopes were often disappointed as young men proved their independence.

As 'servants,' students, and friends Dinka lads accompanied Shaw as travelling companions going as far afield as Northern Sudan, Egypt and later to Britain. As Shaw encouraged their development, his objective remained constant:

Now however we may hope to make good servants of these who will be continuously with us and we may pray too, that our influence and teaching may bring them to be servants, not only of us, but of Him whom we serve.¹⁰³

Because it was so difficult to sustain the commitment necessary for their formation Shaw sought a method of securing a more stable community of workers *cum* students at Malek. In March, 1909 he described his first contractual arrangement toward this end:

In the evening I went with one of our boys, named Kur Adian, to his home. I had given out previously that any boy wishing to serve us for three years, could thereby earn a cow-calf, receiving also current food and clothing. This boy and another came and asked me if they might do this, and I agreed stipulating however that I must first be sure of their relatives' consent. Kur Adian lives at Gwalla. He is an orphan, but lives with various relatives in one of the usual little homesteads consisting of three huts and a corn store standing in the midst of a durra patch. The relatives having assembled I stated the terms of agreement and after a little explanation and talking and a private consultation amongst themselves, they all said the arrangement was very good. Kur was delighted, and volunteered many professions of faithfulness and constancy during our walk back. He is about 16 years old . . .¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Shaw in letter home, 29 Sept, 1906, (CMSA 111/F3).

¹⁰² Shaw in letter home, 30 Oct, 1909 (CMSA 111/F3).

¹⁰³ Shaw in letter home, 12 Mar, 1909 (CMSA 111/F3).

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

By October Shaw had secured four such contracts, "a priceless opportunity to win them for Christ."¹⁰⁵ In Shaw's vision these boys would form the nucleus of a school and ultimately the first community of Dinka Christians. In succeeding years other lads entered into this agreement, receiving wages, lodging, basic education and a cow in return for their three year commitment to school and work. Several were persuaded to continue their education by the incentive of additional cattle as their years progressed.¹⁰⁶

Only by this enticement, it appeared, could a model school be established among the Dinka. Early invitations to attend classes had, according to Scamell, been met with incredulity: "What good is the paper (meaning writing and reading) to us? We have no need of it, and don't want it!" Early classes were comprised of boys whose attention wavered as much as their attendance. By 1912, however, Shaw wrote of daily classes held on his veranda, containing "over 30 boys in various stages of ignorance" many of whom "have improved very much and can read the Gospel almost fluently."¹⁰⁷ All were in direct contact with the mission and several on three year contracts.¹⁰⁸ Scamell headed attempts at "industrial education" which included brickmaking, weaving and methods of production on the station's printing press. In these disciplines, however, it was several Ganda and Moru pupils who excelled for here, lamented Scamell, "The Jieng have no ambition to learn anything."¹⁰⁹

By 1913 the dispensary received 13 or 14 patients daily, another opportunity for Christian influence:

Before giving out any medicine all who have assembled kneel down and repeat a prayer asking God's blessing upon the treatment. A short address is often given-- just a very simple talk perhaps explaining the prayer just offered.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Shaw in letter home, 30 Oct, 1909, (CMSA 111/F3).

¹⁰⁶ Rachel Adak, daughter of John Majak, said her father received as many as ten cows from Shaw during his youth, but it is not certain these derived solely from this contractual arrangement. Scamell wrote that after five years young men received a young heifer to begin their marriage, *Bringing the Present*, unpublished manuscript, 11, SAD.

¹⁰⁷ Shaw's Journal, 7 Dec, 1912 (CMSA Acc 111).

¹⁰⁸ W H Scamell, 'Seed Sowing among the Dinkas,' *Awake*, (April, 1913) 45-6.

¹⁰⁹ Scamell, *The CMS Gazette*, 117 (2 Oct, 1916) 247.

¹¹⁰ W H Scamell, 'Seed Sowing among the Dinkas,' *Awake*, (April, 1913) 45-6.

Scamell laboured on with Shaw to be joined in 1910 by Rev C A Lea Wilson. The next year two additional men, Rev A G King and Rev H F Davies, arrived at Malek. Scamell married while on furlough and his wife arrived in 1913, the first lady missionary on the Upper Nile, later dubbed "godmother of them all."

In 1912 Shaw and Lea Wilson travelled by ox cart to open Lau, among the Ciec Dinka, some 40 miles from Shambe on the West bank of the Nile. There Lea Wilson was joined by another new recruit, Mr Hamilton, later replaced by Davies. In 1915 Mrs Lea-Wilson joined her husband at Lau. The inland Ciec were wary from the outset, taking flight at every sighting of the foreigners. Their men had been forcibly recruited into government labour gangs and given little remuneration, a policy which Shaw disdained for the distrust and hostility it inspired.¹¹¹

At both stations work was slow and disheartening. New blood aside, the daily grind weighed heavily on young missionaries, bereft of even one Christian convert.

2. The first baptism: Jon Aruor e Thor

Hope rose in June 1914 when Aruor, a domestic worker who had been with Shaw for eight years, about 24 years of age, informed King that he "wanted to talk about the things of God."¹¹² With Shaw away in Yambio he was encouraged to share his news by letter:

Chief Shaw, yesterday I heard of God. I was happy for the news of God and Jesus came to my heart and I was full of joy. He has come into my heart. People are persecuting me and I do not fear their words. As you told me, I kept praying over it. Prayer is very dear to me. I ponder much over the things of God. Come quickly that our words may mingle about the things of God. God walk with you.¹¹³

At his request he joined the missionaries for prayer three times daily, and was given special lessons in reading and Bible study. During a two year period of 'probation,' the missionaries took special interest in Jon's development, noting often that though "he is far from perfect," there were "signs of real conversion." By August he had made a public profession of faith and was soon followed by three other missionary 'houseboys.' Choosing the name 'Jon,' Aruor was

¹¹¹ Shaw to Baylis, 10 May, 1912, (CMSA G3 SL1).

¹¹² A G King, Annual Letter, *The CMS Gazette*, (24 Nov, 1915) 114.

¹¹³ Shaw's translation, 7 Oct, 1916 (CMSA Acc 111).

baptised by Shaw on Sunday, 17 September, 1916, in the thatched schoolhouse at Malek before a congregation of some 100 Dinka. King and the Scamells served as Godparents. Two weeks later Jon's two small children were baptised 'Luk' and 'Rebeka.' Of Jon Shaw wrote,

He is very far from being a clever boy (man he ought to be called), and he is by no means a first class cook, neither does he yet find it easy to read anything but passages that he knows almost by heart, but for all that he is able to do quite a lot of definite Christian work now.

Jon was soon teaching the small boys and a women's class. He regularly addressed patients prior to medical treatment, spoke occasionally at daily Scripture Lessons and preached at open air services among the fishing people.¹¹⁴ It was Shaw's hope that he might soon leave kitchen work and develop into a "full native teacher."

Upon conversion Jon and others after him showed increased interest in literacy. Indeed, the ability to read the Bible, at least falteringly, was required for baptism. Perceiving this association between the *Nhialic* of Christianity and the school, rural Bor Dinka referred to the Christian divinity as *Nhialic Thakool*, 'God of the School.' Since baptised school boys often spent years at Malek and underwent considerable adaptation, they were thought not only to have been adopted by the missionaries, but to have come under the sway of this specific expression of Divinity. Returning to their people from school, boys were often told that they had now 'become *koc Aciek*,' 'people of Creator.' Having associated with Europeans and learned some of their skills, they had, in some degree become like their adoptive parents.¹¹⁵

Most evangelical missionaries were uncompromising in their efforts to sever their pupils links with indigenous religious practices, and so reinforced perceptions that the boys had come under the authority of a new Divinity. A catechumen was required to make several promises, among them an affirmation that he accepted "the Christian law of marriage and the giving up of superstitious and evil customs related

¹¹⁴ Shaw, Malek 4 Nov, 1917, (CMSA Acc 111).

¹¹⁵ Because of their peculiarities and technology Europeans were popularly known among the Bor as *Koc Aciek*, 'People of Creator.' As late as the 1950s children who attended school were told that they had 'become *koc Aciek*.' Interview with Bullen Bol in London, 1993.

to the old life."¹¹⁶ Two young men who professed faith in 1915, Alier e Kut, who had long assisted with Bible translation, and Anyang who had served Shaw from childhood, "went back on account of polygamy, and the native night dances which they would not give up."¹¹⁷ In 1917 they again professed their faith and proceeded to baptism.

From the time Jon Aruor first revealed interest in the God of the missionaries he was challenged by his family, his mother declaring that the *jok*, Lirpiou, would be angered if he forsook his ancestral loyalties.¹¹⁸ His wife and her relatives were "very prejudiced against what they read as the teaching of foreigners." When her children were baptised she had attended the service with apparent interest and "consented to wear a cloth garment instead of her skins," presumably at the request of the missionaries, "but the next day she attended a dance in connection with ancestral worship and took both children with her."¹¹⁹ Her action provoked Jon's anger and he immediately went to extract them from the dance. By the end of 1917 she was, however, attending classes and expressed interest in making a profession of faith. In these events each missionary and his British readers took keen and prayerful interest.

3. "Mass Movement Centres" versus the Dinka

By 1909 new horizons began to open for the GSM when, with the death of King Leopold, the vast Lado Enclave, passed from Belgium to Anglo-Egyptian control.¹²⁰ Wingate was anxious to reserve most of this territory for Anglican missionary influence, but given continuing CMS limitations in manpower and finances, the region East of the Bar el Jebel was designated an 'Open Sphere' to missions. Here the Catholics, under Bishop Geyer, advanced ahead of CMS.

¹¹⁶ Leonard Sharland, 'A Missionary's Diary,' Sept, 1947, SPP. Some missionaries were also uncompromising for personal reasons. One missionary husband is said to have forbid dancing within a distance of fifteen miles of Malek because it was a disturbance to his wife. Malou, *Priesthood* 81.

¹¹⁷ Shaw, Malek, 26 Aug, 1917 (CMSA 111).

¹¹⁸ W H Scamell, *A Dinka's Story*, CMS, Sept 1924.

¹¹⁹ Shaw, Malek, 6 and 22 Sept; 7 Oct, 1916 (CMSA 111). In 1950 Sharland noted that 'old John' was still preaching, pouring over Bible, much of which he knew almost by heart, and reminding people of the early days. L Sharland, 'A Dinka Miscellany,' *Sudan Diocesan Review* 7, Vol 2 (Sept 1950).

¹²⁰ The Enclave comprised a large rectangle of land lying on the West bank of the Nile and bordering the Congo Free State.

Nevertheless, the period between 1912 and 1919 was one of CMS expansion with several new personnel allocated to the Southern Sudan. In 1913 Shaw and Hamilton made the 450 mile journey by ox cart from Malek to found a third GSM station at Yambio among the Zande. With the relaxation of sleeping sickness restrictions in the former Lado Enclave, another station was founded among Bari-speaking peoples at Yei in 1917.

Still, the mission among the Dinka had borne little fruit. By 1916 six missionaries had some mastery of Dinka language, but not one convert had been baptised. The baptism of Jon Aruor inspired six other mission workers to become 'enquirers,' but none were forthcoming from outlying people. At Lau two Ciec 'houseboys' had become 'enquirers' and growing numbers attended the dispensary. Otherwise, Lea Wilson lamented,

This station . . . among the Ciec Jieng proved once more how very indifferent the Jieng are; how little interest they take in anything but their cattle; how narrow their horizon is, and how little they wish to have it enlarged.¹²¹

With station routine unrewarding some new GSM recruits did not endure even one term. After a year at Malek the new 'industrial man,' G P Thomas, applied for a transfer to Uganda, where Africans were reportedly eager for craft training and willing to work. The Dinka, he had found, were apathetic, supercilious and, he thought, "too physically weak . . . to be any use at carpentering and building."¹²²

To some missionaries Shaw seemed an uncompromising taskmaster, "more like a military colonel than an ecclesiastic."¹²³ In 1918 King resigned from the Mission announcing that he could not "work harmoniously with Mr. Shaw."¹²⁴ Discussing the conflict Shaw acknowledged that, "The work amongst the Dinkas is 'slow and difficult,' and both Mr. Scamell and Mr. King avowedly at times considered it 'not worth while'. "¹²⁵

Even Christian teachers brought from the growing Church in Uganda were overwhelmed in the GSM sphere. In 1915, Shaw, in need of manpower and

¹²¹ Shaw, 17 Jan, 1918; Lea Wilson, *Sudan Quarterly Notes*, No. 12, Jan, 1917.

¹²² Memo of meeting with Thomas, 14 Aug 1914, cited in Sanderson (1981) 98.

¹²³ Sharland, *Memories* 16.

¹²⁴ Baylis to King, 1918 (CMSA G3 SL1).

¹²⁵ Shaw, Clarification on King's resignation, Malek, 29 June, 1918.

believing that 'native agents' might penetrate Jieng resistance more easily than Europeans, called for the assistance of Ganda Christians. Two were assigned to teach the sons of the largely Muslim population at Mongalla, but their efforts met strong hostility. At Malek Paulo Baguma and his wife Elinora proved an asset but struggled with Dinka language, strange food, homesickness and the 'prejudice' of the Dinka.¹²⁶ By 1919, Shaw had to admit that "The experiment of bringing them has not been altogether successful."¹²⁷

Peoples of the former Lado Enclave appeared far more receptive. In 1910 R C R Owen, Governor of Mongalla, proposed the founding of a technical school at Loka, where, he said "the more bracing climate" had bred "a very fine, bright, intelligent, energetic people, superior in every way to the Dinkas and Baris [and] keen on being civilised as soon as possible."¹²⁸ Among the Zande it was noted that, though they had been cannibals and were "much more immoral than the Jieng," they were in some respects "superior" for there was at least "hope of their making progress." According to Lea Wilson the Zande wore clothes, produced implements, and were "considerably higher in the scale than the Nilotic negroes."¹²⁹ In only three years 150 people were attending Sunday services at the new church in Yambio. By 1916 the Moru also offered an enticing field, "most unlike the Jieng who think only of their cattle."¹³⁰

In 1919 there were only nine CMS missionaries in Southern Sudan with considerable scope for immediate expansion. Shaw estimated that a total of 16 missionaries were needed to cover existing commitments alone, a number beyond the capacity of CMS to supply. It was Shaw himself who "most reluctantly felt

¹²⁶ *The CMS Gazette* 122 (1 March, 1917) 63. C A Lea Wilson GSM Report, 1918 (DA/S992).

¹²⁷ Shaw, Malek to Mac Innes, Cairo, 8 Jan, 1917 (DA G/S 922). As early as 1911 Shaw wrote that Jieng Christians would be the ideal evangelists of their people. In 1912 he suggested Zande Christians might evangelise the Jieng, (30 April, 1912). As was proved by the experiment with Ganda evangelists and teachers, the Dinka were unreceptive to innovators from other tribes.

¹²⁸ Sanderson (1981) 67 citing Annual Report for 1909 (Egypt No 1, 1910, Cd-5121); for 1910 (Egypt No 1 (1911, Cd-5633); Owen to Shaw, 7 August 1910; 7 Aug 1910. Though boys from other ethnic groups were encouraged to attend Malek, few were willing to stay as borders due to their uneasiness among the Dinka.

¹²⁹ C A Lea-Wilson, *The CMS Gazette* (1 Sept, 1913): 173.

¹³⁰ A G King, Malek, *CMS Gazette* (July, 1915): 220. By 1918 there were 30 catechumens at Yambio, 8 enquirers; 25 out of 60 regular students were sons of chiefs, this contrasted sharply with Malek. 'Report of GSM,' March 1918 (CMSA G3 S/P1).

compelled to advise" that, in order to restrict staffing to 11 missionaries, another Society be approached to take part of the existing CMS work.¹³¹ In response members of the Sudan Sub-Committee voted unanimously, "in favour of giving up Dinka work and concentrating on mass movement centres." Shaw was appointed to approach the Australian branch of the Sudan United Mission asking if they would incorporate the two CMS Dinka stations within their existing Dinka work in Northern Upper Nile Province.¹³² If this did not prove feasible, it was resolved nevertheless that missionaries would be withdrawn, leaving native teachers, if available, in charge of the stations.

When, after two years, a response was finally forthcoming, it was negative.¹³³ By then Gwynne wrote that he "would deprecate work [at Malek] being given up after 17 years." Shaw and the GMSM would persevere with the Dinka. Nevertheless, priority remained with the "mass movement centres" of Equatoria. In 1920 a new station was founded among the Bari at Juba, which rapidly developed into an important administrative and educational centre. The following year Maridi was opened among the Baka, and a thriving medical mission begun among the Moru at Lui.

As for the Dinka, Shaw had to acknowledge in 1922 that the broad advances once envisioned had come to "a sad story." The Scamells had left, he after ten years, leaving Shaw once again the sole missionary at Malek. 'Industrial' education was terminated as was hope of Malek becoming an economic centre. Five Dinka men had been baptised, along with some of their children, the sole fruit of 17 years of missionary work. The new brick church, 'St. Andrews,' had a Sunday congregation of under 100, most of whom were mission residents. Treatment at the dispensary and the leper clinic, accompanied by prayer and teaching, laboured on. The school was stable with 100 borders in 1927, their rows of huts forming two sides of a large square surrounding the church, school and football field.

¹³¹ Manley to Gwynne, 2 July, 1919, (CMSA S G3 O)

¹³² Report of Sudan Sub-Committee, 30 Sept, 1919 (CMSA S G3 O 9).

¹³³ G Dawson, SUM, Australia Jan 19, 1921 (CMSA S G3 O 1).

Work at Lau terminated in 1922 when the Lea Wilsons were transferred to begin Nugent School. Shaw grieved that the station was deserted, its properties being devoured by white ants.¹³⁴ Lau was not to be revived, and Malek was again the lone CMS outpost in Dinkaland. Only in December, 1929, did Shaw, now Archdeacon of Southern Sudan, accompany the Rev R S and Dr Catherine Macdonald to found a new station at Akot. This site, 50 miles further inland on the West Bank, was intended to serve a vast Parish extending from Tonj to Yirol and Rumbek. Containing an estimated 200,000 people it embraced four Dinka groups, the Agar, Atuot, Ciec and Aliab. With the Macdonalds as a medical missionary team, a clinic was begun immediately with up to 100 out-patients attending daily. Soon an efficient school, supported by two teachers brought from Malek, was functioning with over 100 students. Among them were ten from the neighbouring Jur and 40 transferred from Malek.

Though Shaw travelled widely as Mission Secretary, Malek remained his headquarters, developing into an orientation base for new missionaries in Southern Sudan. Many passed their purgatory with the Dinka amidst mosquitoes and humidity at the Nile's edge. Still, Malek bore the inimitable mark of the "country gentleman," as some described Shaw. Tea was served on English China; cummerbund and jacket worn for dinner. A student of horticulture, Shaw imported plants and cultivated an extensive garden. A riverside golf course was created for the sport of Bishops, DCs and missionaries alike. To dampen the equatorial heat, a section of the Nile was blocked off to form a swimming pool secure from crocodiles.¹³⁵ Shaw's exploits with wild game, whether on foot, lorry, or the riding horses he maintained, won the admiration of Dinka and Europeans alike.

Unquestionably Shaw's independence and strength of character were well matched for pioneering the GSM in Southern Sudan. Tenacious and committed to

¹³⁴ Nugent School was founded with a legacy from Miss Sophia Nugent and became the most important CMS contribution to Southern education. Established at Juba it moved to Loka, both in Bari speaking regions. Shaw described the demise of Lau in an address to the New Alliance Club, 8 Dec 1922. He was made Archdeacon in the same year. (CMSA Acc 111).

¹³⁵ Gelsthorpe, 'Impressions of Malek,' 12 Nov 1941, writes of 'the famous golf course,' SPP; D T Casson, 1942 refers to the "swimming pool made by blocking a portion of the Nile to keep crocodiles out" CCL.

his principles, he sustained the Mission through its most tenuous periods. Repeatedly he invested meagre resources to excellent effect. Still, his autocratic, and often dogmatic approach did not rest easily with European colleagues.¹³⁶ When it was decided to consecrate an Assistant Bishop for the Southern Sudan in 1935 Shaw, aged 56, was not chosen. With pastoral concern the new Bishop, Guy Bullen, wrote to Bishop Gwynne:

One missionary said to me very sadly, there's no brotherhood in the mission or fellowship. We haven't had the father of a family, but a dictator who never gives any spiritual help.¹³⁷

In 1937 Shaw retired as Archdeacon and Secretary of the Mission but remained on at Malek, working on translation prior to moving to Kenya.

If Shaw was not 'father' among his British colleagues, he was undeniably a father to many young men whom he had 'adopted,' one of whom wrote that "Macuor is the only white man with the spirit of the Dinka."¹³⁸ His name, more than that of any other European, was known across Dinka territory of the CMS sphere. As with Malim in his first year, Shaw had given himself to reciprocal and formative relationships among the Dinka. More than any other missionary he entered into Dinka experience on their terms, whether in debate, wrestling, haggling over cattle, or fireside conversation.

D. Education, evangelisation, and 'revival'

1. The mission school, "cradle of a Dinka Church"¹³⁹

From its inception the GSM had employed several approaches to propagate the gospel among the segments of Dinka society. Missionaries and their assistants preached in village centres and itinerant evangelists circulated in cattle camps.

¹³⁶ In 1936 C W Williams, Assistant Director of Education, wrote a scathing critique of mission education. Shaw, he said, had little to show for 30 years among the Dinka: "He has become an anachronism . . . always roaming . . . madly about the country in a motor car, generally by night, never stopping any reasonable length of time in one place, neglecting his correspondence, ignoring the Resident Inspector's reports, not only an Archdeacon but an Archconstructionist and a past master in sophistry in the wheeling of plausible excuses for his own and his missions' shortcomings." Quoted in Collins, *Shadows* 232.

¹³⁷ Bullen to Gwynne, 15 May, 1936 (CMSA 160/3).

¹³⁸ Daniel Deng Atong, unpublished writings; Sharland, *Memories*, 1.

¹³⁹ L Sharland, 'Missionary Notes,' undated, SPP.

Impromptu sermons challenged government road gangs or groups of men gathered at chiefs' courts. Responses were, however, meagre, and when interest sparked, contact was difficult to maintain. At mission dispensaries treatment was usually accompanied by Christian teaching, but in Dinkaland dressers were few and CMS doctors seldom remained for long. Mission education had always been prominent in the evangelistic arsenal, and was, in succeeding decades, to overshadow all other aspects of the missionary endeavour. Joining Shaw at Malek in 1935 the Rev Leonard Sharland, reflected:

One feels that the school as a centre for the Dinka work is the great hope. The boys are drawn from a wide area extending for about 100 miles inland and they are drawn from many different villages scattered within this area.¹⁴⁰

The school was a protective environment where youngsters could be nurtured in Christian faith. Still, as the MacDonalds wrote, there were those disquieting times when students faced the challenges of life outside,

While they remain on a mission station they do very well for the most part, but when schooling is over and they go out to clerkship, etc. [or are] alone in heathen villages, they crack up and go to pieces.¹⁴¹

Remarkably, it was with student life at Rumbek secondary, a 'secular' school, that CMS Chaplain A J Miller, drew the strongest contrasts when emphasising the eroding currents of 'heathen' society. He observed how, during the holidays,

The boys will have gone back from the comparatively civilised comfort of the school to the squalid village conditions from which they came, and to the beer-drinking and sexual enticements, and the spirit-conscious surroundings, which those conditions entail. . . . they will need a living faith if they are to go through unscathed.¹⁴²

Without Shaw's direct and intimate experience among rural Dinka younger CMS missionaries tended to view indigenous life as highly immoral, inundated by the forces of evil. Wrote Sharland:

Out here one is very conscious of the activity of the devil. His motto seems to be: 'What I have I hold,' and he is very reluctant to part with his territory. Not infrequently you can see the evil one looking out at you through a man's face. It

¹⁴⁰ Leonard Sharland (1904-1972); worked at Malek, Gel River, Akot and Rumbek, 1935-1958, second in duration among the Dinka only to Shaw.

¹⁴¹ MacDonalds, fragment undated, about 1931, reports 107 boys and 4 girls in school at Akot. SPP.

¹⁴² A J Miller, *SSMB* 14, (Aug 1950).

must of course also be said that when the Lord really possesses a Dinka He looks out through the man's eyes, and the sight is a very gracious one.¹⁴³

The condescension and distrust with which missionaries viewed the rural Dinka context was mirrored as Dinka villagers gazed back upon the mission school and urban centres. They saw schools as places for the socially and morally degenerate, for lads bereft of ancestral dignity and identity. Acceptance of formal education came slowly and unevenly, and even in the 1950s boys from respected families were a minority in mission schools.

The contradictions between British and Dinka perceptions of education were reflected when a DC informed Sharland that, "We have a young murderer in the prison, and the chiefs have condemned him to go to school! Will you take him under your wing? It will do him more good than prison." Punishment executed, the boy became a catechumen, was baptised 'Apollo,' and became an assistant teacher.¹⁴⁴ As in the early days at Malek, it was the impoverished, orphaned, wayward, or the last sons of inferior wives, who comprised the majority of students. While missionaries might take satisfaction in their redemptive work, it was nevertheless difficult for many teachers, clerks and local officials, whose origins were of low status, to later gain respect in rural Dinka society.

At each mission station in the CMS sphere pupils attended a four year vernacular elementary school. Because scripture portions constituted the bulk of literature translated in Dinka, literacy was of a common fabric with Bible knowledge. Indeed, personal ownership of vernacular Old and New Testaments and a Prayer Book was prerequisite to baptism.¹⁴⁵ Considerable effort was invested in teaching the rudiments of Christian faith and encouraging students in the daily disciplines of Bible reading and prayer. Those who declared their desire to become 'learners' or

¹⁴³ L Sharland, 'Really Primitive People,' *CMS Outlook* 52, (Oct 1944). A year earlier Sharland described a "witch doctor" whom he saw "dressed up doing his devilish dance and invocations. Seldom have I felt the presence of evil so definitely as I did then." Gel River, 12 Oct 1943, SPP.

¹⁴⁴ L Sharland wrote as he presented the young man for confirmation, 'A Missionary's Diary,' undated, 1950s, SPP.

¹⁴⁵ John Malou Ater, *Out of Confusion* (1973) 5. Director of Education A G Hickson reported 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." 'Akot Elementary Vernacular School, Report of Director of Education, Southern Province,' Visit 21-22 April, 1937. (SAD 664/13/43).

'enquirers' attended weekly classes for a one year period of probation at the end of which they could make their 'promises' of faith and obedience. There followed another year of classes after which they went before a 'native church council.' If approved they made a second set of promises in church and were baptised.¹⁴⁶ The system saw most students baptised and many confirmed during their education. In 1936 Sharland reported that over half the school boys at Malek were enquirers or catechumens, though not one had come from the local Bor Dinka.

Academic achievement and Christian initiation were so tightly linked, however, that the distinction sometimes blurred. At Akot in 1939 it was noted that,

Unfortunately, for a long time the schoolboys thought that baptism was part of the school course and if they were refused baptism because they were not real believers, they thought they had failed the course!¹⁴⁷

Each year the two best students completing mission elementary schools were selected to attend Nugent Intermediate School alongside boys recruited by Government officials.¹⁴⁸ With Lea Wilson as its first headmaster in 1921, Nugent developed into a well disciplined multi-ethnic English language school which offered both technical and academic education. Two decades later it was "the educational show place of the South," its curriculum and atmosphere firmly Christian and evangelical.¹⁴⁹

The influence of each mission station extended into rural areas through out-schools, "the backbone of the missionary endeavour." By the late 1930s Malek still had only 100 students but to it were attached four out-schools. Several years later Malek and Akot each had seven out-schools. Each was under the supervision of a trained teacher or 'teacher-evangelist' who, it was hoped, was a mature Christian able

¹⁴⁶ L Sharland, Malek to Mr Coad, 13 Feb 1940, SPP.

¹⁴⁷ John Collinson, "The Christian Church on the West Bank of the Nile, 1938-1940", a paper written at the request of J Malou, (1 April, 1981) 3.

¹⁴⁸ Gordon Tiir (d 1991), a Bor graduate of Malek during the 1940s, complained bitterly about manner in which "CMS kept the Dinka down" through lack of scope for academic advancement. Since he was not one of the two students selected to attend intermediate school at Nugent, he had, he felt, been pressured by missionaries to enter the evangelists' course. Like many of his peers, he abandoned work as a teacher-evangelist for more lucrative employment, he becoming a medical dresser. Interviewed in Addis Ababa, 1989.

¹⁴⁹ L Sharland at Loka, 30 March, 1938, SPP. Sanderson (1981) 103-4.

to evangelise and maintain a local church alongside his school.¹⁵⁰ However, only a minority of Dinka boys and a handful of adults with long exposure to mission or school, claimed allegiance to Jesus Christ. To the majority of Dinka the God of the Christians remained *Nhialic de Thakool*.¹⁵¹

2. 'Revival' and 'awakening' in Dinkaland

The years 1937 and 38 saw a low ebb in the morale of GSM mission missionaries. Two prominent colleagues had recently died.¹⁵² Of those remaining half were ill or on furlough. Stations were tightly staffed or void of a missionary presence altogether. A bruising government critique of mission education followed by requirements for trained missionary educationalists added to the stress. Many felt concern for "the spiritual tone" of Sudanese Christians and were praying for "blessing" upon the young Church. In this context there arrived, during May, 1938, a well qualified young missionary recruit, Mr Richard Jones, together with his wife. Those who came to know Jones found him "desperately in earnest," prayerful and convinced that he was an "instrument of God" for spiritual renewal.¹⁵³ Jones had recently been a student at the Bible College of Wales at Swansea and was much influenced by the Welsh Revival; he had little interest in CMS methods or Anglican history in Sudan.

The Zande District had for some time been without missionary supervision and the Joneses were immediately posted to Yambio. There they saw a church with few people amidst what Jones described as "a sink of iniquity and a haunt of drunkards and adulterers."¹⁵⁴ Under his forceful ministry Yambio was, within weeks, transformed by 'revival' as large numbers of people gathered daily and through the night for public confession, prayer and, increasingly, manifestations of visions and 'miracles.'

¹⁵⁰ LWC Sharland, Gel River; *SSMB* 2, (1946).

¹⁵¹ In contrast, the town of Yei, among Bari speaking groups, had 12 outschools in 1932 with chiefs requesting more. There were 200 baptised Christians, 2,000 catechumens with 400 to 600 attending Sunday services. *CMS Outlook*, (1932).

¹⁵² Dr Fraser, pioneer among the Moru, 1937, and Bishop Bullen, killed with an RAF pilot in the crash of a demonstration flight against the "unruly Aliabs."

¹⁵³ L Sharland, Loka to Geoffrey Earl, 20 June 1938, SPP.

¹⁵⁴ Andrew Wheeler, *Sudan Revival*, 6, citing Willoughby Carey, 23 July, 1938, (CMSA AL/163/9). For a more thorough treatment of the revival in its broader context see Wheeler.

In June Jones had opportunity to visit Nugent School at Loka where Leonard Sharland, serving temporarily as Head Master, invited him to address the Sunday service and tell about the powerful events occurring in Yambio. Jones took his own tack, launching into "an uncompromising attack on the teachers at Loka," directly accusing them of drunkenness, adultery and other sins. As at Yambio Jones called for scrupulous self examination and public confession of sin to which many teachers and students responded. Jones taught that only through personal cleansing could Christians "walk in the light" and be assured of the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Listening to the 'Inner Voice' they would enter the harmonious fellowship intended by God. Sharland was ambivalent, disquieted by Jones' accusations, but aware of "an extraordinary electrifying feeling of a presence and power dominating the place. Looking back", Sharland wrote, "I believe it was a movement of the Holy Spirit in that Church."¹⁵⁵ In the days that followed there were observable changes in those who responded:

I was struck by the obvious facial changes in some boys. Their whole appearance and bearing is changed. In conversation with various teachers and boys, as we are privileged to do, the conviction comes again and again as was remarked to me, that they are being taught deep things by the Holy Spirit. They are discerning the truth to a degree that one might almost have thought incredible.¹⁵⁶

In succeeding addresses Jones was severely critical of specific GMSM missionaries, who, he said, had betrayed their converts and failed to impart the way to true spiritual life. They lived in material affluence in contrast to Sudanese Christians, and one, he declared, had been "blinded by the devil" and was "leading the people to hell." Sharland asked Jones to continue his obviously effective ministry but to refrain from such accusations. The two ultimately came to a painful stand off, Jones declaring he would "shake the dust from his feet as a witness against Loka." Meanwhile government officials had also become concerned about Jones' influence in Yambio which had resulted in open criticism of British authority. Within less than

¹⁵⁵ Wheeler, *Sudan Revival*, 7, citing "Brief Report on events leading up to the Departure of K.J. Dallison from Loka." L Sharland, 29 June, 1938, SPP.

¹⁵⁶ L Sharland, Annual Letter, Loka, 13 Nov, 1938, SPP.

three months of his arrival, Jones voluntarily left Sudan, and behind him an unprecedented religious movement in the GSM sphere.

Sharland seems to have been vaguely aware that the very point at which he asked Jones to soften his message--criticism of European missionaries--was, in part, the source of its power. He wrote:

. . . unfortunately the message was mixed up with a lot of extreme criticism of missionaries past and present. It was all so strange and unnecessary--and yet despite this (indeed in the light of subsequent events one wonders whether it was because of this to some extent) God worked mightily.¹⁵⁷

Jones declared that every person--missionary, teacher and student--was guilty of sin and in need of repentance. For the first time in GSM history the accepted social and spiritual hierarchy of mission and church was ruthlessly levelled from within. Jones' challenge to the superiority, status and wealth of British missionaries was undoubtedly expressive of feelings until then repressed by some Sudanese Christians. For a European missionary to publicly repent, as did Arthur Riley after Jones' departure, was new and exhilarating. The Dinka teacher, Jon Majak, later wrote to Jones:

I hope God will bend some more white men and make them humble. We will try day by day and we will make some of them bend.

Describing a missionary active in the East African Revival Jon continued:

This morning a man called Dr. J. Church came from Rwanda where the great Revival has been. We saw him through and he was a man of God. He said the same thing is happening there in Rwanda, the white men are the hinderers there also in Rwanda, but they must bend down.¹⁵⁸

Missionaries had, according to Jones, led their converts astray. Rather than teaching them to respond to the unmediated power of the Holy Spirit, Sudanese Christians had been made dependent upon lifeless religious forms. At Loka Jones several times focused upon individuals, demanding that they renounce the missionaries who had taught them. For some, like the Dinka teacher, Rekoboam, this was unacceptable. He had been told,

¹⁵⁷ L Sharland, Loka to Geoffrey Earl, 20 June 1938, 2, SPP.

¹⁵⁸ Wheeler, *Sudan Revival*, 11, citing Jon Majak to Jones, 20 Oct 1938, in Miss Wedmore's File, CMSA.

. . . that he was stopping the blessing from coming to the boys. He was to confess that the Arch. [Archdeacon Shaw] had led him astray &c. He was not prepared to say this. . . . [he with two colleagues] were eager to attend the meeting and to be helped but they were not prepared to say what they did not feel.¹⁵⁹

Though missionaries were openly denounced by some Sudanese Christians in Yambio and at Loka, there is no record that this occurred among Dinka Christians. Nevertheless, individuals who had been deeply affected under Jones' brief ministry were to stimulate an unprecedented movement in Dinkaland. Among those affected by Jones' ministry, Sharland particularly noted two Dinka teachers:

The outstanding fact--and therefore the decisive one concerning the course to be taken--was that Tr. Daniel Deng had come right out and had confessed openly to drinking and pride. He agreed that he had never seen the light before &c. You can imagine how delighted I was to know of the blessing he had received . . . Jon [Majak] came out and did as Daniel had done. Neither Jones or Dallison spared him. He was put through it and warned with solemn warnings if he did not mean what he was doing. But he was determined to go through with it. I believe that both these teachers are new creations . . .¹⁶⁰

Daniel Deng Atong was the senior 'native teacher' at Loka and would three years later be one of the first Sudanese to be ordained an Anglican priest. Both he and Jon Majak had been brought up from childhood by Shaw and received early education at Malek. At Loka each now made a public confession and came into a new, subjective experience of Christianity.

The main movement among the Dinka was to emerge among the Agar in the region of Akot. With the Arnolds on furlough, Akot had gone for an extended period without missionary supervision. When Leonard Sharland accompanied Rev John Collinson, a new missionary recruit, to Akot in November, 1938, they found the station "uncared for and the spiritual life at a very low ebb." Collinson recalled:

drunkenness, dishonesty and violence were wide spread, not only among the few local Christians but also in the Church and School leadership. . . . Interest in the Gospel was almost non-existent.

Even the DC of Rumbek complained about the quality of teachers at Akot's out-schools:

¹⁵⁹ L Sharland, Loka to Geoffrey Earl, 20 June 1938, 3-4, SPP.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 2.

He reported that many were living immoral lives and were constantly drunk and lazy. He said that the teachers were more of a hindrance to our work than a help and suggested that it would be far better to close most of the Outschools, in fact he had himself already suspended teachers in one or two schools.

As a new GSM missionary among the Dinka at Akot, Collinson offered his own critique of existing methods of Christian evangelism:

Education was unwanted, and yet this was the means by which the C.M.S. hoped to reach the people. It seemed to me as a new comer, this policy was actually counter-productive with the Dinkas. Education amongst the vast majority of the Dinkas was despised and only those boys who had no cattle, were willing to go to school, hoping that by passing examinations they might get employment and so might eventually earn enough money to buy a cow.¹⁶¹

After reflection and prayer, Sharland and Collinson, decided to require all teachers to attend a 7-day 'evangelistic mission.' The schedule and forms of Anglican prayers were temporarily suspended. "By the grace of God," wrote Collinson, "a number of the teachers responded to the message and repented deeply and some others including local people, were truly saved." When the mission finished the "newly blessed" wanted to "tell others what the Lord had done" for them. With prayer they went "two by two" to witness in surrounding villages and cattle camps, beginning a practice which continued each Saturday during the following year.¹⁶²

Early in this period Jon Majak was posted to Akot as headmaster. In Collinson, a new recruit with his own experience of revival, Jon apparently met a white man who had been "bent down" by God. The two formed a remarkable partnership, "almost perfection" as Bishop Gelsthorpe described it. They preached widely together, meeting people in village, market or cattle camp, Jon often serving as interpreter for Collinson. Their message was direct and personal, focusing upon repentance from sin and "cleansing in the blood of Jesus." They encouraged "a daily walk" with Christ and encouraged an "up-to-date sinner's testimony" as an example to others. As their outreach was underway an epidemic of cerebro-spinal-meningitis broke out and the Government closed all schools in the area for several months. Even this, according to Collinson, facilitated the rapid growth of the Church since teachers

¹⁶¹ Collinson, *Church 1*.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

and missionaries were freed from educational work to move widely teaching and preaching in rural areas.

The normal congregation of 120 which met for Sunday worship and instruction at Akot increased by over 100 during each succeeding month. When the church building became too small people gathered under a large tree where numbers often exceeded 1,000. Alongside school children came young warriors and mature men and women of all ages, many of whom affirmed their allegiance to Christ.¹⁶³ The songs of Ater Bai, and other newly converted composers expressed a new basis for social solidarity and proliferated new ideas to rural areas. Much needed rains occurred in apparent response to Christian prayers, adding to belief in the efficacy of the gospel. The direct confrontation between ancestral powers, the *jak* and the new allegiance to Christ was fundamental as, "many people brought their charms and witchcraft and hashish and burned them publicly after the Sunday morning service."¹⁶⁴

Bishop Gelsthorpe compared events in Akot favourably with those of Yambio. Based upon a simple presentation of the Biblical message there had been little appeal to emotion. The use of testimony and public confession was restrained, free from Jones' strident accusations. Emphasis was more on God's grace than the threat of punishment or the promise of rewards.

When, in June, 1939, Collinson told Bill Beer, ADC Rumbek, that the "Dinka are receiving the Gospel in great number," he responded with interest but seemed unconcerned. A week later Archdeacon Shaw came from Juba with an urgent message from Provincial Governor Martin Parr, made all the more emphatic by his arrival at 3:00 am in the midst of rainy season. Missionaries were informed that the Governor was concerned for their safety. The movement of evangelistic teams in rural Dinka areas must cease since, it was warned, these "might lead to us being murdered."¹⁶⁵ The Governor, alert to the disruptive potential in any large 'native' gathering, was fearful of 'revival' at Akot. Across the Equatorial border Belgian

¹⁶³ A M Gelsthorpe, 26 April, 1939 (SAD G/S992).

¹⁶⁴ Collinson, *Church* 3.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 4.

authorities were struggling to suppress the prophetic movement which sprang from the brief ministry of Simon Kimbongu, originally a Baptist Mission catechist. Only recently the Jones revival had unleashed resentment against the British in Yambio.

Nor was a religious *cum* political rising among the Agar far from living memory. In 1921 the sudden appearance of a 'sacred lake' near Kor Lait in the vicinity of Akot, had drawn large numbers of pilgrims from the Dinka and neighbouring peoples as far away as Nuer. Word spread that the lake was a manifestation of Kajo, a messianic figure of Agar legend, who would bring an age of prosperity. Tension mounted as indigenous prophets predicted the imminent end of British rule and notions of revolt began to stir. Only when the DC, V H Fergusson, entered the lake to offer a sacrifice as an emissary of the government, were the crowds dispersed. Leaders of the rising were later arrested and a patrol of the area mounted.¹⁶⁶ The Governor recalled these and similar events when he moved to discourage mass gatherings at Akot. While Agar elders would have remembered the mass assemblies at Kor Lait there is nothing to suggest political motivations underlying the services at Akot 18 years later.

By October attendance began to decline and conversions occurred more slowly. For some Dinka a period of consolidation began while others withdrew. Christian nurture could be sustained at school centres but many young rural Christians lacked teaching, encouragement and organised worship. Scripture portions were scarce, few could read, and those who could were usually schoolboys who lacked maturity. Collinson's transfer to Lui early in 1940 was further a loss to the Dinka 'revival,' felt most acutely by his colleague Jon Majak. Misunderstandings and resentment developed with succeeding missionaries and Jon gradually withdrew from Christian leadership. In 1941 "revival activities" such as regular Bible study and early morning prayer services continued, but varied widely, "in accordance with the enthusiasm or irresponsibility of the out-school teachers."¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶ V H Fergusson, 'The Holy Lake of the Dinka,' *SNR*, V, (1922) 163-6. It is noteworthy that, amidst the growth of the church during the 1980s, Kajo has occasionally been termed a 'Black Messiah,' a type of Christ who anticipated the Christian Gospel among the Agar. Rev Abraham Mayom, interviewed, Nairobi, Sept 1992.

¹⁶⁷ Gelsthorpe, 'Impressions of Akot,' 1941, SPP.

One of the most disturbing events during the missionary era at Akot was a violent feud which erupted between Agar and Bor Dinka during 1948, resulting in the imprisonment of 15 of Akot's teachers and teacher trainees. The school received censure from government authorities who cancelled exams, and from the Bishop who refused confirmations. It was a young Dinka divinity student, Mordekai Amol, who helped to re-establish order and encouraged repentance and reconciliation on the order of the Abalokole revival then flourishing in Uganda.¹⁶⁸

Though the vitality of the Church at Akot was to fluctuate widely in succeeding years it remained an important Christian centre. During some periods congregations regularly reached 500 in the beautifully designed Church of the Holy Redeemer, consecrated in 1943 and built largely with voluntary labour.¹⁶⁹ Most apparent were the Christian celebrations which drew people in their thousands, traditionalists and Christian alike, to several days of dancing and feasting, set around the annual Christmas worship service.

On the East Bank less dynamic but equally important events were set in motion by the ministry of Daniel Deng Atong. Following events at Loka he was sent to Malek where, assisted by a Loka school boy, Mark Mothe, he began a wide ranging preaching mission. Sizeable numbers among the Bor and neighbouring Dinka assembled, many professing Christian faith and within several years church congregations at Malek had quadrupled.

Daniel's preaching was apparently simple and biblical. Later he described how he began with Old Testament stories of the creation and fall, the flood and concepts of sacrifice. This led to Jesus as "the Lamb of God Who laid down His life as a sacrifice for mankind," a subject which evoked many questions from rural Dinka. Coming to perceive themselves as lost sheep in need of a Saviour, wrote Daniel, they were "led to repentance and faith in Christ as their only Saviour from sin."¹⁷⁰ Of

¹⁶⁸ B de Saram, 'Report for 1949,' *SSMB* 13, (May 1950): 8-11. Mordekai was attending the CMS Divinity School, Bishop Gwynne College. Opened on a small scale at Yei in 1939, it was moved to Mundri in 1947. Most indigenous clergy received training there until it was closed due to civil war during the 1960s.

¹⁶⁹ Gelsthorpe, 'Akot.' Designed by Arnold the thatched church drew admiration from Dinka and Europeans alike. Destroyed during the 1960s, churches have several times been rebuilt on the site.

¹⁷⁰ D Deng, 'The Church of Christ in the Sudan,' *SDR* 11 (Oct-Dec, 1951): 3-5.

central importance was the fact that these were Dinka evangelists speaking with the enthusiasm and authority of personal experience. Several months later Donald Casson, a new missionary at Malek, recorded that,

A rich young youth, of very wealthy family, asked to come and learn at school at Malek, as there is no out-school yet in his district; and others have since followed his example until there are now twelve, all of them sons of chiefs or headmen. I have provided a sleeping dormitory, a class-room and a teacher and they have to provide all their own food and have brought their own cows to school with them.¹⁷¹

This appears to be the earliest instance in which young men from wealthy and respected Dinka families spontaneously sought entry into school on the East Bank.¹⁷² Daniel's authoritative preaching had apparently won new respect for education and for the church across the strata of Dinka society.

By 1943 Daniel's ministry had extended 100 miles north to the area of Duk Faiwil where Casson reported an 'awakening' in which 180 people stated their desire to become 'learners.' The majority of those entering the church at Duk were, remarkably, "old men and women and leaders of the people." Among them were Chief Deng Malual, three subchiefs, two policemen and several "spirit leaders." Nearly 100 women and girls attended Church gatherings in an area where, a year previously, none were present. Like converts at Malek, those at Duk burnt their *tim jak*, the wooden posts signifying *jak*, and some spontaneously destroyed the prominent shrine of the *jok*, Alier.¹⁷³

On visiting Duk the local DC was angered to find traditional religion undermined with the destruction of an important shrine. He berated local leaders and undermined the teachings of Christian school boys, observing that not all Europeans believed notions such as "a Day of Judgment and hell fire for unbelievers." Chief Deng Malual had, according to Casson, assumed that government and mission were unanimous in their disapproval of ancestral religion. Surprised that their actions did not meet with the DC's approval, the chief and his colleagues were "upset and

¹⁷¹ D I Casson Circular Letter, Juba 26, April, 1939, (DA G/S992). D I Casson served at Malek and Akot from 1938 to 1944.

¹⁷² The intervention of D Cs in recruitment of students had previously been necessary. L Sharland, Annual Letter, Malek, 23 Sept 1940. SPP.

¹⁷³ Women and girls had previously stayed away from gatherings for fear of abduction. D T Casson, Circular letter from Malek, 10th Dec, 1943, CCL.

wavering," apprehensive lest their authority be diminished. Challenges of another sort arose from the *buany jak* who predicted poor harvests and disease if Christians neglected their ancestral *jak*.

By mid 1944 the situation had settled. Three chiefs of the area were among those baptised and serving as Christian leaders.¹⁷⁴ Bishop Gelsthorpe, on a confirmation tour at Duk and Kongor described "a real awakening among these Dinka tribesmen. It is nothing emotional, but is a stirring deep down in the soul."¹⁷⁵ However, when two of the chiefs died Daniel wrote that, "The death of these two men has shaken the faith of quite a number of their believing relatives, and many have either given up their faith altogether or just gone cold."¹⁷⁶ Nevertheless, others were "going on strong and fearless in spite of all these sad and discouraging events." Preaching was conducted regularly among crowds assembled at the chiefs' courts and new Christians marched through villages singing vernacular choruses. At Kongor a number of former policemen and soldiers, were baptised, and by 1951 baptised Christians numbered 1,000.¹⁷⁷

This model of 'revival' became the hope of GSM missionaries in Dinkaland: "Revival or bust," cried missionary Brian de Saram in 1952 as he called supporters to prayer.¹⁷⁸ However, no equivalent movement would be forthcoming until years after the last missionary had departed. Within two decades all but a minority of those who had claimed Christian conversion, many of whom are remembered by the songs they composed, had returned to ancestral loyalties. These events suggest the complex social, political and religious currents which surrounded Christian conversion among the Dinka. Neither of the movements on Dinka soil was sparked primarily by direct missionary initiative. Essential was the authority and enthusiasm of Dinka lay Christians.

¹⁷⁴ Chief Deng e Malwal of Nyarweng composed *Diet ke Jieng*, song 49; his son Jokgaak de Deng, 51; and daughter-in-law, Nyaroor de Duoot, 45, 46 and 47. For English translations of two songs see DJ46 and DJ49 in the Appendix.

¹⁷⁵ D T Casson, 1 June, 1944, CCL, quoting Gelsthorpe. These were Deng Malwal and Ajak Majok of Maar.

¹⁷⁶ D Deng in *SSMB* 4, (June, 1947).

¹⁷⁷ D Deng, 'The Church of Christ in the Sudan,' *SDR* 11 (Oct-Dec, 1951): 3-5.

¹⁷⁸ B de Saram, Panekar, Letter, 11 Jan 1952; 'Report for 1949,' *SSMB* 13 (May 1950).

At Loka Jones' aggressive demand for repentance had brought Daniel and Jon to a new experience of their individual responsibility before God, unmediated by missionary 'parents.' Since both had grown up in the mission compound Jones' challenge presented the first opportunity to acknowledge the doubts they held about missionary superiority.¹⁷⁹ The mission hierarchy had been 'levelled,' and each man underwent his own intense reappréhension of faith expressed in public confession. In Collinson Jon Majak subsequently met a young missionary with whom he could work as an equal, a white man "bent by God." Remarkably, Collinson is the only British missionary who wrote of the Dinka, "we found them loving and responsive to our preaching." The Dinka had always resented any person who came among them purporting to be superior. The new-found authority of the young teachers, and the unprecedented collegiality between Dinka and Briton played their part in validating the Christian Gospel for many Dinka.

For years Sharland had lamented the motivations which drew the Dinka to him, all of which fell short of the gospel of Christ. Because he was known as *ran Nhialic*, a 'person of God,' they at first asked him to bring rain in the manner of the *beny bith*, or believed that the presence of the mission station helped to sustain the rains. His application of medicines at the dispensary was, for the same reason, believed to be efficacious.¹⁸⁰ As the benefits of the government were understood Dinka came to request *waraka*, a 'paper,' written notes which might serve to open administrative doors. With typical adulation they said, to Sharland's chagrin, *yin aril*, 'you have the power.' It was *not* this sort of power he wanted them to seek.¹⁸¹ Nor was conversion to be encouraged if it was primarily to win the approval of the DC whose objectives were initially thought synonymous with those of the missionaries.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁹ Critiquing the authority wielded by CMS missionaries J Malou observed that, "A man without this sense of equality is not considered among Dinka to be a man of God, *Ace ran Nhialic*. A man of God does not discriminate against his fellow men nor is he selective in choosing favourites, but receives people as they are." *Priesthood*, 86.

¹⁸⁰ L Sharland, missionary notes, undated, SPP.

¹⁸¹ L Sharland, Annual Letter, August, 1955, SPP.

¹⁸² Mac Maika, a native of Bor area, says that by the 1960s traditional Dinka, upon seeing a European, would commonly ask if he was an *abuna* or *ran akuma*, a clergyman or government official, the former deserving higher respect.

The 15 songs deriving from the 'revival,' published in 1941, reveal the degree to which uniquely Christian concepts were newly apprehended among unschooled rural Dinka. Here a rich, innovative Christological vocabulary was integrated with indigenous imagery. Many are exhortations calling fellow Dinka to leave *yanhduon*, your divinity and its shrine, turn from darkness and follow Christ. He is the one who brings life and peace, who drives away the *jak* and unites the peoples of the earth. These were important advances, but with few indigenous leaders of the calibre or conviction of Daniel and Jon, the ancestral *jak* would soon reassert their authority.

3. The rise and decline of mission education

Since mission schools had proved capable of providing basic vernacular education at low cost to the Condominium Government, it was, by the late 1930s, planned that their services be extended through increased subsidies and supervision. Still, many officials, committed to 'indirect rule' in the South were fearful of disrupting existing social institutions. Some doubted the long range benefits of formal education and certainly of Christian evangelism among Southern peoples. Throughout the 1930s lack of commitment to academic standards, complicated by the contradictions of 'Southern Policy,' resulted in low-level and poorly funded mission schools guided by erratic educational policies. When the first survey of Southern education was conducted in 1935-36 CMS received severe criticism, to some degree made a scapegoat for governmental ineptitude.¹⁸³

Only in the late 1930s did the government begin to formulate a comprehensive plan for Southern education. With it came requirements for trained missionary educationists, and offers of increased financial incentives. CMS missionaries affirmed that they would "co-operate with the Government to see that the new education drive is essentially Christian."¹⁸⁴ The overwhelming focus on raising academic standards and expanding educational structures helped to secure a place for

¹⁸³ The Anglo-Egyptian Government used 'Indirect rule' to describe its doctrine from the 1920s whereby authority was, so far as possible, exerted through the persons and institutions of indigenous society. Officially imposed between 1930-42 'Southern Policy' restricted the influence of Islam and Arabic upon Southern Sudan, while encouraging indigenous social institutions and allowing for the educational efforts of Christian missions. Sanderson (1981) 111, 121-4, 211.

¹⁸⁴ L Sharland, 29 Dec 1945, SPP.

the CMS under British rule, but it would not have won Shaw's favour during the preceding CMS regime. With 40 GSM missionaries in Sudan in 1945, numbers of expatriate staff were reaching their peak.

Three new Dinka stations were among those founded during this period. In 1941 Leonard Sharland asked a young teacher, Nikanora Aciengkuc Deng, if he would help assist in founding a station among the Gok Dinka, a region where two of Akot's sparsely supervised out-schools already existed. Nikanora had been converted through Daniel Deng, educated at Malek and Loka, and proven himself a gifted evangelist with special commitment to 'unreached areas.' Despite a cut in wages and a degree of hardship Nikanora accepted the challenge.

The mission was sited near the Gel River at the edge of the *toic*. From here they trekked out in twos together with their 'houseboys' to give open air services and evangelise. In Sharland's absence Nikanora continued a pattern of three day evangelistic missions in outlying areas. Gradually a community of believers was gathered, among them the local chief, who, with his son, were among the first intake of new students. Work went more slowly than was hoped but in four years the station had a cluster of permanent buildings with 60 student boarders.

New work was also envisioned among the Ciec and Atuot Dinka, which, since Lau was abandoned, had been served solely by out-schools. At the end of 1947 Arthur Riley was transferred from Yambio with an assistant, Yisai Morangi, to develop a new site at Panekar, 47 miles from Akot on the banks of Lake Yirol. Near District Headquarters at Yirol, the local prison and hospital provided added scope for ministry. Workers were not easily obtained and frequent strikes slowed progress. During the first year famine was a further impediment, and cattle wars amongst rival clans threatened stability. Nevertheless, a four mile approach road and a cluster of *tukhls* were completed. Early worship services, attended by a mixture of local residents, were conducted in Zande and Dinka, and a boarding school was soon functioning with 50 boys.

In 1950 Panekar, with its central location, became home of the 'Dinka Education Centre,' transferred from Akot. "The strategic secret of evangelising a tribe

is the training of teachers" wrote its director, the Rev Brian de Saram.¹⁸⁵ Still, it was already becoming clear that evangelistic zeal was not the primary motivation for many young men who, having attended mission schools, had few options for further advancement. With 32 teachers in training at Akot in 1948 more aspiring teachers were coming forward than the mission could cope with.

At Panekar still another attempt was made to provide education for Dinka girls and women. For three decades sporadic attempts had not overcome Dinka resistance. Relying on the bride wealth received for their daughters parents did not want them spoiled by alien influences. Even young literate men declared their preference for conservative village girls.¹⁸⁶ For the missionaries, however, there existed a worrying pattern which saw hopeful, educated Christian men "fall back" from Christian faith once they married village girls. Reflected Bishop Gelsthorpe: "Until this is solved the efforts to produce Christian life in boys and men are almost like trying to teach birds to fly with only one wing."¹⁸⁷ Beginning in 1950 Monica McClintock enrolled 12 Dinka women, instructing them in sewing, literacy and Bible study. Successes were meagre, however, and her efforts were soon subsumed within the government school for girls at Tonj.

Among the Agar Dinka the town of Rumbek, 30 miles North of Akot in the CMS sphere, was emerging as a prominent administrative centre. At the request of local Christians CMS began educational work with its 'Protestant Christian School' in 1944. Four years later the government's first Southern secondary school was opened, an inter-ethnic English language institution with an excellent academic standard. Extending their influence, the Catholics established their first Sudanese Bishop, Ereneo Dud, at Rumbek in 1950. Catholic education developed rapidly and by 1955 the town was endowed with six schools. To the frustration of GSM missionaries new policies demanded that children desiring catechetical instruction present a written letter from their parents designating which denomination was to instruct them.

¹⁸⁵ B de Saram, *SSMB* 8 (11 April 1948). B de Saram, *SSMB* 13, (May 1950).

¹⁸⁶ L Sharland, 29 Dec 1945, *SPP*.

¹⁸⁷ Gelsthorpe, 'Malek.' Miss M McClintock, Panekar, *SSMB* 17 (Sept 1951).

CMS was anxious to maintain its influence and accepted a government invitation to appoint a Protestant missionary chaplain at the Secondary School. An active schedule of chapel services, prayer meetings and hymn-sings soon complemented Scripture Union and Christian Endeavour programmes. As elsewhere, progress was slow and meetings poorly attended, one Chaplain writing that, "spiritual coldness seemed to lie over all." Some students felt Christian meetings were "'a waste of time' that they did not come to this school to preach or to be preached at!"¹⁸⁸ Nevertheless Rumbek grew in prominence as base for a new Dinka Rural Deanery, with Sharland appointed its first Rural Dean in 1952. Ministry was further extended with the consecration of St Barnabas Church and appointment of two 'rural evangelists,' Enok Marial and Nikanora, to work among the Western Dinka.¹⁸⁹

While the development of new stations and out-schools was encouraging for GSM missionaries, the hope for the future was founded upon indigenous leadership, primarily from among trained teachers. Still, the formation of these leaders was faltering. In 1952 Brian de Saram expressed the sentiments of his colleagues when he asked Mission supporters to,

. . . pray for revival among Dinka teachers. We have about 50 trained teachers now, led by two splendid Dinka pastors, and on them rest our hopes for the evangelisation of the tribe and the building up of the Church. The all too common tendency is for the teachers to slump into mere school routine and not function spiritually. Every such man is useless to the Church.¹⁹⁰

The expectations placed upon teachers often proved unrealistic. Missionaries wanted them to be morally irreproachable, untainted by materialism or 'paganism' and avid evangelists. Rural people often expected them to respect traditional mores and provide free and immediate access to the amenities of mission and town. Still, many, being of low social standing, were afforded little respect in the village. Having undergone a degree of cultural conditioning in Western style schools they were themselves often unable or unwilling to accommodate the intensely held values of rural Dinka. Lamenting the teacher's plight Sharland wrote:

¹⁸⁸ Noel White, Rumbek Secondary School *SSMB* 4 (Autumn 1953).

¹⁸⁹ L Sharland, Rumbek, (24 June, 1954) *SSMB* 6.

¹⁹⁰ B de Saram, CMS Panekar, Letter, 11 Jan 1952.

Few of the people want him or his school in any real measure. He has opposition of a wearing kind from older people and more often than is realized from chiefs. Some have compromised themselves in order to gain the favour of the chief, but others stand their ground and have a miserable time.¹⁹¹

It became policy that the chief should demonstrate his support by seeing that a teacher's house was built prior to his arrival. This did not, however, ensure that local leaders would not, within months, feel themselves threatened by the newcomer.¹⁹² As negligible as a lone teacher, his out-school and church might appear, his underlying agenda of innovation challenged the existing order.

In the perception of missionaries, 'materialism' posed a major threat to the faith and integrity of young Dinka teachers. If the first students at Malek were enticed into school by promise of a cow, it was, more than missionaries wanted to admit, the hope of cattle purchased through their earnings that kept them there. Salaries were meagre, but they were the best hope for young men from poor families. Until the government assumed responsibility for education in the mid 1940s CMS paid the salaries of its 'native teachers'.¹⁹³ When new government policies ensured that their salaries were aligned with those of government employees, Sharland wrote anxiously,

It will be increasingly difficult to assure that the aim of a candidate is primarily for the evangelising of his people and already in some cases it has been quite remote from his intention."¹⁹⁴

It was not merely the desire for wealth but the need to marry that became the obsession of many young men. To be a man with a future in Dinka society was to marry and produce children. A bride price, paid in cattle, could take years to obtain. At their stations missionaries complained that "The constant pre-occupation of teachers and other employees in the necessary search for cattle is a serious drag on work." Apart from his salary, the institutions of mission, church and school were impotent in helping a young teacher as he faced the social and legal demands of Dinka society surrounding marriage, demands potent enough to divert him from the

¹⁹¹ L Sharland, *SSMB* 4, (June, 1947).

¹⁹² D T Casson, 1 Aug 1944, CCL.

¹⁹³ L Sharland, Malek to Mr. Coad, 13 Feb 1940 SPP. Here salaries for two teachers were directly linked to an English Parish Church.

¹⁹⁴ L Sharland, 11 Sept 1947, SPP.

spiritual commitments of his younger years. Some young men, unable to obtain cattle, indulged in pre-marital sex, 'irregularities' that often saw them severed from church and mission. Some overthrew the ethics of the church along with those of Dinka elders, as they attempted to secure a wife by making a girl pregnant and accepting the consequences.¹⁹⁵ Even as the missionary era drew to an end Sharland grieved that "we have so far failed to convince Dinka Christians about the Christian view of marriage."¹⁹⁶

With talk of Sudanese independence and Sudanisation in the early 1950s, there was a rapid reduction in GSM missionary personnel and increasing reliance on Sudanese teachers. In 1954 it was hoped that Africa Inland Mission might provide European staff for Gel and Akot but they proved unsuccessful.¹⁹⁷ The surge in GSM education work among the Dinka lasted little more than a decade and by the end of that time grave doubts were arising as to its role in Mission strategy and evangelism.¹⁹⁸ Between 1954 and his departure in 1958 Leonard Sharland was the only CMS missionary remaining among the Dinka. Then living in Rumbek, he was discouraged to see considerable numbers of former mission students utterly ill equipped for life in either town or village. He described how,

... again and again I come across backslidden Christians either permanently living in the town or here for a visit. There are the eternally job-hunting ex-schoolboys, discontented and undernourished and getting more useless every day. What can we do with them? Their complaint is that they were not allowed to go on to the next grade of education. We have failed to accomplish at the lower level of education what we and the Government set out to do, i.e. devise an elementary course of two years in the village schools which would turn out enlightened better village folk. Instead almost all of them leave the villages and fall between two stools. There are also the casual labour type and a few who

¹⁹⁵ L Sharland, Annual Letter, 1946, SPP.

¹⁹⁶ L Sharland, Annual Letter 10 Aug, 1953, SPP.

¹⁹⁷ L Sharland, Annual Letter, 11 Sept 1954, SPP.

¹⁹⁸ Having been forced to withdraw two missionaries, G Watt-Wyness and B de Saram, Bishop Allison made a belated plea for three new "pastoral missionaries, pioneer types, real evangelists and ready to rough it," and funding of £6,000 to support 'the Dinka Missionary Project': "We believe this is a new challenge to us to make a new approach to the Dinka in the presentation of the Gospel, where we have to recognise the failure of the mainly educational approach of the past to win the Dinka people apart from the school children." The days for such British initiatives were, however, nearing their end. O Allison to E M Bickersteth, 30 Nov 1955 (SAD G/S1013).

seem to keep themselves on trading in a small way with the aid, sometimes of a bicycle. Also of course there are those with good jobs who have settled down in the new, materialistic, paganism which in other forms is found everywhere today

199
...

Of greatest concern were the disenfranchised school boys for whom nobody took responsibility. Unwilling to share in the manual labour required in the village, most had no place with their families. Without work or money they were embittered against a system which offered no hope of further advancement.²⁰⁰ Sharland was at times startled, "confronted with demands, brazen rudeness, where it used to be deferential asking & respect." At the end of 20 years of promoting education among the Dinka, he wrote of how, "African social life and custom" had been undermined by schools on the western pattern.²⁰¹ Most disheartening was the fact that so few had passed through these schools with any residual sign of a living Christian faith.

Furthermore, Islam was again offering a bold alternative to Christianity, even in terms of education. In earlier decades Shaw had been one of the strongest missionary voices calling upon Condominium authorities to exclude Muslim influences from Southern Sudan. GSM missionaries had unanimously maintained the hope for a Christian South, some believing that the Dinka would ultimately serve as a barrier to Southward Islamic penetration. In 1940 Edward Arnold offered his reasons for rejecting a transfer to Nigeria:

If work among the Dinkas is prosecuted effectively and with determination, the Dinkas can be won for Christ and a permanent barrier created to prevent the spread of Islam amongst the less stable peoples of the South. If work amongst the Dinkas is relaxed or weakened at this time they will be lost and the story of the Nuba Mountains will be repeated with infinitely more disastrous consequences. The destiny of the Dinkas will probably be settled within the next fifteen or twenty years. At the moment the tide is running strongly for Christ. We must not miss the tide.²⁰²

By the 1950s it appeared the tide was turning yet again, as illustrated by an incident reported several times in missionary writings. During a visit to the Government

¹⁹⁹ L Sharland, Annual Letter, Aug, 1955, SPP. A decade earlier government officials like J B Bowers had complained that mission "intermediate schools are returning too many waste products to the Upper Nile". In his eyes there was arising a "sceptical anti-tribal "intelligentsia," "the result of giving a purely literary education to boys without breeding, character, or tribal status . . .", J B Bowers, 'Note on Individual Missions,' 1942, private paper of author, 5.

²⁰⁰ L Sharland Annual Letter, 11 Sept 1954, SPP.

²⁰¹ L Sharland, 'Is the Mission Field still a Priority?,' undated, mid 1950s?, SPP.

²⁰² . E Arnold, Akot, to HD Hooper, CMS London, 5 March, 1940, SPP.

Headquarters at Wau, Sharland was asked to come to the office of the Acting DC, a Northern Sudanese, on "a matter of religion." According to new Government policy his verification was required for three boys, all products of mission schools, who wanted "to change their religion." With strict impartiality Sharland was allowed what time he needed to persuade the boys. De Saram recorded their response:

'We came from the cattle camps to your schools,' they said. 'We have failed to qualify for a place in secondary school. We have failed to find employment. We will not return to the cattle camps. We believe it will be to our advantage to become Moslems, and we wish to do so.'

Sharland tried to dissuade them but finally signed the appropriate papers and the 'conversion' was complete. His own conviction was that 'bait' in the form of promises of further education in Egypt had been given the boys. Increasingly lads of Anglican background were converting to Islam or Roman Catholicism, depending on the enticements set before them.²⁰³

E. The emergence of an indigenous Dinka Church

1. Conflicts between culture and Church

In 1953 there remained four centres of Anglican work among the Dinka: Malek, Akot and Panekar with Rumbek as headquarters for the Dinka Rural Deanery. Extending from each were small churches attached to out-schools unevenly supported by teacher-evangelists. As momentum toward independence and nationalised education accelerated CMS missionaries withdrew. By 1955 only Sharland remained in Dinkaland, worried about the shortage of trained and committed Christian leaders.²⁰⁴

Authority was devolving to three well-proven but over-extended Dinka clergy. Daniel Deng Atong, as the senior pastor, was one of the first two Sudanese to be ordained. He and Anderia Apaya, a Moru, had entered the Anglican priesthood in 1943. Nikanora Aciengkuc Deng was the second Dinka to be ordained in 1950,

²⁰³ L Sharland, Annual Letter, 10 Aug 1953, SPP; retold by Brian de Saram, 'Bewildering change,' *Outlook*, *SSMB*, 2/5, (Spring 1954).

²⁰⁴ L Sharland, Annual Letter, 11 Sept 1954, SPP.

followed by Enok Riak Magai in 1953.²⁰⁵ Alongside them were respected lay people with years of service in the company of GSM missionaries. After 24 years with the Dinka Sharland was aware of the potential:

When the Dinka responds he is among the best African products. Intellectually, he is ahead of most of the surrounding tribes and some of our finest Christians in the Southern Sudan are Dinkas. He is a prize worth striving for.²⁰⁶

Still, he acknowledged that, of the four CMS areas in Southern Sudan, the Dinka Rural Deanery was "our weakest point and as yet we have not found the right way to deal with it." When a 'Peoples' Movement' drew numerous Equatorians into the Church during 1956 he grieved that Dinkaland remained untouched, a "largely unevangelised" region.²⁰⁷ Observing the deficiencies of the Dinka Church he wrote, "We ought by now to have a self supporting church bearing the main responsibility for evangelism and shepherding of its own people . . . [but it] has not begun to do either thing effectually."²⁰⁸ The appointment of Rev Yairo Baale, sent by the Church in Uganda, to take charge at Akot, emphasised the severe lack of Dinka clergy.²⁰⁹

The conflicts experienced by Dinka Christians often intensified rather than diminished as they grew older. Parents were pressured by relatives to conform in two areas of Dinka tradition. First, a husband and father was expected to establish a shrine in his homestead where he could offer sacrifices to his ancestral *jok* for the protection of his family. If, as a Christian, he refused and mishap occurred, he came under severe censure by the very relatives upon whom he was dependent. The first baptised convert, Jon Aruor, often wavered between the prohibitions of the Church and expectations of his relatives. In 1938 Sharland observed how, as an old man, intensely grieved over the death of his wife, Jon had "gone back to heathen practices," as would many who followed him.²¹⁰

²⁰⁵ By 1950 twelve Sudanese Anglican clergy had been ordained, according to ethnic group: 5 Zande, 2 Moru, 3 Bari, 2 Dinka, no Nuer. "The Church in the Sudan," *SSMB* 13, (May 1950) 20-9.

²⁰⁶ L Sharland, Undated letter, 1950s?, SPP. Daniel was ordained in an English service in Juba while Nikanora and Enok were ordained in Dinka services at Rumbek.

²⁰⁷ L Sharland, "Southern Sudan Christian Council, CMS Report", undated; about 1956, SPP.

²⁰⁸ L Sharland, Annual Letter, 25 Sept 1956, SPP.

²⁰⁹ Yairo Baale and his wife worked at Akot for some five years. O Allison described him as "a 'real' missionary, and may well prove to be the Lord's gift to the Dinka work there, for this new day." O Allison, Khartoum to L Sharland, London, 8 Sept 1958, SPP.

²¹⁰ L Sharland, Annual Letter, Loka, 13 Nov 1938, SPP.

The second area of conflict concerned polygamy. Many Dinka Christians had been school children when they made their pre-baptismal promises. As adults they often experienced extreme pressure to take additional wives either to increase the wealth and prestige of their families or to satisfy the needs of a deceased brother in 'levirate marriage'.²¹¹ Daniel Deng wrote that:

. . . the greatest difficulty to the young converts is the problem of not having more than one wife. This, more than anything else has caused some to doubt, and even go back to their old life. But the Christian law of monogamy has been enforced, although it means being hard with the present generation, in the knowledge that it will make it easier for the next. Those who find it very hard are the Chiefs and sons of Chiefs and those who are rich.²¹²

In enforcing the biblical norm of monogamy among baptised Christians who wished to remain in communion with the Church, Sharland was assisted by faithful Christians who "would keep a watchful eye upon marriage irregularities and try to get things straight before reporting the matter to me . . ." ²¹³ There were severe disappointments as the years progressed. Philip Garang, for decades the indispensable companion of Shaw and supervisor at Malek, took three wives, one of them a Muslim. Paul Nul, who had grown up under Sharland's care, married four wives. John Majak, evangelist, later turned politician, took as many as twelve wives.²¹⁴

Such 'temptations' aside, missionaries found it extremely difficult to persuade Dinka Christians to "share with their pagan countrymen the gospel which has enlightened them."²¹⁵ The annual CMS 'Week of Witness' met with little success in Dinkaland: "there seems to be an almost impregnable barrier to be surmounted

²¹¹ A popular joke told among the Agar Dinka described an adult catechumen responding to questions in preparation for baptism. Having promised obedience to each of several requirements the man was asked, "Will you remain faithful to only one wife as long as you both shall live?" After a long pause he asked for several days to consider his answer.

²¹² D Deng, 'Report on Kongor and Duk Area,' 1944, SPP.

²¹³ L Sharland, Panekar, Report, 1949, SPP. In 1946 Bishop Allison confronted the D C regarding a ruling of the Chiefs' Court regarding Elithabeth Yuranok, a Christian girl of Akot who was "being forced to marry against the rules of her religion" a polygamous non Christian. Daughter of Ana Ciliping, a "respected Christian and church worker." E H Nightingale, D C Lakes, Decision of Court; Nov, 1946. Allison, Juba, Jan 1947; Minute of Diocesan Council (SAD, G/S1013).

²¹⁴ Accounts could be multiplied. Gordon Ayom, Shaw's second adoptive 'son' married a second wife, divorced and remarried a Muslim. As a prominent Southern politician with a Christian background this was much applauded in the Muslim community. Some, like the evangelist Mordekai Amol, married a second wife but in 1957 divorced her, hoping to return to church work. M Amol in Jalle to L Sharland, May, 1958, SPP.

²¹⁵ L Sharland, 'Is the Mission Field still a Priority?' undated, mid 50s?, SPP.

before they will go and talk to non-Christians with the definite intention of winning them for Christ".²¹⁶ Sharland conjectured as to this lack of initiative:

There are vast areas as yet unevangelised - cattle camps (where the real Dinka are), towns and rural areas; some schools and groups along the river bank. - and the sad thing is that almost no concern exists for these other sheep among the considerable number of Dinka Christians. Why is this? Largely I think because they themselves are only partially Christian. Our pastoral care and instruction have not gone nearly deep enough. . . . They are bound hand and foot by the insidious chain of economic circumstances and material advantage.²¹⁷

Sharland's often bleak analysis extended beyond evangelism to secular innovation:

Those who are educated and in jobs are restless and impatient and dis-satisfied. They complain that progress is too slow and yet most of them are not in the least bit concerned about the conservatism and blindness of their people.²¹⁸

Undeniably there were committed Dinka Christians with an impulse to influence their kinsmen, but they were aware, even more than the missionaries, of the resistance they could face. Through education, evangelism and 'revival' notions of Christianity had proliferated throughout rural areas. Many people had by this time developed strong opinions about the Church and its intolerance of their traditions. Educated Dinka who tried to serve as innovators among their rural kinsman could be interrogated and ridiculed in a manner more severe than that experienced by European aliens.

Nearing the end of the missionary era Dinka Christians still appeared reluctant to assume responsibility for support of their churches and clergy. From Shaw's time efforts were made to teach the principles of tithing, giving a tenth of one's income, to the Church. Noting a deficiency in this area during his 1940 visit to Malek, Bishop Gelsthorpe asked that it be made a priority at all stations.²¹⁹ Still, by paying the salaries of teachers and pastors, CMS had set a precedent which was difficult to alter. In 1954 Sharland was frustrated that Christians not only failed to evangelise, but generally refused any work for the church unless they received some remuneration.²²⁰

As responsibility devolved to indigenous leaders and Western missionaries foresaw increasing government restrictions, it was felt all the more urgent to exploit

²¹⁶ L Sharland, Rumbek, *SSMB* 6 (24 June, 1954).

²¹⁷ L Sharland, "Southern Sudan Christian Council, CMS Report", undated, about 1956, SPP.

²¹⁸ L Sharland, undated, SPP.

²¹⁹ Gelsthorpe, 'Akot.' Daniel Deng reported that tithing was increasing at Malek, D Deng in *SSMB* 4, (June, 1947).

²²⁰ L Sharland, Annual Letter, 11 Sept, 1954, SPP.

new opportunities for consolidating the Church. After a tour of Bor area Sharland met with church leaders who agreed that the 'pastoral centre' should be transferred from Malek to the rapidly expanding District Headquarters at Bor. Since a site needed to be acquired Sharland was ambivalent:

... we have not yet got to the stage where expansion like this can be placed on the shoulders of the Church. The fact is that they are not yet, despite concerted and long effort on the part of those of us who are leaders in the Dinka Church, able to pay their way. The tension is between sticking to the principle of self support (no money then no advance) and seizing new opportunities while they last. "The night cometh when (perhaps) no man can work."²²¹

When Sharland left Sudan in 1959 church finances remained an unresolved and controversial issue. In the memory of Dinka churchmen present at the time, Sharland left a mere 42 piastres in Church accounts at Rumbek, for them a cruel indication of the abandonment of the Dinka Church.²²² During the years that followed Dinka clergy, left largely to their faith and their own devices, suffered considerable hardships. Church treasurer of the Rural Deanery, Yithak Lual, reported that,

... our Parishes have all failed to pay the Pastors their shares . . . This question of money is disturbing all the Dinka pastors, in this area such that they do not devote themselves fully to pastoral work, but they have to look after themselves at times in order to get their daily living by means of cultivation, looking for cattle and perhaps doing carpentry work, etc.²²³

Poverty combined with other factors to undermine the morale of clergy. Pastors, like other prominent Christians, were perceived by many rural Dinka as primary benefactors of the new, educated society of the mission station and town. They received salaries and had direct access to European authority, at times serving as mediators for their kinsfolk. Yet, unlike wealthy Dinka, clergy could not amass large herds of cattle. When the missionaries departed, both salaries and informal assistance were terminated and pastors were left genuinely impoverished.²²⁴

²²¹ L Sharland, Annual Letter, 10 Aug, 1953, SPP.

²²² Interview with Gordon Muortat-Mayen and Bishop N Garang in London, July, 1992.

²²³ Yithak W Lual to L Sharland, letter, 4 August, 1959, SPP.

²²⁴ Many lay Christians in Equatoria had become accustomed to tithing and cultivated voluntarily in church gardens for clergy support. Not so among the Dinka, some of whom asked why they should contribute to those educated by the *tuany*, an Agar term for those who came, exploited the land, and left. Thus, missionaries were being compared to the exploitative and disruptive Turks even in the 1950s. G Muortat-Mayen, Interview, 1992.

Dinka tradition further undermined the efforts of clergy to sustain themselves. Pastors like Enok Magai, struggled to make their families secure by intensive cultivation, filling their granaries. Yet, relatives of the extended family could not be denied the right of sharing in the abundance of their kinsman. Stores were rapidly consumed and pastors left among the poorest of educated professionals. Only Rev Kedhekia Berec, ordained in 1957, was able to rely on a regular income as a skilled carpenter. Furthermore, serving away from his home as pastor in Tonj he was somewhat insulated from the demands of his own people.²²⁵

Pastors often returned to teaching in government schools, their only means for subsidising a meagre income.²²⁶ This could, however, divert a man from his priestly vocation. Rev Nikanora Deng, gifted evangelist and teacher, had wider opportunities than most early Sudanese clergymen. In 1954 he received a CMS bursary to study at London College of Divinity. Having wide experience as headmaster and pastor, he followed Sharland as Rural Dean. In 1958 he took government employment as chaplain of Rumbek Secondary School where his wages increased several fold. New liberties in a rapidly changing social and political climate took their toll and, by the 1960s, he was dependent on alcohol and ultimately resigned from the ministry.²²⁷

The stigma of an impoverished leadership was yet another reason for the reluctance of rural Dinka to become Christians. If *Nhialic* was indeed a God of blessing, why should his ministers be so poor? Christian pastors were unable to conform to traditional conceptions of the spiritual leader who, wealthy in cattle, wives and children, gave generously to others. The obvious lack of financial security deterred many intelligent young Christian men from seriously considering the Church's ministry.

²²⁵ Kedhekia Berec, a Tuic Dinka had been a 'houseboy' for Daniel Deng Atong.

²²⁶ Others would resign after years of struggle, as did Enoch Riak in 1979.

²²⁷ L. Sharland, 11 Sept 47; *The Sudan Diocesan Review* 16 (Apr-Sept, 1953). Rev Noel White, Rumbek Secondary School, *SSMB* 6 (Oct 1954). L. Sharland sermon, undated, shortly after Independence, SSP.

2. The first Sudanese Anglican Bishop: Daniel Deng Atong

At the dawn of Sudanese independence, fifty years after the first GMSM missionaries arrived on the Upper Nile, the Anglican Church in Sudan prepared to receive its first Sudanese Bishop. Early in the Century Sudan was, with Palestine, Syria and Egypt, one part of the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem under Bishop Blythe, succeeded in 1914 by Bishop Mac Innes. Llewellyn Gwynne served as the first suffragan Bishop responsible for Egypt and the Sudan, later made Bishop when the territory became a Diocese in 1920. In 1927 a new Diocese of the Upper Nile was formed, uniting Northern Uganda with Southern Sudan under Bishop A L Kitching, but by 1935 the South was returned within its earlier Diocesan boundaries. The following year H G Bullen (1935-7) was consecrated the first Assistant Bishop for Southern Sudan, followed by A M Gelsthorpe (1938-45), under whose leadership the Diocese of Sudan was separated from Egypt in 1945. Three years later CMS missionary Oliver C Allison was consecrated Assistant Bishop, in 1953 succeeding Gelsthorpe as Diocesan Bishop. Onto this vine of Anglican missionary bishops was grafted, Daniel Deng Atong, the first Sudanese Assistant Bishop.

Daniel's early life was little less than miraculous. In about 1912 a woman discovered a new-born infant in the forest who had apparently been abandoned by the neighbouring Mandari. Because he bore an obvious birth defect he was believed to have been conceived under the influence of spiritual powers and, according to tradition, had to be severed from human community.²²⁸ He was cared for by his adoptive mother who, in 1918, took the boy to Malek where Archdeacon Shaw received him into his care.²²⁹ An intelligent child, Deng spoke fluent Mandari, though his primary language and cultural identity were Bor Dinka.²³⁰ He also

²²⁸ Among the Dinka of Northern Bahr el Ghazal Lienhardt describes the "custom of disposing of malformed children by placing them in a river, or 'returning' them to the river as I have heard it called; for such monsters are held not to have been well and completely created." *Divinity*, 40. According to Dr Thomas Ayom, Deng was born with *hypospadias*, a deformation which would have made it impossible to father children without corrective surgery.

²²⁹ Gwynne's memoirs say that a *British Officer* on a mule discovered the infant Daniel sometime between 1914 and 1918. (SAD 421/1/358).

²³⁰ The family who first adopted Daniel must have been Mandari or mixed Mandari-Dinka. When his elder brother, Jibbia, to whom he bore striking resemblance, two sisters and their families, came from their home in Tombe, to see their brother, Daniel spoke fluent Mandari. He also bore

imbibed the language and culture of his adoptive 'father' whose name he bore as 'Deng Macuor.' Widely known as *wene Macuor*, 'the son of Macuor,' it was in later years that Deng claimed the name 'Atong,' after his genetic father.

Growing up at Malek, often taught by Jon Aruor, Christian concepts were integral to Deng's education. He later recalled his fondness for the song, *Jesus Loves Me*, and wrote, "In the course of time it dawned on me that I must receive this still strange but true Lover of children into my heart as my Friend and Saviour."²³¹ He was baptised by Shaw in 1921 and received the name 'Daniel.'

After completing Juba High School Daniel taught at Malek and then became Head Teacher at Nugent School, where, in 1938, he experienced a profound spiritual renewal. Having imbibed Anglican evangelical piety and able to speak and write 'beautiful English,' Daniel related with comparative ease to British missionaries and it was they who persuaded him to begin the process toward ordination.²³² After serving as priest-in-charge at Panekar and pioneering work at Kongor, he was sent in 1947 to study at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, his holidays given to English parish work. In 1953 Daniel was made one of the first Sudanese Honorary Canons of All Saints Cathedral, Khartoum, and the following year appointed Canon Missioner in the Diocese.

With momentum underway toward Sudanese independence Christian Missions were pressed toward 'Sudanisation' alongside Condominium institutions. Apart from Daniel's qualities as a leader and pastor and his multi-cultural background, the belief among some British officials that the Dinka were destined as prominent leaders in the future Sudan may have given added weight to his selection. Hearing of his consecration a Southern Commissioner commented to Allison, "Of course I realise that the Church has led the way in Sudanisation here."²³³

Mandari facial scarification which must have been cut in early childhood. Interview with Dr T Ayom, Harogate, 1992.

²³¹ D Deng, 'The Church of Christ in the Sudan,' *SDR* 11, (Oct-Dec 1951) 3-5. He treated children affectionately and carefully taught them the rudiments of faith; He often included passages from English hymns in his writings. Interview, T Ayom.

²³² D T Casson described him as "a really spiritual man," and "one of the most splendid African Christians I have met." 12 Jan, 1942; 1 Nov 1944, CCL.

²³³ O Allison, *SDR* 21/8 (March 1955): 8. The Catholic Church enthroned its first Sudanese Bishop at Rumbek in the same year.

On 15th May, 1955, Daniel was one of four African Assistant Bishops consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury at the Cathedral Church of St Paul, Namirembe, Uganda. Archbishop Fisher was assisted by twelve African and European Bishops in a three and a half hour service attended by some 2,000 people.²³⁴ Representing the Prime Minister of the Sudan at the Service was Sayed Santino Deng. Despite transport difficulties 50 Sudanese from the Southern Archdeaconry attended a service perceived by many as a watershed for Anglican Christianity in Sudan.

After an arduous confirmation tour amidst increasing political unrest in Southern Sudan, and a tour of the Northern Archdeaconry, Daniel's home was established at the Divinity School at Mundri. He made several international journeys, accompanying Bishop Allison to the first meeting of the Episcopal Synod of the Middle East in Jerusalem and the Anglican Bishops' Conference at Lambeth.²³⁵

Daniel's position was not, however, enviable for he was often the lone African among European churchmen at a time when Africans were seldom perceived as social equals.²³⁶ Wrote one missionary, "Daniel must have had to repress his feelings and real opinions at great cost to himself." Missionaries perceived him as "very gentle . . . quiet . . . and not free in social contacts in the context he had to live his life. Amongst his own people probably quite different."²³⁷

Indeed, Dinka Christians remember him as a "forceful character," tough and sometimes "dictatorial." He stated his opinions powerfully and was not easily swayed. As a vernacular preacher he was absorbing and incisive. A skilled football player, Daniel would be asked why he was so aggressive on the field, to which he replied, "there is no bishop here!"²³⁸ Still, when not in leadership, Daniel was a private man with few intimate friends. Rural Dinka described him as *ran Nhialic*, and usually gave him wide clearance. At home he often withdrew to his private prayer hut more in the fashion of a European ascetic than a gregarious Dinka leader.

²³⁴ O Allison, 'The Bishop's Letter,' *SDR* 22/8, (Sept 1955): 5-8.

²³⁵ O Allison, 'Bishop's Letter' Khartoum, 14 April, 1958 (SAD, G/S1013).

²³⁶ Agreed by Dinka and Britons alike. In the perception of some Dinka churchmen missionaries had difficulty accepting the authority of a Sudanese bishop.

²³⁷ John Parry, personal letter to the author, 1992.

²³⁸ Interview with Gabriel Geu Anyang in Nairobi, 1989.

Within three years of his consecration Daniel appeared to be in "deep psychological trouble, which is not yet fathomed." After a successful confirmation tour amidst escalating civil unrest in late 1958 he was "clearly over strained" and, on his return, drove a mission Landroaver into the Nile. In 1959 he was posted to Gel River, still an isolated rural station, his only transport, a bicycle. Dinka recall Daniel's frustration over his 'exile' and his unsuccessful efforts to persuade Bishop Allison to assign a new location.²³⁹ Of his situation Treasurer Yithak Lual wrote to Sharland, "Bishop Daniel is at Gel. He has not done any work so far this is perhaps due to lack of transport. I hope you will settle this problem when you come."²⁴⁰ Meeting Daniel the following month Allison wrote:

On my arrival South in late September . . . I was grieved to find the Assistant Bishop was far from well; and that he was not in a fit condition to undertake the strenuous duties of a confirmation tour, as had been planned. After consultation with the Church Advisory board of the Southern Archdeaconry it became clearly necessary to suspend him from further official duties until such time as his mental health improves. You can understand what a grievous blow this is for the whole Church . . .²⁴¹

Bishop Daniel was frequently found talking to himself, his moods alternating between passivity and manic activity. Increasingly his condition was exacerbated by a growing dependence on alcohol.²⁴² In time he was taken to his home at Mabior Kec near Malek. There he lived in increasing poverty and isolation until he died at Bor Hospital in 1974, survived only by his wife, Elithabeth.

Numerous explanations were given for Bishop Daniel's deterioration, some Sudanese suggesting he had been poisoned during a confirmation tour among the Zande. Others recalled the conflicts of interest Daniel suffered when Mandari and Dinka fought over grazing rights. Some believed his wife was at fault for brewing the beer that encouraged Daniel's alcoholism, a tendency already in evidence two decades

²³⁹ O Allison, Juba, to L Sharland, Rumbek, Boxing Day, 1958, SPP. Mac Maika recalled that Daniel sought, but was unable to gain, the intervention of the Bishop of Jerusalem. Interview in London, 1992.

²⁴⁰ Yithak W Lual to L Sharland, 4 August, 1959, SPP.

²⁴¹ O Allison, 'Bishop's Letter' Juba, 1 Jan, 1960 in *SDR* 36/13 (Spring 1960) 5.

²⁴² Dr T Ayom suggests he suffered manic depressive psychosis which brought on wide swings of mood. His solitary conversations were often directed toward friends who had died, reprimanding them for bad behaviour and calling them to repent and seek God's forgiveness.

earlier.²⁴³ Certainly his inability to produce children, an extreme humiliation among Nilotic men, could have encouraged instability.²⁴⁴

In the perception of many Dinka, however, it was Daniel's impotence under the missionary successors of Archdeacon Shaw which brought his demise.²⁴⁵ Even in retirement Shaw continued Daniel's champion and moral support, returning annually to visit Malek.²⁴⁶ Though ill, he attended Daniel's consecration but died the following year. Amidst the tumult of national independence and the eruption of civil war Daniel was the lone African Bishop under Bishop Allison, an autocratic leader who did not easily delegate authority. Allison was himself newly responsible for a vast Diocese and had little time to spare for the pastoral care of African clergy.²⁴⁷

Daniel's position was undeniably complex. From childhood he was part of three distinct cultures and societies, he stood as an adult between an expectant Sudanese Church and British missionaries as yet unprepared to submit authority to an African. As a Nilote he was skilled at direct, reasoned confrontation but as an evangelical Christian he was often expected to acquiesce before his clerical 'superiors.' Reflecting on Galatians 5:13-18 at a retreat prior to his consecration Daniel wrote, "if I am resentful, or complaining, or unforgiving, then I must realise that it is the 'flesh' trying to get in! I must confess these as sins, and get them cleansed

²⁴³ Daniel had confessed drinking during the 1938 revival. Gabriel Geu quoted Daniel as saying that his mental illness only came after he drank. (Interview in Nairobi, 1989). Elithabeth accompanied Daniel at Loka where she attended classes, and, during their early years, taught women's courses. She did not outwardly express disappointment at not having children but gave considerable energy to caring for school boys at Malek, who tended to form an extended family. She did not herself brew beer but employed other women to brew, sell and purchase the low-alcohol 'white stuff.'

²⁴⁴ Nilotic men faced with impotence would normally encourage their wives to secretly become pregnant by another man. This would have been impossible for a Christian leader in Daniel's position.

²⁴⁵ As an adult Daniel rose in prominence as the respected *abuna*, 'father' of the Church, while he was himself unable to produce children. There is no record that Daniel himself spoke negatively of Allison, CMS missionaries or the Church.

²⁴⁶ Rev Andrew Mayul, interview in Addis Ababa, 1989.

²⁴⁷ The Diocese then included the Sudan, the Horn of Africa and southern Arabia. Some missionaries at first attributed Daniel's illness more to alcohol than mental illness; psychological treatment was never sought. J Parry, personal notes to the author, 1992. Bishop Allison attributed Daniel's illness to instability following the mutiny at Torit, three months after his consecration: "As a result of this deeply disturbing time Bishop Daniel found the strain too great and suffered from a rather serious breakdown from which he never fully recovered.

... he had to resign from his office." *A Pilgrim Church's Progress* (1966) 78.

at once."²⁴⁸ Later he affirmed God's Plan for his life, "that I may be His slave and servant."²⁴⁹ The distinctions between servitude to God and servitude to human authority could, in his situation, be difficult to distinguish.

Basic to the liberating catharsis Daniel experienced in 1938 was the affirmation that all people, missionaries and Africans alike, were sinful, in need of repentance and renewal. To this revelation his years as Assistant Bishop may have seemed a disturbing contradiction. After a sojourn in Britain Daniel observed that, *ran e ran piny nhom eben*, "all over the world, people are just people" suggesting there is no superiority of one race over another. Such blunt Dinka egalitarianism, believed Dinka Christians, inspired the wrath of Bishop Allison.

In succeeding decades memory of Daniel's unfulfilled hope was often suppressed, an embarrassment to the Sudanese Church and missionaries alike. Among Dinka Christians Bishop Daniel's suspension was perceived as a warning. If Daniel, with his unique background and abilities, was denied real authority in the Church, then no other Dinka would be allowed to fare better. If Church leadership led to poverty and powerlessness, gifted young Christians preferred the security of secular professions and would serve the Church as lay people.

From the time of Daniel's suspension it would be 23 years before another priest of Dinka background rose to prominence as a Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Sudan. The first Dinka clergy assumed, often beyond their own comprehension, a difficult and costly role of mediation between values and expectations of Sudanese, educated and traditional, and those of European missionaries. None bore this role and suffered its consequences more acutely than Daniel Deng Atong.

In 1963 Elinana Jabi Ngalamu and Yeremaya Kufuta Dotiro were consecrated assistant bishops for the Sudan and by the following year the last missionaries of the GMSM were forced to leave Southern Sudan.

²⁴⁸ 'Letter from the Assistant Bishop,' *SDR* 22/8 (Sept 1955) 9.

²⁴⁹ D Deng, cyclostyled sheet, 1955, SPP.

F. Conclusion

Throughout the missionary era rural Dinka tended to associate GSM missionaires with the oppression of the 19th century and with Condominium authority. They were unimpressed by the first young Britons who appeared arrogant, greedy and inarticulate, as they set themselves in opposition to revered *baany jok* and tried to attract Dinka children. Though the Dinka might condescend to work briefly for immediate rewards, they were no man's servants. Since the foreigners were impoverished, possessing neither cattle, wives nor children, the divinity they proclaimed seemed of little relevance to Dinka experience.

Only the indomitable Archibald Shaw succeeded in winning their confidence. Meeting the Dinka on their terms of competitiveness and prestige, he gained a unique place in their affection. He grasped the social significance of cattle and employed the mission herd to establish contracts and secure a cluster of students. Though irascible and autocratic among Europeans, he nurtured his adoptive Dinka sons with tenderness and integrity, giving them a foundation from which some rose to prominence in independent Sudan.

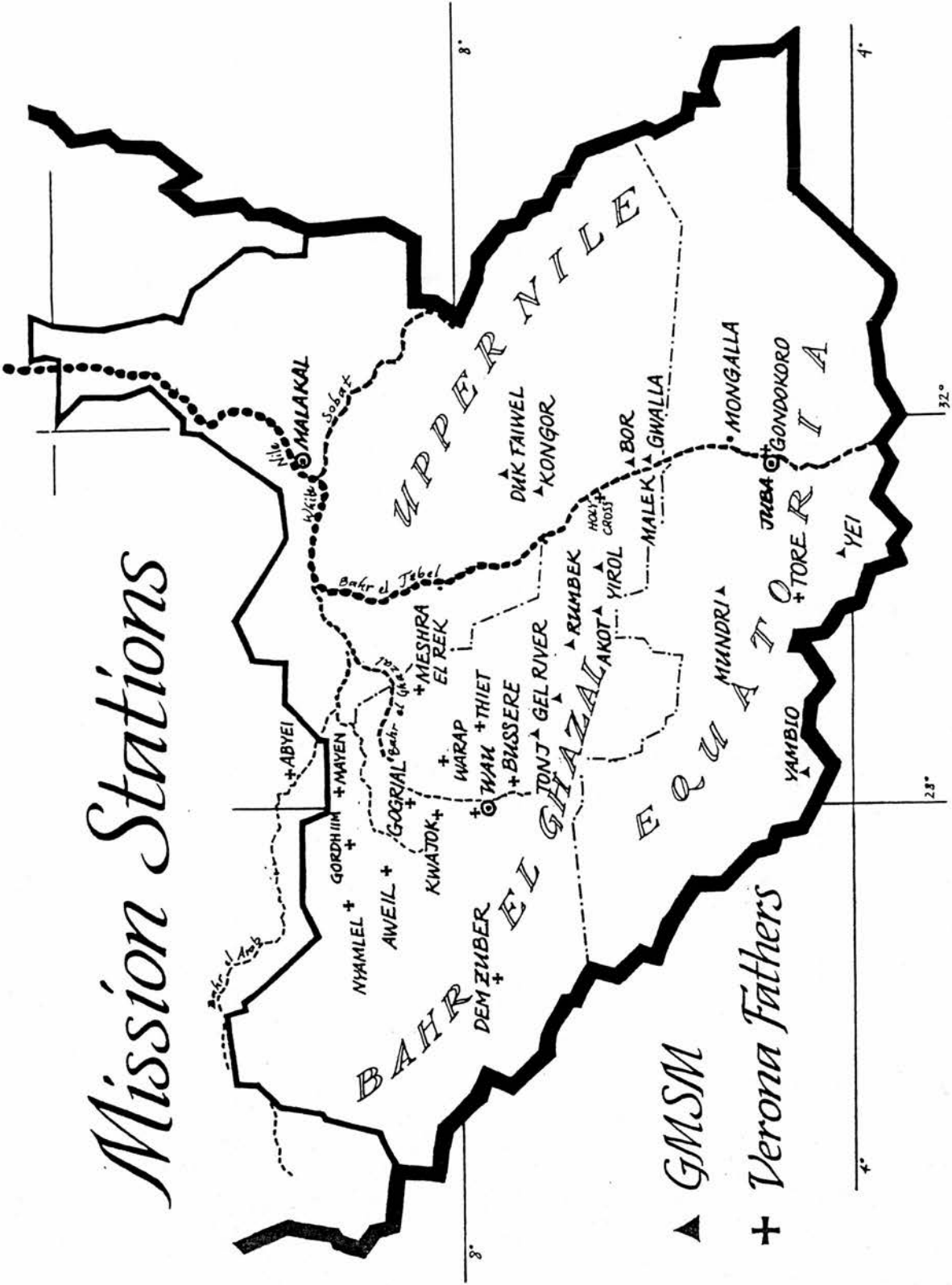
The evangelical GSM was unyielding in its assertion that conversion required turning to Christ and severing ancestral loyalties. The first school boys were primarily orphans and the disenfranchised who imbibed Christian beliefs with their education. Estranged from familial loyalties, and not yet subject to expectations surrounding marriage, they made baptismal promises. Only as they matured did the most glaring contradictions of culture and faith become apparent.

'Revival' erupted among rural Dinka when their own sons began preaching, linking familiar concepts with biblical, often Old Testament, imagery. As much as they taught the salvation of *Nhialic* and the sacrifice of Christ, they conveyed the egalitarianism of the gospel: Dinka and European were equals, working in partnership. Though zealous converts burnt ancestral shrines, Christianity was insufficiently rooted in social experience and, within a decade, many returned to their *jak*.

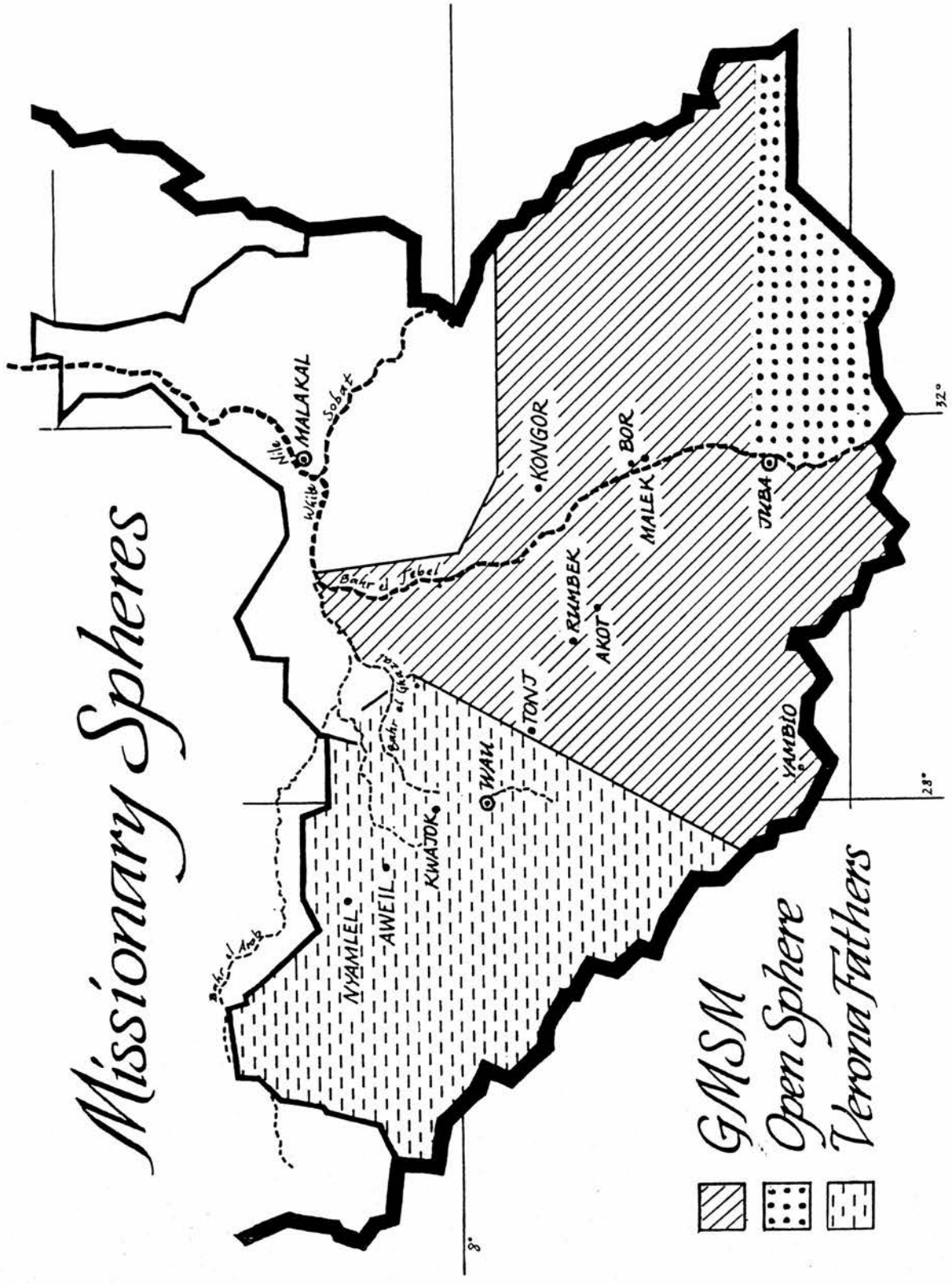
The first Dinka pastors were entrusted with responsibility from an early date, encountering conflicts more intense than those of any other group of educated Dinka. They were expected to act not merely as advocates of modernisation, but to establish new moral and spiritual premises for social existence. The weighty expectations of missionaries were countered by those of Dinka elders, both groups upon whom they were, in some degree, dependent. The effects of these conflicts were exemplified in the life of Bishop Daniel Deng, seen by some as an embarrassment and lost opportunity. Rather, he might be perceived as an important transitional figure who, during a period of turbulent change, bore the cost of mediation.

Ever under-staffed and under-funded, doubting the validity of work among so 'prejudiced' a people, and preferring more adaptable societies, it is remarkable that missionaries of the GSM left so enduring a legacy among the Dinka. As young converts matured, missionaries grieved over the moral indiscipline, materialism and lack of self reliance of a people who would not conform to their expectations. Remarkably, out of five tenuous decades would emerge a vigorous indigenous Church.

Mission Stations



Missionary Spheres



V. "CHILDREN OF THE FATHERS":

THE VERONA FATHERS AMONG THE DINKA, 1924 - 1964

After all previous experiences one must say that the heathen Negro promises much more than the Mohammedan Arab: he is sincere, moral and clean and has special qualities which appear appropriate to our work. I do not think myself to be mistaken if I say, after all that I have observed first hand, that the religion of Jesus Christ under the heathen Negroes of the Sudan has a beautiful future. The expenditure in terms of sacrifice and labour will prove to be very worthwhile.

—*Bishop Xavier Geyer in Khartoum, 1907*¹

We encountered impediments, refusals and oppositions but we had the patience and with the strategy of charity we reached our goal.

—*A pioneer missionary among the Dinka*²

Even Italians don't understand the behaviour of Italians like we do.

—*Christina Parek*³

A. Introduction: The Dinka under Condominium rule

This chapter will examine the second phase of Roman Catholic mission in Dinkaland, focusing primarily on the work of the Verona Fathers in Northern Bahr el Ghazal. We will analyse the role played by Catholic schools in creating an alternative social and religious milieu, with interest in the ways Dinka children sought to

¹ X Geyer, *Khartoum: Ein Zentrum der Kultur in Inner-Afrika*, (1907) 67-68. This was a fund-raising booklet in which Geyer described Southerners he encountered in Khartoum among whom Dinka were prominent.

² Probably Fr Aghasi, 'Kwajok,' *Bulletino de la Congregazione dei Figli del Sacro Cuore*, (July 1948) 733.

³ Dinka, former student in Catholic schools, interview, London, 1992.

integrate the teachings of Roman Catholicism with the beliefs of their elders. A final section reflects on the tensions confronted by Dinka Christians within the authority structures of Catholic institutions and the factors which have hindered their rise to ecclesiastical leadership.

In 1901 Condominium officials, anxious to divert zealous Christian missionaries from Northern Sudan, encouraged the Catholics to establish a new Southern mission among the Shilluk, some 250 miles north of what was once *Heiligenkreuz*. By 1905 the CMS was assigned to territory which encompassed the old Catholic mission, and further Catholic expansion was directed toward Bahr el Ghazal Province. Though 80% of the provincial population was comprised of the Northern Dinka--the Rek, Tuic, Malual and Ngok--these groups remained beyond stable administration until the 1920s and the Catholics focused upon the patchwork of smaller ethnic groups in the West of the Province.

After half a century of destabilisation Southern Sudanese peoples experienced few benefits during the first two decades of Anglo-Egyptian rule. From 1900 Condominium troops manned several outposts in the Bahr el Ghazal but their numbers were few and their authority limited. While smaller ethnic groups acquiesced, the vast Dinka populations remained wary and aloof, their leaders reluctant to confer with the latest emissaries of foreign rule. The Nilotes were disgruntled by government demands for labour and tribute. Ill equipped to negotiate, British and Egyptian officials resorted increasingly to use of force, less reputable officials using deception and brutality for their own ends. By 1902 the Dinka Agar had risen in defiance. Numerous skirmishes followed, the most violent of which was the Aliab rising of 1919.

Simultaneously, prophetic figures began to appear, often uniting people across widespread regions. In 1917 Deng Kur stirred inhabitants of Northern Bahr el Ghazal to armed resistance. In 1918 the 'sacred lake' of Khor Lait, overseen by several leaders, was drawing people from as far as Nuer and Mandari. Most influential of these new movements was that of the Malual prophet Bol Yol, widely known as

Arianhdit. His ambiguous message taught peace and reconciliation, avowing no hostility toward Condominium authorities, while it anticipated a day of liberation from alien authority. Arianhdit's refusal to meet with government officials stimulated anxieties that his followers were preparing a major uprising. In 1922 Provincial Governor Wheatley moved to suppress the movement and Arianhdit was taken into exile. In the wake of the prophet's movement Condominium authorities sought to win the good will of his followers.

Employing a system of 'indirect rule' in succeeding years, British officials tended to developed paternal bonds with those they considered 'their' people. Some felt strongly about the advent of Christian missions, asserting that Roman Catholicism, with its alien trappings, was fully as destructive of African indigenous values as was Islam. Nevertheless, the missionaries were readily available and willing to provide education at low cost and serve as a 'civilising influence' across Southern Sudan.

Given their alien approach and small numbers in the 1920s it appeared impossible that the teaching of Christian missionaries would ever grip the hearts and minds of Nilotic peoples as had the declarations of their own revered prophets.

B. Roman Catholic restoration and expansion

With many of its missionaries having fled to Egypt during the *Mahdiyya* the Roman Catholic Mission survived in exile under Monsignor Francesco Sogaro, successor to Daniel Comboni as Vicar Apostolic of Central Africa. Under his direction the Mission was reorganised as an independent religious order and from 1894 became officially known as 'the Sons of the Sacred Heart.' As a religious congregation it was the life in community, the spiritual disciplines, and obedience to the Rule that took prominence as the basis of apostolic commitment. Beyond this, in contrast with the era of Bishop Comboni, there was little to define evangelism or methodology in the missionary apostolate.⁴

⁴ On the field the Fathers were under the authority of a Vicar Apostolic appointed and directed by Propaganda Fide in Rome. A new missionary was told that, "They will tell you on the field

Bishop A M Roveggio succeeded Sogaro in 1895. Once the Ansar had been suppressed in 1898 he lost little time in seeking to consolidate and extend the holdings of the Mission in Sudan. With the Islamic climate in Khartoum still volatile, however, neither Cromer nor Governor-General Kitchner welcomed the return, let alone the expansion, of the 'Austrian Mission.' Cromer conceded only that "if they like they can go to Fashoda where the population is heathen."⁵ Mustering political and ecclesiastical pressure Roveggio nevertheless reclaimed a place for the Mission in Khartoum, even if on a new and inferior site. Work was soon underway in Omdurman where many Christians had gathered during the *Mahdiyya* and by 1900 the mission in central Khartoum was well established.

To facilitate a return to the Upper Nile with a degree of independence, Roveggio purchased a 60-foot shallow-draught steamer christened the *Redemptor* and in December 1900, he with four companions, steamed up the White Nile.⁶ On the Sobat in February they obtained permission from the Shilluk Reth to found their first new station at Lul. Further southward the Bishop envisioned the revival of the earliest Catholic station at Gondokoro, but his application was denied by the Ugandan Government. Commencing a second journey in 1902 Roveggio fell sick and died at Berber. The following year he was succeeded by the indefatigable Bishop F X Geyer, who, equally committed to Southward expansion, made a remarkable series of missionary journeys between 1904 and 1912. In 1903 a second station was founded among the Shilluk at Attigo (Tonga), and the station at Lul, having received its first Catholic sisters began basic education.

With portions of the Bahr el Ghazal open to the Catholics in 1904 Geyer led his companions in founding stations at Kayango and Mbili.⁷ The Provincial capital

what you must do. Only obey." Fr Uhl, General Secretary for Evangelism of the Verona Fathers, interview, Rome, 1989.

⁵ The Mission retained the support of the Austro-Hungarian Consul-General. Daly, *Empire* 251, citing Cromer to Sanderson, 21 Dec 1898 (FO 633/8/193).

⁶ Components for the *Redemptor* were sent from Yarrow and Company of Clydebank and assembled in the dock yard at Omdurman. It served until 1914 when it foundered near Khartoum North and was succeeded by *Pio XI* a two-propeller steamer in use from 1930 to 1940. Santandrea, Stefano, *A Popular History of Wau from its Foundation to about 1940*, (1989) 52.

⁷ These stations were among the N'Dogo-Golo and the Jur, respectively. Much of the material for this section is taken from *National Directory, Catholic Church Sudan*, Secretariate of the Sudan Catholic Bishops' Conference (1980) 15-18.

of Wau had been avoided, with its blend of peoples and strong Muslim presence. Wingate, however, encouraged Geyer to take over administration of a school founded in 1903 by Governor Boulnois.⁸ Soon Geyer was given permission to establish a full mission station at Wau. After an initial period of opposition from Muslim residents, the Fathers' were able to win the favour of the population and established a permanent compound.

Wau became the most prominent town of the Province, a cosmopolitan centre for the institutions of government, commerce, education and religion. Some 20 languages were spoken among ethnic communities, each in their own quarters of the town.⁹ Commerce was monopolised by *jellaba* and Greek merchants whose agents carried trade and new ideas to even the most remote regions of the Dinka.

Though settlements of the Rek and Malual Dinka commenced not many miles North of Wau and the Dinka comprised much of the provincial population, they remained aloof, reluctant to have any contact with the degrading influences of the town. Only a few Dinka, generally the impoverished and outcasts, were willing to serve as herdsman for prosperous town-dwellers.

Roman Catholic Missionary strategy determined to establish a presence in every area still free of Muslim influence across the entire Vicariate, stretching southward to Uganda.¹⁰ At least one station was to be founded among each major ethnic group, though smaller groups were considered if they proved more responsive.¹¹ Geyer, chafing over the preferential treatment which the Condominium

⁸ It was concerning this school that Wingate first asserted the primacy of English in Southern education. "I am not at all keen," he informed Boulnois in 1904, "to propagate Mohammedanism in countries in which that religion is not the religion of the inhabitants." Arabic was, he believed, a 'foreign language' in the Bahr el Ghazal, and "if any foreign language is taught it ought to be English." Sanderson (1981) 58-9 citing Boulnois to Currie, Jan 1904 (SAD WP, Mission Schools II).

⁹ Daly, *Empire* 399 citing Titherington to his godmother, counted 20 languages, 20/1/20, CIVSEC 1/9/31. Among Luo are included the Jur, Shilluk, Dembo and Shatti groups; original inhabitants are the so-called Jur. Santandrea, however, suggests that the name Wau is of Dinka origin. Santandrea, *Wau*, 9.

¹⁰ In 1913 the Holy See decided to divide the Vicariate Apostolic of Central Africa into two jurisdictions. The Vicariate Apostolic of Khartoum was to encompass the Northern Sudan, Chad, and the territory of the Shilluk while the Prefecture Apostolic of Bahr el Ghazal encompassed the remainder of Southern Sudan and Northern Uganda. *NDCCS* 17.

¹¹ Giovanni Vantini, *The Roman Catholic Contribution to Evangelization in the Sudan at the time of the Condominium*, Durham, (1982).

system of 'missionary spheres' gave to the Protestant CMS, would not be confined to Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile. Applications were made to work in the northern region of the Uganda Protectorate as well as the Lado Enclave once it reverted to Condominium control.¹²

In 1910 Geyer and his missionaries boarded the *Redemptor*, sailing past Gondokoro to found Omach on the shores of Lake Albert, followed by Gulu. At the end of 1909 King Leopold died and the vast Lado Enclave came under Condominium authority, marking the start of bitter competition between the CMS and the Catholics. Despite Wingate's desire to preserve the territory as an Anglican enclave, the limitations of the CMS forced admission of the Catholics. In 1912 the Fathers loaded their ox cart for a 15 day journey to found the station of Mupo, so fulfilling Geyer's dream of a station among the Zande. In the same year permission was granted to revive the old station at Gondokoro, later shifted to Rajaf East. Polaro and Raffili followed. To the North in Bahr el Ghazal the Mission expanded West of Wau with new stations at Mboro and Morjan Khali.¹³ The government had declared the eastern section of the former Lado Enclave an "open sphere" and here also the Catholics led the way founding stations among the Lokoya and Lotuka.

With Britain the dominant authority in government and a Roman Catholic Mission comprised of Austrian, German and Italian missionaries, the two World Wars were to have drastic consequences for the advance of Sudanese Catholicism. The outbreak of war in 1914 saw the flow of European financial support wither as did missionary recruitment. Amidst war, Wingate was constrained to recall all Austrian and German missionaries to Khartoum where their movements could be monitored.¹⁴ The loss of personnel brought closure or cut backs to several stations. In 1917 the Prefecture of Bahr el Ghazal was transformed into a Vicariate Apostolic, so sheltering it from measures against aliens. No longer under Geyer's formal authority, an Italian Bishop was appointed, and the new Diocese staffed almost entirely by Italians.

¹² Daly, *Empire* 257.

¹³ These stations served the Madi, the Bor-Balanda and the Golo.

¹⁴ Daly, *Empire* 257.

In 1922 it was decided to divide the missionary endeavour of the Verona Fathers into two branches. Missionaries predominantly of Italian origin were to remain at the heart of the work in Sudan and Uganda, while those of Austro-German descent were assigned to other parts of Africa. Reorganisation necessitated the resignation of Bishop Geyer as Vicar Apostolic of Khartoum to be succeeded by Mons P T Silvestri.

This period served to emphasise cultural and methodological distinctions which had, since the inception of the Mission, led to tensions between Italian and Austro-German missionaries. The strategy for mission encouraged by those of German origin stressed that evangelism should be preceded by a preliminary phase of social development. In contrast, Italian missionaries asserted that an initial evangelistic focus would naturally lead toward social development.¹⁵ In actuality both approaches were to be employed in Sudan. Among peoples like the Zande who appeared to readily embrace new ideas, catechetical training commenced almost immediately. Among the highly conservative Nilotes, however, an extended period of 'pre-education' was implemented.

By the mid 1920s education was at the heart of Catholic mission in Sudan. Persuaded of the effectiveness of its schools as tools of evangelisation missionaries took responsibility for staffing, funding and organising their institutions, and were able to function quite independently from government supervision. A second phase began as the government assumed new levels of responsibility. In 1922 Southern governors began granting subsidies for mission education so confirming their place as the sole instruments of education in Southern Sudan. In many regions the missions proved themselves capable, more than bureaucratic governmental structures, of gaining the trust of rural populations, adapting to cultural variations, and responding to their immediate needs.

Undeniably the Catholics far surpassed the Protestants in the number of their institutions and personnel, the extent of their influence, and their physical resources. Nevertheless, the government maintained its preferential treatment of the Anglicans

¹⁵ Vantini, *Contribution* 5.

extending higher subsidies for their meagre achievements, a pattern which continued throughout the Condominium. Justifications for this noted the lower overhead demanded by celibate, as opposed to married missionaries, the lower number of scheduled hours for 'secular instruction,' and a lower level of efficiency on the part of the Catholics.¹⁶ As early as 1907 the Provincial governor made the often repeated criticism that the Fathers were not sufficiently proficient in English.¹⁷ Some believed that the Italians lacked sound pedagogical skills, their technique tending toward strong discipline and rote instruction, with a premium placed upon the passive obedience of students. There was also suspicion of the Catholic tendency to use schools as bases for training barely literate catechists who were sent out to convert rural populations. While these criticisms may have accurately described some of the Fathers, others merit the highest commendations. From an early date Geyer set high standards for academic and technical education. In succeeding decades the resilient and visionary Bishop, Eduard Mason, won respect as an educationalist of unsurpassed stature.¹⁸

With the end of World War I, work again progressed as new stations were founded at Rejaf, Torit and Loa. By 1922 a total of 19 mission stations were functioning across the Vicariate. In Bahr el Ghazal work was underway among the Jur, Zande, Ndogo, Golo, Balanda, Bongo and the Kresh. From a total of ten baptisms conducted prior to 1911, there were 3,000 by 1921. Living converts numbered some 5,325 in 1922 who received instruction from 444 indigenous catechists.

Recruitment of school children gradually increased. Initially it was only marginalised children, orphans and slaves, who could be persuaded to remain with the Fathers.¹⁹ Nevertheless, chiefs such as the Zande Avangara soon discerned the

¹⁶ Sanderson (1981) 224.

¹⁷ Sanderson (1981) citing Sir Henry Hill 64, 66.

¹⁸ Sanderson (1981) 156 citing Oliver, *Missionary Factor in East Africa* 275. Eduard Mason (b 1903) Father Superior, Wau Mission, 1932-8; Educational Secretary, VGM Bahr el Ghazal, 1940-7; Vicar Apostolic, Bahr el Ghazal, 1947-60.

¹⁹ When, in 1905, chiefs near the Kayango mission were encouraged to send students to the school, they responded by rounding up 18 young slaves and 'selling' them to the Fathers. Sanderson (1981) 64.

potential for enhancing their political power through educating their sons. In 1911 Brother Consolaro wrote of the "Princes' College" at Wau attended by 18 lads of chiefly origin. Among these he listed one Dinka, the son of Sultan Abdallah.²⁰

At least a dozen schools with a total of some 500 students, provided education at a level higher than 'bush school' religious instruction. The comparatively high standards at Wau, along with the CMS school at Juba meant that Western-style education was irreversibly established as a factor in the life of Southern Sudanese peoples.²¹ Together with catechetical training centres the Catholics estimated a total of 127 'schools' attended by 1,772 pupils across their Vicariate.²²

Though Bishop Geyer had traversed sections of Dinka territory as early as 1905 and envisioned the founding of a station "among the great people of the Dinka, which is no less numerous than the Shilluk," no progress had yet been made. Only a handful of Dinka students were to be found in existing schools, isolated from their rural kinsmen.²³ The government, struggling with 'pacification' of the Nilotes, was unwilling to allow missionaries to enter their territory, and missionaries themselves believed the swamplands of the Dinka to be disease ridden, especially dangerous to their own survival.²⁴

1. Kwajok: second Catholic mission in Dinkaland

Within a year of the killing of chief Aguok and the suppression of other leaders loyal to Arianhdit, Major Titherington met with two bearded, white robed Fathers. Supplying them with a copy of the map he had drawn he virtually ordered them to go found a new station among the Dinka.²⁵ One form of spiritual authority in

²⁰ Santandrea, *Wau* 52; Sanderson (1981) 65.

²¹ Sanderson (1981) 104.

²² There were also ten trade and domestic science schools with 233 students. Reported in *Nigrizia*, 7 (1923) 106. Statistics include stations in Northern Uganda, quoted by NDCCS 17. Sandersons (1981) 97, report that by 1920, "there must have been nearly 300 pupils in the Catholic schools."

²³ *Nigrizia*, (March 1905) 36.

²⁴ Arturo Nebel, *Lecku Banyda yan dit rin Ruon war yam cieng Kristian Kuajok, 1924-1974*, Kuajok Anniversary booklet in Dinka, (Sudan: 1974) 2.

²⁵ *Buletino* (July 1948) 733. P Nicolao Olivetti, *Vita di Missione, Lettere di un Missionario del Bahr el Ghazal*, (1933) 24.

Dinkaland was to be succeeded by another. Alien and irrelevant as it appeared, the Catholic mission was intended to convey the good will of Condominium rule while propagating the Christian gospel. Nearly 300 miles to the Northwest of *Heiligenkreuz*, the station of Kwajok, *Stazione Pio X di Kwajok*, was founded among the Rek Dinka in 1923.²⁶

Impetus for a mission among the Rek had come from Fr Maroni who, on his journeys between Wau and Meshra el Rek, had envisioned its location, the personnel required and begun translation into Italian of the Dinka Ciec dictionary and grammar compiled half a century earlier.²⁷ When the government finally opened the way, the missionaries were directed toward a location on high ground, impervious to flooding, about 50 miles north of Wau. Late in 1923 Fr Arpe, superior of the Mission, and Fr Nicolao Olivetti, appointed superior of the new station, set out on a reconnaissance visit. With the station situated near the Bahr el Jur River the Fathers would be able to travel by boat to Wau and to neighbouring Dinka settlements when the river was navigable. In dry season there was easy access to the recently opened government road. Since the station would occupy land bordering the domain of three prominent Dinka chiefs, the missionaries were certain their work would see rapid expansion.

On 11th December Fr Arthur Nebel accompanied a heavily loaded ox cart out of Wau's central station "in search of the promised land."²⁸ After him came 15 porters carrying boxes, tents and a portable altar. The Fathers, aware of the difficulties in employing Dinka, took experienced Catholic workers from Wau and Kayango. These trekked through the night to be met the following day by Frs Olivetti and Arpe on bicycles. Citizens of Wau, accustomed to the military patrols which regularly marched on Dinka territory, were amused by this benign retinue. The missionaries were, nevertheless, undergirded by decades of experience and logistical support far superior to that of their predecessors at Holy Cross or the Anglicans near Bor.

²⁶ The Italian title, in honour of Pope Pius X, as recorded in the station diary, Comboni Archives. The station was dedicated to St Joseph.

²⁷ G Beltrame had produced an Italian version so this was apparently from Mitterrutzner's longer German version, *Bulletino* (July 1948) 733.

²⁸ Olivetti's phrase.

By evening they reached the Kwang River delineating the southern boundary of the Dinka, and were ferried across by local people. Having pitched camp all were again on trek by 3:00 am. As the day dawned the retinue surveyed a landscape transformed, "an endless plane, sprinkled, almost uninterrupted, with big huts." Reaching the compound of "the great chief Kwol," the travellers were welcomed, the chief reportedly expressing his "great happiness that we were going to establish our work in his country." The travellers were presented with the gift of a ram. Concerned with Dinka propriety, the Superior presented the chief with "a shirt so that the next time he came to see us he wouldn't need to wear his black costume."²⁹

By evening the caravan arrived at "the famous hill of Kwajok" and pitched camp at its base. The following morning the Fathers surveyed the land, confirmed their choice of location and erected the sign of their faith. Olivetti later declared his hope that, "the cross of God which already extends its arms on this beautiful hill of Kwajok will see numerous Dinkas gathered at its foot." He recalled their thanks to God, "because he wanted us to become the first to plant the cross among the virgin tribe of the Dinkas which is to become one of the greatest fields of missionary work."³⁰

Superior Arpe returned to Kayango as land was being cleared for building. Nebel began visiting neighbouring compounds, trying to establish relationships and working on language. A reader and a booklet of translated prayers were quickly produced. Olivetti, speaking Ndogo and Golo, supervised the workers in the casting and baking of bricks. Within five weeks the missionaries moved from their tent into a new house of raw bricks while construction continued on further accommodation, a chapel, store and workshops.

The Fathers were at first delighted by the receptivity and integrity of the Dinka. Though mission supplies went unguarded and exposed for weeks nothing went missing. Describing a photograph taken shortly after their arrival, Olivetti pointed out,

... not only some Christian workers [from other stations] but also some Dinkas with axes and sledge hammers. I assure you this is not a parade. The Dinkas, as

²⁹ Olivetti, *Lettere* 33.

³⁰ Olivetti, *Lettere* 33.

they have accepted us with great pleasure, now see us with good will and offer their assistance. They attend to the work; they come to sell *dhura*, milk, etc., all the necessary things to keep our manpower working. We had an excellent impression of the people and all this makes us hope for a happy future.³¹

Initial inquisitiveness and formal hospitality did not endure, however. Nebel, writing in Dinka, later recalled how "The people of Kwajok welcomed the Fathers with respect though they were not very friendly."³² Requests made for Dinka labourers in the hope that some might learn construction skills, brought a few responses from adults but children were kept well away from the site. For over a month no Dinka was willing to work and for nearly a year it was impossible to find even one youth to watch over mission cattle. The Fathers remained dependent upon workers recruited from other ethnic groups to fulfill a variety of basic tasks.

Nevertheless, the number of Dinka labourers gradually increased as pragmatic individuals realised the use they could make of the money paid by the Fathers. Among these were two mature sons of Akol Ayai, a prominent elder near Kwajok. They led the way for other young men to join the work force. With them came a number of girls who contributed greatly at the construction site, carrying bricks and other supplies.

One of the sons of Akol Ayai had become paralysed in both legs, suffered severe chest pains, and was forced to crawl on his knees. Bloodletting and other cures attempted by local doctors proved ineffective. The Fathers took pity on the lad but feared to touch him lest they be accused of trying to abduct him. The boy was told that, if he wanted their help, he must come to the station voluntarily by his own strength. When the lad appeared at Kwajok the Fathers encouraged him to walk upright using a stick. Initially he resisted, but soon became quite adept at this. The time came when the sore on his chest burst open, releasing blood and puss, and leading to his full recovery. The boy remained with the Fathers attending catechetical teaching and, upon baptism was given the name Felice.³³ Such illustrations of the trustworthiness and healing power of the Fathers drew increasing numbers of the sick

³¹ Olivetti, *Lettere* 33.

³² Nebel, *Lecku* 3.

³³ Nebel, *Lecku* 4-5.

and wounded. A few of the elderly took interest in the Fathers' teaching and one aged chief asked to be baptised before his death.

Gradually a small cluster of pupils was gathered for daily instruction, the core of whom were lads from other tribes who had come in search of work. To these were added children sent by the DC to be trained as clerks for the chiefs courts. Orphans or boys without supervision, often came voluntarily. Rarely, however, did lads come from families in the neighbourhood of the Mission itself. As Archibald Shaw had resorted to incentives to persuade his pupils to remain in school, so the Catholics developed sweeteners for students and their families. When boys returned home during the holidays they were given salt to cultivate the friendship of their parents and to ensure their return.

During dry season nearly a year after their arrival Nebel took a group of school boys on an outing beyond the river. As they neared a homestead, a man demanded abruptly, "What are doing here? You are people of Kuol Amet. Stay on the other side of the river!" Nebel responded,

We have not come to the people of only one chief. Look at the children walking with me. Some of them have come from far places. We have come to reveal the Word of God to everybody and to teach them to write.

Seeing the Father's hunting rifle carried by one of the boys, the man declared, "You will not shoot any animal in our territory! I have cursed your gun. So be it!"³⁴

Realising the man was a *beny bith* Nebel asked him to,

Look at the children walking with me. They are praying to God every day to give them food. They have also prayed for food this morning and asked God to provide meat for the broth.

As he spoke Nebel saw two antelopes grazing near the homestead. Taking aim and shooting one he instructed the boys to cut out the liver and give it to the *beny bith*. As it was presented Nebel said, "Here is the liver; it is yours so that you may know that I am your friend. You did not welcome me but I forgive you because you do not know me." The liver was received and the Fathers experienced no further confrontations in the area.³⁵ It is instructive that, in this early encounter with a *beny bith* Nebel pointed

³⁴ "Acin lei ba moc pandan ken; manydu aca lam; yenakan!" Nebel, *Lecku* 5.

³⁵ Nebel, *Lecku* 5-6.

toward the spiritual efficacy of educated children, already reinforcing the link between school and the potency of Christian faith.

Recruitment of Dinka students remained disappointingly slow until a breakthrough occurred, a repercussion of government military action. The Tuic Dinka had long suffered raids from arabised peoples to their North. When the government successfully intervened in their favour, Chief Rihan of the Tuic acknowledged that the new order was unlike those who had previously exploited his people. In appreciation he acquiesced to government requests and sent one of his sons to school at Kwajok. Other prominent leaders followed his example, notably Chief Giir Kero, who continued during succeeding years to help develop the Mission. Chiefs Rihan and Giir Kero were later the first to have out schools established in their areas.³⁶

When, after 1930, Kwajok was firmly established, the Fathers began itinerant missions to other areas, penetrating as far as Apuk, Kongor and Lau and into the territory of the Tuic and Malual Dinka.³⁷ Education was already gaining widespread popularity among neighbouring peoples, but it would not be until the 1950s that schools gained similar interest among the Dinka. Education Officer A G Hickson noted that, Nilotic regions notwithstanding, it became much easier to fill school places after 1927.³⁸

By the end of the Condominium in 1955 Kwajok had become the 'Dinka scholastic centre.' The Verona Fathers recorded 1,194 baptised Catholics and 691 catechumens, though many of these were from other regions. Some 288 boys attended elementary school with 59 girls in the Vernacular Teachers Training College. The Artisans school was training 73 students and 575 pupils were attending

³⁶ Olivetti, *Lettere* 33.

³⁷ *Bulletino* (July 1948) 733.

³⁸ Sanderson (1981) 171ff.

out-schools.³⁹ This was a substantial achievement, comparing well with such centres as Kayango, the earliest mission in Bahr el Ghazal.

2. Catholic expansion among the Dinka of Bahr el Ghazal

The premier Dinka station was followed by the first among the Nuer in 1925. New stations were opened among the Zande, a third among the Shilluk; Isoke among the Dongotona and Deim Zubeir on the southern fringe of heavily Islamised north-western Bahr el Ghazal. The years between 1926 and 1931 were a period of consolidation followed by new missions at Juba Centre, Raga, Palotaka among the Acholi, Bussere near Wau and Kapoeta in Eastern Equatoria.

Even as Kwajok was under construction there had been hope of founding a second Dinka mission 120 miles to the Northwest among the Malual. The station would serve the district of Awiel with its population estimated at 130,000, still leaving some 300,000 within the catchment of Kwajok. With the region stabilised in the years following the fall of Arianhdit, the local DC had, in 1927, constructed several buildings to receive the Fathers but, their personnel already overextended, they were forced to decline. The school at Kwajok had its impact, however, as former students, serving as clerks among the Malual, encouraged children to attend school in Kwajok. Only in 1933 did Fr Olivetti and Brother Rimonde found the new station on the Lol River near the old fortress of Nyamlel. A small brick house, a school, two dormitories, a granary and a small workshop were completed, and on Easter Day the Chapel was dedicated to Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus.⁴⁰ At the end of 1934 Fr Elghisi arrived, the first teacher.⁴¹

Several local converts tried to smooth the way but Malual distrust toward the newcomers lay deep, encouraged by the neighbouring settlement of *jellaba* and the

³⁹ *The Golden Jubilee of the Bahr el Ghazal Mission*, Nigrizia Press, Verona, 1956.

⁴⁰ P. Nicolao Olivetti, *Fra Una Tribu' di Giganti*, (Verona: 1933) 34.

⁴¹ 'Nyamlel,' *Bulletino de la Congregazione dei Figli del Sacro Cuore*, (Nov 1948) 779.

predominantly Muslim military garrison.⁴² Though the Fathers were treated with respect and material assistance was forthcoming from local chiefs, the same men opposed any expansion of formal education in their areas, declaring that the few existing Malual court clerks and nurses would suffice.⁴³ Opposition intensified when government officials, determined that children of prominent families should be educated, tried to circumvent local authority and encouraged teachers to take charge of student recruitment. Covert defiance from the elders undercut progress. Any advances, like those in the village of Peth, were due solely to the perseverance of teachers and the good will of local people.⁴⁴

In 1936 an event occurred which marked a transition in Malual attitudes toward the Fathers. The prominent chief, Majak, son of Akot and nephew of the famous Chak Chak, had made his hostility toward the mission well known. On an Autumn day he sat in the court of a village several miles from the Mission. Apparently inebriated, he began to publicly berate the missionaries, declaring that they were merely his slaves. He would, he boasted, throw them all into jail the following day as punishment for their lack of respect toward him. The next day, however, Majak was confronted by a former policeman who accused the Chief of wrongdoing against him. He thrust a spear into Majak's chest and killed him. In later days, as the corpse was taken for burial it was necessarily carried through the mission compound. In these events Malual observers perceived the judgment of *Nhialic* in favour of the Fathers.⁴⁵ Basic to Malual resistance was fear of the erosion of their authority both by Condominium rulers and by the missionaries who were perceived as their emissaries.

Nevertheless, the first decade of work at Nyamlel saw the number of Malual Christians increase to some 400 with between 60 and 90 boys attending school.

⁴² *Bulletino* (Nov 1948) 779.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

Progress was brought to a halt, however, with the advent of war in Europe. As personnel and mission funding decreased, Malual leaders grasped the opportunity to again deter boys from attendance and enrolment dropped to 40 pupils.

The two Dinka stations, Kwajok and Nyamlel, were among 17 opened between the First and Second World Wars, extending Catholic influence from Western Bahr el Ghazal across Nuerland and down to the frontiers of Uganda.⁴⁶ With centres opened at Lonyaker and Apiath in 1942 the Dinka out-schools soon totalled 20, offering instruction, primarily catechetical in nature, to 800 pupils. Between 1937 and 1946 war in Europe brought a halt to the creation of new stations and it was not until 1948 that a third Dinka station was founded at Mayen. Dinka leaders met at Gogrial in 1946 and offered land free of charge for the founding of additional schools.⁴⁷

The station of Mayen exemplifies the dramatic shift then underway in the attitudes of many Dinka in Bahr el Ghazal toward formal education and the Catholic Church. Fathers Nebel and Golin had visited the Tuic Dinka since their early years at Kwajok, and considered them, then estimated at between 60,000 and 80,000, more responsive to innovation than other Dinka groups.⁴⁸ An out-school was opened at Apiath, 8 kilometres from Mayen, as early as 1933 but due to flooding, was transferred to Mayen in 1944. There, within three years, four elementary classes were functioning containing 130 pupils. Two boys who studied in the first class of students at Mayen later became highly influential for the advancement of education. They proceeded through Kwajok, were baptised Christians, and as mature men elected chiefs of the Tuic.

When Monsignor Orlor visited the out-school in 1946 he was "nearly moved to tears" upon surveying the number of Dinka students. He determined to formally

⁴⁶ These were Yubu, Detwok, Yoinyang, Isoke, Dem Zubeir, Juba Centre, Raga, Palotaka and Bussere.

⁴⁷ *Bulletino* (July 1948) 733.

⁴⁸ 'Mayen,' *Bulletino de la Congregazione*, (19 March, 1950) 1175.

establish a new mission. A land lease was negotiated between Chief Paulino of the Tuic, and officials of government and mission. On February, 1948, Mayen was dedicated to the Holy Heart of Mary by Apostolic Vicar, Monsignor Mason. Under Fathers Gasparotto and Tessitore the student population continued to increase, a fourth class added, and ten mud and thatch huts constructed as student dormitories. Fr Dal Maso was elected Superior of the Station and the first indigenous priest of the Vicariate, Fr Iraneo Dut, a Luo, made director of the school in 1950.

Encouraged by increasing numbers of converts in positions of responsibility an over abundance of boys was drawn to the school. Younger boys had to be returned to their homes while a new catechumenate was formed to absorb the older ones. Chief Mawir constructed two dormitories at his own expense. Upon his first visit to the new Mission Bishop Mason was welcomed by nearly 300 boys, including those from the out-schools along with local Tuic dignitaries and many village people.⁴⁹ The chiefs asked that a fifth class be established at Mayen and, remarkably, requested that Catholic Sisters be sent to instruct their daughters. With 150 Tuic baptised as Christians and another 160 attending the catechumenate at Mayen, Christianity had gained prestige, even among indigenous leaders: the chiefs requested that Bishop Mason celebrate a mass among their people.⁵⁰ Education and the religion which accompanied it were clearly coming to be perceived as avenues of economic and social advancement among some communities of the Dinka.

With new-found responsiveness among the Nilotes, the Fathers sought to extend their influence into areas of Bahr el Ghazal allotted to the Anglicans such as Tonj among the Rek Dinka. The government, however, pushed the Fathers westward, away from the Protestant sphere and a comfortable distance from its own new elementary school at Tonj.⁵¹ Fathers Gasparoto and Angeli were directed toward

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ In 1935 the Catholics and the CMS had agreed that, under certain conditions, missionaries would be allowed to enter one another's spheres. This was endorsed by Bishops of both churches in

Thiet, a rural district which in 1949 included 19 Rek Dinka chieftaincies.⁵² Within three years the clinic at Thiet, particularly serving mothers and children, had won favour and the number of Christians increased rapidly. Here girls' education had also gained acceptance, 80 Dinka girls having been sent to stations in other areas prior to the arrival of the sisters.

The transitional years of independence and the dawn of the Sudanese civil war, 1946 to 1961, saw some 30 new missions founded, eight of which were in Dinka territory. This represented the most intensive expansion in the history of Catholic missions in Southern Sudan. New Dinka stations included Warap, founded in 1952, Tonj, Gordhiim, and Rumbek Parish, all founded in 1953, and Abyei.⁵³ As testimony to the changes in Malual attitudes by independence, the Fathers could report 648 baptised Christians and 350 catechumens at Nyamlel with a total of 580 pupils attending schools. The total of Christians at all stations in Dinka territory in 1955 was estimated at 4,398 with 2,974 receiving catechetical training. 1,202 boys attended elementary school alongside 231 girls, and a total of 2,334 pupils attended Dinka out-schools. While these represented but a small percentage of the entire Dinka population, they reveal a considerable shift in the attitudes of the Dinka.

C. Catholic mission and theology in Dinkaland

1. Perceptions and misperceptions

By the time Kwajok was founded the Verona Fathers had some experience among Nilotic peoples and were aware of the slow progress they were likely to make

1945, but for reasons political and administrative, the missionary spheres remained in tact, if somewhat ambiguously, until the end of the Condominium. The RC mission at Tonj was officially opened in 1953. *RC Contribution*, Durham, (1982) 2.

⁵² *Bulletino* (19 March, 1953) 422. *NDCCS* (1980) 18 lists the founding of Thiet in 1935, but this must be as an out-school.

⁵³ Abyei, among the Ngok Dinka, is actually located in Southern Kordofan, just North of the Bahr el Arab, but is ecclesiastically part of the Bahr el Ghazal Vicariate. Abyei was detached from Mading Abyei (1955) in 1960. Two later Dinka missions were established after the 1972 Peace Agreement: Cuibet, 1976, and Yirol, among the Ciec and Atuot, 1977.

among mature Dinka. From the beginning their energies were focused upon the formation of young minds in the 'Christian' environment of the schools. Initially the catechism took a prominent place even in basic 'bush' education. However, under policies established by Bishop Mason the first two years of primary school were devoted solely to the 'three Rs.' This was a period when pupils were familiarised with the Fathers and the disciplines of the school. Only in the third and fourth years might catechetical training commence, followed by the first invitation to baptism. Fr Elias Toniolo recalled trends during the 1950s:

The first thing is education. You first have to make them men . . . form them so they were less savages. We had to go to the area and break down the environment. I consider it a breaking down of pagan or native or natural environment . . . The chief knew that religion was not our concern. Teachers were looking after the pupils. Religion was not our issue.⁵⁴

Rural Dinka likewise came to see the Fathers' primary goal as imparting the skills of literacy:

The religious ideas were never clear. They [adults] only came to realize when the children were going to school. Then they understood they had come to teach the children. The priests were for the young, not for themselves. . . . I don't know whether they realised that missionaries were there to teach the word of God. They never made the connection between the missionaries' teaching the Gospel and the children learning to read and write. Literacy was at the centre. The children would learn to work like those in the offices. Nothing more.⁵⁵

Catholic Christianity was to emerge among Dinka youth who had imbibed a new social and intellectual identity and for whom the influences of traditional society were gradually diminishing. Schools, whether in the mission compound or out-stations, were the loci for the exchange of new ideas, and through the schools and those who attended them, rural Dinka came to perceive the Fathers. As untiring as the Fathers were in their itinerant ministries, however, there would remain, even after four decades, regions of Dinkaland untouched by their influence.

⁵⁴ Interview in Verona, 1989.

⁵⁵ Antiok Athuai Lual, Rek Aguek Dinka, attended Kwajok during the 1950s. Interviewed in London, 1991.

The often diminutive missionaries, replete with long white robes, pith helmets and full beards, could hardly have contrasted more sharply with the "tall, slim, and bony" "giants," "darkest among the coloured race," among whom they established themselves.⁵⁶ The Fathers who began work among the Dinka came to appreciate aspects of their culture, their intelligence, and particularly certain of their moral values. One Italian writer describing the strength of Dinka families, noted that "Although they ignore external clothing, their conduct is immaculate and scandals are extremely rare. Conjugal faithfulness is rigorously observed."⁵⁷ The premium placed by the Dinka upon honesty, democratic rule and the functioning of indigenous courts were noted appreciatively as a foundation for Catholic moral teaching. As to religious ideals, "they grasp a good deal of truth which provides a valuable foundation for our work of evangelisation."⁵⁸

The missionary Fathers, having for two decades lived on the periphery of the rebellious Dinka, perceived other traits as less than acceptable: their quick temper, their aggressiveness, their constant readiness for battle with spears, clubs and sticks ever at hand, their arrogance toward and disdain of other peoples who possess no cattle, and certainly their conservatism, their refusal to accept new ideas, whether in the sphere of technology, education or religious beliefs. The Fathers were disdainful of the laziness they perceived, particularly among Dinka men, some of whom came to work in the mission "only when their stomachs were empty."

The Dinka were initially unable to distinguish the missionaries from Condominium authorities who had so recently suppressed their own religious movements. When, in the early days, it became known that the Fathers wanted parents to send their children to be taught about God, suspicions were confirmed that youngsters would be carried into slavery. As the Mahdist's message of Allah's

⁵⁶ Olivetti, *Lettere* 33; Several articles referred to the Nilotes as giants, such as Ivo Ciccacci, *Tra I Giganti del Sudan*, 1967.

⁵⁷ Olivetti, *Giganti* 34.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

liberation had been succeeded by oppression, so the Verona Fathers were believed to be government agents employed to destroy the institutions Dinka society. In time, however, the peculiar character of the Fathers, their language, dress and manner, set them apart, as a distinct and peaceable category of alien.

The association between the British co-dominion and missions was not altogether negative, however, as memory of the initial period of brutal 'pacification' faded. As the Condominium neared its end and tensions with Northern Sudanese began to arise, Europeans, whether in administration or missions, were associated with an era of peace, as Stephen Bak recalled:

The Fathers were seen to be pacifists . . . the government administrators and the Fathers were working hand in hand and the first concern of the natives was public order, security. Inter-ethnic and inter-clan wars were put to an end. Groups were reconciled, slavery was stamped out. All that we know historically and what our elders taught us was that the British did not go to Sudan for colonial ambition. They came to stamp out slavery. This was proved by the short period they spent in the Sudan.⁵⁹

As Fr Nebel tried to recruit students for Kwajok during the early years he made forays into rural villages, accompanied by well dressed, healthy and cheerful school children. Seeing the cordial relations between the missionary and 'his' children and how well fed the students were, new recruits were sometimes won over.⁶⁰ Most parents were, however, hostile toward missionary overtures to their sons. Not only was there an association with slavery, but, the lad who went to school was considered 'useless' in terms of labour, communal defence, and the prestige of his family.⁶¹ Antiok Lual describes his father's response when his defiant son ran off to school:

My father met Umberto Fazina [Pasina] when he walked 19 miles to go get me for second time from school. When he saw the Catholic Fathers, he had given up hope on me: I was a lost person. He considered he had lost one son. When he was talking to Fazina he said he had nothing else to do; he would leave it to Fazina. . . . *Miith ci lo pan abun a miith abun apath, acin ke ben kwın ke gup.*⁶²

⁵⁹ Stephen Madut Bak, of the Rek Awin Dinka. Interviewed in London, November, 1992.

⁶⁰ Arthur Nebel, *I Dinca Sona Così*, 245.

⁶¹ A Lual interview, 1991.

⁶² "Children who have gone to the school become solely the children of the mission; there is nothing further you can get out of them." A Lual interview, 1991. Pan Abun = *Pan* (Dk), 'home' of *Abun* (Ab), 'Fathers,' adj.

During the 1940s, as demands for Sudanese independence increased, Condominium officials became alarmed that the South was so ill prepared for national leadership. District Commissioners intensified efforts to persuade parents, especially in prestigious families, to educate their sons. Resistance still endured. Bona Malwal, a firstborn son, recalled how his father initially sent his cousin in answer to the DC's request. When the boy died at the mission Bona's father had no choice but to send his eldest son, destined by tradition for political and spiritual leadership as *beny bith*. Antiok recalled the trauma of families with few sons:

It was difficult for Dinka, especially who had only one or two sons. Missionaries went about inviting them to bring their sons. Dinka men told them to stay away, not wanting their sons to go. They would hide their sons when they saw the car coming. At the time the most unthinkable thing a missionary can do would be to take away the only child.⁶³

Families who had several sons to choose from, usually selected the one thought to be the weakest or least intelligent for the school. Despite the assumption of many Dinka that the Fathers' schools would fail, classrooms were gradually filled with those who, in popular Dinka parlance, went to *pan Abun*, the 'house of the Fathers,' where they became *miith Abun*, the 'children of the Fathers.' Lost to the rhythm and values of traditional Dinka life, these young Dinka became the adoptive children of aliens.

Prospective students were attracted by a new community replete with its own symbols of distinction and achievement. Ambrose Thiik recalled the display of children being prepared for primary school:

... my uncle would get the students in a drill. He would be so well dressed: black shoes, khaki shorts, socks, waste coat, and wonderful spear, *Tongyuak*, and he carries a whistle. It is a combination of marching and drill and jumping like acrobatics. This went throughout the villages, a campaign to attract children to go to school.⁶⁴

Images of progress combined with the resonant symbol of a spear wielded by a respected adult to entice boys into school. Songs affirmed a new identity. Praise songs honoured progressive indigenous leaders as much prominent leaders of church,

⁶³ A Lual interview, 1991.

⁶⁴ Ambrose Thiik, native of Loinyaker, Apuk area of the Rek Dinka, former magistrate and Member of Parliament. Interviewed in London, 1991.

school and mission. As a new communal identity developed, cattle nevertheless remained close to the hearts of those raised in cattle camp. Desire for cattle wealth merged with the aspirations of education, as Ambrose recalled,

Then at Christmas at Kwajok, they would come from our area. Those from the out-schools would come in with nice songs composed to praise their chiefs and teachers and Bishop . . . this was meant to promote education. Go to school and you'll have anything you want! And what do they want? The cow, the goat:

It is Ngot who is the man, Lang is the man,
 these people who hold pen and paper.
 Therefore they have the cow and the goat in plenty,
 They have wealth,
 They know what is to eat during the lean time of rainy season.
 Therefore wealth goes with the pen and paper.⁶⁵

By the 1940s the association between education, progress and wealth was spreading. Some boys entered school, encouraged by graduates who had gained government employment. Their roots still deep in cattle culture, most nevertheless, invested their wages in livestock.

In time of famine some hungry lads appeared at the missions voluntarily. Attendance of girls in catechism classes was also encouraged by young men who, having been taught the virtues of Christian marriage in school, wanted future partners who had been baptised and confirmed.

Increasing numbers of rural Dinka found benefits in visiting *Pan Abun*. From the day of their arrival the missionaries requested local products such as milk, fish, grain, eggs and what livestock the Dinka were willing to trade. In exchange they bartered imported beads, soap, salt, sugar, cloth and manufactured goods from hoes to bicycles. Demands increased as the schools grew and mission compounds became recognised places of trade.

New horizons opened as medicines and health care were found effective. At dispensaries Catholic sisters treated children brought from rural areas and encouraged parents to have them baptised. When a child recovered from severe illness he was

⁶⁵ As recalled in English by A Thiik; no original Dinka version is available; interview, 1991.

often sent to school as an expression of gratitude.⁶⁶ Though it was difficult to persuade rural Dinka to remain in the mission for extended treatment, increasing numbers sought medical help:

. . . people began to realize that the mission was not only for the young. There was much more to it. They found it a place to get medicine; to bless your wife and children. They didn't link it with Christianity. It was a place to run to for medicine and for maternity. Women began to flock into the mission to give birth . . . [It was found that] women who give birth in the convent have better chances of survival."⁶⁷

Though many accepted the Fathers gifts some were suspicious, particularly after independence, likening them to the 'bribes' used by Muslims to entice people into conversion. Joseph, who attended school during the 1960s, recalled uneasily the methods used to lure impoverished Dinka into Christian worship:

One of the dirty tricks of the Fathers was that the Mission gave gifts, cloth, schools, a whole package of things. They gave soap, salt, etc. They brought many things and I think they forced people to go to them because of their needs. These were the first things they came for. They returned home to the *beny biith*. The poor families got into that; poverty often drew people. Not that people were struggling with famine, because at that time people were flourishing. But the new things, sugar and the salt, these were given every Sunday. You go to Church and receive it. The Fathers said, 'You are *ran rac*' [a bad person] if you don't come to church. The rich people had no need or interest. But our people were not hostile toward the newcomers. They would come and get what they wanted and then return home again.⁶⁸

The missions, some equipped with trade schools, often attracted disenfranchised Dinka, those who lacked cattle wealth. Especially before government centres were established the mission stations were centres for earning wages and learning new skills such as bricklaying, tailoring, carpentry, metalwork and diversified gardening.

As out-schools proliferated and cordial relationships developed between the Fathers and Dinka leaders, the mission drew large crowds during special celebrations. Christmas at Kwajok was especially memorable in the 1950s:

⁶⁶ C Parek, describing her experience in 1953 when 72 children were baptised. 60 children who were treated survived, many of whom later attended school.

⁶⁷ A Lual interview, 1991.

⁶⁸ Rev Joseph Ayok, Malual Dinka, attended school during the 1960s. Interviewed in London Nov, 1991.

The attitude of chiefs was so good, they always looked toward the mission. I couldn't say what it was. They seem to stand on equal terms. The chiefs went along very well. They never differ. Every year the missionaries would invite all the chiefs to spend Christmas in Kwajok itself. All the surrounding schools would come together for *Yai Yecu Kritho*, and the missionaries would have tents for the chiefs, and their people. All laid out in different directions, all after their chief. We would celebrate Christmas for days and days. They would bring bulls to be slaughtered. It was a communal gathering, community really. We think fondly about those years. Christmas was a big, big thing . . . They had 300, 500, 700 in one place.⁶⁹

As the Mission came to be perceived less as a threat and more as a familiar centre for the advancement of the community, rural people received the Fathers with traditional hospitality, even contributing to Christian religious celebrations. Their generosity was obvious when Father,

. . . Fazina went to Gogrial where there was a newly built church to be opened. Fazina was to serve mass there. The Dinkas brought in a lot of gifts, goats, *dhura* in baskets, plenty of firewood, grass. The church was built by volunteers: young men cut wood; people brought grass. There was a *wunabun* in Kwajok, the cattle camp of the Mission, and all the cattle were contributions from the people. There were 28 at Marialdit near Kwajok.⁷⁰

2. The Dinka and "the Word of God"

Gradually one notion which the Fathers tried to propagate became more widely accepted: *Ke koc Nhialic, wet e Nhialic ben pioc koc*, "They are the people of *Nhialic* who have come to teach people the Word of *Nhialic*." While the name *Nhialic* identified the supreme being known to the Dinka, the content of his divine word was to prove shocking and irrational in two important areas: the Fathers' teachings about marriage and those about spiritual power.

The idea that a man should marry only one wife was an assault upon basic Dinka assumptions regarding happiness, secure social relations, spiritual well-being and wealth. Add to this the Roman Catholic assertion that *ran Nhialic*, 'the person of God,' was one who remained unmarried, bereft of progeny, and untainted by sexual relations, and it seemed a reversal of all that was known of Creator and his intention for humankind. For a Dinka child to embrace such notions was equivalent to death in terms of the society from which he came. Stephen Bak recalled,

⁶⁹ A Lual, interview, 1991.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

The ordinary villager could see them [the Fathers] as spiritual messengers but when they tell them not to marry more than one wife, or call their sons to be celibate priests, then they don't believe them. The Dinka believe that marriage is an investment: the more children you have the richer you are.

Conflicting assumptions also surrounded encounters with *baany bith* whom the Fathers could not, during their early years, distinguish from less reputable, spiritual functionaries. Even a renowned *ran Nhialic* like Arianhdit was initially referred to as *ran rac*, 'an evil person.' Their rites, including major communal sacrifices, were condemned as 'sinful' and baptised Christians prohibited from attending them. Nor did most Dinka conceive of any parallels between the spiritual authority of the *beny bith*, and that asserted by the Catholic Fathers. Antiok Lual recalled these as,

... totally different worlds between the *baany bith* and Abuna, no connection. They had more faith in *beny bith* than in Abuna because they felt that *beny bith* answered their problems by saying something to God. Abuna has capacity of teaching the children to read and write. I don't know how many people knew the missionaries were to teach God's word. From 1953 backward, I don't think so, certainly not my family.⁷¹

The Fathers' domain remained primarily that of their adoptive children within the mission compound. Rarely did common people compare their spiritual authority with that of the *baany bith*.

The cattle-based traditions of the Dinka provided a pervasive and virtually impenetrable system of values. This sense of completeness and self satisfaction caused them to resent aliens who came claiming to possess qualities of life superior to their own:

... one of the problems of the Dinka with the outsider, particularly with the foreign European has been that the European has always come with what they thought were new, enlightened ideas to a people who didn't know, to a dark society. This of course is something that the Dinka resent very much because the Dinka, in their very makeup and their very nature think that they are a whole society, they are complete. There is religion among them. There is spirituality among them. There is good and bad. There is enlightenment that all is contained in the Dinka society and even if this is not contained they would resent that an outsider should bring them what they think is the good thing.⁷²

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Bona Malwal is from the Tuic Kuac Dinka, former Sudanese Minister of Culture, politician and journalist. Interviewed in Oxford, 1992.

Upon hearing that the Fathers had come to tell them of 'Jesus, the Son of God,' the Dinka commonly responded, that, *Koc eben e miith ke Nhialic! Nhialic aci koc eben cak!* "All people are children of *Nhialic* because he has created all people." There is, then, nothing unique about Jesus. A devout graduate from Catholic schools saw few distinctions between Church doctrine and practice and that of her Dinka ancestors:

... when you explain to people, most are close to what they are believing before the Italians came. They know there is a God. When you do something bad to someone there is judgement from God. You are baptised like what *beny bith, e doc you e piu* [anoint you with water]. Like you are going to river to take bath, it is the same, no difference. According to *beny bith*, he says he is calling God the father to help him in what he wants. ... they say there is no difference between the missionaries and us. The missionaries don't slaughter something in the Church. But at Christmas they slaughter and drink beer. Also for the *beny bith*, there are some months when they slaughter and make celebration. They say that for the word of God there is no difference. The only difference is that you must not marry more than one wife.⁷³

Another convert, Chief Lino Aguer, of the Tuic, made the familiar assertion that comparable religious knowledge had circulated among the Dinka long before the missionaries arrived. Their deficiency was the inability to record it:

The missionaries came and found that the people already knew a lot. The missionaries actually wrote down what they heard from the elders. What was in the Holy Book was what was recorded from the people. It is just that our people did not know how to write. We grew up hearing it from our fathers, sons from the fathers, coming down to us from well back. What was lacking was somebody to write it down and say, 'This is our Grandfather's book and our Father's book.' That was what was missing. But the word of mouth which we ourselves heard was there.⁷⁴

In Catholic schools, however, Dinka children learned that their 'grandfather's book' was of little relevance in contrast to the new religion: to be educated was to be a Christian. Literacy, initially perceived as the almost magical power of deciphering words on paper, became linked with the enlarging world of the town and with the hope of employment. Antiok Lual recalled the amalgam of images which accompanied his 'Christian name':

I became a Christian because the other children had wonderful Christian names and it occurred to me that by being baptised you become automatically educated

⁷³ Christina Parek, Rek Dinka from near Thiet, attended Kwajok and Tonj Teachers' Training College. Interviewed in London, 1991.

⁷⁴ F M Deng, 1978, quoting Chief Lino Aguer of the Twic, p 83.

and 'civilised. That was the motive. . . . To be civilised meant finding myself in a big office in Gogrial, being a chief's secretary or wireless officer. . . . My reason for civilisation was very limited.⁷⁵

The bestowing of names, so fundamental to identity among the Dinka, emerged as a potent sign that one had passed over from illiteracy, backwardness and paganism to the sphere of the formally educated, the 'civilised,' progressive and Christian. "The adoption of foreign names put you into a new and elevated category."⁷⁶ However, in this, as in other areas, lads often found it necessary to adapt in deference to their elders. Boys baptised as Dominico or Silvano reverted to Deng and Marial when they returned home.

Education and entry into the Church became associated with previously unknown concepts of advancement and progress. Dinka children began to speak of 'going ahead,' moving forward (*lo tweng*), to express their hope for the future advancement of their people. Boys coming to school directly from village and cattle camp formed new 'age sets' based on familiar structures of group identification. In their songs the spear gave way symbolically to the pen, primal divinities to the Virgin Mary and Saints, and traditional spiritual leaders to the priests and Bishop.⁷⁷

School children were taught that the eternal salvation of their souls was dependent upon their conversion, baptism and entry into the Church. Teachings that salvation could be attained solely through Christ, that the believer was promised eternal life in *pan nhial*, 'the place above,' and unbelievers were condemned to *pan mac*, 'the place of fire,' were sobering concepts.⁷⁸ Conversion required not only a transfer of allegiances in the spiritual realm, but a conscious shift of loyalties from family, clan and ancestors, to that of the Fathers, their divinities and the Church. It required considerable courage for the son of a respected family to confront his elders with his desire to become a Christian.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ A Lual interview, 1991.

⁷⁶ A Thiik interview, 1991.

⁷⁷ 'School Songs' 132, 135 and 137 in Francis Deng, *Dinka Songs*, (1973) 250-259. See Chapter VI.

⁷⁸ *Katekismo Ka bi Kristian Ngic* [The Little Catechism in Dinka], Bussere, 1938.

⁷⁹ Francis Deng records the probing question his father placed before him when he declared his desire to be baptised: "Assuming that the Christians were to go to the home of God and the rest to the home of fire, would you be pleased to enjoy the home of God while the rest of the family burned in fire?" F M Deng, *The Dinka of the Sudan* (1972) 156.

Catholic worship drew converted children into participation in colourful processions, vibrant song and service as acolytes. This contrasted with Dinka religious rites in which children were silent observers to rites reserved for adults.⁸⁰

Though the Latin liturgy was little understood, it helped to create a sense of awe: "You feel you are really going toward God; really communicating with God."

Children experienced both exhilaration and tedium:

As a child there was mystery in it, beauty; and terrifying pictures of crucifixion, Mary praying, St Joseph, and so forth. You felt these people may be alive. . . . I also helped as an acolyte, carrying candles and wearing red and white, . . . I was little and it was painful. The service could take one and a half hours. . . . The worship was very boring for me as a boy. We did say the *Lord's Prayer*, *Hail Mary* and others in Dinka. We didn't understand the prayer of consecration. That was all Latin, with the priest turned away from people. You don't look at the Cross; you bow your head and put your hands together. As kids we would try to see, take a glimpse. It was boring when he said his own thing.⁸¹

Children who had imbibed the ritual and prayer of Dinka religion were, nevertheless, able to sense resonant parallels with Christian worship, and with the central rite of the Eucharist. The *beny bith* used ritual gestures and offered prayers in a distinct and elevated form of Dinka much as the Catholic priest who chanted the Latin rite. Both possessed their ritual objects and shrines. Rites occurred at designated times, often to achieve specific ends which related to the experience of the community. Those who gathered were expected to act reverentially, with common purpose, as cantor and congregation sang hymns antiphonally. In both contexts *Nhialic* was addressed as a great father, and each was concerned with human obedience to divine law. In each human transgressions were recalled and the people called to repent.⁸² Just as Dinka communities enacted their rites of social and spiritual solidarity it was natural for children to perceive the rites of Christianity as an essential part of their new social environment.

During the initial stages of Catholic mission such parallels were, however, left largely to the perception of Dinka children. The Fathers yielded little ground to

⁸⁰ Rev John Malou, an Anglican, thought that solemn Christian ritual must seem quite boring to traditional Dinka who were familiar the emotion and excitement of blood sacrifice and the communal feast that accompanied it.

⁸¹ J Ayok, interview, 1991.

⁸² Reflections of Fr Rudolph Deng Deng Tong, interview London, Oct 1992.

comparisons which might denigrate Christianity. Bona Malwal recalled the response of a missionary teacher when he asked a question in which he compared European dowry with Dinka bride price. He was told never to raise such questions again and expelled from class for a month.⁸³ Ambrose Thiik recalled his perception as late as the 1950s:

The attitude generated by the Christian priests was that the gods our parents worshipped, everything that was our way of life, was of the devil. Their ways were those of *jong rac*. 'Your becoming Christians is rebirth, being readmitted, being brought to know God.' It was also fashionable, one of the ways you are climbing up the ladder of civilisation and education. You used to be made to look down on that which was traditional, to dismiss *en masse* traditional beliefs and accept the Church teachings as the enlightened path.⁸⁴

Children, returning to visit their people, were exhorted to refuse to participate in or attend any form of traditional ritual. Sacrifices of the *beny bith* were disallowed. If they fell ill they were to prohibit relatives from offering sacrifices on their behalf. Even the blessings commonly bestowed on children by Dinka elders, using water or saliva, were to be refused. Antiok Lual described his own insubordination:

When I went back home the *beny bith* was about to perform and I reacted terribly. I walked away saying that these are evil things. When I went to school and back home I used to be very proud of having been to school, being baptised, having received my name. I started to look down on those who hadn't gone to school and kept telling them that they were uneducated. What we had learned about *jong rac* we kept away from our fathers. We stayed away from the performance to avoid saying anything that would challenge our elders. We became disassociated from family gatherings where the *beny bith* was present. That was the break with family ties for myself. . . . In the previous four years I would happily go home; when I left home my father called the *beny bith* to bless me with water to wish me well. Four years later, as I left, I turned, waited till the last minute, and just walked off. The family didn't know how we thought; they said only, *Aci Abun racnim. E miith abun!*⁸⁵

In a child such as Antiok, who defied the authority of his elders and their ancestors, the fears of his father had been realised. The elders had predicted that the boy who attended school would be taken by the Fathers and 'brainwashed,' *racnim*. He would not respect the *beny bith*, but would eat the ritual cow, *wang yath*, indiscriminately, showing no respect for his own heritage.

⁸³ B Malwal interview, 1992.

⁸⁴ A Thiik, interview, 1991.

⁸⁵ "The Fathers have brainwashed them; they are just the Father's children!" A Lual, interview, 1991.

School children were often ridiculed for their new beliefs by age-mates in the village. One of the most common points of disagreement concerned the importance of Dinka divinities and ancestors over against those introduced in the mission. Antiok recalled:

When I said that Mary was the mother of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, oh there was a great dispute. God is the Father of everybody. All people have come from God and all are his sons, so how could he be Jesus? As for Mary, God never married. They took me to be a fool actually, and many other school children.⁸⁶

Elders and age-mates alike observed that *Nhialic* is Creator of all mankind and that such figures as Jesus and Mary brought little that was new to Dinka thought. When his age-mates examined the crucifix dangling from Antiok's new rosary, they agreed it must be, "the white man's grandfather." If the Europeans brought new divinities, they were necessarily their own ancestral divinities and of little relevance to the Dinka.

3. *Abundit* Arthur Nebel and the 'fulfilment' of Dinka religion

By the 1960s several Verona Fathers had compiled considerable linguistic and ethnographic data on the Dinka.⁸⁷ In retrospect it seems remarkable that so few of their insights undergird a cohesive policy concerning theology and missionary strategy in Dinkaland. In part, this was because the Verona Fathers were a religious community guided by a Vicar Apostolic who tended to adhere to policies and directives emanating from Rome. While individual missionaries 'on the field' might exercise a degree of latitude in their immediate context, they had little opportunity to feed their insights up the hierarchical structure to influence broader policy.⁸⁸

Nevertheless, one Father is known to have had particular impact on the evolution of Dinka Catholic thought. Among missionaries who came to respect some facets of Dinka religion, was the Austrian, Fr Arthur Nebel. Best known as a linguist,

⁸⁶ A Lual, interview, 1991.

⁸⁷ The Fathers' voluminous ethnographic notes are held in the Comboni Archives in Rome. Alghisi, Ciccacci, Nebel and Tessitore published numerous articles in *Nigrizia* during their years with the Dinka, an output which increased after their expulsion in 1964. In 1968 Nebel published *I Dinca Sono Così*.

⁸⁸ Their work in Southern Sudan, terminated by the 1964 missionary expulsion, experienced little of the influence of Vatican II with its advocacy of greater 'contextualisation' of the Gospel in non Western cultures.

he was a faithful teacher and trusted pastor whose influence extended over half a century.⁸⁹ Much as Dinka Christians of the ECS remember Archibald Shaw for his longevity and commitment, some Dinka Catholics recall Arthur Nebel. However, the approach and methodology employed by the two are in sharp contrast.

Like Shaw some Catholic Fathers received Dinka ox names with little apparent concern. Father Raphael was everywhere known as *Mayomdit* and Father Toniolo, as *Marialdit*. Nebel, however, stood in the face of Dinka convention and refused, believing that the obsession of the Dinka with their cattle was a detraction from the Gospel and the work to which he was called. The sole title he accepted, and by which he was universally known, was *Abundit*, 'great' or 'elder Father.'

Certainly Nebel perceived severe deficiencies in the rites and beliefs of Dinka religion. Occasionally he employed a common vernacular idiom, referring to them as, "the things of small black forest ants," in contrast to the comprehensive truth manifest through the Church.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, he affirmed that Dinka religious thought revealed ancient Judeo-Christian influences and contained elements of divine truth. Nebel recorded numerous Dinka myths, proverbs and beliefs and from these often drew parallels in his efforts to convey the precepts of Christianity. From 'exile' in 1968 he recalled the approach he and his colleagues had pursued:

We were trying to avoid hurting the Dinka's pride and conservatism. Our efforts were aimed to make them understand that our religion was not a foreign religion, appropriate only to the whites, but that it was the fulfilment of the primitive religion which was from its inception imbued with many truths.

Among these were the essential 'monotheism' of the Dinka, the legends which bore resemblance to biblical narratives, and many aspects of Dinka social morality. Nebel described how they studied the religious and moral teaching of the Dinka "in order to value them as a sanction to our teaching." He continued,

⁸⁹ Arthur Nebel (d 1981). By 1939 Nebel had produced a Dinka dictionary and abridged grammar, a reader, hymnal, prayer book, a gospel narrative, a catechism, four graded arithmetic books, a collection of vernacular stories, a volume on geography and history, and his 'Life History of a Dinka', published by instalments in *The Messenger*. Listed in *The Messenger* (August, 1939) 57.

⁹⁰ Dinka employ the idiom *Kek acuok roor*, 'they are forest ants' (small black ants), to emphasise the insignificance of mere human beings before *Nhialic*. They may also use it to distinguish the mere layman from the *beny bith* who is uniquely empowered to meet the spiritual needs of the community. Nebel used it to contrast the beliefs and practices of Dinka traditionalists from those of Christianity. Fr Rudolph Deng interview, 1992.

. . . it was possible to demonstrate that at the beginning we all had the same religion. The Dinka, having long lived far away from those to whom God entrusted the preservation of his Word, and possessing none of the books of the Word of God, had forgotten some of his truths. As it happens with all oral traditions, so the Dinka traditions were subject to error.⁹¹

Thus students were taught to replace the 'emblems' or 'totems' of indigenous religion with the guardian angels of Catholicism. Wrote Nebel, "the Dinka easily understood that it was unworthy to conceive of the protector-spirits as residing in the bodies of animals like snakes, crocodiles and other lower creatures."⁹²

Among the Dinka of Northern Bahr el Ghazal certain ancestors are highly revered. Parallels were drawn between Garang and Abuk, the primal ancestors of Dinka legend, and the biblical Adam and Eve. To suggest these parallels Garang and Abuk were incorporated in the vernacular catechism recited by school children and in songs of the church.⁹³ Nebel acknowledged, however, that, unlike Adam and Eve, Dinka ancestors may also be venerated as divinities, a factor which he does not appear to have seen as problematic. While Nebel argued, on moral grounds, against practices such as polygamy, revenge, and the malign activities of *tiit*, he conceded considerable ground to the great ancestors and divinities of Dinka religion.

Such integration of indigenous thought was further developed among Dinka students. An example is the role sometimes attributed to the most revered ancestor, Deng, conceived alternatively as the 'son' or 'husband' of Abuk.⁹⁴ He is the divinity 'who 'fell from heaven' and is *Nhialic* himself.' It is not surprising that young Christians saw in Deng parallels with Jesus Christ. These connections were sometimes extended to identify the three primal ancestors with the Holy Family: Garang, Abuk and their 'son' Dengdit, being equated with Joseph, Mary and Jesus.

Nebel, with several decades in Dinkaland, maintained a wide-ranging dialogue with indigenous religion and, in later years, did little to suppress the integrative impulses of his students. For his liberality Nebel was sometimes criticised by

⁹¹ A Nebel, *I Dinca Sona Così*, (1968) 240.

⁹² Nebel, *I Dinka Sono Così* 241.

⁹³ Nebel was more open to 'contextualisation' of Christian teaching than some of his colleagues, a fact that sometimes provoked their severe criticism. Fr R Deng, interview, 1992.

⁹⁴ Lienhardt describes the three as 'free-Divinities' and explores the rich symbolic imagery related to each. *Divinity* 159-64.

colleagues who sought to maintain more rigid control on the thought and activities of young converts.

4. The integrative impulses of Dinka Catholics

Some boys, like young Antiok, tried, often in defiance of their elders, to be obedient to the more severe prohibitions of the Fathers. Others sought ways of accommodating themselves to the two distinct social and religious spheres in which they participated. Stephen Bak described how he used moral and rational criteria to distinguish between indigenous rituals in which he would participate and those he rejected:

At home in my family we had the *yik* of Dengdit, a clan symbol. Dengdit, for me I regard it as god. When I returned home I would stand near the *yik*, and elders would come and spray my body with water. Any animal that was killed was killed near the *yik*. I used to comply with this. Other things I would avoid. Also in my own family we have Mathiang Gok, called Makueidit. I did not recognise it whenever people used to say it talks inside the wall. I used to ignore it and not comply with what was being done. I was rebuked. Like my brother, I would also despise it, saying there was nothing to it. We would only believe in the *yik* of Dengdit. . . . Makueidit was a sort of evil; it is not holy but devilish. It was not a member of the family who performed its ritual but has its own priest who speaks to it; no one else. Its demands are not universal. They are localised according to each family. But Dengdit is universal; most families have it in addition to their clan totem.⁹⁵

The distinctions Stephen employed were commonly accepted by many traditional Dinka as well as other Christian converts. Mathiang Guk, efficacious through a fetish bundle is a malign *jak*, a 'black power' (*jong col*) or earth power' (*jong piny*) widely disdained among Dinka.⁹⁶ Stephen employed the missionary's adjective, 'devilish,' in describing its nature. Similarly, devout converts refused dealings with inferior *jak* subject to the authority of *tiet*, *apeth* or *acor*. Few, when sick, would accept the ministrations of *ran loguop Aciek*, a medium who becomes possessed in order to provide diagnostic insight. In contrast with these inferior 'powers' the divinity

⁹⁵ Stephen Madut Bak is from the Pakor Awan region of the Rek Dinka. His education was received after independence in government schools, but he attended annual catechesism classes at Mayen Abun and was baptised in 1958. At time of writing he is a spokesman for the SPLA in London. Interviewed, Feb. 1992.

⁹⁶ *Divinity* 64-65.

Dengdit possessed an honourable tradition, and his cult was maintained by reputable clan elders.

Whether on moral or empirical grounds, young Catholics decided which of their ancestral traditions they would accept and which reject, declaring to their elders that, 'I am a Christian.' Many chose to receive the blessings offered by older people as expressions of solidarity with their families. However, when it came to the 'emblem' or 'totem' of his clan Stephen described certain beliefs as "nonsense." He refused to join his relatives when they slept unprotected in the forest believing that, being "related to lions," they could not be harmed.

Some children found it possible to move between the two distinct, systems of belief and practice, adapting to the demands of each as required. Though they had entered the expanding world of the educated and baptised, they could not presume to impose the claims of the Catholic Church upon their elders. Bona Malwal described his early resolution:

Most of these [rituals] took place when the Fathers were not around anyway. . . . when I was in school they wouldn't let me go, but when I am on holiday and the people are celebrating I would go. I didn't feel any guilt or ambiguity at all. In fact I didn't consciously attempt to compare what the Dinka were doing with what the Christian churches were doing. To the contrary . . . it came to me that these were two ways of worshipping the same God . . . so I didn't feel the contradiction. I think early, perhaps in my adolescence, when I got from 15 on . . . I think those who did not struggle with it transformed themselves--and this was in me too--the feeling that being a Christian, and getting involved and getting baptised as a Christian was one of the distinguishing features of an educated person and so you easily justified your outsideness from the rest of society as being an educated person and Christianity was part of a distinction of an educated person.⁹⁷

Bona, the son of an influential chief and *beny bith*, began to perceive himself as participating in a broader and more pervasive system of political authority and religion than that of his father. 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. His father, nevertheless, resented the possibility that his eldest son might not receive his own mantle of

⁹⁷ B Malwal, interviewed Oxford, 1992.

authority as chief and *beny bith*. Bona reflected on the limitations of his father's vision:

He didn't conceive of the situation where the authority of the Church was going to be superior to his authority as *beny bith*. Rather, that his son is going to be alienated from his natural spiritual being into something new. He knew, for instance, that I couldn't perform the rites of *beny bith* if I was a Christian, and he resented that.

If the Verona Fathers had initially hoped that evangelism of rural Dinka populations might come about through the influence of educated youth they were mistaken, certainly in the short term. Never did Dinka adults submit to catechism classes and baptism in the numbers common to other ethnic groups. Whether out of respect or fear, few Dinka children discussed questions of their new faith openly with their elders. If they did, they encountered the blunt and irrefutable logic of the Dinka:

It was very slow, you know, because how can the child convince the big person? What is the way of persuading the big people? When they went to the parents to tell them they wanted to teach them about God in the school, they would say, 'We know God already, there is nothing more to teach. To write and read it is good.'⁹⁸

Some felt that the Fathers, as respected elders, should themselves have taken their gospel message directly to adults in villages and cattle camps. Tensions often existed between parents and the children who had disobeyed them which precluded any discussion of Christian faith. Antiok recalled:

At the moment, only those who've been to school know what Christianity is about. Even myself, who has been through school, I have never had time to go back to my father and brothers to tell them what the Bible carries. The missionaries wasted a valuable period where they could have gone straight to the people. The children never went back to tell the parents what the missionary has brought. I think we were scared. First, when we went to school when your father didn't want you to go, it will prove his point, his original reason for not wanting you to go. He will say that you now disrespect all that our ancestors believed in. The parents have fears as to what the children will come back [with]. The children, then, will keep quiet about everything, whether it is good or bad.⁹⁹

By the 1950s there existed a small community of adults who, having completed mission education, were serving as teachers, local administrators and catechists who stood at the forefront in recruiting new students to school and Church.

⁹⁸ C Parek, interviewed London, 1991.

⁹⁹ A Lual, interview, London, 1991.

Elementary students were encouraged to use their three month dry season holiday to attend catechetical classes in preparation for baptism. During the mid-1950s some Catholics made baptism a prerequisite for advancement. One Catholic headmaster, "a southern activist," determined that students at the government elementary school in Gogrial would not be allowed to advance to intermediate school unless they were first baptised.¹⁰⁰

Ayok Anie, an exemplary Christian and progressive educationalist, moved about persuading and sometimes coercing parents to send their children to government school. While he clung to certain traits of his Dinka identity which he found admirable, he propagated the symbols and teaching of Catholic Christianity. His children, having matured in the town, did not undergo *ghornhom* scarification, nor did they have their lower teeth removed. Boys were, however, circumcised according to Malual custom. Christian confirmation, *Yek rial*, 'endowment with power,' became an important focus of adult transformation, as Joseph, the son of Ayok Anie, recalled:

In my mind it was a substitution; this was how we felt. We were in a group, a feeling that really within me as a child, we were going to go through it together, to be prepared. You have to pass it. You feel lost if you don't pass that. It was the point at which I became responsible. Like the age set. Responsible for my own wrongdoing before God and before my parents, taking in mind that the Ten Commandments--honour your father and mother--that is at the centre of Dinka tradition. You are protector for your family and home; you become responsible citizen, member of community in baptism also. The rite of Confirmation, laying on of hands it was powerful for me. It was a mixture of joy, but also of responsibility. Don't play with the girls; don't lie; if you do you confess quickly.¹⁰¹

Though evangelism met little success except through the schools, a shift in the attitudes of all parties was underway by the late 1950s. Dinka elders, their political and spiritual authority being gradually eroded, began to acknowledge that the Catholic mission had brought some benefits to Bahr el Ghazal. Several former students, bearing Christian baptismal names, had assumed prominent positions as chiefs and government officials. Young Dinka converts continued the process of

¹⁰⁰ S M Bak, interview, London, 1991.

¹⁰¹ J Ayok, interview, 1991.

categorising and integrating the two worlds of which they were apart, developing a distinctively Dinka response to Catholicism.

The Fathers themselves had incorporated aspects of Dinka culture. At Rumbek and Warap new Catholic churches appeared, not in red brick reminiscent of Italy, but in the style of the large round, grass roofed cattle byres, similar to the shrines of Dinka religion. Assuming a familiar spiritual role European priests set out by boat on the Lol River, clad in cotta and pith helmet, to invoke the blessings of *Nhialic* upon the new fishing season. Fr Nebel, having befriended several *baany bith*, commended their moral leadership and priestly mediation, as Bona Malwal recalled:

And Ciirdit, as the supreme spiritual leader of all the Ciec, was recognised by the Church as somebody who appeals to God directly and not a *beny bith* of the kind who would go through something else. So the Church quite interestingly accepted that Ciirdit's way of praying to God is a different way of praying to God, but the appeal goes to the same God. So there was no competition. And Ciirdit would come to the mission on Christmas Day to be together with us and with the priests, and during the annual harvest celebration the priest and the school would go to Ciirdit's home to also do the same kind of celebration. So there wasn't that kind of antagonism between these two at all.¹⁰²

A new, if tentative, collegiality was developing whereby students and rural Dinka observers could acknowledge two complimentary forms of spiritual authority. The children who had been adopted by aliens as *miith abun* were increasingly free to claim their kinship to *baany bith*, who, like the Fathers, invoked the one *Nhialic*, father of all.

D. Catholic authority and Dinka egalitarianism

Catholic missionaries frequently lamented the stubbornness of their Dinka students, while Dinka have challenged the prejudicial treatment they believe they received at the hands of missionaries. This section will analyse the difficulties which Dinka have encountered, first within Catholic schools, and then in the larger context of a highly stratified Church.

¹⁰² B Malwal, interview, 1992.

1. Missionary teachers versus Dinka students

Given the extensive educational system they developed and maintained it was understandable that the Verona Fathers valued submissiveness among their pupils. A Southern Sudanese student population of 813 in 1923, had grown to 4,404 by 1933, and was estimated at 8,000 in 1945. By 1954 over 26,000 students were receiving instruction in Catholic institutions.¹⁰³ Financial resources were limited and subsidies provided by the government nominal. Mission life was rigorous and practical:

It was hard . . . The schools in those days meant you had to be a practising Catholic and a hard worker. You must cultivate, bring firewood, pound your own *dhura*, clean your own plot in the compound. This deterred many people from going to Catholic schools. I was prevented by my parents because life was tough there.¹⁰⁴

Within the schools the Verona Fathers, mostly of vigorous Italian peasant stock, and Dinka children, confronted one another with an array of challenges. Despite all that distinguishes the Italian from the Dinka cultural personality, both might be characterised as determined, temperamental and convinced of the superiority of their own heritage. The Fathers demanded a new type of encounter among a people who, historically, had sought either to exclude aliens or subdue them through absorption within their society. Though the celibate missionaries lived quite insulated in *Pan Abun*, they demanded, through Dinka children, an inroad into the soul of Dinka society.

While it was expected that Sudanese children would enter fully into the pervasive structures of the mission compound, most missionaries made few concessions to Dinka etiquette. Early memories of some former students recall the Fathers as distant and "unapproachable": "They gave us sweets, but I couldn't see love in their eyes. It seemed they were hiding under their long robes." Some recalled how, upon entering Dinka compounds, the Fathers refused to sit on the ground and engage in normal social intercourse. The refusal to drink water offered in conventional

¹⁰³ The Educational Secretary of the Comboni School, quoted in an anonymous paper, "The Roman Catholic Contribution to Evangelization in the Sudan at the time of Condominium", Durham Sudan Historical Record Conference, 1982.

¹⁰⁴ S M Bak, interview, 1991.

hospitality was offensive, "a great pity for children to see." The impulse of some to wash hands immediately after greeting, or to refrain from shaking hands altogether, had a similar effect. Some students were frustrated by the fact that Italian missionaries possessed 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?" demanded one former student.¹⁰⁵

Nevertheless, several priests, sisters, and brothers were honoured as *Koc keg Nhialic* 'people of God' and parents in the faith. Among qualities which Dinka students respected were their generosity, wit and wisdom, their even handedness in dealing with students of different ethnic groups, and their care for the sick. The Fathers' reputation for patience was even extolled across rural areas in the lines of a song:

Other nations are always trying to cause him trouble,
but he remains as patient as a priest.
All other nations are troublesome but he must remain patient.¹⁰⁶

Several popular 'school songs' also honoured missionary personnel, among them Sister Pamphilia, Superior of the girls' school, and Father Pasina, Superior of Kwajok.¹⁰⁷ Bishop Eduard Mason, long based in Wau, was a gifted educationalist and missionary diplomat, remembered for his even handedness and discipline:

Mason, he was not like other Italians; he was different in the way he treated people, no tribalism. Other Italians, they liked the rich, the educated.¹⁰⁸

Even before Kwajok was founded a few Dinka had joined the ethnically mixed schools functioning in other tribal areas. As schools proliferated and Dinka mixed more widely, the distinct attributes of their character often seemed apparent to European teachers. If their ancestors had been characterised as truculent, conservative, and aggressive, some missionaries found reason to describe Dinka students in similar terms. Like their egalitarian elders, they did not adapt readily to the demands of authoritarian hierarchies.

¹⁰⁵ J Ayok and C Parek.

¹⁰⁶ From a song composed by Adueng Ring in 1968, when the Adiang and Awideng clans fought against the Goi. Translated by Fr Dominic Matong, interviewed Rome, 1989.

¹⁰⁷ See 'School Song' number SS135 in the Appendix.

¹⁰⁸ C Parek, 1991.

Dinka students were often bright and capable but their self-assured, confrontative character often contrasted sharply with that of other students. In the perception of their teachers Dinka were more prone to challenge authority, to question restrictions, to denigrate their non Dinka school mates, and resort to violence.¹⁰⁹ From the time the Fathers first arrived at Kwajok they were aware of the difficulties of employing the 'insubordinate' Dinka and brought labourers from neighbouring tribes. The trend continued, as a former student recalled:

There was a big gap because the non Dinka who were in and around the mission at the time were much more favoured by the missionaries than the Dinka. I think maybe the Dinka are hot-headed; they don't accept things as easily as other tribes would do. You would find a lot more of the non Dinkas in the mission and working in the mission. The workers who helped the Fathers were mostly non Dinkas. . . [The Dinka] did not like being servants; they looked down on the non Dinka from the other tribes as being too submissive to the *Turuk*. As if they are just *duor*, too submissive. I think that is where the conflict between the missionaries and the Dinka began. They don't want to be seen as those who go work at the missions; they don't like the word 'servant!'¹¹⁰

Many Dinka who graduated from mission schools carried some resentment over what they perceived as the 'tribalism' and prejudice of European teachers: "The problem still hangs on our necks that the Dinka is something terrible."¹¹¹ Bona Malwal recalls,

. . . the generally prejudicial attitude of the Catholic Church, particularly the Comboni Fathers, to the Dinka as a people. It comes across to us, even as lay Catholics, not as priests. This prejudice is not racial or anything. It is based on the fact that the European Christian missionaries generally find the Dinka too independent-minded for their liking, much less submissive than the other tribes. If we lead people, we are much more comfortable with people who are submissive to us than those who are more independently minded.¹¹²

Acknowledging the stubbornness which sometimes typified Dinka children, Christina Parek believed they were often subject to injustice:

. . . from what we realize today, Italians particularly, they are not treating the Dinka equally like the Equatorian peoples, the Zande, or Bari, or whatever . . . when something happened between a Dinka boy or Equatorian boy, they fought in a quarrel, and they are taken to be charged, the Equatorian will be punished,

¹⁰⁹ These traits contrasted, for instance, with those of Zande pupils who came from a more hierarchical society rich with the vocabulary of gratitude and adulation for people of superior standing. Submissive and obedient students were naturally preferred by schoolmasters.

¹¹⁰ A Lual, interview, 1991.

¹¹¹ A Thiik, interview, 1991.

¹¹² B Malwal, interview, 1992.

given garden work to do, to cut the grass, . . . and the Dinka boy will be sent away [expelled] immediately. They say Dinka are very strong minded. When the Dinka are wrong they will not say they are sorry.¹¹³

Seldom did Dinka students hesitate to challenge the injustices they perceived in the actions of their superiors. Few could accept the notion that, because they were Black or Dinka, they should be treated by standards different from those applied to other Africans, 'Arabs' or Europeans. As students imbibed the tenets of the Christian gospel they were often angered by what seemed the hypocrisy of their teachers. Preference toward individual students was resented as much as favouritism toward particular ethnic groups:

The Italians don't know how to support those who are weak. They show preference. They should not select a few people that are better than the rest. And they say they have come to preach the Word of God!¹¹⁴

When Condominium officials belatedly awoke to the need to prepare future Southern Sudanese leaders, one of the criticisms they often levelled against Roman Catholic educators was the premium they placed upon submissiveness over the creativity and independence of thought required for leadership. In Nilotic students the Catholic Church confronted assumptions about authority and power, about individual initiative and assertiveness, which seemed in opposition to its own hierarchical traditions. These tensions, common in the schools of Southern Sudan, were to influence the role which the Dinka later assumed within the Catholic Church. Recalling these dynamics some reflective Dinka Catholics have asked, if the Verona Fathers did not subvert the original vision of Daniel Comboni for whom African initiative and self determination were so essential.

2. Toward indigenous leadership of the Church

The plan of Daniel Comboni for the "regeneration of Africa by Africa," first conceived in 1864, appeared far from its fulfilment when, precisely a century later, all

¹¹³ C Parek, interview, London, 1991. Bona Malwal echoed this, "It was easy to reprimand a non Dinka for the same mistake for which you would dismiss a Dinka from school. That was a very open kind of a thing. If you committed the same mistake that a non Dinka committed you would not only be reprimanded but would be expelled from school." Interview, Oxford, 1992.

¹¹⁴ C Parek, 1991.

European missionaries were expelled from Southern Sudan. From the beginning of the Condominium until national independence in 1955 a mere 15 indigenous Sudanese had been ordained to the Roman Catholic priesthood; and one indigenous Bishop had been consecrated for the Diocese of Rumbek. Alongside them were some 360 Catholic missionaries. It was affirmed that "the Church spares no efforts to train Sudanese priests and hastens to promote them to the episcopal status as soon as it finds them able to bear the responsibility," but this did not decrease the six arduous years of philosophical and theological education, much of it in Latin, required for ordination. This contrasted sharply with Protestant practice, where devout men might be ordained with little more than three years of Bible College.¹¹⁵

The Fathers tried to obtain at least one ordinand from each ethnic group among whom the Church had been planted, but, given its late start among the Dinka, 70 years elapsed between the ordination of Daniel Sorur Farim Deng, and that of Salvatore Atak, the second Dinka Catholic priest.¹¹⁶ By the time missionaries were expelled in 1964 only two Dinka had been ordained and their territory was among the least prepared to face the challenges of the 1960s.

The restrictions of Catholicism regarding marriage remained the single greatest obstacle to Dinka participation in the Church. Bona Malwal recalled how his father "went mad" when his eldest son informed him that he wanted to be baptised a Christian, so potentially relinquishing his right to chieftaincy and authority as *beny bith*. Only the winsome friendship of Fr Nebel and the encouragement of the local DC overcame his father's resistance. It was another matter altogether when Bona, age 15, suggested he would like to become a priest. The resolute chief confronted both missionaries and the DC declaring that, were this encouraged, his son's education would be terminated. The matter was dropped by all parties.

¹¹⁵ Vocations to the priesthood were sought as early as 1933 when some Sudanese boys were sent to junior seminaries at Bussere and Okaru. Only with the opening of Saint Paul's Major Seminary at Tore in 1953 did the full spectrum of seminary training become available in Sudan. Sanderson (1981) 393.

¹¹⁶ The 135 indigenous Sudanese Catholic priests ordained between 1944 and 1988 constitute a remarkable ethnic, linguistic and geographical diversity. Dellagiacoia, *Sudanese Catholic Clergy*, 3rd Edition (Juba, 1988).

Dinka students were, however, prone to competitiveness and perceived the ordained priesthood as one more great, if virtually unattainable, achievement to be mastered. It was unlikely that many grasped the full implications of a priestly vocation, as Bona Malwal reflected:

. . . the age in which they had to make those decisions they were young and adventurous . . . [But once] you have already made a choice and you have got into this and you say, 'If I cannot go through it successfully, I will be a failure' and that depends on you as a Dinka. You must not permit failure; you must go through successfully.¹¹⁷

a. Father Salvatore Awembil Atak

Given their innate sense of ethnic pride it was not easy for educated Dinka to accept that, of the 21 Southern Sudanese ordained between 1944 and 1957 there was not one Dinka. For them a Dinka priest would mark a new level of mutual acceptance between the Dinka and the Church. On the 21st of December, 1957, Salvatore Awembil Atak, was received into Holy Orders, the first Dinka Catholic priest of the 20th Century. Having studied at Bussere Seminary from 1945, he attended Okaru and Gulu, and received a degree in theology at the Urban University in Rome where he was ordained.¹¹⁸ Antiok Lual remembers his reception at Kwajok:

We danced for two or three days. The feeling we had--everybody, school children, first to fourth year--it was a profound feeling, very nice. Because, if a person who speaks our language can learn to become a priest! We thought there was something secretive about it, very difficult. We talked about being a lawyer, engineer, etc. those were possible. But a priest, to be nearer to God, that was wonderful! I wonder how many children entered for priesthood that year. It symbolised a Dinka man who had gone to school like any other children. Then after all, there is nothing bad in going to school. . . . What delighted us was our own son coming to tell us what Jesus Christ was all about. If he can tell us, then there must be truth in it. These were people who never before knew that a Dinka could become a priest.¹¹⁹

The feeling of achievement and jubilation was, however, accompanied by a sense of loss on the part of an ordinand's family. As school children had become *miith abun*, adopted into an alien 'family' so an ordinand was drawn further into the

¹¹⁷ B Malwal, 1992.

¹¹⁸ Salvatore Atak (born about 1930, d 1975) was from a village near Awiel, baptised at Nyamlel in 1939. Dellagiacomu, *Directory*.

¹¹⁹ A Lual interview, 1991.

incomprehensible, isolated and alien world of the missionaries. As life became regimented within the mission he underwent a social death in the eyes of many Dinka. Even more than the school boy, he was a 'lost person', a 'wasted life' in the eyes of many Dinka.¹²⁰ Joseph Ayok recalls their perception:

They would regard and honour them knowing they were good men but would puzzle at their aloneness in their private rooms, not free to welcome outsiders, having to meet people in a neutral place . . . I thought they didn't have any personal relationship, but rather a military sort of interaction. . . . They were oblivious to the pressures on them. If they had a quiet day they were supposed to be in the compound. [Father Alipio] Akec's brother arrived to tell him of a death and he was not allowed to speak to him. Nobody came to Akec to encourage him. He expected some support from the white Fathers but he had to go to his room alone, not understanding why. He wept.¹²¹

Having been cut off from the normal pulse of Dinka society and adjusting to the values of European clericalism it would be virtually impossible to return to conventional village life:

Like Atak Riak, having decided to become a priest and then leaving it, he will never again fit into the life of a typical Dinka person. He is in neither of these camps, so he can't fit in. I believe it is because he knows both worlds very well, the life in the villages, and that of being a priest. He cannot readapt himself to life in Dinka area.¹²²

The indigenous priest entered a netherworld, for he was never fully received within the social milieu of European missionaries. The missionary Fathers, united by a common language and culture, constituted a social unit which was largely inaccessible:

Some of the native priests tried to put aside their culture and live in the Catholic compound as priests. In a strange way this did not bring respect toward them from the Catholic Fathers. At the same time they were told off if they disobeyed the rules. Father Akec said that sometimes they don't understand why they must do certain things, but must do them regardless. As priests they didn't know where to stand as people.¹²³

Relatives of Dinka clergy often anticipated that their 'sons' would compensate their losses by providing wealth and opportunity through the Church. If the European Fathers were equipped with comfortable housing, vehicles and warehouses full of supplies, it was expected these would become available to the families of ordinands.

¹²⁰ Such phrases are commonly used, J Ayok and A Lual.

¹²¹ J Ayok, interview, 1991.

¹²² A Lual, interview, 1991.

¹²³ J Ayok, interview, 1991.

Family pressures were often intense and unrealistic. When, in the 1960s, the Europeans were expelled and the priests left with few resources and virtually no power, they were perceived as utter failures by the criteria of many Dinka.¹²⁴

The dynamics which typified relationships between Nilotic students and their Catholic teachers often carried over when young priests took up residence in the Mission. Nilotic clerics found it particularly difficult to submit to authorities whose decisions seemed unjust and arbitrary or to rules, the reason for which they could not comprehend. If they anticipated a just and harmonious Christian society, they encountered the hypocrisy and racism endemic in any human community. "In the early days there was no sense of equality toward Southern Blacks. Europeans did not treat us as if we were their own people."¹²⁵ Dinka ordinands often found themselves isolated within a highly stratified ecclesiastical structure which contradicted the egalitarian assumptions inculcated from youth. Their defiance and inability to conform often increased isolation.

The experience of Salvatore Atak was to foreshadow that of other Dinka priests who followed. On his return from Rome in 1958, he was posted to serve in the newly formed Vicariate of Rumbek under Bishop Ireneo Dud.¹²⁶ With the support of European contacts Fr Salvatore determined to develop a sizeable agricultural scheme for support of the Diocese, an endeavour which seemed to Church authorities a diversion from his priestly vocation. With the legitimacy of his project as well as his personal motivations under scrutiny, Salvatore fell into conflict with his superiors. His farm was closed in 1961 under directive from Ali Baldo, Governor of Equatoria. With his relationships increasingly tenuous and the civil war escalating, Salvatore took refuge in the Central African Republic. A sexual liaison resulted in the birth of two children and Salvatore was suspended from holy orders. After repenting he was restored to his ministry for a brief period, but finally dispensed from priestly vows and took employment as a secondary school teacher. Salvatore chose never to marry,

¹²⁴ Fr R Deng, interview, 1992.

¹²⁵ A Thiik, interview, 1991.

¹²⁶ Ireneo Dud (b. 1912), a Jo-Luo from Mbili, consecrated first Sudanese Bishop in 1955; in 1960 became Bishop of Wau, a position which passed to Gabriel Zubeir, a Belanda Bviri, when Ireneo became Archbishop of Juba in 1975. When Bishop Zubeir was selected to serve in Khartoum the Bishop's seat in Wau passed in 1979 to Joseph Nyekinde, a Bor Fumbiria.

became increasingly dependent upon alcohol, suffered from a peptic ulcer, and died in 1975.¹²⁷ What had seemed a remarkable triumph in the ordination of Salvatore Atak proceeded through years of alienation to culminate with his suspension and sad decline.

Bishop Ereneo, a Jo-Luo fluent in Dinka, reportedly told Salvatore that, "there was no room in the Church for proud people like the Dinkas who question every order or every instruction from the Bishop."¹²⁸ The 'pride' of the Dinka, was considered by many churchmen, European and Sudanese alike, to make them unsuitable for Holy Orders. They lacked the humility, self control and the willingness to submit which was required of the Church's priests.

Of the 135 Sudanese who were ordained to the Catholic priesthood between 1944 and 1988, 18 were Dinka (7.5%). Of these half renounced their vows voluntarily or were suspended for unacceptable conduct. Upon terminating his priesthood Salvatore Atak turned to teaching and wrote on political issues.¹²⁹ Like him Arkangelo Bak, Alipio Akec and Mark Mathon, were men who left holy orders to become teachers. Angelo Makur and Daniel Deng Bol Toc were among those who attempted to enter politics. Like others after him Salvatore Atak was often described as "a proud Dinka man."¹³⁰

As has been true in many regions where family relations take high priority, celibacy was difficult to enforce and sexual misconduct a prominent area of clerical discipline. Alipio Akec exemplifies an only son (of his mother) who, having entered the priesthood, experienced unrelenting family pressure to take a wife and bear children who would assume responsibility. Despite his loyalty to the Church he

¹²⁷ Fr D Matong, interview, Rome, 1989.

¹²⁸ R Deng, interview, 1992. Bp E Dud was not unfamiliar with the Dinka. He was fluent in six languages, including Dinka. With Fr E Toniolo, he produced an extended manuscript on Dinka culture and religion, undated, Archives of the Comboni Fathers, Verona.

¹²⁹ He wrote a small book called *Sudan Back to the Stone Age* critiquing the period of Aboud and Hassan Bashir.

¹³⁰ Fr D Matong, interview, 1989. Introducing an article by Fr Atak at his ordination, *Nigrizia* noted, "He is 28 years of age at ordination and measures one meter and 93 centimetres in height. The Dinka, he says, want to be big in every sense." "Noi Denka Siamo Fatti Così", (April 1958) 5.

finally acquiesced, fathered several children, remained unmarried, and continued in an intermediate status with the Church.

While traditional Dinka society enforced a rigorous code of sexual ethics this was based more upon legal issues governing bride price than personal morality. When a Sudanese priest was found to have transgressed, usually with a mature or non-Dinka woman, Dinka responses were mixed: "They are disgraced by the educated but welcomed by the traditionalists. They'd say it [celibacy] was a crazy idea after all: it never could work!" Referring to former priests who "went full force in their pursuit of women," even the educated quipped that, "They are collecting their arrears!" after years of abstinence.¹³¹

However, when cattle were involved joviality vanished. In 1956, an Italian priest at Kwajok was accused of making an unmarried Dinka girl pregnant. So enraged was the president of the appeal court that he threatened the priest's life and the Mission saw that he was quickly transferred.¹³² Unlike the Church, the concern of most Dinka was not one of personal sexual morality but of disrespect for social institutions and economics.

If the independent self-determination and stubbornness of Dinka Christians at times led to their foundering in Catholic institutions, it could also equip them for survival in the most inhospitable circumstances. An individual who has been remarkably sustained by these traits is the first Dinka Catholic sister.

b. Sister Sidonia Aman

Though the education of Dinka boys was at the forefront of the Catholic agenda, girls' education was not neglected. As early as 1927 the Sisters at Kwajok began outreach to women and girls, first providing medical care, an important part of

¹³¹ Ambrose Thiik, Interview, 1991.

¹³² Recalled one Catholic observer, "We never expected a priest to be involved with sexual relationships. The president of the court of appeal was so bitter. The opinion among the Dinka population dropped concerning the missionaries. Why? Because a girl, in a normal situation is the future investment in a Dinka family and cows will be brought, but if you spoil her, pregnate her, nobody will be interested in marrying her. She is a second rate woman. That's why it usually causes war if you rape someone. This almost caused conflict around Kwajok. The people didn't want to trust missionaries by then." Name withheld, interview, 1991.

which was a maternity centre. Only in the early 1950s, however, was girls' primary education extended to Mayen and Thiet, followed by the successful girls' school in Tonj. Post primary girls' education was restricted to the Vernacular Teachers' Training College at Kwajok until an intermediate school was opened at Wau in 1955.

Even then most Dinka chiefs adhered to a maximum age of 13 years for girl students, by this ensuring that they would be free to marry according to custom and receive an acceptable bride price.¹³³ Formal education was considered both irrelevant and a liability since few young men, educated or illiterate, desired girls who, influenced by church and school, tended to be less submissive and resisted their marrying additional wives.¹³⁴

Given the high degree of control Dinka parents exerted over their daughters, Fr Nebel was incredulous when, in about 1938, a young woman at Kwajok expressed her desire to become a nun. Though her family had already negotiated her marriage and received five cows, Sidonia Aman Tong was unafraid to demand her independence. When her brother, Atong, learned that she had accepted the "nonsense of the whites" he became so enraged that he prepared to kill her. The missionaries, however, secreted the girl from mission to mission, ultimately providing refuge in the Sisters' convent at Wau.¹³⁵

Sidonia's family was determined to retrieve their daughter and sought the intervention of the Commissioner. When confronted she reportedly held up her crucifix and said, "This is my husband: I never had another." On a second meeting she declared, "I am not the slave of my family. There are other girls here in the town living evil lives. Tell them to return to their villages and leave me free to serve the Lord."¹³⁶ Coercion went no further.

¹³³ C Parek, interview, London, 1991.

¹³⁴ Few educated girls were interested in becoming nuns, as Christina Parek recalled, "After people are baptised, the Italian sisters make tea for everyone and they ask people how they prayed to God. 'Do you ask God to help you become a sister?' I say, 'I must not be a sister! I must have children!' They say, '*Brute fashe!* You must become a sister so that you can help your people.' I say, 'No, I will help my people through the children I will have.'

¹³⁵ After inspecting Kwajok EVS in Dec 1936 J Hartley, noted that parents had withdrawn girls from school because they did not want them to follow the example of 'Aman Tong, a girl of exceptional character' who had gone to work at Wau Hospital (SAD G/S701).

¹³⁶ Sr Sidonia was born about 1923. Fr D Matong recalled that the Catholic mission paid 30 cows to Sidonia's family for her release. Interview, 1989. Nebel comments that her family was 'not the

The Bishop, having invited indigenous vocations, was dubious about the perseverance of a Dinka, as were the Verona Sisters. Nevertheless, after a carefully observed novitiate Sidonia made her vows in 1941. After working as a hospital nurse, she went to Nyamlel where, living alone, she acted as prefect of the girls' primary school. From 1954 she trained as a teacher in Uganda and joined the African Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. Returning to Sudan in 1965 she initially oversaw younger sisters in the newly formed Congregation of Sisters of Nazareth in Wau. In the face of continual government opposition she opened schools in Wau and then in Awiel, and during several turbulent periods of civil war, organised assistance for the orphaned and displaced of northern Bahr el Ghazal. In 1991 the tenacious sister celebrated 50 years as a nun.¹³⁷

On her singular journey Sr Sidonia appears to have confronted challenges as complex and isolating within the Church as she experienced from her own people without. As a Dinka woman the choices she made demanded even more courage those of men who became priests. Nebel wrote of other prospective Dinka nuns, "who are very conscious of their dignity, do not accept domestic slavery, and want to be free to choose their own destiny." Yet, only a few other Dinka women have followed Sidonia's course and none is known to have survived for long.¹³⁸ In this as in other areas, the Catholic church seemed incompatible with fundamental assumptions of Dinka society.

The capacity for self assertion and critical thought which enabled Dinka to assume authority and proceed to the forefront of national politics have been the same qualities which often impeded their progress within the Catholic Church.

best of pagans.' During her flight the girl reportedly faced lions but was protected by her Guardian Angel. Nebel, *I Dinka Sono Così*, 254-57.

¹³⁷ Fr Rudolph Deng reported that, at the time Sidonia entered orders, the Verona Sisters (*Pie Madri della Nigrizia*) did not receive Africans. However, Fr G Vantini reported that she joined the Sisters' Society but "had to overcome many difficulties especially from her native environment" and was later advised to transfer to a Sudanese Society, a decision that "did not please her very much." (Letter to author, 11 May 1993). Fr Matong, among others, believed that Sr Sidonia was treated with prejudice and ostracised by the European Sisters. Interview, 1989.

¹³⁸ Nebel, *I Dinka Sono Così*, 257. Aluel Akoc made a well known attempt to become a nun in 1957 but was returned to her family through the intervention of the Muslim Governor of Bahr el Ghazal and later married. Clara Akur Mathiang from Abyeï entered the novitiate but abandoned her vocation within two years. A Lual interview, 1991.

Ecclesiastical leadership has remained in the hands of those whose cultural conditioning better prepared them to function within a regimented hierarchy. Though a number of Dinka clergy have completed degrees in Catholic seminaries in Africa and Europe, none, at the time of writing, has been consecrated a diocesan bishop in the 68 years since Kwajok was founded. While Church leaders may point to the tendency of the Dinka toward ethnocentrism, arrogance, spiritual immaturity, and insubordination, it is, in the minds of many Dinka, an issue of ecclesiastical discrimination. A laymen from Kwajok catalogued what he perceived as the treatment of Dinka church people in the shadow of the Bishop's throne in Wau:

One thing that puzzles me is that the Dinka priests and sisters, when they go to Wau with those of other tribes, they seem to be isolated. Sister Sidonia was forced to go to Awiel from Wau even though she was a Sister Superior. Father Matong was kicked out though he was supposed to be the bishop. It frustrated him so that he returned to alcohol. There are other Dinka priests who are alcoholics because they have no authority, and no churches in which to serve. The minority tribes are controlling the church in Wau.¹³⁹

Whatever their accuracy, such charges reveal the perceptions and sentiments of numerous Dinka Christians, laity and religious alike.

F. Conclusion

Following decades of brutal 'pacification' and the suppression of their own prophetic movements the Dinka welcomed neither the missionaries nor their innovations. The first children who were lured into the Mission's orb were again from poor families, the sickly and dispossessed. It was over two decades before prominent families began voluntarily sending their sons to be educated. Once absorbed within the schools Dinka youngsters began to see themselves at the forefront of a new order in which literacy and progress supplanted ancestral traditions. Integral to their education was the reception of Christian names and initiation through baptism into the new society.

However, the forms of Latin worship in which they participated and the catechetical knowledge they displayed often disguised an underlying debate regarding allegiances, spiritual and tangible, ancestral and Christian. Confronted with two

¹³⁹ Aniek Atong, nephew of Sr Sidonia, interviewed in London, 1989.

distinct religious systems, Dinka children undertook their own processes of synthesis, often seeing in the divine persons of Christianity counterparts for their own ancestral divinities. This allowed for an integrative religious experience quite distinct from that of Protestant converts.

Most missionaries found the temperament of their Nilotic students unnerving and provocative, preferring the respectful acquiescence that typified children of some other tribes. The same independence of thought and self assertion that created tensions in mission schools later hindered the advancement of the Dinka to positions of authority in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Nevertheless, these same qualities could also ensure the survival of the Dinka and their faith in more turbulent times.

After four decades a second phase of the Catholic apostolate among the Dinka was brought to an abrupt end when, in 1964, missionaries were expelled from Southern Sudan. Among the Dinka there remained only small, scattered, communities of baptised converts. Those who had been prepared to care for them consisted of a cluster of catechists, two priests and one nun. Amidst growing civil strife some lay people wondered if there would be anything left of a Catholic church in Dinkaland. From 'exile' Fr Nebel estimated that there were 12,000 Dinka Catholics and foresaw their numbers rapidly increasing.

Just as the northern Dinka had been swept into alliances with the Mahdists eight decades earlier, and a plethora of tribes had been galvanised by the messianic visions of Arianhdit in the 1920s, religion continued to play a unifying role when the Nilotes confronted a common enemy. What began as teaching given by a few white foreigners to clusters of school children was, by the 1960s, proliferating, in the face of increasing aggression from northern Sudan, as a symbol of solidarity across the spectrum of Southern Sudanese peoples.

VI. "WHO ARE THOSE MARCHING ONCE AGAIN?"

THE SONGS OF DINKA CHRISTIANS

A. Introduction: the missions and Dinka music

Songs sung in community are integral to the ancestral religion and spirituality of the Dinka. They are no less important to the worship of Dinka Christians. This chapter will survey and compare the lyrics of vernacular songs (in one case a poem) composed by Dinka from Roman Catholic and Episcopal churches. We will examine the vocabulary and metaphor which have evolved, the theological issues which take prominence, and the ways that songs have been used in teaching and evangelisation. Two overarching themes recur in many compositions. First, is the place of ancestral 'powers' and divinities in Christian experience. The second, particularly evident in songs of the past decade, concerns the presence and authority of *Nhialic* amidst civil war.

This penultimate chapter examines songs composed over five decades, both during and since the missionary era. Like the final chapter of this thesis, which documents the growth of the church under indigenous leadership, it reveals increasing diversity as Dinka have migrated to new areas of Sudan and Christianity has become the faith of the urbanised Dinka as well as those still in their home territories.

From their earliest encounters with the Dinka both Catholic and Protestant missionaries recorded Dinka songs and reflected upon their meanings. Fathers Kaufmann, Beltrame and Morlang recorded samples at *Heiligenkreuz* in the 1850s.¹

¹ Kaufmann, Anton [1881], "The White Nile Valley and its Inhabitants", *The Opening of the Nile Basin*, Elias Toniolo and Richard Hill, eds, (1974) 170. Even the ivory trader, J-A Vayssiere, occasionally attempted transcriptions of Dinka songs, noting that "I little expected to find among these humble Blacks a feeling for music developed to so high a degree." He described their "simple motifs

Nebel and Ciccaci in the Bahr el Ghazal and Archibald Shaw on the Upper Nile recorded, translated and published numerous traditional Dinka lyrics during the 20th Century. Though they sensed the importance of these compositions as an art form expressive of social and spiritual values, it was some decades before any began to realise their potential as a component of Christian worship. Rooted in 'pagan' religion and culture, associated with the sensuality of Africa, they were thought incompatible with Christian devotion. Both in form and content, indigenous compositions were considered expressions of the evil forces the missions had come to supplant.

In the CMS sphere the 'revival' of 1939 saw the first outpouring of vernacular songs. Among Catholics it was students who began composing a new genre of song during the 1950s. Composition continued in various forms into the 1980s when, amidst the expansion of Christianity among the Dinka, new compositions have multiplied at an unprecedented rate.

To date no study has attempted to survey and compare this wealth of vernacular Christian material. Indeed, the compositions of ECS Christians have received no scholarly attention. Nevertheless, with nearly three thousand compositions to draw from, the selection below can not presume to be fully representative. Songs have been chosen because they reveal particular aspects of the dialogue between indigenous Dinka thought, contemporary experience, and Christian faith. Those presented tend to be more culturally specific and idiosyncratic than the majority which, especially in the ECS during recent years, focus largely on biblical and evangelistic themes. Each song derives from a specific context and period of history. Unfortunately, some historical details relevant to older songs are lost to memory, while material on some recent compositions has proved inaccessible.

Apart from rare instances where songs were already assigned titles, these have been supplied for easier reference.² In most cases translations are fairly literal, relying

something like a gentle cantilena, rather monotonous and sometimes of striking originality", 'Ivory-buying on the White Nile,' *Europeans in the Sudan*, Santi and Hill (1980) 140, 163-4.

² In most cases the full, original vernacular text for each song appearing in the text is provided in the Appendix. In cases where an English title stands alone it has been supplied by the present author. Where a title appears in both Dinka and English, the title was assigned by the Dinka composer. In

more on footnotes than on expanded phrases within the translation. As stated above, certain frequently used words which bear conflicting or nuanced interpretations remain in Dinka. Common Dinka ejaculations such as *ee* and *adeh*, have also been allowed to stand.

Unfortunately, translated lyrics are dry in contrast with the vernacular originals, especially when sung by groups, accompanied by gestures, clapping, drama, liturgy, or orchestrated processions. Many of the compositions presented here are rich in metaphor. Their imagery is subtle and complex and deserve more careful analysis than present space allows. Nevertheless, this selection witnesses to the complexity, richness and variety of Dinka theological reflection as it continues to evolve in response to the changing social and political environment.

B. The compositions of Dinka Catholics

Each of the four sections below reveals aspects of the development of the thought of Dinka Catholics during the past four decades. The first two sections draw upon the *Dinka Prayerbook* and songs spontaneously composed by students during the 1950s and 60s. These are followed by works from the 1980s by two mature Christian men. Of interest throughout is, first, the interplay between traditional values and those of the educated elite, and, secondly, the status and role of ancestral divinities.

Several of the Verona Fathers, most prominently Nebel and Ciccacci, recorded Dinka songs, some of which were translated into Italian and published for readers of *Nigrizia*.³ In an effort to extend inter-ethnic understanding across Southern Sudan, editors of *The Messenger*, the newspaper of Catholic schools, published English translations of vernacular songs, some of which were in Dinka.⁴

several cases songs of particular note not included in the text of this chapter, are presented in the Appendix in English and Dinka.

³ Ivo Ciccacci, "Cantautori di vita Denka", *Nigrizia*, (Sept, 1963) 28-31; "Canti Denka", (July-August, 1965) 25-26; "Poesia Denka", (March, 1967) 26-28; A. Nebel, *Dinka-Leider*, *Archiv für Volkerkunde* 15 (1960): 34-47; *I Dinca Sono Così: Ricordi Di Una Vita Fra I Dinca der Bahr el Ghazal, Sudan* (Museum Combonianum 21: 1968). Stefano Santandrea "i Denka cantano le lodi del bue", *Nigrizia*, (April, 1961) 24-25; L Tescaroli, *Poesia Sudanese* (Museum Combonianum 12: 1961).

⁴ A Nebel, 'Life History of a Dinka: Songs,' *The Messenger*, (March, 1939) 18; 'Praise Songs,' (May, 1939); 'Lyric Songs' (Sept, 1939) 66; 'Satirical & War Songs' (Sept, 1939) 83.

However, music acceptable within Catholic worship, certainly that incorporated with the liturgy, derived almost exclusively from European traditions. Components of the Latin Mass, such as the *Gloria Patri* and *Agnus Dei* were learnt by heart, if seldom understood, as were canticles such as *Te Deum Laudamus*. The 1950 *Dinka Prayerbook* provided Arabic and Dinka translations for some of these, but retained the Latin settings, which were by then beloved by many Catholics. Father Pasina travelled about the stations using an accordion to teach the music and lyrics he had composed, sometimes of a more informal nature. With him, Fathers Nebel and Ciccaci began to encourage gifted converts to compose songs reflective of their faith, from which a corpus began to develop.

1. Primal ancestors and the *Prayerbook*

The *Dinka Prayerbook* (CPB) of 1950 was published under the auspices of the Verona Fathers and included 20 Dinka choruses alongside sections in Latin and English.⁵ The imagery of these compositions is confined largely to Christian subjects such as the Virgin Mary, the persons of the Trinity, the Nativity, and the Saints. However, the first song in the collection is directed to the primal ancestors of Dinka tradition. As has been noted, the ancestors are of particular importance to Dinka of Northern Bahr el Ghazal, for whom clan- and free-divinities are naturally distinguished from disreputable *jak* such as Mathiang Guk.

This song, clearly composed by a Dinka familiar with traditional invocations, suggests the parallels which Catholic converts perceived between their own primal ancestors, and the pair described in the Genesis narrative:

NHIALIC AND OUR ANCESTORS OF OLD (CPB137)⁶

Ah, you children of *Aciek*, let us offer love to our Father!
 Ah, *Nhialic* has created mankind, *ee*,
 He has created mankind without sin and without death.

⁵ *Rok ku Diet, Dinka Prayerbook*, 1950, 160 pages; Chapter 7, pages 136-48, 20 vernacular songs, some composed by Dinka Christians. In 1961 Nebel published *Dinka Cantus, Wak Nhialic*, (1961) 38 pages. This contains 32 vernacular songs, some already known from the *Prayerbook*.

⁶ CPB137, Song No 2, 'Nhialic ku warkuan theer,' "Wak Wel Nhialic" in *Rok ku Diet, Dinka Prayerbook*, (1950) 137.

Garang, how did you do that?
 and you, Abuk, how did you do that?
 Garang and Abuk, you have brought evil upon your children.
 Garang and Abuk, you have not respected *Nhialic*.
Nhialic has rejected us, *ee*, we are the children of man, *ee*.
 We are the children of a man who dishonoured *Nhialic*.
Nhialic has hidden his face from us
 and judged us worthy of death and misery.
 Garang and Abuk, *ee*, you have brought evil upon your children.
 What can we offer to appease the Lord our Creator?
 What can we offer to appease him?
 Our ancestors offered the meat of cow and goat.
 How am I going to beg meat for mere ants?⁷
 How can you ransom a human being
 with the blood of a domestic animal?
 The anger of God has perplexed the ant.

In traditional prayer the Dinka sometimes bless their primal ancestors, Garang and Abuk, or as here, interrogate and challenge them for their misdeeds. Because this song is placed first in the collection of vernacular compositions and is the only one referring to the ancestors, it is clearly intended to evoke parallels with Adam and Eve and the 'original sin' which separated mankind from the Creator, *Aciek*.

Like the primal pair of Genesis, Garang and Abuk are judged guilty of committing sin in an otherwise perfect world, so bringing about separation between *Nhialic* and his creatures. Dinka myths provide several scenarios concerning their original transgression but none is specified here. After challenging the ancestors, the hymn discounts the central rites through which the Dinka have always sought reconciliation with Divinity. Animal sacrifice appears foolish and ineffectual in restoring harmony. The song ends plaintively, providing no solutions, and making no suggestion as to an alternative sacrifice.

As has been observed, Dinka conceptions of Garang and Abuk extend well beyond their role as ancestors, whether of a historical or legendary nature. The pair may also be venerated as divinities to whom petitions and sacrifice are made, and who are believed efficacious in contemporary experience. They are, for the Dinka, far more immediate and potent than Adam and Eve are conceived to be, certainly in the contemporary Western Church.

⁷ *acuok* (sing, *acuk*), small black ants of the forest, a common idiom for mankind when contrasted with Divinity.

It is not clear to what degree the Verona Fathers saw these dimensions as problematic, but their use of them pedagogically conveyed an undeniable affirmation of ancestral divinities within Dinka Catholic experience. This linkage would have been inconceivable among missionaries of the evangelical CMS, but was more easily accommodated in Catholic theology and piety because of the mediating role already assumed by saints and angels. As reflected in songs below, it was to influence the development of Dinka Catholic theology.

2. 'Progress' and faith: the 'school songs'

By the late 1940s formal education was beginning to gain acceptance among the Dinka of Bahr el Ghazal and growing numbers of boys from prominent families were entering Catholic schools. Steeped in the musical idioms of their people, they began to generate songs rich in the imagery and values of their new environment. These were called "school songs" (SS) by Francis M Deng, twelve of which he published at the end of his collection of 143 Dinka songs.⁸

Apparently more 'secular' in nature, these songs would rarely, if ever, have been given a place in formal Christian worship, but were prominent in school marches, civic occasions, parents' days, and major public gatherings like those at Christmas. The songs provided a platform for students to display new ideas and reinforce their common identity. They also provided an apologetic before their peers, who, having remained in cattle camp, were often scornful of those attending school.

There is a tension throughout the 'school songs' as young composers assert the superiority of their new social, economic and religious order over the old. Modernity succeeds tradition; literacy, books and 'the word,' triumph over the limitations of oral society; literate, progressive leaders take the lead ahead of insular local chiefs; and Christianity takes precedence over ancestral powers. Challenging the limitations of

⁸ Francis M Deng, 'School Songs,' *The Dinka and Their Songs*, (1973) 250-261. The text here employs the numbering assigned by Dr Deng. Because these compositions are available in published form they have not been reproduced here, apart from 'The Bishop' (SS135) and 'Maria is Feared' (SS137), which may be found in the Appendix.

their elders, the composers aspire to become like people of the town, to become “like the Europeans” (SS138).

The spear is replaced by the pen as a symbol of prowess (SS132, SS133); and the summer cattle camp is supplanted by the mission school (SS136). Only cattle retain their value. Literate school boys anticipate the wealth they will acquire through government employment to purchase more cattle (SS138).

While the themes of these songs were innovative, their form, style and impact generally fitted into familiar categories. Songs sung at community gatherings extended greetings to prominent chiefs praising those who had established schools or were themselves literate (SS138). Other leaders were challenged for allowing their people to ‘remain behind’ (SS136, 139, 142). The government as well as the missionaries were honoured for establishing education among the Dinka (SS142).

The notion of ‘progress’ or ‘going ahead’ (*lo tweng*), so fundamental to these songs, is, as Lienhardt observed, little known in traditional Dinka thought with its assumption of cyclical continuity and stability.⁹ Here Dinka school children reveal the trends of the future, the importance of adaptation in a rapidly changing world. If the Dinka were to survive politically amidst the changes of modern Sudan they had to acquire new skills through education and compete alongside other Sudanese.

Christian religious themes are addressed directly in only seven of twelve ‘school songs,’ and often appear subsidiary to the overarching objectives of advancement through education. In the Rek song ‘The Bishop’ (Appendix SS135) the tangible achievements of education and development are accompanied by the spiritual triumph of the Church. Typically, as in SS35, real people, places and events are described. Bishop Mason, Fr Pasina and Sister Kapila, establish order, erect schools, and develop the country. Simultaneously, they confront the subversive powers threatening the land. As development overcomes backwardness, so the Church’s spiritual authority supplants the encroachments of Islam, personified in Mohammed, and the destructive *jak*, exemplified in Mathiang Guk.

⁹ Lienhardt, ‘The Dinka and Catholicism,’ *Religious Organization and Religious Experience*, ASA Monograph 21, (1982) 88-9.

The 'school songs' were composed during years of transition as Sudan became an independent nation and the Nilotes increasingly realised their vulnerability. As the Northern Sudanese government exerted its control and propagated Islam across the South, questions of political security became closely allied with religion. During this period several Dinka chiefs were taken to Rome for an audience with the Pope, an encounter recounted in the composition 'What will the Christians Do?' (SS139). This section recalls a dialogue between the Pope and the chiefs:

... The chiefs were asked, 'What do you want?'
 'Father, it is *wei*.'
 'What do you have to say?'
 'Father, it is *wei*.'
 'What do you want?'
 'Father, it is *wei*.'
 It is *wei* that we, of Ajang, are seeking'

The vitality and well-being which the Dinka normally anticipated through the mediation of their *baany bith* is here sought from the Christian Pontiff. As the song continues the chief describes the alien forces which threaten his land, so diminishing *wei*. He asks how the Christians will help in confronting these malign forces:

Father, our master
 The land is threatened by pagans
 The land is threatened by Mohammedans [*sic*]
 O what will the Christians do?
 I turn this way, and it is the fetish Mathiang Guk
 And Mohammedans are facing East
 They are facing where the sun rises.
 What misfortune, what misfortune!
 We are entangled with bad spirits
 Some are evil-eyed
 who disturb the innocent in the land
 The land led by the Bishop
 The land led by Edward
 The land is confused
 The land has its head in a knot.¹⁰

¹⁰ Full text appears as "What Will the Christians Do?", Song No 139 (here SS139) in F M Deng (1973) 258-9. Dr Deng used the same song in his article "Pursuit of Well-being" but substituted *wei* for 'life' and 'breath,' in W James & D Johnson, *Vernacular Christianity* (1988) 163-4.

Underlying most 'school songs' is the desire for *wei*, the essential ingredient if 'progress' is to continue. The elders call for the intervention of the Church as they seek to thwart the spiritual forces subverting the 'life force' of their people. From within there are the malign *jak* (as opposed to venerated ancestral divinities) and from without come the encroachments of the Muslims. Bishop Mason is again invoked as a powerful, protective personage identified with progress, education and Christian faith in a context of flux and insecurity.

While several songs look to European Church leaders for spiritual assistance, others invoke the divine persons of Christianity, notably, Mary, the 'Mother of God,' and 'our mother' (SS134, 135). In the song 'Maria is feared' (SS137, Appendix) students ask her to defeat the 'bad spirits' in the fierce battle which surrounds them. Vernacular songs in the *Prayerbook*, describe her in various ways: she is completely white, without blemish; she possesses a 'cool heart,' is gentle and gracious; she is 'our hope,' the one who provides help, and pre-eminently, is the source of *wei*.¹¹ Remarkably, there is no reference to Christ or the Holy Spirit (*Wei Santo*) in the school songs published by Dr Deng, the Creator (*Aciek*) being the only other divine person mentioned.¹²

The prominence given to the Virgin Mary as a mediating figure in Roman Catholic piety was received with comparative ease by those who had long revered female ancestors as divine mediators. Abuk, the mother of Deng, has often been associated with Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Other myths recall Arekdit, who gave birth to her son, Awutiek (meaning *waves*) without male agent. For some this served as indigenous confirmation of the Virgin Birth. Catholic teachings concerning Mary benefited from these traditions, but, according to Dr Deng, she achieved higher status than any female ancestors for she alone was known to devout Catholics as the 'mother of God.'¹³

¹¹ *Dinka Prayerbook*, 'Yin ayer eben,' 'Yin amuothku,' 'Bi piny col Ayok,' (1950) 145-6.

¹² F M Deng states that the Dinka-Latin combination, *Wei Santo*, 'holy breath' or 'life,' used by Catholics to translate *Holy Spirit*, was virtually incomprehensible to uninitiated Dinka. "Dinka Response", (1988) 162-3; also, Lienhardt, 'The Dinka and Catholicism,' (1982) 90.

¹³ Abuk's role received scholarly analysis in Adalberto Del Nero, *Abuk il Cristianesimo e Maria presso i Dinka*, (1973) unpublished thesis presented to the Pontificia Facolta' Teologica "Marianum", Rome. The parallels between Arekdit and Mary derive from an interview with Rev Joseph

For Catholic students mission education brought with it a new range of religious authorities and divine persons who they sought, on the one hand, as a source of *wei*, and on the other, for protection against the threat of Islam and malign ‘powers.’ Interestingly, the songs make no mention of revered ancestral divinities. While their status has been placed in doubt and their future is uncertain, their authority has not been denied.

3. Indigenous song recreated: the compositions of Father Matong

During the first decade after national independence mission schools were nationalised and European educators expelled. As civil war escalated the vitality which once typified mission schools was replaced by bitter discontent. The dwindling numbers of students in Southern schools found themselves increasingly in multi-ethnic institutions, void of the stimuli which once inspired vernacular ‘school songs.’ In the cities multi-ethnic Catholic congregations tended to use Arabic or English while scattered rural congregations relied upon the familiar church music of previous decades. Only rarely were new vernacular songs of worship composed by Dinka Catholics. In Northern cities Dinka from the former Catholic sphere were often attracted by the vital vernacular music proliferating in ECS Dinka congregations.

The compositions of two mature men reveal trends arising in the 1980s among those who, as youths, were the “children of the missionaries.” Fr Dominic Matong, a Catholic priest of Tuic Dinka descent, began to probe the religious idioms of Dinka tradition as a vehicle for Christian faith. In a very different vein, Joseph Athiaan, gave his acute poetic vision to themes of liberation.

Ayok. While these associations provided a natural foundation for Dinka acceptance of Mary, she, according to Dr Deng: “was elevated to a level not previously accorded to ancestresses or female divinities. Since both her son, Jesus, and his heavenly father were God, Mary became the closest human approximation to the supreme being and, in Dinka religious thought and practice, the best intermediary between man and God in the pursuit of worldly well-being and the salvation of the soul after death. Thus the *wei* sought by the Christian converts was subtly diverted from the *wei* offered by the elders and ancestors, who naturally became subordinated to Mary . . . Mary, now presented as the Mother of God, had to be even more pivotal as a source of *wei* to all humankind, a power superior to all the practitioners of traditional religion.” F M Deng, “Dinka Response,” (1988) 157-69.

Fr Matong was steeped from childhood in the spirituality of the Rek and Tuic Dinka.¹⁴ His thought was further enriched during the 1980s when he worked intensively with Bible translation. After 1987 he was one of the few Catholic priests serving in refugee camps inside Ethiopia and in SPLA controlled territories.

Little known to Catholic leaders, Fr Dominic began to compose music during the 1980s, seeking to employ the resonant and widely known musical idioms of Dinka religion as vehicles for the imagery, theology and moral teaching of Christianity. His adaptations would, he believes, have been unacceptable to the Verona Fathers who considered the old songs unsuitable in form and content to the Church.¹⁵ The following hymn, widely known among the Dinka of Bahr el Ghazal, has been sung in this form for generations. Used as a sacrificial invocation it constitutes a plea for rain, that *wei* might be upon people and cattle. It is sung as rainy season approaches, when Divinity is believed to draw near the earth:

THOSE WHO WORSHIPPED (DM10)¹⁶

Nhialic has people who worshipped him long ago;
 These were Abuk Deng and Garang.
 I am praying to you so that you appear as a new moon,
Nhialic has people who worshipped him long ago.

I am killing Mabior O *Nhialic* who is near
 that the Father may give us *wei, ee*.
 Deng Abuk with *wei, ee*,
 Deng Garang with *wei, ee*,
 Deng Abuk with *wei, ee*,
 with the *wei* of cattle and human beings.
 I am killing Mabior O God who is near
 that you may give us *wei, ee*.

The sacrifice of the ox, Mabior, being offered to *Nhialic*, is an expression of the devotion which has continuously arisen since the time of the primal ancestors. As the

¹⁴ Fr Dominic Matong (b about 1940) at Thur near Wunrock, Mayen Parish; attended Bussere Minor Seminary from 1955; studied philosophy at Tore, theology at Kit, Lachor and Khartoum; ordained in 1967; was made Vicar General for Rumbek in 1972; later assigned to Aweil; then to Wau. Worked on Bible translation with Summer Institute of Linguistics. V Dellagiacomma (1988) 34.

¹⁵ Fr Matong, interviewed in Rome in October, 1989.

¹⁶ DM10, Fr Matong entitled this song '*Nhialic* has those who worshipped him long ago.' He has supplied titles for original and adapted versions of most compositions.

new moon disappears and rises again, so *Nhialic* recedes and draws near, encouraged through ancestral mediation, and by the sacrifices regularly enacted in human community.

In his bold adaptation, below (DMIR), Fr Matong replaces the ancestors with Christ as the central figure of mediation. Christ is both the God who draws near and himself the eucharistic sacrifice offered among the people. The objective of both songs is similar: that the blessing of *wei* may be imparted to the human community (in the revised version cattle have been eliminated from the petition). Where the first song above, 'God and our Ancestors of Old' (PB137/2), condemned Dinka sacrificial traditions, this version condemns neither the ancestors nor their sacrifice. Rather, the revised composition focuses on the mediation of Christ, adding 11 lines to illustrate what he accomplishes through his self-offering:

NHIALIC HAS THE PERSON WHOM HE SENT (DMIR)¹⁷

God has the person he has sent
 and that is Jesus himself, his only son.¹⁸
 to come to tell us how to adore his Father
 appearing as the new moon.
 We offer the sacrifice of the Son of *Nhialic*,
 because *Nhialic* is near,
 so that our Father gives us *wei*,
 our Almighty Father, our Holy Father¹⁹
 It is *wei*, the *wei* of man on earth.

We offer the sacrifice of the Son of *Nhialic*,
 so the Father gives us *wei*.
 We offer the only sacrifice which *Nhialic* likes,
 so he will give us *wei*,
 We offer the only sacrifice, that brings peace,
 so he will give us *wei*,
 . . . that redeems people, . . .
 . . . that has no substitute, . . .
 . . . that brings *wei*, . . .
 . . . that joins people, . . .
 . . . that has no equal, . . .
 . . . that brings happiness, . . .
 . . . that is the way to heaven, . . .
 . . . that brings *Nhialic* to earth, . . .
 . . . that unites all nations, . . .

¹⁷ DMIR, English translation by Father Matong.

¹⁸ *Juol* = single child with no others born before or after.

¹⁹ *Wendeeng*

This new version employs the music, cadence and phrasing of the original, laden with the religious and social context of Dinka sacrificial rites. The link between the killing of Mabior and the eucharistic sacrifice of Christ is unavoidable, the ultimate goal of both rites being the abundance of *wei*.

A second adaptation derives from a very old hymn to 'Creator' which is known across Rek and Malual regions. It is commonly sung at sacrifices when Dengdit is invoked:

OUR CREATOR DESCENDED FROM HEAVEN (DM3O)²⁰

The Creator has fallen from heaven
with the *wei* of cattle and people.
Now that our Father has come, what shall we do?
Let us go pray to the Lord.
Our Father has fallen with resounding noise.²¹
The Creator has fallen from heaven
with the *wei* of cattle and people.
Let us pray to the Father Almighty. . . .

According to primal myths known across Dinkaland *Nhialic* and his creatures once enjoyed communion by means of a rope which allowed human access into heaven. The time came when human transgression caused the rope to be severed, *Nhialic* withdrew, and humanity was doomed to hardship and death.²² This hymn envisions the restoration of that relationship. Observing that only *Nhialic* could take the initiative, Fr Matong said, "someone has come down, fallen from above, to save the souls of cattle and mankind." In this he perceives a parallel for the incarnation of Christ.²³ Matong's reinterpretation (Appendix, DM3RE) employs the language of worship and lordship to reveal Christ as the solution to this dilemma.

Christ has been substituted in three of the revised hymns. The image of the Creator or his emissary 'coming down' or 'falling from heaven' recurs in DM1OE, DM2OE

²⁰ The literal translation is 'fallen'; alternatively, 'descended.'

²¹ Like thunder.

²² As well as the version recorded by Kaufmann, p 100 above, various versions are recorded in Lienhardt, *Divinity*, 33-38. The myth was often employed by Catholic and Protestant missionaries to teach about the reconciliation of Christ.

²³ This was sung at the ordination of Akile Malueth at Wau Cathedral in 1981 with many 'pagans' in attendance. "When it is sung in the Dinka way you will really feel that God is among the people." D Matong Interview, 1989.

and DM3OE. Lines in DM2OE say that Deng “fell from the byre of the moon; the Creator is near though the people say he is still far away.” This suggests the ambivalence felt by the Dinka about the nearness or distance of Divinity, both of which have their dangers. Nevertheless, they anticipate that Deng’s coming will restore the communion which makes *wei* abundant.²⁴

The traditional hymn, ‘*Kerac ci Koc Yok*,’ literally ‘The Evil which befalls People’ (DM2O), is sung in times of war, famine or other devastation. The singers encourage themselves not to fear, but to continue offering sacrifice worthy of the Creator, *Aciek*, upon whom they are dependant. He alone will make the final decision regarding the destiny of mankind. In his version, ‘A Prayer in Time of National Calamity’ (DM2R), Matong inserts Christ as the one who both speaks words of comfort and replaces Deng as the mediator sent by *Nhialic*. An extended section lists the functions which only Christ can assume: he is teacher, saviour, paternal uncle of the nations (the final spiritual authority within a family), the one who has died for human sin, the one who has cast away the bad *jok*, revealed the Father, and shown the way to the place above. He not only replaces Deng, but accomplishes things beyond the capacity of the divinity.

The song “*Nhialic* has his people . . .,” (DM1OE above) is commonly sung during sacrifice of an ox at the time of the new rains. Matong’s re-interpretation, DM1RE, states that ‘We offer the sacrifice of the Son of God’ . . . that it may bring us *wei*.’²⁵ Unlike Catholic missionaries who avoided connections between the Christian sacraments and Dinka religious practices, these songs take Christ’s divinity and self offering to the heart of Dinka religious experience, identifying Christ with the sacrificial victim. Because the hymns retain the musical idioms of the originals rural Dinka with no previous experience of the Church reportedly join enthusiastically, finding their Christian teaching easily accessible. Unfortunately, they have not yet seen wide circulation.

²⁴ Lienhardt, (1961) 38-39, 53-4, 198.

²⁵ Lienhardt, (1982) 90-91; “Self: public, private, Some African representations”, JASO, (1980) 75.

The continual civil conflict of the post-independence era has offered little time for the luxury of reflection and experimentation in the sphere of Christian worship and theology. During this turbulent period many former *miith abun* have sought salvation less in the 'one who descended' than in armed resistance.

4. *Abuna Athiaan Deng: revolutionary poet*

The multi-lingual radio broadcasts of the Sudanese Peoples' Liberation Army during the 1980s popularised the revolutionary compositions of numerous vernacular singers. Many were songs of war which fortified common identity while invigorating combatants for battle. Among compositions which received wide acclaim were the 'Poems in Dinka Language' (*Main Thong Monyjieng*) of Athiaan Deng Garang. Not a singer in the conventional sense, he is a poet who reads his compositions in his own pulsing, emotive style.

It is noteworthy that Athiaan was once a Catholic seminarian, and, ordained a deacon, is widely known as *Abuna*, a 'Father' of the Church. However he was pressed by family concerns and chose not to be ordained a priest in 1972. Instead, he became a teacher, continued to develop his genius for language, and produced several vernacular books.²⁶ Though he has undergone considerable Catholic education, his style, vision, idiom, philosophical approach and imagery, are rooted in traditional Dinka life.

Athiaan has shied away from overtly religious imagery. Rather, he uses emotive concepts from Dinka tradition to encourage personal initiative and inculcate standards of social morality. His poems often describe Southern Sudan as a land undermined by alien influences and corrupt politicians, where the minds of the youth are numbed by deceit, laziness, and jealousy. He implores his listeners to return to old norms of integrity and generosity. They are challenged to self discipline and sacrifice,

²⁶ Born in Western Warap about 1943, Athiaan has experienced considerable hardship. During his seminary studies his brother was killed and he assumed responsibility for his family. He married but his wife died leaving him to care for their children. Athiaan opened a school in Wau which was confiscated by the government in the 1970s. Among the books he has published is *The Elegy of Alweal Thuch*, an enigmatic modern fable. Cyclostyled English translation of Part One (Juba: 1983), 97 pages.

not least in battle, so that ancestral homelands, and all they symbolise, might be restored.

Drawing upon imagery in the tangible world, concerned with innovation, social change and identity, the poems are reminiscent of the 'school songs' of the previous generation. They are, however, much wized and matured through hardship. Enthusiasm and novelty are replaced with rugged determination and an agenda for survival. Far from discarding the past, they seek to reclaim its most valuable attributes.

For months after it was broadcast phrases from one poem in particular remained on the lips of Dinka listeners, Christians and traditionalists alike. Aired on Radio SPLA, in about 1988, it makes a statement of determined self definition over against Northern Arabisation and Islam. It contains no overtly Christian imagery, but reveals the degree to which contemporary Dinka self-perception is rooted in the spirituality of the past:

DENG AND MOHAMMED

IN THE LAND OF SUDAN (ADG1)²⁷

The man who doesn't keep the rhythm
 won't be allowed to lead the dance.
 The skin is not given to the fellow,²⁸
 who, ignorant of the words,
 has failed at the dance rehearsal.¹
 The man is not allowed to lead the country
 who has no skill at herding cattle,
 the one unaware of the size of the population:
 For herding people
 is far more difficult than herding cattle,
 and the greedy person who sits before the people
 distributing wealth,
 discriminating in favour of one race over another,
 Such a person should be removed from the land
 before he casts down his seed.

It is no sin for us to drink water from the Nile

²⁷ This translation was made with the assistance of Nichola Nyuol M Bol from an SPLA Radio recording. The poet's sentences are complex and his imagery multi-layered, presenting a challenge for any translator.

²⁸ *Strip of goat skin = bang*; a woman selects a man at a dance by throwing a strip of her leather skirt over his shoulder.

together from one cup, Mohammed,
 for we are both born in one country.
 It is no sin for us to share one sleeping mat
 for we meet each other in a land
 which is known by one name.
 It is no sin for us to walk together
 in the same way of life
 because we are born in one land.

But another issue, don't try to involve me
 with the laws of your *Nhialic*,
 and don't involve me with the laws of your culture,
 Because you are not me and I am not you.
 If you wish for evil to befall an innocent person
 simply because he is not of your race;
 then you and I have nothing in common.
 because my soul has no joy
 in torturing an innocent person.
 who has done me no evil.
 If you love to lead but hate to follow
 then you cannot lead me
 because, should our order be reversed
 you will not know how to follow.
 And we do not share one manner of life, you and I,
 because you don't know your own identity,
 and you don't know tomorrow,
 and you don't know the history of Sudan.

If you ridicule a citizen of the land
 who has revealed your misdeeds
 by stirring up the smoke,
 then you and I have nothing in common,
 because you have strayed
 from the behaviour of human beings.
 Turn the door of your house
 in the direction your heart's desires,
 and I will turn the door of my house
 in the direction my desires.
 Because you are not me and I am not you.

You, give praise to your *Nhialic*
 in your resting place
 in the tongue of your mother and father.
 and I will praise my *Nhialic* in my resting place
 in the tongue of my mother and my father.
 and don't try to involve me
 in the laws of your *Nhialic*,
 and don't involve me
 with the laws of your tradition.
 Because you are not me and I am not you.
 I am called Deng, and you are called Mohammed.

Our great country never let down its pride
 in the day of heavy wind

and the day when the cattle remained tethered²⁹
 A great country never changes its name
 simply because other countries
 don't like their people.³⁰
 Those of a great land never desert the centrepost³¹
 leaving way for intruders.
 We will never allow the homestead of our ancestors
 and the graves of our grandfathers to be desecrated
 by the hands of those who pass by.
 And likewise with my name,
 take your hands off my body
 so my soul may flourish freely in its own place
 Because you are not me and I am not you.

Deng and Mohammed in the country of Sudan,
 if you would like to preserve your good name,
 I too want to preserve my name
 from those who are destroying it.
 I am alert to preserve the language
 of my father and mother
 from those who are spoiling it.
 I have planted my shield
 so as to protect the proud life of my people
 from those who want to wipe from the earth
 everything that is not of their liking.
 Part of the land which is ours,
 the part which belonged to our ancestors,
 A land where everything decays
 and life generates anew
 A land full of hatred and love,
 A land full of the generous
 and those who hold tightly to their possessions
 A land that is shallow and deep,
 A land full of joy and sorrow,
 A land full of cowards and those who are courageous
 A land where the clever one adjusts himself
 for greater advantage,
 A land where a camel kicks its master
 out into the cold.³²
 I must struggle to adjust my life for best advantage,
 both in the way of our ideals and in actuality.
 If it does not proceed like this,
 then my life and my existence have no meaning
 in the flow of the stories of my people,
 in the history of the world.

29 The cattle are never taken out to graze.

30 Conveys the sense of imminent danger of aggression.

31 Post at the centre of cattle camp.

32 An image from an Arab story widely known through a Sudanese school book.

This poem stands in the finest tradition of Dinka oral literature, employing tangible images--cattle camp and land, centrepost and shield--to evoke some of the most cherished aspects of Dinka identity. Each image possesses layers of symbolic meaning. Statements about praising "my *Nhialic* in my resting place," and preserving the "graves of our grandfathers" confirm the poet's determination to remain firmly rooted in the spiritual heritage of his ancestors. There is no abstract theological elaboration, but descriptions of what Dinka actually do, expressive of the spiritual universe they inhabit.

The tone is hard hitting and assertive, describing a confrontation between two men, inhabitants of Sudan, surrounded by familiar social, religious and political concerns. 'Deng' is, undeniably, a personal name, perhaps the most common name for Dinka males, shared by the poet, his father and his ancestors. However, since 'Deng' confronts his co-countryman 'Mohammed,' both names redolent with their religious origins, each assumes heightened potency. As 'Mohammed' recalls the Prophet of Islam, 'Deng' has associations with the primal ancestor and with Divinity, '*Nhialic* himself,' 'the one who fell from heaven.'

Unlike the 'school songs' of the 1960s, there is no recourse to foreign bishops, Saints or missionaries. Nor does Fr Athiaan, a seminary graduate, betray any impulse to place Jesus Christ or Mary at the forefront of the confrontation with Mohammed. None is so evocative of Dinka identity as 'Deng.'

Not only is 'Deng' more deeply rooted in the religious heritage of the Dinka, but he, more than Christ, inspires an assertive stance against Islam. While Muslims have professed a degree of tolerance toward the followers of Christ, they have denounced the gods of 'pagan' Africa. Deng, asserts Athiaan, stands defiant before Islam. Numerous prophets of Bahr el Ghazal have, like Arianhdit, invoked the divinity Deng when confronting violent aggression. In contrast, the missionaries portrayed Christ as a man of humble self sacrifice, peace and reconciliation. In a poem which asserts Dinka claims to property and self determination, against a backdrop of civil war, Deng is undeniably more suitable than Christ. The poem does not presume to be 'Christian,' but is composed by a man educated in Christian

theology and known for his devout faith. As such it reveals facets of self understanding which are essential to many reflective Dinka, Catholic and traditionalist, during the present civil war.

The discussion above distinguishes four categories of music and poetry composed by Dinka Catholics. Missionaries had provided a foundation for church music which was rich in biblical imagery, European theology and well adapted to the liturgy. Rarely, however, did it encourage integration of indigenous musical idioms or directly confront the rapidly changing social and political environment in the context of Christian worship. Spontaneously, Dinka converts undertook to integrate their beliefs and experience through song.

The role of Dinka ancestors and divinities is addressed differently in each of these forms. Missionaries incorporated one hymn of a new convert in the *Prayerbook* to suggest the similarities between Garang and Abuk and the Genesis narrative. By this they affirmed the common origins of both traditions for the benefit of their Dinka students. In the 'school songs' students at the forefront of a changing, often threatening, environment located spiritual authority in the divine persons of Christianity and in European churchmen, but, in the context of the mission, avoided mention of ancestral divinities.

Two decades later Fr Dominic's compositions reclaimed the music and conceptual foundations of Dinka religious song, using them to convey basic Christian doctrines of the creation and fall, the incarnation and the eucharistic sacrifice. Here the incarnate Christ replaces and fulfils the role traditionally assumed by Dengdit, and hymns which originated in communal animal sacrifice are reinterpreted for incorporation at the heart of eucharistic worship. Finally, the gifted poet, *Abuna Athiaan*, invokes the spiritual authority and symbols of his pre-Christian heritage, to confront alien encroachment and social disintegration.

In each expression we find the Dinka creating a fresh synthesis of spiritual resources, ancestral and Christian, as they meet the challenges of a changing world. As these initiatives were underway, quite distinct creative impulses were arising among Dinka in the sphere of the CMS.

C. The compositions of Dinka Anglicans

This section will draw upon compositions deriving from three periods. First, the ‘revival’ of 1939 saw some of the earliest impulses of new converts to express their faith, and the tensions it evoked, in song. During the 1960s new impetus came with the migration of young people to urban centres, particularly in Northern Sudan. The third and most prolific period has accompanied the growth of the Church during the 1980s and 90s. Some of these convey the anguish of suffering, unprecedented in earlier compositions, as well as fresh theological debate concerning the presence of *Nhialic* in war.

1. Dinka music and the GSM

Archibald Shaw, pioneer missionary of the CMS, was a lover of music. Among the possessions which accompanied the first GSM missionaries in 1905 was Shaw’s pump organ, unfortunately water logged with the first heavy rains on the Upper Nile. Missionaries who joined Shaw at Malek in later decades recalled his evening sing songs around the organ. With a keen interest in vernacular music Shaw recorded and translated a number of indigenous compositions some of which were published with the encouragement of the Seligmans.³³

CMS policy of the period required that an emerging church be provided with a vernacular book of services in the form and structure of the Anglican 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*, and a collection of translated hymns. Within eight months of their arrival the first GSM missionaries had translated six hymns for publication and soon thereafter Shaw was attempting to compose choruses in his still rudimentary Dinka.³⁴ As the Mission developed Shaw was concerned that European musical idioms, including Anglican plainsong, be adapted to the tonal range of the Dinka, creating vernacular worship which was “true to liturgical principals” and “accurately ‘Dinka.’”

³³ Archibald Shaw, “Dinka Songs” (With a Note by C.G. Seligman), *Man* 120 (1915) 35-36; “Jieng (Dinka) Songs,” *Man* 34 (1917) 46-50.

³⁴ *Church Missionary Gleaner* (Oct 1906). An early Dinka composition by Shaw to the tune of *Jesus Stand Among Us* is in ‘extracts from letters,’ 25 July, 1909 (CMSA Acc 111). By 1912 (entry 7 Dec) the 30 pupils at Malek were singing the *Magnificat* and the *Nunc Dimittis* to chant tunes which they preferred to hymn tunes.

To this end he sought the assistance of Professor Archie Tucker who composed intonations and a system of pointing for Psalms and chants.³⁵ Soon it was found that trained school boys could easily manage semi-tones to complete the octave in Western music since this range was within the scale of indigenous singing.³⁶

Shaw's early efforts culminated in the publication in 1930 of a *Shortened Prayerbook in Bor Dialect* which included several Psalms and 20 hymns.³⁷ Among its offerings were such British mainstays as *Jesus Loves Me*, *Onward Christian Soldiers*, *What can Wash Away My Sins?* and *God Save the King*. The completed Dinka Prayer Book of 1946, *Kitap de Duor*, contained 59 hymns, only one of which was the composition a Dinka clergyman.³⁸

The foundation for Anglican worship, so carefully laid during the 1930s, was not to stand independently, however. During the 'revival' of 1939 rural Dinka, gifted as composers in the traditional idiom, came into a subjective experience of Christian faith and began spontaneously composing vernacular songs on Christian themes.³⁹

Leonard Sharland recalled how:

. . . the test came when spontaneous spiritual growth produced original material for lyrics, hymn tunes and the whole range of joyous expressions of life and worship. . . . When real spiritual conversions took place in cattle camp or out-school areas, there was the opportunity for gifted musicians to express their new experience in spontaneous song--and this happened . . . Almost overnight a mass of such songs found their way into the Dinka Christian circle.

The new compositions circulated widely among the Agar during the period when Jon Majak and John Collinson undertook itinerant evangelism. While Sharland and

³⁵ The first selection of hymns published were translations set to a pentatonic scale or original tunes which were already pentatonic. A N Tucker of the School of Oriental and African Studies, did much work on the dialects of Dinka and produced the *Dinka Orthography*.

³⁶ L Sharland, *Memories*, 20-21.

³⁷ *Kitap de Duor, Shortened Prayer Book with Hymns in the Dinka Language, Bor Dialect*, SPCK (1930), 95 pages. A combined trial version of the Gospels, Acts, James, a Catechism, Prayer Book and Hymns was produced by the Bible Society, (1932), PB & songs, 95 pages. Revised Prayer Book, (1946); standard edition, (1956), *Prayer Book with Hymns, Dinka, Bor dialect, modified*, including Psalms and 59 hymns, 327 pages.

³⁸ *Kitap de Duor*, literally, 'Book of Worship.' These, like the popular hymn of Daniel Deng Atong (in Dinka and English, Appendix, DJD58), incorporated formal European verse structure and biblical references. Daniel's composition, like most 'revival' songs, confronts conflicts surrounding loyalty to *jak*.

³⁹ Possibly the first person to compose in the new genre, early in 1939, was Ater e Baai, an illiterate Agar Dinka convert.

Collinson were enthusiastic about the new songs some older missionaries, Archdeacon Gibson among them, were apprehensive that indigenous music might convey “evil associations.” Nevertheless, Shaw, by then retired, welcomed the songs and helped to collect, edit and prepare them for publication. To ensure they would be officially adopted for worship the Diocesan imprimatur was inserted on the fly leaf of the 12-page booklet.⁴⁰

While Shaw and his successors based their teaching primarily on Scripture and used Anglican forms in worship, they had sought to extend freedom in the manner in which these were expressed and reinterpreted by Dinka Christians. In the development of new vocabulary Shaw had encouraged his colleagues to, “Let Dinkas themselves decide what words they prefer when objects and ideas new to them have to be added to the written language.” This approach now extended to the songs. However, unlike Bible translation which, by the 1930s, employed a small group of educated Dinka consultants, song composition drew upon the thought of numerous newly converted and unschooled people. As such it provided insights into the manner in which rural Dinka interpreted their faith. Shaw took seriously the potential dangers in these rapidly proliferating compositions and “was careful to ‘vet’ the choruses as they came into use and to discourage any which contained definitely erroneous or misleading ideas.”⁴¹

In both the Catholic and Protestant spheres rural Dinka had perceived Christianity primarily as the religion of the school and town. With the ‘revival,’ as more adults claimed allegiance to Christ in the CMS sphere, the inclusive term, *Krithianoi*, was increasingly employed. One song declared that, “It is not only we of the school who are chosen by Jesus; It is all of us!”⁴² So it was that young men directly from cattle camp were among the most prolific and gifted composers of the early Christian songs.

Insofar as these were the spontaneous compositions of Dinka attempting to integrate a new sphere of thought and experience, they parallel the ‘school songs’

⁴⁰ *Diet ke Jieng (Dinka Choruses)* contained 15 compositions, published by GSM, CMS, Nile Mission Press, Cairo, 1941.

⁴¹ L Sharland, *Memories*.

⁴² DJ28, by Yithak Majak (Agar), first pub 1947.

which later appeared in the Catholic sphere. Unlike them, their primary focus is upon the realm of spiritual forces, and the repercussions when allegiances are transferred to Jesus Christ. Expressive of the encounter between the evangelical teaching of the CMS and the worldview of the Dinka they constitute a distinct genre of Dinka Christian music.

Missionaries valued the new compositions for their effectiveness in evangelism but denied them equal standing with the canon of hymns and canticles approved for Anglican worship, all but two of which were translations from English. With their raw imagery and frequent references to conflicts surrounding 'evil spirits,' they were reserved for informal meetings and sung before and after 'proper' Anglican worship.⁴³

2. *Nhialic versus jak: Songs of the Dinka*

The new vernacular compositions were easily accessible, relevant to rural Dinka experience, and conveyed a range of evangelical concepts. Employed by evangelists like Daniel Deng and John Majak, they became effective evangelistic tools, integral to the growth of the church. The first collection of 15 new songs was published in 1941; an expanded version circulated in 1947, culminating in the 1956 edition of *Diet ke Jieng*, 'Songs of the Dinka' (DJ). This contained 88 of the most popular compositions, 14 of which were by women.⁴⁴ The most prolific composer was Daniel Ayup, a Ciec Dinka. Renowned as a composer long before his conversion, 38 of his songs appear in *Diet ke Jieng*, several of which remain popular in the 1990s.

Unlike the 'school songs' these choruses betray little concern with 'progress' or modernisation in the concrete world. Certainly literacy was a symbol of transformation as much among Protestant as Catholic children, but the songs of *Diet ke Jieng* suggest that literacy is pre-eminently the tool through which the 'Word of

⁴³ The tendency to distinguish between 'official' worship forms, established during the missionary era, and informal, spontaneous song continued until the 1980s. Only with the recent growth of the Dinka church have new compositions begun to assume near equal status with hymns of the missionary era.

⁴⁴ Beyond this standard collection of 88, another 22, numbered 89 to 110, have been found in rough form. These have apparently never been published; SPP.

God' is apprehended. From their beginnings on the Upper Nile CMS had established a strong link between literacy and Scripture, portions of which were the most readily available printed material. One composer calls Dinka to come so that no one is "left behind," suggesting advancement in the spiritual sphere. Though they are rebellious, lost and blind, the Bible will reveal the way:

And what is the Bible?
 The Bible is the way of life [*piir*]
 for an inquirer,
 we have found the road to Heaven.⁴⁵

In a lively composition by Daniel Ayup the Bible awakens the mind of the sleeper and provides knowledge of *Nhialic*. The first two lines dominate musically:

THE BOOK OF HEAVEN (DJ7)⁴⁶

The book of Heaven is the Bible,
 It will reveal what we have not known,
 We have not yet awakened from sleep
 there is nothing that we know, *ee!*
 Our Father is coming, So let it be,
 When our Father appears
 he will awaken us, *ee*.
 And we will arise with the dawn.
 O Father, the only *jok* we knew was Adeekdhoor,
 within our land, our land, our land.
 Truly, I will turn to the Father,
 and I will reject Adeekdhoor;
 And we will gather ourselves
 in the byre of the Creator,
 he whose word is spoken in the daylight,
 he who is called Jesus.

50 years after it was composed this song remains popular, though the *jok*, Adeekdhoor, has faded from memory. As in most *Diet ke Jieng*, the drama is fundamentally in the spiritual realm between the dawning revelation of *Nhialic*, assisted on the human plane by literacy and the Bible, over against the secretive, destructive realm of *jok*.

⁴⁵ DJ25, by Yithak Majak, Agar, pub 1947.

⁴⁶ DJ7, 'Waragang to Nhial,' Daniel Ayup, Ciec, pub 1941.

Shaw's approach to language development encouraged converts to create their own ways of articulating theological concepts. Within *Diet ke Jieng* some 50 designations are used to describe the persons of the Trinity (*Diangdit* = 'Great Three'). Many are adaptations from biblical imagery such as 'King of peace,' 'Creator of Heaven and Earth,' 'Gate to the sheep enclosure' and 'King of the nations.' Others bear a distinctively indigenous vision: 'the food that smells nice,' 'the Great/Beautiful One,' and 'the *Jok* who has the Cross.' *Nhialic* is the source of light, peace, eternal life, the entry into heaven, salvation, and pre-eminently, of the 'breath of life.'⁴⁷

Contrasting is the dark realm of the *jak jok*. These terms were translated with starkly negative connotations by missionaries and converts alike, as 'evil spirits' or 'devils.'⁴⁸ Dinka composers employ an imaginative vocabulary to describe this sphere, so integral to their ancestral identity and the phenomena of the natural world as they understand it. While *jak jok* are the most common terms, reference is sometimes made to 'the deceiver' (*adhuom*). Rarely is an individual person referred to by the biblical name, *Catan*, Satan. Among the songs 13 *jak* are mentioned by name: Abiel, Abuk-jok, Acieer, Anei, Anok, Atem, Athueeth, Ayomdit, Deng, Lirpiou, Loi, Mathiang Guk, and, most prominently, Aleer, which figures in six songs.⁴⁹ Here the free-divinity Garang is placed alongside the revered clan-divinity Lirpiou and the fetish spirit Mathiang Guk, and all are uniformly identified as forces of evil. Since these names were identified with the human communities who venerated them they also suggest the tensions existing between various clans, while defining specific groups as the unconverted.

Under the CMS, conversion to Christ required an absolute rejection of all *jak*, no distinction being made between them. It is this traumatic renunciation and its

⁴⁷ Trinity (*Diangdit*), 'King of peace' (*Meleng de door*, from Arabic, *Melek*), 'Creator of Heaven and Earth' (*Acieng e ci nhial cak ku piny*), 'Gate to the sheep enclosure' (*Ye thok wat*), 'King of the nations' (*Meleng e baai eben*), 'the food that smells nice' (*Cuin ye nguac apieth*), 'The Great/Beautiful One' (*Adhengdiit*), 'the *Jok* who has the Cross' (*Jong nong tiem ageer*); light (*veer*), peace (*door*), eternal life (*piir atheer*), the entry into heaven (*pan Nhial*), salvation (*luak*), and life (*wei*).

⁴⁸ While the unqualified *jak/jok* is always translated negatively, qualified forms are occasionally used to describe divine persons of Christianity, as in 'the *Jok* who has the Cross' and *Jongdiit Lajik*, 'the Great and Pure *Jok*,' for Holy Spirit.

⁴⁹ These *jak* are, of course, those best known among Dinka groups of the CMS sphere.

wide-ranging implications, that constitute the tensions underlying most *Diet ke Jieng*. Often the encounter is dramatised as dialogue with the adherents and keepers of *jak* and with *jak* themselves. The *jak* are likened to “the thief who dwells on the edge of the wilderness”; “he who throws himself down, raising the dust,” he “who speaks in dark corners” and “a bird which snatches people up.”⁵⁰ In the human community they encourage division and hatred, adultery and falsehood. They are the greedy forces who demand sacrifice but bring few results, those who usurp the place of *Nhialic*.

The songs of evangelical Protestant converts, more than those of Catholics, convey a polarisation of the spiritual universe in which the entire order of ‘powers,’ excluding *Nhialic*, is condemned. No integration or accommodation of traditional divinities was to be knowingly conceded by Dinka Anglicans. A radiant and life-giving *Nhialic*, largely free from ambiguity, is set in absolute opposition against the deceptive, death-dealing *jak*, regardless of derivation. The songs emphasise this confrontation through opposites: good and evil, light and darkness, heaven and hell; right hand and left.

A 1947 composition provoked a debate between Shaw and Sharland regarding the use of the term *yath* and revealed issues surrounding the early choice of *Jongdit Lajik* (‘Great/Pure *Jok*) for ‘Holy Spirit.’⁵¹ The song, ultimately ‘banned’ by Shaw, used the phrase, *Yanh de pan nhial ee, Jongdiitda!*, translated then as ‘Heavenly Sanctuary, yes, our Great Spirit!’ Shaw understood the word *yath*, more common among Northern Dinka than in Bor, to mean, ‘sacred place’, i.e. a place of habitation of the tribal spirit and from which they function, and where they are worshipped.” He was unwilling to apply a term related to ancestral divinities to the transcendent Holy Spirit who is itself *Nhialic*.⁵²

⁵⁰ DJ76, 44, 38, 77.

⁵¹ The composer, Rekoboam Akec, was a former teacher who had resigned. Shaw noted that his song, composed at Sharland’s request on the theme of ‘Jesus, the Way the Truth and the Life,’ had never been especially popular.

⁵² The term *yath* may apply both to the clan divinity and to the ‘shrine’ where it resides. The missionaries assume only the latter meaning. *Yanh de pan nhial ee, Jongdiitda!*, might also be translated, ‘The divinity of heaven, yes, our Holy Spirit.’

Sharland contested, quoting Dinka Christians as saying,

Yath is the focus point of Worship [*duor*], or reverence [*rieu*] or fear [*rioc*], for the ordinary Dinka . . . To the Christians this focus point is transferred to the Person of Christ (*Guop de Yecu*).

An educated Ciec convert said that, when a rural Dinka told him the identity of his *yath*, "I reply 'Mine is Yecu Kritho.'" Such a suggestion that Christ was another, if superior, *yath* was unacceptable to Shaw. The exchange reveals the concerted, if not always successful, attempt of missionaries to delineate between planes and qualities of spiritual beings. They tried to assure that the 'Holy Spirit' and Christ were identified solely with *Nhialic*, untainted by ancestral divinities, even though they had conceded to the term *jok* in creating a designation for the 'Holy Spirit.'⁵³

In conventional idiom composers refer to themselves and their people as "black man/people" (*ran col/koc col*), who, in the songs, frequently appear vulnerable and ambivalent between the two forces which compete for their allegiance. He is perplexed (*nhom mum, nhom dieeng*), "existing in weakness," and "full of darkness." Those who do not follow Christ, "are like a tiny baby, which, knowing nothing, crawls into the fire." Many find it impossible to discern between life and death for, "The Ajang nation is ignorant of life (*piir*), So that you seek a *jok* to hurt you, You have lost life (*piir*) but seek a *jok* to kill *wei*."⁵⁴ Most songs evoke the sentiments of Christians who have renounced sacrifice to *jok*, refusing "the *wei* that comes from a goat." Some declare their willingness to die in this conflict to the death. Others are less certain: "We have burnt Aleer, but we have not yet prepared the shrine [*luak*] of our hearts."

Nevertheless, the songs declare that the real triumph is among those who, rejecting *jok*, have received the *wei* of Christ, been forgiven of sin (*rec*), endowed

⁵³ Sharland noted that the choice of *Jongdit Lajik* for 'Holy Spirit' had always been "a bone of contention with other missionaries to the Dinka." Shaw believed "the association of Jongdiitda ['our Great Spirit'] with 'yath' is dangerous. The spirit associated with the 'yeth' by Bor Dinkas was the tribal or national ancestral spirit, Deng, Garang, etc. In using *Jok* for Holy Spirit we have endeavoured to counteract the obvious dangers by teaching that *Jongdit Lajik* is an altogether different plane to the tribal spirits--it is God in fact, and never was a tribal spirit." The progression, "from 'yath' to 'Jongdiitda' suggests that . . . the distinction is not being maintained." A Shaw to Leonard Sharland, undated. L Sharland at Akot to A Shaw, 30 May 1947. Sharland's personal notes on *yath* and copy of the song with English translation, undated. SPP.

⁵⁴ DJ16, Ajang here meaning Dinka.

with his power (*riel*) and live in his peace. They are “free like the tiang that live in the forest, having many horns.” Their life is marked by a moral order expressed practically in freedom from jealousy, enmity, lying and adultery. With an expanding awareness of neighbouring peoples and nations a call for unity and peaceful co-existence began to arise. If there is urgency to “get ahead” in such phrases as “do not be late” or “do not be left behind” it is pre-eminently with the goal of apprehending Christ’s salvation, not in the tangible realm of ‘progress.’

The following chorus, published in 1941, endures as one of the most popular. The first plaintive line, which dominates musically, has served as the cry of Dinka Christians who feel weak and vulnerable before the forces of evil. It has also offered solace during periods of political instability:

JESUS HELP US (DJ3)⁵⁵

Jesus help us,
 We are perplexed by *wei*
 and pray the person who is above for our *wei, ee*
 We pray the person who is above,
 hear the word of Christ so we prepare ourselves.
 The Father has reached us,
 The Great One has saved the land.

Another composition reveals the moral struggle of the heart to discern between good and evil. As the associations of coolness (self control and temperance) are contrasted with those of heat (bad temper and hostility), so the pervasive peace of Christ is juxtaposed with the utter discord and chaos personified in *jok*.

A CHANGED HEART (DJ18)⁵⁶

If the heart could be changed,
 I would send my heart back;
 From the Lord I would choose
 a heart which knows good and knows evil,
 that is the heart of transforming *wei, ee*.
 Jesus of peace, what shall I do?
 O destitute one,
 I will give you the life of peace on earth,

⁵⁵ DJ3, by Daniel Ayup, Ciec, first published 1941, remains popular in 1990s; when sung the first plaintive line dominates.

⁵⁶ DJ18 by Yithak Majak, Agaar, first published 1947.

Help the destitute to believe in you!
 Lord Jesus, come near, Father, come near,
 that I may call upon you while you are near,
 while you are close by;
 That I may pray to you and believe.
 My body is very hot, it is hot indeed, *ee!*
 Why am I so hot;
 I have Coolness from the Person who sustains *wei*;
 Will we not be washed in the blood of our Father,
 will we not be washed!
Jok jumped into the kraal,
 and scattered the people like animals!
 Bad *Jok*, *ayi yee*, bad *jok* is coming!
 He looks at us like sheep . . .
 deceiving people to commit adultery;
 It is *jok* who does it; *jok* causes enmity between us,
 bad *jok* plays havoc with guests,
 Sheep of Christ the Son, *jok* plays havoc with them.⁵⁷

The *jak* appear to embody all that is out of control, unreliable and destructive in the human character, individual and corporate. They are the cause of conflict, the stimulus for adultery, and the force that demeans human beings making them behave like animals.

Among the earliest and most respected of Christian converts during the 'revival' on the East Bank was Paramount Chief Deng e Malual of the Nyarweng Dinka.⁵⁸ During a period when many of his people were entering the Church he composed a song in which he, a widely known chief, challenged the people of three neighbouring groups--the Bor, the Tuic and the Nuer--to abandon their respective ancestral *jak* and humbly turn to receive the *wei* of Jesus. He exhorts them, somewhat provocatively, not to be prejudiced but to put Christianity to an empirical test as they would in other spheres of experience.

⁵⁷ The last four lines are repeated.

⁵⁸ A song by Nyameer e Aleer (DJ67) holds up Deng e Malual as an example: ". . . And hear what is said, that Deng our chief believed the sacrifice, hear the true word, the word he spoke of Jesus." Published 1947. J A Malou lamented that, though Deng was a faithful and exemplary Christian who had 'burnt the idols,' the missionaries never allowed him to be baptised because he was a polygamist. *Priesthood* 85.

WE DECLARE (DJ49)⁵⁹

The people of Aweeng are united,⁶⁰
 speaking with a single voice, *ee*;
 The *wei* of a child, and the *wei* of an adult,
 for these I pray to Jesus.
 The people of Aweeng are united,
 speaking with a single voice, *ee*;
 I declare to the Bor, I have discarded my Aleer,
 so then you should abandon Alier,
 and let us pray to Jesus
 that he will give us our *wei*.
 I declare to the Twic, I have discarded my Aleer,
 so then you should abandon Atem,
 and let us pray to Jesus
 that he will give us our *wei*.
 I declare to the Nuer, I have discarded my Aleer,
 so then you should abandon Abiel,
 and let us pray to Jesus
 that he will give us our *wei*.
 Let us pray with humble hearts,
 and let us leave jealousy behind us,
 then our Father will turn our hearts,
 our Father *Nhialic*, hear our prayers.
 We are lost; so we turn back to you, our Father,
 to offer prayer in the holy name of Jesus.

You eat python:⁶¹
 How did you know that it was edible?
 Was it not by trying
 that you found you could eat it,
 able to sustain people!
 You eat cobra: How did you know that it was bad?
 Was it not by trying that you found it bad,
 able to kill people?

Let us ask the great Lord our Father in prayer,
 Let us bend our knees, and close our eyes,
 and let us respectfully offer prayers;
 including the blind, including the lame,
 including the deaf and the small child,
 and the old man and the old woman.

The song provides an inclusive vision of the unity of all peoples, young and old, those of widespread, often contentious, ethnic groups, and those, suffering all

⁵⁹ DJ49, by Deng e Malual, Nyarweng, first published 1947.

⁶⁰ *Aweeng*, derived from Nyarweng.

⁶¹ Python (*nyiel*) is held to be a sacred creature by some Dinka, particularly those on the Nile who honour the river (*kiir* or *waar*). Here the reference appears to be literal. The Nyarweng eat neither cobra nor python; while some Dinka groups eat python, none eat cobra.

varieties ailment. As the chief understands it, the *wei* of Christ will bring healing to the social order and to the physically ill. The proof that it is not poisonous but beneficial will be in tasting.

Also illustrative of events surrounding early conversions in Nyarweng is the song of Nyanroor, daughter of Chief Deng e Malual. Her composition, 'What Killed Him?' (Appendix DJ46), sung in the distinctive idiom of songs to *jak*, describes a dialogue between adherents of Aleer from the Akoi clan, and those of Ajuiny, among whom an early mission centre was opened and where Christians first multiplied.⁶² Two village men of Akoi had become powerful Christian leaders. Zealous Akoi converts burnt a shrine to Aleer among the Ajuiny. Provoked to anger the keepers of Aleer challenge the Christians. Here tensions surrounding conversion and education overlay long-standing rivalries between Dinka communities and the prestige of their cults.

A final selection, published in 1947, reveals the hope of messianic deliverance, already prominent in the thought of new converts. At Christ's triumphant return he gathers all the Agar Dinka to himself. The event is closely linked with their peaceful co-existence under the 'Dove of Peace,' the source of *wei*. Here Jieng virility and victory are not in tangible warfare but in their solidarity under *Nhialic*. In the second half of the composition this exhilarating vision is challenged by the keepers of the *jak*, Abiel and Mathiang Guk. Severe doubts arise but the Christians declare that they will remain faithful even to death.

LORD OF PEACE (DJ22)⁶³

Great Lord of peace,
 I am joyful when I pray to you, *ee*!
 Father Great One,
 reveal a sign that the Ajaang may know you;
 We Muonyjieng have become strong,
 we black Jang have become powerful.
 The King of peace will prepare the Agar,

⁶² A mission school was first opened at Ayongdit among the Ajuiny, prior to the Mission at Duk Fayuel. As will be seen in Chapter VII, section D.1., similar rivalries have occurred during the 1980s.

⁶³ DJ22, by Yithak Majak, Agaar, first published in 1947.

so that we enter by one gate,
 Let no one be left behind, we few; . . .
 if we stretch our wings like an eagle,
 and we gather into heaven, *ee!*
 When the Father comes, He will come on that day
 he will cast the *jok* away, *ee!*
 When Jesus comes, the triumphant gathering!
 When he comes that day
 The Father will arrive in the midst
 of the triumphant gathering;
 the Dove of peace holds our *wei* on the right;⁶⁴
 When the Father comes on that day
 he will chase the *jok* away, *ee!*
 The keeper of Abiel says, if you leave *jok*,
 where will you find *piir ee?*
 We have agreed to die,
 if that be the case we will die.
 The keeper of Mathiang Guk says, if you leave *jok*,
 how will you live, you inquirers?
 We have agreed to die,
 if that be the case we will die.
 Monyjieng do not know the good Creator,
 The blessed Kingdom is lost to the Jang!
 The good kingdom is not known to the Black Man,
 The Kingdom of blessing is lost to the Jang!
 What does the Father tell us *ee?*
 The Father says, put away jealousy
 and dwell in peace.

Until the 'revival' nearly all Dinka converts had been school boys, much influenced by their missionary 'parents.' The 110 vernacular songs composed between 1939 and 1956 reveal a new level of dialogue, rooted primarily among rural Dinka as they sought to integrate the precepts of evangelical Anglicanism with wide-ranging religious, social and moral issues. Here there is no mention of 'progress' in tangible terms. Rather, the tension is between apprehending Christ, with all that he promises, present and future, and relinquishing the *jak*. Beliefs surrounding the *jak* are, according to the songs, undergoing a remarkable transformation. Once the recipients of propitiatory sacrifices and emissaries of *Nhialic*, the *jak* have become the expression of all that is subversive, deceitful and death-dealing in the Dinka universe.

⁶⁴ The 'Dove of Peace' does not occur elsewhere.

3. Solidarity among aliens: *Songs of Praise*

By the mid 1950s the evangelical faith propagated by the GSM was being embraced and adapted by a minority of Dinka, mostly in population centres or along main roads in Southern Sudan. Though only small numbers of rural people were Christians, most had imbibed the rudimentary precepts of the church and many could express reasons for their rejection. Composers of *Diet ke Jieng* had created a distinctive vocabulary which made these concepts widely accessible. Importantly, the compositions which circulated were not those of foreigners, but of Dinka, some of whom were now at the forefront in an expanding world.

The 1960s saw the first sizeable migrations, primarily of young Nilotic men, toward the cities of Northern Sudan.⁶⁵ There many found work as menial labourers in Arab-owned companies, but, being perceived as aliens, these were seldom free from discrimination. Stripped of familiar symbols of status in an Arabised environment, it was in the Christian 'clubs,' and vernacular churches that many found affirmation and continuity with the life they had left behind. They might be subjected to inferior treatment by day, but in the evening they could find solace and solidarity in vernacular language and music. Gradually young composers in urban centres added their voices to the corpus of *Diet ke Jieng*.

In the towns young people were severed from the pulse of cattle-based life and the rites of communal sacrifice and their songs reveal little concern with ancestral divinities. Issues of individual sin, salvation and messianic deliverance take prominence. Many songs came directly from Scripture, the New Testament being the prime text for the newly literate. Many are hymns of praise, thanksgiving and love for the persons of the Trinity. New and novel images from the Old Testament and the Book of Revelation were adapted to song. Against a backdrop of civil war and government attempts to Islamise the South, the songs anticipated the victory of Christ and served as a covert expression of defiance. In an alien environment young people

⁶⁵ For a more thorough discussion, see Chapter VII on the Dinka Congregation and 'Clubs' in Khartoum.

found in each other the families they had left behind, and through song sought security, nurture and a positive identity as children of *Nhialic*.

During the 1970s and 1980s several cyclostyled collections of songs, *Diet Jot ke Duoor* (DJD), 'New Songs of Praise,' circulated in urban Dinka congregations.⁶⁶ Many of these reveal a new formality with numbered verses replacing free flowing lines.

A song by a young woman, Martha Ajak, was particularly popular in urban congregations. Here she contrasts the constancy of Christ with the transience, betrayal and anxiety of daily life. Threatened by chaos and enveloping darkness, she anticipates the coming of Christ and prays for the protection of *Nhialic*.

FILL OUR HEARTS (DJD73)⁶⁷

- 1) The person who comes to me, comes with a white heart,
That I may not cover my eyes when I depart in future.
With a good heart he tells us
to await the day of his coming,
When I come to visit all of you.

Chorus: *Fill our hearts with yourself, Lord Jesus.*
Until the day you remember us,
Until the day when you visit us.

- 2) I mourn for the Great Lord who died for us,
I mourn for the blood made to flow for all of us.
Who will have courage to stand firm
in his service in future,
And ask for that which is good?
- 3) You will be saved by the blood
which is in conflict with death.
Because of the turmoil upon the earth he covers us.
You, O Lord, shield us with your words.
We feel remorse in our hearts, all of us,
We have gone astray from your word, all of us.

⁶⁶ One cyclostyled collection of *Diet ke Duoor* bears the name of Rev Hilary Garang, contains 187 songs, and circulated in Juba (undated). Another, *Diet Jot ke Duoor*, contains songs numbered 60-93, bears the name of Gabriel Geu, and was circulated in Khartoum (undated). Both include selections of songs published previously.

⁶⁷ DJD73, by Martha Ajak Wel of Bor; composed in Khartoum during the 1970s.

I regret those whom I chose, but then abandoned.
 You fear people, but you don't fear him,
 Who will save you if you fear human beings?

- 5) Who will be able to do all that you ask
 Unless you abide in our hearts?
 We are children of the lineage of Judas, Lord Jesus,
 We sin by day and deceive by night.
 Who will serve you with a contented heart?

Though the concepts confronted in this composition are weighty, the music is fast paced with a lively rhythm, and is sung enthusiastically in large groups. This apparent contradiction is found in many songs of the period.

Typically, this song expresses awareness of personal weakness and sin, and the need for the forgiveness and redemption of *Nhialic*. Like others it employs sacrificial imagery which appears to have found a natural reception among those for whom animal sacrifice was no alien experience. Explicit images of cleansing in Christ's atoning blood, common to Western evangelicalism, frequently arise, as in the following chorus:

*We bathe, we bathe in the blood.
 We bathe in the blood of the Son
 who is full of the Holy Spirit.
 We bathe, we bathe in the blood.
 We bathe in the blood of the Son
 who is full of love and peace.*⁶⁸

In many songs human sinfulness exists in tension with the redemptive self offering of Christ. Isolated and helpless, believers plead for God's deliverance. Each verse in the popular song, 'Father of our Lord in Heaven' ends with the plaintive cry, 'we are left,' the fear here being abandonment to spiritual death:

Our Father who is in heaven
 visit us for our hearts are worried.
 We have no faith, try to visit us all.
 We are all distressed;
 the world is difficult for us.
 We are all distressed;
 The evil of the earth

⁶⁸ Chorus of DJD86, entitled 'He Died and Rose again' (*Ee Cii Thou Ku Be Rot Jot*). This is an original Dinka composition, but has obvious parallels with the English hymn which speaks of being 'washed in the blood of the lamb.' Again, the music is quick paced.

has severed us from your path.
 We are left alone, we are left,
 we are left, we are left.⁶⁹

The final verse concludes with the cry “We are burning, we are dying, we are burning, we are burning, we are burning.”

During the 1970s Jakob Kot was a young mechanic in Khartoum. His song, with its pulsing rhythm and message of consolation became popular among youth in the ‘clubs.’ Relying upon imagery from John 14 it encourages those who have journeyed into a desolate land to be hopeful and expectant. Followers of Christ are promised that he has gone to prepare a dwelling for them and will return to take them there. Though conditions are hard and treatment demeaning, Christ will ultimately bring security.

GO AND COME (DJD77)⁷⁰

- 1) Come near our Lord of hosts, throw light upon us.
 Come Father, go and come.—
 We were nearly lost within the wilderness,
 we had ventured too far.
 Our brother Jesus, come visit us often.
 Come Father, go and come.
 We were nearly lost within the wilderness,
 we had ventured too far.

- 2) You are the first born of the blessed girl
 Come Father, go and come.
 We were nearly lost within the wilderness,
 we had ventured into a bad place.
 No temptation will have victory over us. . . .

No longer threatened by *jak*, young urbanised Christians focus their concern upon personal sin and biblical morality. In Christ they find an example for endurance in suffering, survival in persecution, and a new model for social relationships. Having

⁶⁹ Verse 1 from DJD68, entitled ‘Father of our Lord in Heaven’ (*Wun de Benyden to Nhial*).

⁷⁰ DJD77, by Jakob Kot Anai, Yirol. Based on John 14:1-4: “In my Father’s house are many rooms; . . . I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you . . .” Verses 3 and 4 are identical to v 1, except for line 5 in each: v 3 substitutes: ‘Give us peace and joy of heart’; v 4, ‘We will praise you forever.’

⁷¹ In each of four verses it is this line which takes prominence in singing.

left cattle and animal sacrifice behind, the blood of Christ becomes the symbol of divine deliverance from sin. In a threatening environment comfort and security are found in the acceptance of a culturally homogeneous Christian community with its shared messianic hope.

4. Song amidst war: 1983 - 1993

This section represents the most prolific and vital, period in the history of Dinka Christian music. It also contains some of the most disturbing expressions as a people struggle to survive amidst civil war.

Compositions are divided into three thematic categories, each revealing some aspects of recent innovation. The first section, suggestive of the great majority of new songs, reflects the vitality and assertiveness of a growing church, and reveals their interest in organisation and evangelistic growth. A second category comprises the 'songs of suffering' in which a people, confronted with death and displacement, express their hopes, doubts and desperation to *Nhialic*. A third category, merging with the second, is that of 'government songs' in which Christians probe the relationship between Christ's messianic deliverance and the need for immediate liberation by military means.

The outpouring of new compositions during the 1980s parallels, but far exceeds, the years of 'revival' five decades earlier. The styles, forms, and theological issues addressed are more varied and complex. The majority are firmly evangelical, and, as in earlier hymns, the tension between *jak* and Christ, is the focus of Christian conversion. Women figure prominently and are among the most gifted of composers. Even children have contributed moving compositions. Foremost among young composers has been 'Pastor of Youth,' Stephen Dit Makok, who was assigned to gather and edit new compositions. By 1992 over 1,000 new songs from across the former CMS sphere had been collected and combined with older selections for a new song book.⁷²

⁷² At time of writing a selection of some 500 songs is being culled from the 1,018 compositions which comprised a draft volume entitled *Bung de Diet ke Duor*, 'Book of Songs of Worship' (BDD). Of the larger collection about 800 were composed between 1984 and 1992. The

Through itinerant evangelism and the migrations of the displaced new compositions have circulated widely, and may erupt in virtually any context. Some songs accompany church processions enacted with almost military precision, while others enliven liturgical services and dramatic presentations. In Agar area a small College, Dhiau Kuei, was established to train church leaders. Of its 160 students in 1993, half are women. Since only a minority of students are literate and New Testaments insufficient, song lyrics have become the most important vehicle for conveying biblical concepts. Through song the narrative of scripture is continually interpreted and applied to contemporary experience.

Several departures from preceding forms may be noted, though these points are in need of further analysis. Where earlier compositions frequently developed a single overarching theme, the new works often appear more fragmented and disparate, their images shifting abruptly. Where older songs had a rich and varied musical texture with multiple themes, many new works tend to be simpler and more repetitive. As in the past, numbered verses often alternate with a chorus. However, some songs contain lengthy sections intended to be sung antiphonally between the congregation and a cantor, with subtle alterations in the lyrics upon each repetition.

Some new, borrowed vocabulary arise in vernacular texts. The English 'youth' is now much used in church circles. From years in contact with Socialist Ethiopia, 'bourgeois' (*burjuaath*) signifies the wealthy oppressors. Numerous Arabic words (*tahrir* = 'liberation'; *jiec* = 'army') are taken from military and political contexts. Because composers have varying standards of education there is considerable variation in the quality and style of written Dinka.

a. Songs of celebration and growth

Despite the enormous destabilisation that has afflicted Dinka territories since 1983, there have been occasional periods of relative calm when Christians have celebrated, evangelised, organised their churches, and considered the meaning of their

original texts from which translations in this thesis were taken vary widely in spellings and phonetic systems; attempts at standardisation are presently underway.

experiences. Many new songs, like the selections below, reflect the vitality of these intervals.

Bor Christians often wonder why it has taken so long, eight decades since the coming of Archdeacon Shaw, for their people to embrace Christianity. As these lines suggest, this can only be the mysterious work of *Nhialic*:

NHIALIC HAS COME SLOWLY (AM4)⁷³

Nhialic has come among us slowly
and we didn't realise it.
He is standing, shining into our hearts.
I ask you, Lord of peace who is in heaven,
I am calling with the people of the earth,
with our entire strength we stand firm
until you reach us.
Send us the brightness of the Lord
that we may see it, the *Jok* of Truth,
who will teach the law that is written.
We receive the law slowly, slowly,
all of us together, so none of us is left behind.

These lines are part of a lengthy song composed in an Ethiopian refugee camp (see Appendix). The composer and his people had suffered greatly and been forced from their land. Having undergone their own 'apocalypse' their song places recent events at the end of time. Together, they anticipate the immanent return of Christ and the new order he will establish.

Many new compositions celebrate the rapid expansion of the church. Songs of praise and celebration in the style of 'charismatic' Christianity are numerous. Those by Bishop Benjamin Mangar, himself a product of Pentecostal training, have proliferated widely. His ministry is now in the shanty towns of Khartoum, but prior to 1988, he planted numerous congregations of the 'Alleluia Church,' a charismatic adjunct to the ECS, in his own Agar area. In this Christmas song rural Dinka celebrate the church's geographic expansion:

⁷³ AM4, Recorded by Rev Andrew Mayul, Addis Ababa, 1989. For the complete Dinka and English texts see Appendix.

FEAST OF IMMANUEL (BDD266)⁷⁴

What is this, the great celebration in the town?
 Is it not the feast of Immanuel, the son of God,
 the feast of Immanuel,
 the feast of Jesus,
 the feast of Christ,
 the feast which has filled the entire earth,
 If you go to *Wan Acol*, Alleluia! (X2)⁷⁵
 Maleng Agok, Alleluia! (X2)
 In Cuaibet, Alleluia! (X2)
 In Thiet and Tonj, Alleluia! (X2)
 In Malakal, Alleluia! (X2)
 In Yambio, Alleluia! (X2)
 At home in Rumbek, Alleluia! (X2)
 In Jongelei, Alleluia! (X2)
 The feast that has filled the entire earth,
 the feast of Immanuel, Jesus Christ,
 which has filled the whole world,
 It is all of us, Alleluia, Alleluia!

A song by a young woman anticipates the vast crowds gathering for celebration. In their enthusiasm they overflow the dancing area trampling the surrounding gardens of *dhura*, ready for harvest:

WINDSTORM (BDD182)⁷⁶

Let us praise the Lord and ask him to give us peace
 Let us praise *Nhialic* and ask him to bless us
 on his right (X3)
 Let us praise Christ.
 Let us praise the Trinity.
 The day of the windstorm,
 the day of playing the thumb piano,
 the day of blowing the horns.
 All the grain shall be cut down,
 the great day of celebration,
 all the grain will be flattened.

As this rapidly growing church has confronted pressing human needs, administrative 'committees,' common among urban congregations, have developed. In Bor area the choirs, essential to every congregation, became known as *Jol Wo Liec*,

⁷⁴ BDD266, by the Right Rev Benjamin Mangar, composed in the mid-1980s.

⁷⁵ Meaning the town of Wau. Following are listed Sudanese towns representing the ever-widening geographic scope of the Church.

⁷⁶ BDD182, by Mary Anai Kon, from Bor.

'Look Upon Us.' Responsible not only for music and processions, they made practical preparations for church events. The Committee of *Teng de Piir*, 'Seeing after Life' is concerned with collecting and distributing support for pastors' families. Such interdependence arises, according to this song, from the inspiration of Scripture.

CHURCH COMMITTEES (DG689)⁷⁷

- 1) The Committee of 'Look Upon Us'
desires to praise God everywhere.
- 2) The Committee of Sunday
desires to praise God everywhere.
- 3) The Committee of 'Seeing after Life'
wants to consider carefully.
- 4) The Committee of the Diocese wants
to reflect properly.

Chorus: *Let us praise the Lord,
He has left us all the words,
all those within the Bible [X4]*

Leader: The Lord left us all the words
which are in the Bible.
The Lord sent us his only Son
to come and wash away our sins
and again he sent us the Holy Spirit
to come and fill us all.

Such activities contrast sharply with an earlier era when missionaries lamented the lethargy and lack of self reliance of Dinka Christians.

With new administrative structures and music, fresh symbols of a dynamic community have emerged. Forests of flags and lean crosses made of reeds, wave over processions in which music, gesture and drama are often highly orchestrated. When resources allow, colourful uniforms denote rank and status. Military conflict appears to be mirrored by renewed confrontation between Christians and the *jak*. Seldom since the 'revival' have Christians processed triumphantly into the compounds of new

⁷⁷ DG689, The composer, Makedelena Yar Garang, is perhaps 25 years old, married.

converts to burn ancestral shrines. The following song recalls the forays of an earlier generation and asks who is marching once again:

HAVE YOU PREPARED? (BDD184)⁷⁸

Youth, have you prepared?
 Kuai, have you prepared?
Acueny Garang prepare yourself and go to the Lord⁷⁹
 who chose you from the day you were born.
 And the *youth* who burnt Garang are not hidden.⁸⁰
 They shall march to the celebration.
 We are the *youth* of the Lamb of blessing
 Kolyang enquired of me.⁸¹
 Mareng enquired of me.
 Ding-Jok enquired of me.
 Who are those who are marching once again,
 raising the great flag of glorious Immanuel?
 There is nothing bad; come all of you.
 You may have forgotten me from long ago,
 It is the flag of the Lord of hosts
 I shall raise it high with my right hand
 So that all of you shall know
 that I am the King, the King.

Such triumphal events are not without their cost. As individuals have renounced their ancestral *jak* tensions have frequently arisen and families have been divided. Nyanroe was one of three Christian sisters from Nyarweng who lamented the death of their only brother. Their parents having died, the sisters pleaded with him to repent and be baptised so he would not remain alone when they married. According to their song their brother was foolishly enslaved, the first to provide a bull for sacrifice when the *tiet* requested it. He 'immediately' became ill and died:

⁷⁸ BDD184, by Moses Kulang Garang.

⁷⁹ *Kuai*, name of youth leader, signifying his group; *Acueny Garang* means 'he who burnt [the free-divinity] Garang.'

⁸⁰ English *youth* is used here; they are not hidden but proudly exposed.

⁸¹ Meaning 'the people of . . .'

EATEN BY JOK (AM1)⁸²

The person who allows himself
to be deceived by evil *jok*,
he will be eaten by *jok* along with his bull. (X 3)
Let us lean on the hand of the Lord,
the hand of the Son of the Lord,
the Son who was sent for eternal life,
The person was told but did not believe.
his cry will fall upon no person.
No one will receive his blame.⁸³
In the coming day we will be selected.⁸⁴
The words of the house of darkness mislead us,
and bring only evil upon us.
They hold us back from the high ground of blessing.

The sisters refuse to accept any blame for the death of their brother. They had called him to repent, but his own complicity with *jok* led to his death.

Over one third of the new compositions are by women who, with many of their menfolk in combat or dead, are prominent in every aspect of church life. As this chapter reveals, their songs are among the most articulate and courageous.⁸⁵ The following is a personal statement by one who has just burnt the *jok* of her family, a bold step for a young woman.

COOL HEART (BDD177)⁸⁶

My heart is cool, so refreshingly cool,
My heart is wonderfully relaxed,
Hey, young women!
She who has not received,
let her go and take her share,
[To refrain] is not acceptable to *Nhialic*
I must look into this.
I have burnt the *jok*
in the homestead of Tong Akok.⁸⁷

⁸² AM1, the first sentence dominates the song; from an interview with Rev A Mayul, Addis Ababa, 1989.

⁸³ For he has no one to blame but himself.

⁸⁴ Chosen, the best of the seeds for future planting.

⁸⁵ In contrast to *Diet ke Jieng*, only about one sixth of which were composed by women.

⁸⁶ BDD177, by Mary Ameer Malek. Coolness is here a metaphor for soothing peace and relaxation. To be 'hot hearted' is to be hostile and in conflict.

⁸⁷ She has destroyed the shrine of her family.

During a period of destabilisation and rapid change old loyalties are being boldly challenged. Supernatural phenomena have also been reported with increasing frequency. The sick have been miraculously healed, the *jak* have cried aloud as they are exorcised, and angels have come near to comfort the oppressed. One popular hymn was reportedly sung by a choir of invisible angels as they crossed the heavens over the Agar Parish of Malith.⁸⁸

The songs in this section reflect the positive self assertion of a largely youthful, little educated Christian community during a period of unprecedented expansion. Isolated in the 'Liberated Areas' they have had virtually no direct contact with foreign missionary influences. Their theology is christocentric and their tenor, expansive and evangelical. Some of the structures and symbols which for several decades typified Dinka congregations in urban centres are here being synthesised in the life of rural congregations.

b. "*Songs of Suffering*"

The majority of new songs convey a hopeful, positive vision of divine salvation, rarely giving vent to expressions to despair. Some compositions provide encouragement by emphasising biblical themes of divine liberation. Many anticipate the imminent return, judgment and deliverance of Christ. In others Christians draw upon Old Testament narratives, identifying themselves with the Hebrew exiles in Babylon or slaves in Egypt. They anticipate God's deliverance and their return to the ancestral 'promised land.'

Occasionally, however, there arise brief, unanticipated lamentations which suggest another strata of emotion. Typical is the plea, "*Nhialic* our Creator, look upon us" (*Nhialic Duciengda, ting wok*). Many Christians appear to be ambivalent about expressing the doubt, desperation or the sense of abandonment, which arise during these turbulent years. Though many songs focus upon conflicts between spiritual

⁸⁸ Several lines, as angels reportedly imparted them: "Our Lord Jesus Christ who came and redeemed us on earth, look upon us for we are overloaded with sins in our hearts. Forgive and save us, we are lost on your way. Rev A Mayom, 14 Nov 1991, Report for ECS Dioceses of Rumbek and Wau, 1991. No original Dinka translation is available.

powers, only a small minority explicitly address negative feelings or the tangible consequences of the war.

Issues arising during prolonged war pose particular challenges to evangelical Christians. Most leaders of the ECS maintain the distinction, imbibed during the missionary era, between the spiritual work of the Church and the overtly political concerns of secular government, between the eternal and the transient. Church leaders may have strong opinions about political issues, but these are seldom expressed publicly in sermon or song. Their declarations are normally confined to resolving conflicts in the spiritual realm.

ECS Christians often interpret their suffering as the result of God's judgement upon the 'sinful land of Sudan.' Numerous lyrics, present and past, convey the guilt which Christians bear as they invite one another to repentance. Many seem to anticipate that the renunciation of *jak*, and the regenerate life in Christ will see the dawn of peace and renewal. However, surveying the past 37 years, war and destruction predominate.

Increasingly, younger Christian converts compose songs expressive of the harsh realities of their experience. They ask why their cries go unanswered and suffering and injustice still pervade their existence. Some are lamentations, cries to *Nhialic* for mercy and deliverance, evocative of the Hebrew Psalms. Others openly question if *Nhialic* has abandoned them.

As occurred during the missionary era, vernacular songs have been carefully vetted before publication, now by indigenous church leaders. Some of the most penetrating compositions of the late 1980s are omitted from drafts of *Bung de Diet ke Duor*, while those selected very seldom refer to the physical and social realities of war.⁸⁹ Songs in the rest of this chapter derive primarily from some 50 compositions *not* selected for publication. Designated 'Songs of Suffering' (*Diet ke Gum*) and

⁸⁹ Bishop Nathaniel Garang suggested that a wider Dinka community would not want to sing the 'songs of suffering' which derive from one region, nor would such songs, specific to one historic period, encourage the longevity of the book. Interview, London, 1992.

'Songs of the Government' (*Diet ke Akuma*), most have been set aside, possibly for later publication.⁹⁰

The plaintive and child-like cry of some compositions seems incongruous with the independent stoicism and self assertion by which the Dinka are often stereotyped. The 'songs of suffering' often reveal the tenderness and vulnerability of the Dinka character. Traditionally young men, secure with their cattle, liken themselves to aggressive bulls. Lesser domestic animals, especially poultry, are denigrated as dirty, unworthy food for virile men. It is remarkable, then, that a young man from Bor, takes solace in the biblical image of *Nhialic* as a mothering hen.

COVER US (DG448)⁹¹

- 1) It is we, O *Nhialic*, it is we, it is we,
look back upon us, and bless our days,
bless this place,
this land we are in, so that it may be a holy land
which you chose for us
where we worship, where we work,
where your people are taught.
Open the light upon us, here, here.

Chorus:

Cover us with your wings like a bird covers her chicks
*Cuddle us, O Nhialic, cuddle us,*⁹²
in these bad years
so that we may live in your faith, O Nhialic. [X2]

- 2) People who are hated, people who are insulted,
People against whom evil is spoken
because of your holy work, are blessed [X2]
Nhialic said to you, O Christians,
suffer everything and I shall have revenge
against those who reject my words.
Those who hate you because of my words [X4]
 - a) Greed--says the person of the town⁹³
 - b) They are lost--they sacrifice for themselves

⁹⁰ None of the *Diet ke Gum* and *Diet ke Akuma*, here designated by 'DG,' are being included in the Dinka songbook. Though they are but a small minority of songs collected, they are prominent here because of the process of theological reflection they reveal. Numbers of songs are those on original manuscripts.

⁹¹ DG448, by Mathayo Marial Cuor, Kanitha Aroou, 1988.

⁹² *boom* = cuddle, as a mother intimately embraces her child.

⁹³ *tweeny* = derogatory term for townies. These three sentences are set out in this manner in the hand-written original. It is not certain if these are intended for responsive singing.

- c) They go to the diviners--
who cheat people in the name of *jak*.
- 3) I suffered them, I suffered them, I suffered them,
from those who hate you.
The Lord gave himself;
Christ gave himself to show you suffering
you, the believers. [X2]
People of the *jak* are laughing, ha ha,
not knowing what will happen,
that the world is turning.
The girl who will burn,
the boy who will burn because of sin,
Do not [. . .] that which gives life⁹⁴
Why align yourself with the bad *jak*,
long condemned by *Nhialic*
Father, don't punish us
because of the mistakes of bad people.

Cuddle us, O *Nhialic*, cuddle us, in these bad years
so that we live in your faith, O *Nhialic*.

At the time this was written many Bor Dinka were fleeing to Ethiopian refugee camps. In his first verse the composer longs for security so that he and his people might remain in their own land. The tangible afflictions of "these bad years" were largely the result of escalating war. Nevertheless, the conflict he describes derives primarily from the oppression of *jak* and those who submit to them. Assaulted, humiliated and vulnerable, the composer invokes *Nhialic* as a nurturing mother.

In another composition "the lineage in conflict with death" struggles with temptation and death as the world spirals towards its apocalyptic end. Here, unusually, human beings are not alone in their guilt, but *Nhialic* too is assigned responsibility for the present dilemma: it was he who placed human beings and *jak* together upon the earth.

CONFLICT WITH DEATH (DG372)⁹⁵

- 1) To you all humankind of the earth,
the word of *Nhialic* is near.
We shall weep in the days to come, *yee, yee, Nhialic*
While we do not realize what evil we have done
Nhialic created us and tempted us with *jak*

⁹⁴ Meaning unclear in original.

⁹⁵ DG372, by Duruka Acol Makeeth from Maar Church, 1987.

so that we share the earth with *jak* together.
Jok is there in the form of the peg
 dug into the ground before the house of dwelling
 He is deceiving people
 whom he will thrust into the fire.

Chorus:

*We are the lineage of those
 in conflict with death.
 Among us there is no one generous enough
 to offer his son to save mankind
 Like the Lord who redeemed us through his only son.*

- 2) The evil upon the earth began with knowledge
 and it will finish with knowledge.
 We are the filth of evil,
 We cry for the flesh
 and we do not perceive the life of the soul,
 The end of everything is near
 and so we are burdened with *wei*
 having neither heaven nor earth.
- 3) When we overtake evil upon the earth
 in pursuit of salvation
 then *jok* will remain near the byre
 beginning to stalk its prey like an animal
 to find whom he will single out and divert,
 Lack of belief is accompanied by a curse.
 Let us pray *Nhialic* for *wei* that will remain forever.
- 4) Let us then praise him with honour
 since he has followed us with salvation.
 We are worried about death, evil
 and the words of our Lord in heaven.
 Is there any person
 who will be sacrificed upon the earth?
 The pure life is in heaven.
- 5) Let us then praise him,
 we the lineage of holiness across the earth,
Nhialic of all who long ago created the earth
 we have not yet identified ourselves with him
 and we have not believed him.
 His coming has been foretold in the Bible
 and yet we have not listened
 because of the evil of Adam within us.

In the two songs above Jesus Christ assumes an important role. In one (DG448) he provides an example of endurance through suffering. In the second the composer extols the generosity of *Nhialic* who gave his only son to redeem mankind, and asks if

her hearers would do likewise (v 4). Though *Nhialic* is the source of temptation he has also provided the avenue of salvation.

Another composition, popular in Ethiopian refugee camps, also asks penetratingly about the Creator's responsibility. It was inspired by the widely known prophecy against 'Kush' of Isaiah 18. The prophet describes a battlefield where human corpses are left to be devoured by wild animals, a scene familiar to the singers. The basic question twists and turns plaintively throughout the composition.

WHO CREATED US? (AM2)⁹⁶

We ask you *Nhialic* who created us,
 It is you who created us!
 We ask you *Nhialic* of all peoples,
 Who has created us? Isn't it you who created us,
Nhialic of all peoples?
 We ask you *Nhialic* who created us,
 it is you who created us?
 Listen to the prayers of our bones in the wilderness
 Watch over us, O our Creator
Nhialic of all peoples, we are yearning for our land
 and we beg you to liberate us.
 Hear the prayer of our souls in the wilderness
 watch over us, O our Creator.
Nhialic of all peoples, we are yearning for our land
 that we may pray to you in freedom. . . .

If *Nhialic* is Creator why does he allow his human creatures to be forced from their land and die in the wilderness? So profound is this disruption that the natural order itself cries out for deliverance, as expressed in another song from an Ethiopian refugee camp:

LET US RETURN (DG480)⁹⁷

- 1) We are asking *Nhialic* for our lives;
 We are asking *Nhialic* for our land;
 We are asking *Nhialic* for our children.

⁹⁶ AM2, Sung in 1989 by Rev A Mayul, Addis Ababa. The first words are repeated as if struggling with an insoluble riddle. The content of this song places it within the 'songs of suffering' but it has not been found in other collections. When Chris Patton, then British Minister of Overseas Development, visited refugee orphans in Ethiopia they selected this song for presentation.

⁹⁷ DG480, by Stephen Mathiang, of Pinyudu Church, Ethiopia, 1989.

You are the Lord and we pray to you;
 You are the Lord and we adore you;
 You are the Lord and we ask you for our own land.

Chorus:

*Father, Father, have mercy upon our land.
 Return us to our land, return us to Sudan;
 Father, Father, have mercy upon our land.*

- 2) Let us not increase sin by more sin.
 Let us not leave what is good
 in this land filled with sin.
 We ask you, *Nhialic*, we ask you,
 Lord, have mercy upon us
 We your children have sunk down, *amavou, amavou ee*.⁹⁸
 Your mercy has turned us to you, our Lord.

- 3) The tree cries to the Lord;
 Grass cries to the Lord;
 The animal cries to you, O *Nhialic*;
 The bird cries to the Lord,
 and the fish and the ant
 are confused because of disaster.
 The land is crying, *amayou, amayou ee!*
 Your mercy, O Father, turns us to you our Lord.

- 4) And a person cries while holding his hand
 asking until when, until when,
 shall we worship you under the trees?
 Until when, until when,
 shall we worship you in foreign lands?
 Until when, until when,
 shall the birds live on our flesh?
 Until when, until when,
 shall the animals live on our bones?

Here the entire order of creation has been thrown into chaos by war and displacement. Humankind, animals, insects, plants, and the earth itself, voice their united lamentation before their Father and Creator. As the chorus emphasises, the land is foremost among possessions which have been lost. Though the world is devastated by sin and people are displaced, the composer sustains the hope of restoration, pleading that he will not lose sight of the remnant of good which still exists (v 2).

⁹⁸ This exclamation is a cry of desperation which literally means 'O my mother.' Human beings and the created order cry out to God as both Father and mother.

The songs above were composed between 1987 and 1989, a period of large scale population movements, and much loss of life. Survivors were bereft of cattle, property and land. Some composers believe that the earth is in its final death throws, having entered the apocalypse. The locus of conflict remains primarily in the spiritual realm, between human beings and their still formidable opponents, the *jak*. Accordingly, human guilt and complicity are at the root of prolonged suffering. However, some see their afflictions as an enigma, and ask if *Nhialic* himself does not bear responsibility. A few wonder apprehensively if he has abandoned them.

In the 'songs of suffering' liberation is usually envisioned in a life yet to come, a new world brought about through divine intervention. Christ will return, ushering in the just rule of *Nhialic*. There is, however, another, parallel vein of thought which only recently has been openly expressed within the Church.

c. "Government Songs"

This final section examines the debate about the means through which *Nhialic* will bring liberation to his people. Where preceding songs have described conflicts which are primarily in the realm of spiritual powers, these songs alternate between the spiritual realm and the tangible realities of armed resistance. They also shift between salvation which is essentially eschatological, and the political liberation of the land.

In several songs above, but even more in those which follow, the land is a dominant image. While human lives and cattle can be expected to regenerate, the land is irreplaceable, essential to the future survival of the Dinka. Having been entrusted to them by the ancestors it is the context of history and myth, the bond between generations. Redolent with spiritual associations it reveals the presence of Divinity, and is the vehicle through which *wei* is manifest. Of all losses during recent years, none is more traumatic than being forced to evacuate ancestral lands. The following prayer, typical of Dinka displaced by war, reveals the circumstances and attitudes underlying some of the songs in this section:

Nhialic who created heaven and earth, it is you who have given us this land. It is not we who chose it. You, you have given us the earth: it is our land. Is it your will that other people leave their place and come to kill us here? Look O

Nhialic:⁹⁹ Our goats have been driven away. Our cattle have been stolen. Our children have been carried off. Our houses they have burnt. Look O *Nhialic*, these people who come and take our land. Take them back! We do not go to the North. We do not go to the West of Sudan. We are here. Why do they leave their own land and come and burn down our houses and take our cows? *Nhialic* help us! *Nhialic* help us!¹⁰⁰

Because the land is fundamental to the order established by the Creator, it appears enigmatic that he allows it to be destroyed, its inhabitants killed or forced to flee.

For many Christians, the victory of Christ over the forces of evil in the spiritual realm is necessarily allied with the military victories of the SPLA over Northern government troops.¹⁰¹ The 'government songs' composed by Dinka Christians bear obvious similarities with the liberation songs of the SPLA, but here a primary concern is with the presence and authority of *Nhialic* amidst military conflict.

The following composition reveals the ambivalence underlying this genre. It was first composed in 1988 to celebrate completion of a new refugee church. In the original version the composer seeks the blessing of *Nhialic* upon Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia, and upon SPLA commander, Colonel Doctor John Garang, the primary symbol of the Liberation Movement. The enemy in this version is the oppressive 'bourgeoisie' of Northern Sudan:

BUILDING YOUR HOUSE (DG307/382)¹⁰²

[Original]

Christ bless us, forgive our sins,
 We have built your house,
 We have built your *Yekalu*,¹⁰³
 Byre of prayer,
 House of *wei*,
 Bless us like Solomon.
 We long for freedom,
 Emmanuel, freedom of our souls¹⁰⁴
 and freedom of the land of Sudan, O Lord.

⁹⁹ At this point everyone moves their hands imploringly, palms upward.

¹⁰⁰ Many Bor Dinka, having fled to Ethiopia, were forced back to Sudan, where conflict again propelled them southward toward Uganda and Kenya. This prayer was quoted as an example typical of people who have been repeatedly displaced. Rev M A Gak, interview, London, May, 1992.

¹⁰¹ Most of the songs below were composed prior to the time when the SPLA divided into competing factions and composers still conceive of a united Movement.

¹⁰² DG307/382, young male composer, name withheld, Ethiopia, 1988.

¹⁰³ Hebrew term *hekal* = 'temple' transliterated into Dinka for the vernacular Bible.

¹⁰⁴ *Tiipkuo* = our souls, usually used to refer to a shade, soul after death.

Burjuaath of the world are oppressing us,
 Bless the great John Garang
 with all our children in Ethiopia.

This version was, however, found inappropriate for specifically Christian gatherings, and the last three lines were rewritten:

. . . The troubles of the world weigh down upon us.
 Bless us, your children
 so we are free to gain victory over evil.

In the revised version the *burjuaath* have been replaced with the New Testament image of 'forces of the world,' shifting from the tangible enemy of civil conflict to an unseen, spiritualised enemy. Victory here relies not upon armed resistance, but upon the miraculous deliverance of *Nhialic*.

Another composition, unique among the 'songs of suffering', envisions two pairs of opposing forces, one in the spiritual realm and one which is concrete. Two persons, *Jehovah* and the military leader whom he has raised up, provide leadership and ensure liberation. The *jok*, the source of spiritual enslavement, are here paired with the enslaving forces emanating from the North. Tangible salvation is through the SPLA and spiritual liberation through the word of God.

LEFT AND RIGHT (DG387)¹⁰⁵

God, Jehovah, here, take the land,
 and lead the land
Jok has no power to lead us
 You will lead our land, Jehovah,
 together with John so that we taste freedom.
 We are suffering double slavery
 We are enslaved by *jok*,
 and enslaved by man as well.
 The power of the SPLA, *Wa yiyeei!* [X2]
 Raise up your left hand!
 Victory will be with the left hand!
 Bible on the right!¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ DG387, Matthew 2:1-2, the visit of the Magi, is given as the text. Composed by a young man, name withheld, 1988.

The place of the *jok* will be no more.
The two great points of strength
will give us respite.¹⁰⁷

The final three compositions, all by women, contain some of the most penetrating images in the collection. The first two combine religious and military themes and have the tenor of battle songs.

This song, composed in 1988, combines wide-ranging images, political, military and spiritual, to express complex, often ambivalent ideas. Here conflict is all encompassing: *wei* is doing battle with death; the well trained leaders of the SPLA are intransigent before the regime of Sadiq el Mahdi; and *Nhialic* is defeating *jok*. One has the impression that destruction and death suffered in military combat is not dissimilar from the fiery death to which the *jok* entice their captives. Like many Christians Martha Ameer believes their suffering is punishment inflicted by *Nhialic*, but this does not hinder her plea for liberation. Faith in *Nhialic* will sustain those who engage in warfare.

LIFE AND DEATH (DG413)¹⁰⁸

- 1) The army of Liberation,
Sudan the fine land which *Nhialic* gave us
and wrote death into it to take us.
Nhialic who created us well and gave us the land,
and turned to punish us with death.
What have we done on this earth?
Everything tries to test us in this war of Sudan.

Chorus:

*How will it defeat us?
How will the big black land defeat us?
We are with the Doctor who is in Addis.
waiting for a word which will come from Sadiq.
Tell Sadiq that what angered the SPLA
until it left its own land and went to Bonga¹⁰⁹
There is no man who forsakes his land without reason.
If what he has written is not accepted,
war will not cease.*

¹⁰⁶ In Dinka symbolism the right hand is normally superior to the left. SPLA soldiers hold their gun in the left so that the right is free for defense. In these songs the right hand holds the Bible, offering it a place of special respect and prominence.

¹⁰⁷ Referring to God and John Garang; Respite, here *Ayaiyoou*, an expression of relief.

¹⁰⁸ DG413, Martha Ameer Jon Malek, Kanitha de Tongkook, 1988.

¹⁰⁹ Bonga was a refugee and SPLA training camp in Ethiopia. Sadiq refers to Sadiq el Mahdi, Prime Minister of Sudan when this song was written.

- 2) There is a struggle between life and death,
 Life for *wei* and death for our *wei*;
 We know it with *Nhialic* who created our *wei*.
 We are like a bundle of weeping upon the earth.
 Let us take heart and return the glory to *Nhialic*
 for the little heart he has given us
 to obtain victory for our land
 with the strength of the pen.
 The army of the Doctor are all educated;
 They will shoot it with a gun and write it with a pen.
- 3) SPLA is not a man to be deceived
 like those who were once deceived;¹¹⁰
 It is a different group.
 It is an army soiled with the blood of liberation.
 Don't you see them swimming in blood,
 yet, not fearing in their hearts, *ee*?
 That is it, I shall accept salvation,
 Even if you are killed, it is your own:
 SPLA, *Oyee*, SPLM!
 Even if you are finished, it is your own.
- 4) Now have compassion, O *Nhialic*, we are finished.
 Our bones on earth and all those people scattered.
 What shall we do, O *Nhialic*?
 Birds of prey are eating us,
 and wild animals eating us:
 Is the price not yet sufficient,
 the price for buying the land?
 Now, comfort us with our land,
 Compensate us with our land O *Nhialic*.¹¹¹
- 5) Give us freedom
 We have all prayed before you
 Bless our Bishop and all the priests following him,
 so that your word spreads upon the earth
 without mourning
 and mistreatment from *Jok*,
 See the work of *Jok* running like thirst,
 looking around for what it will devour,
 and caste it into the fire,
 to be burned by the everlasting fire.
 Let us not be taken into the fire by *Jok*.

As in 'songs of suffering' the tension between life and death is all encompassing. In this conflict, however, it is not the sacrifice of Christ which achieves salvation, but SPLA combatants "soiled with the blood of liberation." Using

¹¹⁰ Referring here to the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement. Violated by Nimeiri in 1983 it is now perceived as yet another deception of Southerners by the Northern Government.

¹¹¹ *puk* = payment made for a relative who has been killed.

the Dinka legal concept of compensation (*puk*) for the loss of life, the composer asks if the lives which have been lost are not yet sufficient for liberation. It is noteworthy that 'government songs' make no mention of Jesus Christ.

One of the most prolific and gifted of contemporary composers is Mary Aluel Longdit. Her well known composition, 'Death has come,' (about 1984) is firmly christological, anticipating the imminent return and judgment of Christ, and yet she does not hesitate to address questions of slavery and oppression.¹¹² While most of her hymns confine their imagery to biblical themes, she has, with the escalation of war, given voice to songs of military liberation.

Undergirding the 1991 composition below is the assumption that *Nhialic* has endowed his people with their land. There is an almost organic relationship between land and people: the land knows its inhabitants and mirrors them. It assumes regenerative powers, sustaining those who sacrifice themselves for it. Mary makes the claim, typical of the Dinka in wartime that, even though only a few survive, they will regenerate and reclaim what is theirs. Because the liberation warriors know *Nhialic*, their victory is ultimately assured. Herself among the displaced, she asks the disquieting question, "Has *Nhialic* forsaken us?" and then provides her refutation:

OWNERS OF THE LAND (DG373)¹¹³

- 1) Take heart, those who move rapidly in the bush,
 You, the army who have closed your ears,
 encourage yourselves,
 There is no war which stops without its surprises,
 Adeh! Let us be strong!
 We are being created again; Our land is changing
 The army of the Doctor, you know *Nhialic!*
 If a man is alive and his land is snatched from him,
 what else of worth remains?
 Let us fight so that at least a few remain,

¹¹² Mary Aluel is Tuic Bor from Kongor. Two verses and the chorus of 'Death has come' were published in M Nikkel, "Contemporary Religious Change among the Dinka", *Journal of Religion in Africa* XXII, 1 (1992) 82-3. The full text in Dinka and English are in the Appendix, BDD86. This song is somewhat unique, probably the boldest composition selected for publication.

¹¹³ DG373, Mary Aluel Longdit Garang, composed about 1991.

No other seeds will be planted within our land,
 the South, no other seeds but we ourselves.
 We Jieng of old, let us not be worried about the war.
 If the war of Sudan is fierce,
 the South will itself give birth to my siblings
 Know the future, if we are killed, so be it!
 A curse upon our land--a land like salt.

Chorus:

*We are not sojourners, pillaging a foreign land,
 We are the real owners of the land,
 the land which has taken our blood,
 It will mend our wounds,¹¹⁴
 the land will come to our rescue.
 Is there a land which does not know its owner?
 The land resembles us,
 Let us fight for the land with courage and integrity,
 the land, the land.
 Our land is returned through its noble humps¹¹⁵
 Let us call upon Nhialic to join us on earth,
 Nhialic who created each man and gave him his place
 and created boundaries upon the earth,
 so that we become free by ourselves,
 now and forever and ever.*

- 2) Who? Who hears the voice of the Lord?
 Has *Nhialic* forsaken us? It is not so, not so,
 It is that we might turn from the bad place
 in which we are staying.
 This army which hates slavery
 fights like the squirrel.
 SPLA, SPLM, raise up your left hand
 and take the land by force!
 Our own land which *Nhialic* gave us!
 The big black land!
 And planted us in it, so that we grew to be like it
 If we miss the land does *Nhialic* say we forsake it,
 look back upon us
 You are not foreign to us
 We shall not forsake you
 It is better we go into the fire
 Lead us, *Nhialic*, so that we have victory in our land
 The war will escalate
 and life will appear with freedom,
 from the earth which first brought forth death.

Here the land undergirds the identity of the people. It is the prize to be defended, and the context of battle. The regenerative imagery of the last three lines, above, might

¹¹⁴ *boot* = mend, as in to seal cracks in a boat with mud.

¹¹⁵ *duol* = the hump on the back of a bull by which it is identified and can be seen from afar; idiom for leaders of prominence.

even bear comparison with the resurrection of Christ. While the land is the dominant image, it is the presence of *Nhialic* which undergirds the drama: he is the land-giver, and the ultimate source of victory and renewal.

A final composition draws upon a remarkable range of images, historical, biblical and contemporary, military and spiritual, to convey its distinctive vision of liberation. Here a woman who had survived the decimating flight from Ethiopia in 1991, links the experience of her people with the biblical Flood of Genesis. She recalls the prophecies of Isaiah and of the great Nuer prophet, Ngundeng, as predictions of the present civil war and its consequences. In this epic flow of history *Nhialic* has chosen John Garang as his tool of liberation and the source of *wei*. It is John who has called for the United Nations, with its 'pipeline' of goods and services to care for the destitute. Here the 'gun' becomes the unsurpassed symbol of liberation which John will employ to bring liberation in every conceivable facet of life.

THE PIPELINE (DG801)¹¹⁶

- 1) *Nhialic* has more strength than we,
 The Lord is powerful
 and willed that John should be born among us,
 and took him to Bonga.¹¹⁷
 War was prophesied by Isaiah,
 and so it has come among us.
 How shall we fare, *ee!*
 How shall we fare, *yaa!*
 It is just as in the days of the ark of Noah,
 once told to us, but we could not believe.
 Do your work, O Lord,
 Do your work as you plan for your servant, Garang,
 who will stabilise the homestead.¹¹⁸

Chorus:

*The pipeline through which everything passes
 has been brought into our land,
 and so now all of us will fight while we stay here,
 old men and women and children.
 The war being fought by Garang and Omer is not delayed
 Forward, move on, no delay, forward, forward,
 let us move on without delay.¹¹⁹*

¹¹⁶ DG801, Rebeka Aleng Makuee, Kanitha de Wangklee (1989).

¹¹⁷ An SPLA base in Ethiopia.

¹¹⁸ *kooc* means both 'to stabilise' and 'to raise up the head of the family' when a father has died.

- 2) John our chief, Doctor Garang Mabior,
Our chief, have you heard of us,
that we are back home,
with worn clothing, with hunger?
Then the UN came and opened a school.
The UN came with medicine for cattle.
- 3) Your word is yours alone, yours alone;
Like the coughing of a goat,
you who hate the Doctor,
saying he has spoiled the land,
How does he spoil it when he has the *wei*?
The destruction of the land
was foretold by Ngundeng, who said,
'The youth who will come will have bad times.'
- 4) A man who has been heard like Doctor John
does the job well,
Starting with a gun, bringing us the UN to help us,

The Bible is the gun for *jok*;
We shall use it to shoot *jok*.
The blanket is the gun for cold;
A mosquito net is a gun for mosquitoes;
and medicine has been brought,
a gun for sickness.
Toria is the gun for floods,
we will use it to shoot it.
The hoe is there, a gun for the grass.
Maze has been brought as a gun for hunger.
We shall shoot at hunger with maize.

For a people encircled by malign forces the Liberation Movement is undeniably perceived on the side of life and renewal. Amidst the epic events the composer, a Bor Dinka woman, attributes almost messianic qualities to John Garang, a son of her people. He is the one chosen by *Nhialic* even before his birth: he is equipped with *wei*, education, relief supplies, and guns, all of which are tangible expressions of divine salvation. As a desperate people pray for miraculous intervention they place their immediate, concrete hope in kinsmen who sacrifice themselves in battle.

¹¹⁹ Pipe or pipeline = *mathur* (Ab). Once the North seemed to possess all the supplies but now, through the UN, they flow to the South. 'Not delayed,' meaning 'it goes quickly.' Omer, reference to Lt.-Gen. Omer al Bashir, head of Sudan's Revolutionary Command Council, in power since 1989.

Few words are given to the enemy, the *Burjuaath*, the aggressors. They are neither castigated nor demeaned, for their actions reveal their nature. In a conflict often characterised in religious terms, no song from ECS Christians mentions Islam or its Prophet. Islam appears to be more a facet of Northern aggression than a specifically religious threat. The only 'religious' battle is the familiar one near at hand between Christ's followers and *jak*. Concerning the aggressors there is but one persistent hope: that they will return to the territory assigned them by *Nhialic*, "so that we become free by ourselves."

The songs in this section do not by and large conform to the 'official' theology or moral prescriptions of the ECS. Like the early voices of 'liberation theology' in Latin America, they are the expressions of common laity. They articulate poignant questions of survival as Christians try to understand their suffering, claim their birthright, and affirm their dignity as children of the Creator. They have built churches, renounced *jak*, worshipped, prayed, and disciplined themselves anticipating that the salvation of *Nhialic* will be forthcoming. Though ambivalent, they make their case and seek divine salvation where it can be found.

D. Conclusion

The compositions presented here reveal the seriousness and theological sophistication with which Dinka Christians from various backgrounds have, over several decades, articulated their religious experience. Two areas of discourse are noteworthy. First, is the manner in which they have related Christian faith and teaching to ancestral religion, particularly with regard to divinities and 'powers.' Second, are the ways they have interpreted their experience and sought divine intervention amidst prolonged and devastating civil war.

The Catholic composers represented here have all undergone mission education (though the composer of CPB137 may be an exception). In their 'school songs' Catholic students expressed the tensions they experienced as they withdrew from the social milieu of their elders and entered the school and mission. For them Christian conversion was closely allied with notions of 'civilisation' and 'progress,'

and accompanied by a new order of spiritual authorities, human and divine. These they invoked against the malign 'powers,' who undermined stability and prosperity, the *wei* of their people. Insofar as ancestral divinities were part of the old order, their status was diminished, but rarely were they supplanted. Rather, in succeeding years, former students often maintained a dialogue between the divine persons of both religious traditions.

By the 1980s Father Matong composed songs which placed Christ at the heart of indigenous religious experience through the adaptation of familiar idioms and vocabulary. Not only did he substitute the mediating role of the divinity Dengdit with the incarnate Christ, but he placed Christ's eucharistic sacrifice in the context of Dinka sacrificial rites.¹²⁰ Such bold initiatives were, however, the work of an individual with unique experience and training. It is more difficult to assess how the thought of Dinka Catholics in rural areas has continued to evolve.

In contrast with Catholics, many Anglican composers, have been rural lay people with little formal education. For them spiritual conversion is expressed in the confession of Jesus Christ and the absolute renunciation of all ancestral *jak*, be they divinities or lower 'powers.' Their spontaneous compositions reveal an intense, subjective experience as the images and teachings of evangelical Christianity proliferate through daily life. Through music they have evolved methods of teaching, evangelisation, and a theological vocabulary which have played an increasingly important role in the life and growth of the church.

In recent years Christians of both communities have sought new ways of expressing their experience and sustaining themselves amidst civil war. Physically stripped of possessions and forced into exile, their compositions often incorporate natural phenomena, the land, and elements basic to survival. Where Athiaan Deng employs a wealth of resonant symbols rooted in homestead, cattle camp, and land, the Anglicans raise their cry in unison with the entire created order. In the face of aggression each appeals to the greatest spiritual resources available. Athiaan invokes

¹²⁰ The ECS, still relying upon vernacular translations of the Eucharist from the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*, has not ventured toward such integration.

the moral and spiritual authority of his forbears, and by inference, the divinity Dengdit, 'who is *Nhialic* himself,' while the Anglicans invoke *Jehovah* of the Old Testament, the God of salvation who defends his people and leads them to the land of promise.

The songs of Anglican Christians often express the trauma of civil war as a tremendous battle between spiritual forces in which they themselves participate. The guilt of sin, so prominent in ECS compositions, is often linked to their affliction: war and its ramifications come as divine punishment upon a sinful people. In other songs Christians see themselves as helpless victims who plead for divine deliverance, sometimes holding *Nhialic* himself partially responsible for their plight.

In the 'government songs' the military conflict is conceived as a tangible battle which parallels the conflict between spiritual forces. Here combatants of the revolutionary army are imputed with divine authority to fight victoriously in defence of their land and people.

At the heart of many recent compositions is the contradiction between a Creator known for his love, justice and power, and the immediate sense of abandonment. He has blessed the Dinka with land and sustained them through hardship. He must, assert these composers, act according to his nature.

VII. "DEATH HAS COME TO REVEAL THE FAITH": CIVIL WAR AND DINKA CHRISTIANITY, 1964 - 1993

So, in the providence of God, the Southern Sudan may become not only the Christian Buffer-State of Central Africa, but a Christian Outpost from which the Church may advance Northwards.

Bishop Oliver Allison, about 1948¹

The good Christian life will help your country be reconciled and there will be nothing wrong. The country will be free of confusion; all things will be put in order according to the truth; and all things can be achieved without difficulty and people will be able to help themselves without hatred.

Fr Nebel, 50th Anniversary of Kwajok, 1974²

A. Introduction

This concluding chapter focuses upon the expansion of Christianity under the initiative of Dinka Christians between 1964 and 1993. However, an initial section reviews the missionary era, contrasting Catholic and Anglican endeavours in Dinkaland prior to the 1964 missionary expulsion. Following is a historical section providing background for the nearly three decades under examination.

This period has been dominated by two civil wars and large scale population movements, factors which underlie the increasingly fragmented settings in which the Dinka church now exists: in Northern Sudan, in displacement and refugee settlements, and in the 'Liberated Areas' of Southern Sudan, each of which is

¹ O Allison, *The Sudan--Yesterday and Tomorrow*, about 1948 (SAD G/S992) 3.

² A Nebel, *Lecku Banyda Yan Dit rin Ruon War Yam Cieng Kristian Kuajok, 1924-1974* (1974) 5.
Translated by Fr D Matong.

examined separately. We will reflect on ecumenical impulses among Dinka refugees, and continuing developments in the Catholic Church, but our concern is increasingly with Dinka communities within the ECS.

A final section, more theoretical in approach, examines some of the tensions accompanying the Church's expansion. First, we will reflect on the continuing importance of confrontations with the *jak* and their significance for ECS Christians in rural areas. Finally, we will examine the role of Christianity as a source of reconciliation and a rallying point for defiance in a divided nation.

B. Review of the missionary era, 1853 - 1964

Both Roman Catholic and Anglican missions began their earliest work in Southern Sudan among the Dinka, making substantial investments of manpower and finance. For both their initial efforts proved abortive. In succeeding years missionaries often felt constrained to shift from the arduous and disappointing work among the Dinka to focus upon less 'prejudiced' Sudanese peoples. Even Archibald Shaw, champion of Dinka work in the Gordon Memorial Sudan Mission, tried to relinquish Dinka stations so that meagre resources could be concentrated on 'mass movement centres.'

For their part, most Dinka saw the missionaries as little more than an extension of the exploitative, occupying forces with whom they arrived. Missionary efforts to entice children were reminiscent of the slave merchants, and their concern with religion evoked memories of the Mahdists. Both missions sited early stations in areas where there were, or had recently been, well established indigenous spiritual movements, some led by powerful prophetic figures. In contrast, the foreigners and their message, appeared alien and irrelevant. Dinka were often offended by the impropriety and arrogance of the foreigners, and unimpressed by men who were, by their standards, quite impoverished, lacking both cattle and wives.

The Catholic missionaries who founded *Heiligencruetz* among the Ciec Dinka in 1853 entered an environment of exotic diseases and escalating violence. The Fathers tried to defend those among whom they lived from predatory merchants, and

succeeded in introducing a few innovations, but these were short lived. Their mission survived for hardly a decade, leaving virtually nothing as witness to their considerable sacrifices. Given the growing hostility toward foreigners in many Dinka territories, it was 60 years before the Catholics established a second station on Dinka soil.

The 19th Century mission in Northern Sudan was marginally more successful, initially focusing its efforts on the education of liberated slaves. However, young converts were quickly absorbed into the multi-cultural amalgam of Northern towns and few remained faithful to the Church or its precepts. Evangelism was conducted among Dinka populations residing in the North, but no distinctly Dinka Christian community yet emerged.

Missionaries of the Anglican GSM arrived among the Bor Dinka in 1906 and the Verona Fathers resumed work on Dinka soil at Kwajok in 1924. Both met with cool resistance. Archibald Shaw resorted to contractual arrangements for cattle to persuade families to allow their sons to live at the mission, while the Verona Fathers enticed pupils with food and medical care. Because respected families were unwilling to see their sons exposed to alien influences it was lads on the periphery of society who first entered school.

The most successful missionaries were themselves as tenacious as the Nilotes, and capable of respecting and accepting the Dinka as they were. Among those remembered by Dinka Christians as spiritual fathers were Archdeacon Shaw and Father Arthur Nebel, each of whom were central to the work of their respective missions. Both were avid linguists who related easily with rural people. The achievements of each expressed the priorities of their missions. Shaw, focusing on Bible translation, envisioned a self propagating vernacular church, while Nebel concentrated on developing wide-ranging academic, catechetical, and linguistic materials.

Missionaries of both churches conceded a degree of integration between indigenous culture and Christian faith, but differed in their areas of dogmatism and flexibility. The energetic Shaw engaged the Dinka in verbal sparring, wrestled with young warriors, and, more than most missionaries, acknowledged the positive role of cattle in Dinka life. He developed a herd to advance mission interests and entered

into cattle litigation. Unlike the gentler, more circumspect Nebel, he was widely known by his personal ox name, *Macuor*.

Both missions saw education as the primary tool of evangelisation, but their methods and approach differed considerably. The Verona Fathers were pre-eminently a religious community grounded in an ordered life of work and prayer. Among Dinka children they sought to develop a foundation for Christian moral character through discipline and secular education. Catechetical instruction followed and, when it led to conversion, was expressed primarily in sacramental and moral terms. In contrast, GSM missionaries tried to propagate the gospel through direct evangelism at all strata of Dinka society, and, through 'native agents' or 'teacher-evangelists,' tried to extend work to rural areas.

In their schools missionaries hoped to shelter their pupils from the influences of indigenous culture and create an educated, Christian elite. Dinka ancestral divinities were denounced and converts prohibited from attending the religious rites so important to their elders. Initially rural Dinka saw boys who attended school as having been adopted into a new social and spiritual lineage, and of no enduring value to their own people. In the Catholic sphere they were referred to as 'children of the Fathers.' Among the Bor Dinka they became 'people of Creator,' and, having accepted an alien God, were said to venerate *Nhialic thakool* or *Nhialic Macuor*.

Catholic missionaries, like the Anglicans, initially denounced all facets of Dinka religion but, with time and reflection, certain concessions were made. Parallels were acknowledged between the primal ancestors of Genesis and those of Dinka legend, and between the mediatory role of Christian saints, and the great Dinka ancestors-*cum*-divinities. Insofar as the *baany bith* relied upon *Nhialic* the Fathers came, by the end of the missionary era, to affirm their legitimate priestly authority. In response, young Dinka Catholics, finding themselves part of two distinct communities, each with its own structure of religious and social values, often evolved their own synthesis, adapting to either according to need and context.

In contrast, missionaries of the evangelical GSM, maintained absolute distinctions in the sphere of spiritual powers. Conversion meant that new converts confessed their allegiance to Christ and renounced all ancestral rites and 'powers.'

This was a traumatic act which often resulted in social ostracism. It was understood that Christ, having triumphed over death, stood in absolute opposition to the *jak* or *yeeth*, uniformly condemned as death-dealing and satanic.

Nevertheless, rural people began to join the church in growing numbers when their educated kinsmen came preaching the gospel in familiar images and language. Fired by their own subjective experience, the evangelists were free from the mediation of missionary elders. Spontaneously, new converts expressed the significance and drama of conversion by burning the shrines of ancestral divinities.

Complimenting these phenomena were new initiatives in prayer, Bible exposition and the composition of songs, all of which revealed an intense debate with the persons and precepts of Christianity. New songs, published under missionary initiative, became an effective tool of evangelisation, gave rise to new vocabulary, and provided a forum for theological reflection. The 'awakening' lasted only a few years, however, and with leadership insufficient, most rural converts returned to indigenous practices. Apart from this episode neither mission found it easy to draw upon the innate strengths or creativity of Dinka society as a foundation for the Church.

Never did the Dinka adapt easily to the authority of foreigners or the hierarchical structures of school, mission or church. Though they were among the first ministers to be ordained by both churches, the development of Dinka ecclesiastical leadership came slowly. Requirements for monogamy deterred many young men from vocations, as did the celibacy of the Catholics and the poverty of Anglican clergy.

In the Catholic sphere a large community of missionaries continued to wield ecclesiastical authority until the 1964 expulsion. By contrast, the GSM was anxious to devolve responsibilities as national independence drew near. In 1955 Daniel Deng Atong, adoptive 'son of Macuor,' was consecrated the first Sudanese Anglican Bishop. When mental instability forced his resignation five years later it appeared to confirm the doubts of some that the Dinka were ill equipped for ecclesiastical leadership. In both churches the Dinka were considered among the least hopeful of future Sudanese church leaders.

By the end of the missionary era, 110 years after the first mission station was founded on Dinka soil, those who claimed Christian faith were, at most, between one and two per cent of the total Dinka population. In the face of escalating civil conflict, with missionaries expelled and very few indigenous church leaders, the future of Christianity among the Dinka seemed quite uncertain.

C. Independence and civil war: historical background

The years immediately preceding Sudanese independence in 1956 confronted educated Southerners, most former mission students, with a bewildering array of new influences and opportunities. Many Dinka rapidly rose to positions of authority in regional government and some were ushered into national politics.³ Youthful loyalties to foreign missionaries were frequently eroded as Sudanese nationalist movements, secular and Muslim, decried the missions as mere instruments of 'imperialist exploitation.' Missionaries like Sharland grieved over the openly "anti-British" attitudes of men who, not many years previously, had been their adoptive 'sons.'⁴ While some Southern leaders reassessed and deepened their Christian commitment amidst the new political climate, others sought alliances to enhance their careers. In the North liaisons emerged with the 'Arab' elite, a few finding advantage in conversion to Islam. When visiting the South they gained popular support through participation in ancestral rituals, to the bewilderment of more orthodox Christians.

The exhilaration proved short lived, however. Southerners felt themselves 'betrayed' when the British left political power substantially in the hands of Northern Sudanese. Promises of equal representation went unfulfilled and 'sudanisation' brought growing numbers of Northerners into authority in the South.

³ Despite Dinka reluctance toward education, Malek, as the earliest CMS station, placed its students at the forefront among educated Southerners. The Principal of Bishop Gwynne College wrote, "It is a matter of profound interest and gratification . . . that young men, products of primitive pagan homes and mission schools in the South can, and are taking no insignificant place in the Legislative Assembly sitting in Khartoum." F Crabb, 'A Building not made with Hands,' *SDR* 3, Vol 1 (July, 1949).

⁴ Gordon Apec, another of Shaw's adoptive sons and for years his valued translation assistant, ultimately took a place in the Constituent Assembly. He publicly declared himself 'anti-British.' In 1953 Sharland wrote, "If anybody owes everything to the British, Gordon does." SPP.

Southerners were further alienated by government attempts to impose Islam and Arabic as a strategy for national unification under slogans such as “one country, one language and one religion.” The government’s unyielding drive toward Islamisation and its open antagonism to the missions and Church, brought issues of religious identity to prominence.

Northern officials accused missionaries of subversion and increasingly circumscribed their activities.⁵ May 1962 saw the imposition of the Missionary Societies Act which declared proselytisation unlawful and sought to deter the baptism of children. The termination of valuable health, educational and relief services maintained by the missions brought discontent even in rural areas.

Christian students were pressured to discard “the Religion of Imperialists” and embrace the “National Religion.”⁶ Strikes at Rumbek Secondary School sparked action among students across the South. Chafing against islamisation and declining academic standards, growing numbers left for neighbouring countries where they became refugees or entered the guerrilla forces then in formation. By August 1963 the Anya-nya Liberation Army began guerrilla operations on Sudan’s southern frontiers, ending options for a non military solution.

Because Northern officials had been wary of antagonising the populous Dinka, their territories were not initially subjected to the widespread brutality inflicted on Equatoria. Of the estimated 300,000 Southerners who fled to neighbouring countries the Dinka comprised only a small minority.⁷ Discontent was, nevertheless, growing and, prompted by their own intelligentsia, the Dinka identified increasingly with the broadly based *Southern* opposition. In 1964 Bahr el Ghazal Dinka were prominent among combined guerrilla forces in the abortive siege of Wau which marked the unequivocal alliance of the Nilotes with their Southern countrymen.⁸

⁵ At an Umma Party rally, 13 Jan 1966, Sadiq El Mahdi declared that “90% of the Southerners know nothing about the Southern problem, nor do they see there is any such problem. The other 10% of Southerners comprises separatists, floaters and ardent unionists . . . the separatists are a few missionary-educated Southerners who had been indoctrinated by the missionaries to hate the Northern Sudanese.” Quoted by G M Mayen, to All African Council of Churches, 1 Dec, 1966.

⁶ M A Atem, ‘Why the Southern Students Leave school,’ *Voice of Southern Sudan*, Vol 2, No 2, July, 1964.

⁷ On 7 July 1965 some 1,400 people were killed in Juba town while thousands fled to the forests. The following two months saw most Parish Churches, hospitals, schools, including Bishop Gwynne College, destroyed.

⁸ The ‘Wau Incident’ occurred in Jan 1964. Sanderson (1981) 370, 406, 416.

Confronted with their growing resistance, government officials decided to exert indiscriminate force across the South. Foreign missionaries, already perceived as a threat inside the country, could not be allowed to report on government actions in the international media. Abruptly and with little apparent planning, the Council of Ministers declared, in February, 1964, that all missionaries were to be expelled from Southern Sudan.⁹

The Verona Fathers, still maintaining considerable property and expatriate personnel inside the country, had been the most vocal mission in confronting government suppression. The expulsion abruptly divested the Catholic Church in the South of over 200 expatriate missionaries and 70% of its ordained clergy. One Bishop and 28 priests remained to care for 500,000 Catholics. Among the Dinka the Church was left with only two ordained priests and a handful of catechists to provide vernacular ministries across widely scattered communities.

By contrast, the expulsion order came when the CMS had only six missionaries physically in Southern Sudan. Having envisioned a church thriving "in the soil of self-help, self-support, and self-government," all twelve former mission stations had become parish centres. Each was, in some degree, self-supporting, with parish work in the hands of two Sudanese Bishops and 44 ordained clergy.¹⁰ Where no clergy were present, lay people took services in what missionaries referred to as "The Layman's Diocese."¹¹ The process of handing over property was well underway.

With the 1959 withdrawal of the last GSM mission from the 'Dinka Deanery' three Parishes had been created. Tonj, including Wau and Gel River, was under Rev Kedhekia Barac. Rumbek was in the care of Rev Nikanora Deng, and Akot under the Ganda missionary, Pastor Yairo Bale, assisted by Barnaba Them, then a Deacon.¹² Because CMS had increasingly concentrated its meagre resources in

⁹ *Nigrizia*, April, 1964, 26-30.

¹⁰ In many places the initials *C.M.S.* had disappeared, having been replaced by *E.C.S.* Another six GSM missionaries were outside the country on leave. O Allison, *Travelling Light*, (1983) 75. The total number of expulsions from Southern Sudan over several years was estimated at 272 Roman Catholic and 28 Protestant missionaries.

¹¹ O Allison quoting Archdeacon Harper, 'Letter from Assistant Bishop,' SDR 9, Vol 3, (March 51) 21.

¹² Supported by the church in Uganda, Bale and his wife served at Akot for some five years, supplementing the shortage of Dinka clergy. Parish boundaries had been defined, parish budgets accepted and each was equipped with its own council. A B H Riley, 'Notes from the Archdeacon,' SDR 34, (Summer, 1959).

Equatoria, some Dinka Christians perceived anti-Dinka discrimination. The early withdrawal of missionaries was taken as a further sign of neglect, and even abandonment in the face of imminent Northern aggression.¹³

The expulsion of foreigners proved the first and least deadly of Northern efforts to eliminate influential opinion-leaders in the South. Articulate and educated spokesmen for the Southern cause were targeted, as were elders in rural areas. Clergy were at first treated circumspectly, but increasingly came under fire. Among the most prominent Catholics to be killed were Vicar-General Arkangelo Ali and Fr Saturnino Ohure. In 1964 the Dinka priest, Fr Barnaba Deng, was killed in Wau for his outspoken defence of civilians against the abuses of Northern troops.¹⁴ Others included catechist John Malual, ECS Deacon Henry Mabor Toric and Gabriel Kolnyin, reinforcing the identification of the church in Dinkaland with the Southern struggle. School teachers, often respected Christians, were among the thousands tortured and killed.¹⁵

Northern officials often employed coercion in their efforts to propagate Islam among Southerners, but many Dinka resisted religious conversion as defiantly as had their fathers resisted evangelism early in the missionary era. Many later prided themselves on their intransigence when they contrasted themselves with their more acquiescent neighbours. For the first time, missionary observers commended the Nilotes for their stubbornness in religious matters.

Nevertheless, Dinka societies were undergoing profound transformations. By the end of the 1960s indigenous leadership in many regions had been destabilised and

¹³ In 1957 Bishop Allison described the concentration of CMS personnel in Equatoria, "... Nearly all our Missionary staff is now concentrated either at the Mission Headquarters at Juba, at the Church Training Centre at Bishop Gwynne College, or at the Educational Centres at Yei and Loka, and the Technical Centre at Lainya. The existing staff is strategically employed at these centres." Some Dinka felt this reflected missionary prejudice which finally abandoned them to Arab domination. According to Bishop N Garang the missionaries were unaware of the resilience and determination of the Dinka: "They really threw away the Dinka people to Arabs. They didn't know." Interview, June, 1992.

¹⁴ Barnaba Deng (about 1935-1965), attended seminaries in Sudan, Uganda and Italy; joined the Verona Fathers in 1959, ordained priest 1962. He challenged Government abuses from the pulpit and physically fought with police and army over their treatment of civilians. "He was a hot tempered man, but a man full of self respect and dignity and of honour," Fr R Deng, Interview, Oct, 1992. His killing by soldiers was orchestrated by a fellow Dinka, Santino Deng.

¹⁵ Fr Saturnino Ohure, (ab. 1921-1967) the first Lotuho priest, became Patron of 'The Sudan African Closed Districts National Union.' RC Catechist John Malual was an Agar killed with a number of civilians including former ECS evangelist John Majak near Akot in 1965. Gabriel Kolnyin had been an ECS minister, defrocked for polygamy, who continued evangelising.

many potential leaders were dead. A generation of young people, already alienated from rural society, had gone without education. Many were destitute and rootless, floating between urban centres. Chronic alcoholism emerged, a problem unprecedented in much of Dinkaland. What development had been achieved in Southern Sudan during the Condominium was eradicated and once thriving mission institutions were reduced to rubble.¹⁶

In May 1969 Gaafar Mohammed Nimeiri seized power in a military coup. By 1972 the civil conflict was brought to an end with the signing of the Addis Ababa Peace Agreement, a negotiated settlement in which the World Council of Churches played a major role. Soon thereafter Nimeiri toured the South trying to win the confidence of his countrymen, not least that of the populous Dinka. In their towns massive public ceremonies were held, numerous oxen slaughtered, and rites of reconciliation enacted in honour of the leader who had brought peace. Under his rule many mission educated Dinka rose to positions of prominence in local and national government. Even the President of the High Executive Council, Abel Alier, was a native of Bor area whose survival in infancy was attributed to the ministrations of Archibald Shaw.¹⁷ The capacities of the Dinka for incisive analysis, leadership and self assertion which found little acceptance within the churches, came to the fore amidst the cut and thrust of national politics.

The decade, 1973-83, was one of relative stability laden with potential for Southern reconstruction. Tragically, it was wasted as politicians engaged in sterile power struggles. Cries of 'Dinka domination' resounded as Equatorians and Nilotes vied for senior posts in the regional civil service. Meanwhile, Khartoum asserted its claim on newly discovered Southern oil reserves and negotiated water rights with Egypt. By 1980 President Nimeiri, always adept at manipulating his detractors, was shifting alliances in favour of the Muslim Fundamentalists.¹⁸ Policies which, under

¹⁶ Malek was deserted after 1964 and Akot, with its fine church and buildings, was levelled. Of Catholic stations across the South 16 were completely destroyed, 17 badly damaged and looted, and five suffered minor damage. Hoeben, 'The Catholic Church in Sudan: A Golden Opportunity Lost,' *Pro Mundi Vita: Dossiers*, 1 (1984) 10.

¹⁷ Abel Alier, born at Angakwei about 1932. Abel's mother was sick and unable to feed her new-born infant; assistance was obtained from Shaw at Malek, 27 miles away. Abel was given the name *Wal Macuor*, 'the medicine of Macuor'. Abel Alier, *Southern Sudan*, (1990) 1-2.

¹⁸ Nimeiri had used Islam as a basis for political unity as early as 1978 with the publication of *Why the Islamic Path?*, but only in 1983 did he undergo what some termed an Islamic conversion, proclaim himself an Imam,

the Addis Ababa Agreement, had gained the confidence of the South's diverse peoples, were undermined and finally nullified when Nimeiri redivided the South into three regional governments, each responsible to Khartoum. Southern hostilities flared when, in September, 1983, Nimeiri imposed his own idiosyncratic version of *Shariah* Law.

With discontent rising across the South a military mutiny erupted in Bor area. Soon joined by Colonel Doctor John Garang de Mabior, it marked the emergence of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army.¹⁹ By 1985 Nimeiri was himself ousted by a military coup to be succeeded by several short lived administrations. In 1989 the Revolutionary Command Council of Omer al Bashir took control. In its determination to establish an Islamic state, the regime has executed the war against the SPLA with unprecedented severity, bringing massive death, displacement and destruction to Southern Sudan.

D. New frontiers of Dinka Christianity

This section will explore the expansion of Christianity among the Dinka in four distinct communities, each suffering the impact of civil war. The first sub-section concerns fresh initiatives among those who migrated to Northern cities during the 1960s and 70s. Three others examine more recent developments among Dinka populations in Northern Sudan, in Ethiopian refugee camps, and in the 'Liberated Areas.'²⁰ One sub-section examines the emergence of new Christian leadership among the Dinka.

1. Northward migrations: the churches and the 'clubs'

This section will examine the development of the 'Dinka Congregations' in Northern Sudan since the 1960s, a movement under Dinka initiative with little parallel since the 'revival' two decades earlier.

and impose the *Shariah*. This was an ill conceived attempt at Islamisation imposed upon a mixed society uneducated in its precepts. An ecumenical body of Christian leaders pleaded that it should not be implemented. "Petition to President Gaafar Mohammed Nimeiri on Introduction of Sharia Law," 21 Sept 1983.

¹⁹ Colonel John Garang de Mabior, a Bor Dinka and veteran of the Anya-nya guerrilla war; an American educated PhD in economics.

²⁰ 'Liberated Areas,' meaning regions of Southern Sudan which are under SPLA control.

During much of Condominium rule the migration of Southern Sudanese to the North was tightly restricted. As foreign rule drew to a close, however, growing numbers were able to seek education and employment in Northern towns.²¹ By the mid 1950s Sunday mornings found Khartoum's Anglican Cathedral "filled to the doors" with Southern Christians.²² As civil war during the 1960s eroded the infrastructure in the South, increasing numbers of Dinka boys, educated and illiterate, joined the flow. Rural Dinka had long avoided urban centres as places of moral degradation, but were now being drawn by their services and opportunities.²³ Between 1959 and 1961 massive Nile flooding in Bor area brought infestations of belharzia. When the waters subsided Tuic and Bor families returned to find their children taken ill and many journeyed to Khartoum in search of treatment. By the 1970s there existed a sizeable Dinka community in Khartoum, the majority comprised of young men and boys.²⁴

In the South the work of the CMS had resulted in *vernacular* churches, each with its own Scripture portions and worship materials. In Khartoum Southerners were drawn to vernacular worship when it was available, alongside the united services at Khartoum's Anglican Cathedral.²⁵ In 1966 the posting of Rev Reuben Macir to Omdurman coincided with an impetus toward formation of an ECS Dinka Congregation.²⁶ As a Jur fluent in Dinka, Reuben established valuable liaisons with churchmen in Khartoum. He, working with a cadre of articulate Dinka lay Christians,

²¹ Under the Passport and Permits Ordinance of 1922 it was a punishable offence for Southerners to be found in the Northern provinces without special permits.

²² B de Saram, 'Bewildering change,' Panekar, *Outlook, SSMB* 2/5 (Spring 1954). In 1951 Bishop A M Gelsthorpe wrote that "there have grown up in the Sudan two branches of the Anglican Church, one in the North, mainly of white people, and one in the South mainly of Sudanese." He hoped to mobilise Southerners to evangelise their kinsmen in the North. Within a few years the situation had changed markedly. 'The Bishop's Letter,' *SDR* 9, Vol 3.

²³ There had, however, been Dinka communities on the outskirts of Khartoum since the 19th Century. Shaw described Dr Lloyd's medical care for people from a 'Dinka Village,' "a rather mixed collection of Dinka subjects of the Khalifa who had been carried off to Omdurman during slave raiding times." On visits to Khartoum Shaw organised prayers in Dinka at Clergy House attended by some of these. Shaw to CMS, 23 Oct, 1908; Extracts from letters, Malek, 4 July, 1910 (CMSA).

²⁴ In 1972 the Dinka comprised only a small proportion of Khartoum's total population, and was still quite inconsequential when compared with the massive influx which arrived during the 1980s.

²⁵ As early as November, 1916 Archibald Shaw had led a group of students from Malek in the first Dinka vernacular service in Khartoum Cathedral. "Sudan Church Note," *CMS Gazette*, 1 No 121 (Feb 1917) 40.

²⁶ Reuben had been warned not to return to his own Parish of Rumbek due to continuing insecurity. O Allison, Bishop's Letter,' *SDR* 55, Vol 18, (Autumn 1966) 9.

founded new congregations in Khartoum's three cities, each of which drew growing numbers to Friday and Sunday worship.

Since schools had served as 'the cradle of the Dinka Church,' education was seen as a natural concomitant of church life. In Northern towns Catholic and Protestant missionaries facilitated informal classes alongside their official schools. In 1926 CMS missionaries used *kuttab schools* as 'agents of evangelism' to cultivate relationships in new neighbourhoods. Groups of children or men were invited for religious instruction and lantern shows.²⁷ By 1948 the CMS had constructed a community centre and club in Omdurman primarily for the education of Southern boys.²⁸ In the 1950s the Verona Fathers offered evening classes which later developed into the 'club' long run by Brother Sergi. During the 1960s a young layman from Bor, Gabriel Geu Anyang, spearheaded a plan to extend adult education across Khartoum's three cities through the 'clubs' or *nadiin*.²⁹ Plots of land were obtained, shelters erected, and black boards provided, often painted on mud walls. Individuals with knowledge of vernacular language, English or Bible, taught classes as youth assembled after work.

The 'clubs' became thriving centres, attracting youth hungry for education, and, during succeeding years proliferated across the suburbs and shanty towns of Northern Sudan.³⁰ In an arabised and largely Muslim environment, dark skinned aliens with minimal Arabic or formal education were subject to discrimination. They had access to only the most menial employment and little hope of advancement. In an often hostile environment the clubs were oases where cultural identity could be affirmed and status improved. In low-cost, self-help classes the teachers were individuals with basic knowledge who developed curricula not dissimilar from those of early mission schools. English classes drew students from varied backgrounds while vernacular literacy was of a fabric with Bible study and catechises. Six graded

²⁷ Miss W Miller, 'Kuttab Schools as Evangelistic Agencies,' *CMS Outlook*, (Aug 1926). Daily Bible study and religious teaching was conducted with youth. *Kutabs* at Omdurman for men offered lantern lectures and drew as many as 100 to 150.

²⁸ O Allison, *The Sudan—Yesterday and Tomorrow*, about 1948, 3 (SAD G/S992).

²⁹ *Nadi* = 'Club'; plural, *nadiin*. William Deng Nhial, Kothia Kuien Mabiior, David Col Aweet, Nathaniel Anai Akur, Joseph Musbia and Gabriel Geu were among the founders. L Finley expressed missionary concern in *SDR* 40, Vol 14 (1961).

³⁰ At time of writing there are eight clubs in urban Khartoum attended by hundreds of youth each afternoon.

classes of Dinka language drew Dinka from every sub tribe and denominational background.

With energetic lay support both the Dinka congregations and the clubs grew steadily. In the late 1970s Rev John Malou Ater, formerly a school chaplain, returned to Khartoum soon to be assigned as Pastor in Charge of the Dinka Congregation.³¹ A trained teacher, gifted communicator and administrator, John worked to develop young leadership. With the aid of 'elders' like Gabriel Geu, chairman of the 25 man Church Council, 13 committees were created.³² Like the Congregation as a whole, each was to create its own self-help projects.³³ Regular seminars, retreats and conferences were organised and 'praying centres' opened in Gerief and Omdurman.³⁴ Evangelistic efforts and conferences were extended to towns as far afield as Wad Medini, Port Sudan and Malakal.³⁵

The clubs became the natural route through which young Dinka entered the Church in Northern towns. Each evening eight centres across Khartoum were filled to capacity. While there was no requirement to enter the Dinka Congregations, enthusiasm for Bible study, buoyant vernacular music and a schedule of youth conferences attracted participation. With a Dinka population in the Three Towns estimated at 15,000, worship services on Friday and Sunday each drew congregations of 500 to 800.³⁶ Despite their poverty, these were growing, self supporting vernacular churches.

In 1979 evangelism was extended to Port Sudan with the posting of Daniel Deng Bul, an energetic young pastor, himself a product of Khartoum's Dinka

³¹ John Malou Ater (1935-1986) Agar, native of Malengagok, near Rumbek, was trained as a teacher, studied at Bishop Tucker College, Uganda; Chaplain in Khartoum, 1969-72; priested in 1970; obtained degree at Near East School of Theology, 1974-5; returned to Khartoum in 1977 as Associate General Secretary, later evangelism secretary of the Sudan Council of Churches. Consecrated ECS Bishop of Wau, 1984; killed while on relief mission in 1986.

³² Gabriel (1946-1990), from Bor area, active evangelist in 1966; assisted by Bishop O Allison to study Law at Khartoum University. As the Church's Legal advisor at Attorney General Chambers he defended the ECS against Government encroachment in Khartoum.

³³ By 1983 John Malou was seeking support to begin a self-help *dhura* agricultural project for the Dinka Congregation comprising 1,500 feddans of land in Melut.

³⁴ The first Dinka Congregation Youth Conference met for three days from 26 June, 1981, with 664 participants; on 6 August the first Day of Prayer saw 141 people gather at 8 p.m. for a twelve hour vigil. J Malou, Khartoum, to J Collinson, Exmouth, 8 Oct, 1981.

³⁵ A single service in 1978 saw 100 Dinka baptised in Wad Medani. J Malou, Khartoum, letter, undesignated, 4 Sept 78.

³⁶ Dinka Congregation, Khartoum, Annual Report for 1983, 12.

Congregation.³⁷ Though the environment was often hostile and evangelism unwelcome a congregation grew, comprised primarily of young men from Nuba Mountains and the South, many Dinka among them. With typical determination Daniel wrote that, "Sudan is *our* country, we must be ready to meet the need of our people by telling the Good News even if Christians are persecuted for their faith." The congregation grew to 200, spinning off schools, prayer centres and conducting pastoral work in prisons and army garrisons. Evangelists were sent to begin pioneer work in Kassala, Gebeit, New Halfa and Gadaref, regions never before penetrated by Anglican mission.³⁸ Small Christian communities emerged in some areas where no Christian presence is known to have existed since the decline of the Nubian Kingdoms.

Without parallel since the 'revival' of the 1940s, this indigenous initiative in Northern Sudan represented a second phase in the development of Dinka Christianity. Divested of cattle and the social and religious framework of which they were a part, the spiritual inclination of the Dinka found release in a new, youthful community of faith. As aliens they sought a positive identity which was distinctly, often defiantly, non Arab and non Muslim. Without age groups or extended families, Christians developed structures in which relationships were ordered and status affirmed.

Where ancestral rites had given little place for youth except as observers, the clubs and churches were created and led by the young. Committees for education and evangelism, finance, music and worship found willing participants. The preoccupation of rural Dinka Christians regarding conflicts with ancestral 'powers' was replaced by an emphasis on personal sin, temptation and ethics in the urban setting. Hope of eternal life and messianic deliverance from oppression gave comfort to the socially deprived in an alien environment.

³⁷ Rev Daniel Deng Bul (b 1953), ordained 1978, from Tuic Bor area, began school in 1961; went to Khartoum in 1967, taught Dinka language and was selected as an evangelist by the Dinka Congregation and later sent to BGC.

³⁸ D Deng Bul, Port Sudan to C Hayward, 18 Dec 1988; Annual Report, Christ Church, Port Sudan, 1986; Transcript of taped interview between D Deng Bul and R Fisher, 1985.

Migrations from the South also transformed the Catholic Church in Northern Sudan which, until the 1950s, was comprised almost entirely of expatriates.³⁹ In an effort to diminish 'tribalism,' clergy continued to encourage the use of common, unifying languages. Among the diverse peoples who increasingly composed urban congregations the Latin liturgy was interspersed with, and ultimately replaced by, Arabic or English.⁴⁰ Sadly, the forms of Arabic employed were hardly intelligible to many newly arrived Southerners.⁴¹ This, together with the prominence of foreign clergy, meant that Catholic worship tended to be less accessible than the vigorous vernacular services of the Protestants.⁴²

Unnoticed by many, independent lay evangelistic initiatives were also being undertaken by Dinka Catholics. Those who moved to the North during the 1970s established prayer centres in Wad Medani, Costi, Babanusa and other towns. Dinka petty traders who had become Catholics in the North returned to Bahr el Ghazal where they founded chapels and catechistic centres in locations where none previously existed. Gradually Catholicism was proliferating, invariably as a quiet but determined opposition to the encroachments of Islam.

2. New ecclesiastical leadership

Expansion of ECS Dinka congregations meant the need for more pastors, lay and ordained.⁴³ The ten Dinka clergy ordained by 1970 were widely respected, resilient and tenacious survivors, but the poverty and meagre education that typified

³⁹ Alongside the Roman Church were Armenian, Chaldean and Maronite Catholic Churches. By 1984 there were between 40,000 and 80,000 Roman Catholics in the Diocese of Khartoum, most of them Southern Sudanese.

⁴⁰ Southerners who knew only the dialect of 'Juba Arabic' familiar in the South had difficulty with Northern Arabic.

⁴¹ Archbishop Zubeir strongly supported the use of Arabic as the language of Christian worship and himself composed numerous Arabic songs for the Liturgy.

⁴² When, during the 1980s, vernacular languages were increasingly used in worship they met resistance from lay people. Though incomprehensible to many, they had come to enjoy the sound of the Latin rite. During 1984, with ethnic tensions of 'redivision' or *kokora*, at their height, Catholic leaders in every major city celebrated the Jubilee Year of Redemption in vernacular masses. Only then did many Catholics gain an appreciation of their vernacular languages in worship.

⁴³ As late as 1951 Daniel Deng Atong was the sole Dinka among nine indigenous ECS priests. In 1965 there were 4 Dinka among 44 priests in the Southern Archdeaconry (three in the North). By 1976 there were ten Dinka out of a total of 122 priests. In 1980 Rumbek, established as a Diocese in 1976, had a total of 44 Clergy (deacons and priests), 17 of them Dinka, 8 priests and 9 deacons.

most of them held little appeal to a new generation.⁴⁴ In the thriving young congregations a number of highly motivated professionals brought new impetus. In 1979 the Dinka Church Council in Khartoum declared its need for three pastors, three evangelists and six layreaders, numbers which would rapidly multiply.

Rev John Malou was an astute judge of pastoral potential who drew upon youth whom the clubs had equipped with basic Bible knowledge, administrative and pastoral skills. A decade earlier a number of these had been illiterate lads with little experience outside of cattle camp. With his encouragement growing numbers received Bible college training during the 1980s.⁴⁵

As for the episcopacy, Daniel Deng Atong was succeeded by two Assistant Bishops, Elinana Ngalamu and Benamina Yugusuk, consecrated in 1963.⁴⁶ It was to be 23 years after Daniel's resignation before another Dinka was made bishop. After returning from exile Elinana became the first bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of the Sudan and in 1976 was enthroned the first Archbishop when Sudan became an independent Anglican Province.

By 1984 the Province was undergoing extensive reorganisation resulting in the consecration of five new assistant Bishops, two of whom were Dinka. Nathaniel Garang became Assistant Bishop for the Area of Bor and John Malou for Wau, both in the Diocese of Rumbek.⁴⁷ With conflict raging around Bor, Nathaniel was, within months, sealed off in the SPLA held 'Liberated Areas.' As Bishop, John Malou breathed new life into the multi-ethnic ECS Church in Wau. With thousands of refugees fleeing the savage incursions of government armed militia in Northern Bahr el Ghazal he worked with Catholic churchmen to create reception camps. Tragically,

⁴⁴ Through the civil war of the 1960s and early 70s, pastors attached to the Dinka church served in a variety of capacities. Rev Kedhekia Barac de Mabior was renowned as a vernacular preacher, and served the Church in North and South. Rev Henry Riak supported Sudanese refugees in Uganda. Rev Barnaba Them endured considerable hardships alongside Pastor Solomon as they served the Moru Church at Lui, baptising over 900 people.

⁴⁵ In 1981 Bishop Gwynne College had only one Dinka student, from the Diocese of Rumbek. By 1986 there were a dozen, mostly from the Diocese of Khartoum.

⁴⁶ Elinana Jabi Ngalamu (1918-1992) was a Moru, a small ethnic group in Ekuatoria among whom the CMS work of Dr Fraser had given birth to a vital church. Benamina Wani Yugusuk is a Lokoya from Eastern Ekuatoria.

⁴⁷ The total number of Bishops now came to ten. Garang was consecrated in Juba on Nov 1st with Eluzai Munda for Moru Area, both in the Diocese of Rumbek. Seme Solomona and Manasseh Binyi for the Diocese of Juba and Mubarak Khamis for the Diocese of Khartoum. John Malou Ater was consecrated alone on the 2nd of December, 1984, in Wau.

within 18 months of his consecration he was killed while on a relief mission to his hometown of Rumbek.⁴⁸

In 1986, with the South fragmented by redivision and war, events transpired to split the ECS and radically alter its leadership. A controversy arose over a vote by the House of Bishops calling for the retirement of Archbishop Elinana. A complex and painful power struggle ensued with Elinana Ngalamu and Benjamina Yugusuk, each claiming to be Primate, Benjamina having been consecrated in 1988. Though arguments remained largely in the sphere of constitutionality, ethnic rivalries, inflamed by redivision, were not far beneath the surface. The Dinka, more than other groups, were split, the majority supporting Elinana.⁴⁹ In early 1988 Elinana sought to exert his authority by consecrating six new Bishops, four of whom were Dinka.⁵⁰ Consecrations under Benjamina followed leaving each of the Church's 11 Dioceses in charge of two opposing bishops.⁵¹

After unsuccessful attempts to negotiate reconciliation by Anglican primates in Africa and Europe, the Archbishop of Canterbury declared his support for Benjamina "as the constitutionally elected Archbishop of the Province."⁵² Effectively severing Anglican links with Elinana, this came as a severe blow to his supporters. For older Dinka Christians who long perceived themselves the stepchildren of the missionaries, this added a sense of ostracism from the world wide Church. In August 1992 Archbishop Elinana died peacefully and the following month the ECS was reunited, Bishops of both parties pledging their loyalty to Archbishop Benjamina.

⁴⁸ On 18 May, 1986, the military helicopter in which he was riding was shot down by an SPLA missile, killing all on board. He had gained respect in wide-ranging ecumenical circles and was equally respected by the intelligentsia and rural people alike.

⁴⁹ Both sides made claims that theirs possessed the larger following, but statistical estimates are difficult to verify. In 1989 A K Riak wrote that 8,346 people attended meetings of the Dinka Congregation presided over by Elinana or his clergy; Khartoum North (6,750); Hag Yusuf (1,016); Dar es Salaam (580). In centres with a large Dinka component outside Khartoum estimates totalled 4,520, Medani (910), Kosti (350), Renk (1,920), Port Sudan and Kenana (1,340). A K Riak, Khartoum to 'Visiting Pastors from the Diocese of Bradford,' 16 Feb 1989.

⁵⁰ On 7 and 8 Jan, 1988, Bishops Elinana and Eluzai independently consecrated Ephraim Natana, Assistant Bishop for Lui; Wilson Arop, Bishop of Torit; the Dinka bishops: Daniel Deng, Assistant Bishop for Kongor, Bor Diocese (later designated Area Bishop of Port Sudan, Khartoum Diocese); Henry Riak Cuir, Bishop of Wau; Kedhekia Mabiior, Bishop of Malakal; Benjamina Mangar, Assistant Bishop for Rumbek.

⁵¹ The 'Third Ordinary General Synod of the ECS' met 26 Feb to 6 March 1987. Attended by Bishops and clergy from all four dioceses, the Moru and Dinka delegates abstained. Seven new dioceses were created bringing the Provincial total to 11: Diocese of Kadugli from Khartoum Diocese; Diocese of Wau, Bor and Mundri from Rumbek Diocese, Diocese of Yei and Kajo Kaji from Juba Diocese; Diocese of Maridi from Yambio Diocese. The number of Bishops grew to twelve with 800 ordained clergy. Report by B W Yugusuk, 1988.

⁵² Archbishop R Runcie, Lambeth, 'To the Primates of the Anglican Communion,' 10 Feb 1988.

Having had only two Bishops in 1983, the Church now had 22 men endowed with Episcopal authority, of whom six were Dinka.⁵³ By 1990 some 50 Dinka clergy had been ordained to support a growing church. Half of these served in Northern towns, and five had their origins in the former Catholic sphere. With ordinations conducted by Bishop Nathaniel to care for the burgeoning congregations in the 'Liberated Areas' of Southern Sudan the number of ECS Dinka clergy exceeded 100 by 1993.

In the Catholic Church a reformation of leadership was also underway. Having enjoyed a degree of autonomy after the 1964 missionary expulsion, Sudanese Catholics pressed Rome for their own hierarchy, granted in 1974 when the *mandatum* was withdrawn from the missionary orders.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, the numbers of Sudanese clergy remained insufficient and the Church maintained its reliance on the support of missionary personnel. During the 1980s several articulate Sudanese Catholics, most prominently Archbishop Gabriel Zubeir, won widespread acclaim for their courageous defence of civilian rights before successive Sudanese regimes. Inspired by their example, a new generation of gifted and committed young men was attracted to the priesthood.⁵⁵ Among them were Dinka ordinands who often proved better prepared psychologically and socially for the rigors of the Church than had their predecessors.⁵⁶

Among mature Catholic clergy Monsignor Rudolph Deng Majak rose to prominence and was appointed Apostolic Administrator of Wau, the highest post yet held by a Dinka Catholic.⁵⁷ The fact has not gone unnoticed among the Dinka that Fr

⁵³ In the selecting of Dinka bishops Elinana relied on a 'select committee of senior elders' from the Dinka Congregation. Bishops Kedhekia Barac and Henry Riak were among the first generation of Dinka clergy. Bishops Benjamin Mangar and Daniel Deng Bul were dynamic younger men with proven records.

⁵⁴ The Verona Fathers tended to appoint their own missionaries and move them at will, a point of tension between Church and Institute. The Verona and Mill Hill missionaries, active prior to the 1964 expulsion were joined after 1970 by other institutes, among them, the Maryknoll Fathers and Sisters, the Salesians, the White Fathers and the Apostles of Jesus.

⁵⁵ Returning from exile a number of Sudanese priests proved unreliable, lacking apostolic zeal and commitment. Between 1944 and 1984 a total of 111 'native priests' had been ordained in the Sudan, 17 of whom died. Of those who remained 38 (40%) left the ministry. 12 Sudanese priests held degrees in theological disciplines but none was teaching in the Major Seminary. Hoeben, 'The Catholic Church in Sudan: A Golden Opportunity Lost,' *Pro Mundi Vita: Dossiers*, 1 (1984) 13.

⁵⁶ Since 1988 four Dinka have been ordained: William Deng, Carlo Kau, Peter Ayong and Francis Ngong.

⁵⁷ Rudolph Deng Majak (b 1946) was ordained by Ireneo Dud (1970), attended Major Seminaries in Tore, Kit and Lachor and obtained a degree in Rome (1967-1970). In 1973 he was appointed Secretary of the Sudan Catholic Bishops' Conference based in Khartoum, and in 1975 elected Rector of the Major Seminary at Bussere. In

Rudolph, like Bishop Nathaniel of the ECS, is of a prominent lineage, and, as the son of a respected *beny bith*, unites two veins of spiritual authority.

Today the two Sudanese churches, Roman Catholic and Episcopal, reveal complimentary strengths and weaknesses. The Catholics possess a cadre of highly educated, multi-lingual leaders, able to speak on behalf of the Church in international forums. Several have proved courageous and prophetic leaders. However, their laity have, until recently, remained heavily dependent upon clerical initiative, and the growth of Catholicism in the 'Liberated Areas' has been limited. By contrast, no Episcopal clergy have attained levels of education comparable to their Catholic counterparts. Still, their church possesses a dynamic and creative laity who read the Bible, pray and propagate their faith with confidence. Nowhere has this been more obvious since the mid 1980s than among the Dinka.

3. The diaspora and church growth in Northern cities

The escalation of civil war in Southern Sudan during the 1980s, brought large scale migrations of rural Dinka to the cities of the North. In this section we will examine the role the churches in receiving them, and their response to Christianity in the new environment.

From its inception the SPLA was widely characterised as a 'Dinka movement.' By the mid 1980s the Northern army was arming 'militias' among traditional enemies of the Dinka in attempts to destabilise their territories.⁵⁸ In Northern Bahr el Ghazal 'scorched earth' tactics combined with systematic looting and the re-emergence of slavery to force a large scale exodus. Many survivors sought refuge in Northern Sudan while tens of thousands trekked eastward to Ethiopian

recent years he served in Kwajok, Wau and Awiel. As Vicar General of the Diocese of Wau he remained in Bahr al Ghazal throughout the massacres of the 1980s providing support for the displaced. His father, Deng Tong, was a respected *beny bith*. Rudolph's Christian name derives from Italian Bishop Rudolph Orler who died the year of his birth. Uniting two lineages, those of church and of Dinka religion, Rudolph possesses a unique pedigree for spiritual leadership.

⁵⁸ In actuality the SPLA was, from its early years, comprised of varied ethnic groups. Nevertheless, both President Nimeiri and Prime Minister Sadiq el Mahdi stated that suppression of the Dinka was a primary goal of military action.

refugee camps.⁵⁹ As the war escalated more than half of all Southern Sudanese were forced from their homelands.

In 1989 Southerners displaced in Khartoum were estimated at 1.5 million, possibly half of them Dinka.⁶⁰ Impoverished newcomers joined relatives in ill equipped shanty towns of burlap and cardboard. With a population increase of 200% over seven years, some 40 sprawling 'unlawful' settlements emerged around the capital.⁶¹

When newcomers were registered with civil authorities religious affiliation was customarily noted. Since no category existed for 'traditional' or 'pagan' religion clerks tended to automatically register Southerners as Christians. Many Dinka, fresh from rural areas, had little knowledge of Christianity but, in solidarity with relatives and in opposition to 'the Arabs' and Islam, identified themselves as Christian. As in previous decades, Christianity assumed ethnic and political dimensions.

Catholic Bishops, assisted by an increasingly flexible community of missionaries, tried to defend and care for the displaced. New policies sought to "foster different tribal cultures" and languages while encouraging the Christian values of tolerance and mutual respect.⁶² In study, worship and song vernacular languages came to new prominence among the Catholics. Following the pattern of Latin American *base communities*, Catholics across the North were encouraged to create small communities "of faith, worship and charity, where the Church is built from the grassroots."⁶³

The Catholic and Episcopal churches, with the Sudan Council of Churches, led the way in providing education, often using temporary *rakubas* of grass mats and

⁵⁹ Tens of thousands were killed or starved during this exodus. Most notorious of mass killings occurred in March, 1987, when Rizeigat Arabs attacked over 1,000 Dinka civilians at Dhein in Western Sudan, since 1964 site of a Christian church used largely by Dinka. Between 3,000 and 7,000 Dinka are estimated to have been enslaved during the 1980s. These events were documented by Ushari Ahmed Mahmud and Suleyman Ali Baldo, *The Dhein Massacre Slavery in the Sudan*, (1987). *African Concord* (10 Dec, 1987) 8-13.

⁶⁰ The shanty towns of Khartoum held an estimated one and a half million people, increasingly threatened with *kasha*, the arbitrary arrest, detention in communicado, and transfer to forced labour camps. An estimated 14,000 street children wandered Khartoum's streets. *African Concord*, 10 Dec (1987) 8-13.

⁶¹ Y A Yath, "Dinka Migrants in Khartoum." *Geojournal*, (June 1991) draft copy, 7-8.

⁶² Most articulate and courageous of Sudanese churchmen were Archbishop Gabriel Zubeir Wako and Bishop Macram Max Gassis of El Obeid who produced pastoral letters and documented injustices condoned or supported by Government authorities.

⁶³ A concept adapted from the 'base communities' of Latin America. *The Church God-Wants-Us-To-Be. Final Document of the Diocesan Synod*, 23 Nov, (1991) 6.

plastic sheeting.⁶⁴ Prohibited from building new churches the Catholics developed 70 'multipurpose' or 'welfare centres' which became the foci of community solidarity much like village meeting places.

In the shanty towns Dinka attended prayers conducted by vernacular catechists. Missionary priests welcomed non Christians to the 'ministry of the Word,' but were less pleased when they remained during the Sacrament. Nevertheless, with their traditional religion undermined, growing numbers sought Christian baptism.⁶⁵

As in earlier decades, the Dinka posed special challenges to Catholic missionaries. The displaced could be demanding and aggressive, sometimes dominating centres intended for multi-ethnic use. A Verona Father with decades in Khartoum echoed his predecessors describing the Dinka as "the most explosive," tenacious and independently minded of Sudanese. Yet, these very characteristics were "for better and for worse," he said. The stubborn determination of the Dinka ensured that they--and their new-found faith--would survive. Contradicting earlier missionaries he predicted that,

... the Dinka will be the champions of the faith in the future. Though they are difficult to deal with they are more enterprising. They enter the Church in a joyous way.⁶⁶

Government repression in Northern Sudan encouraged defiant solidarity among disparate groups. The annual Christmas Eve celebrations had, like the 'Week of Christian Unity,' long been a focus for ecumenical co-operation. In 1979 7,000 people marched through Khartoum's streets, among whom the Dinka were prominent. In 1989 the government, threatened by these displays, imposed a curfew, but defiant

⁶⁴ By 1989 42 new schools were functioning. Of these four were self help schools assisted by SCC, 21 were established by the Catholics and 16 by the Episcopal Church. Of the 200 teachers, those under the Catholics received a meagre salary where those of the ECS were voluntary. Awet and Kambaya, *Primary Education for Displaced People*, Sudan Council of Churches, (1989) 2.

⁶⁵ Of the 30,000 adults baptised in the Archdiocese of Khartoum during 1981-91 nearly all were first generation Christians born outside its borders. The Church God-Wants-Us-To-Be, 23 Nov, 1991. One Parish on the outskirts of Khartoum baptised over 500 catechumens during the Easter Vigil, 1991. Hoeben, 'The Sudan, A Call for Help,' *Dossier, Catholic International*, 1-31 July, (1991) 620.

⁶⁶ Interview with Fr Antoniono Orlando, Rome 1989. He added, "If there is something against the Parish Priest you can be sure that the Dinka are there. They are very difficult to deal with, but they also realise their own mistakes."

church leaders called for celebrations through the night.⁶⁷ Christmas Eve, 1991, saw crowds swell to unprecedented numbers and the compound of the Dinka Congregation in Khartoum North overflowed with an estimated 27,000 people.⁶⁸ As displaced rural Dinka claimed Christian identity their urbanised kinfolk reclaimed their rural heritage. Fridays saw crowds of Dinka, educated and illiterate, surging through Khartoum to assemble for traditional dances. In the face of a succession of Sudanese regimes which have attempted, with ever greater severity, to impose rigid forms of Islam, the symbols of Christianity and traditional Dinka culture have intermingled and the expressions of religious and ethnic solidarity have formed new and defiant alliances.

4. Ecumenism in Ethiopian refugee camps

Forced from their territories by escalating conflict and famine Southern Sudanese sought refuge not only in Northern Sudan but in neighbouring countries. By 1988 over 400,000 refugees were amassed in four camps in Western Ethiopia. These were initially poorly equipped, but SPLA administrators, assisted by the United Nations and other organisations, tried to provide support.⁶⁹ Sudanese church leaders from six denominations made joint petitions and co-ordinated distribution of relief supplies in the camps.⁷⁰ By 1988 Itang camp alone had eight large church buildings and numerous 'praying centres' with an estimated 12,000 pupils in schools run jointly by the SPLA and the churches.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Ultimately the Christmas Eve curfew was shortened but some Christians were arrested and churches have shifted from marches toward services held inside their compounds. Report by Fr Hilary Buma of SCC to Administration of Itang Refugee Camp, 2 Feb, 1990.

⁶⁸ Interview with Lazarus Leek Malek, London, Dec, 1992.

⁶⁹ The Ethiopian Government at first prohibited outside agencies from working in these camps. Itang, for a time, the largest refugee camp in Africa, and initially the least hospitable, had the largest percentage of Dinka. Begun in 1985, it had a population of 200,000 within three years. New arrivals came at a rate of 4,000 to 8,000 each month. Pinyudu, opened in 1987, received people primarily from Bahr el Ghazal and grew to a population of 70,000. Assosa had 25,000 inhabitants mostly from Southern Blue Nile. Dimma was last to be opened. Interview with Dr Timothy Tutlam, medical Doctor at Itang, Addis Ababa, 1988.

⁷⁰ The Roman Catholic, ECS, and Evangelical (Presbyterian) churches had the largest communities. Also represented were the Sudan Interior, the African Inland, and the Pentecostal churches.

⁷¹ Inter-ethnic services, especially the monthly united prayers for peace in Sudan, drew congregations of thousands. With Dinka the majority at Pinyudu, the Sunday vernacular service found 1,500 to 1,800 tightly packed in a single thatched church. Report on visit to Refugee camps by John Boyer of ACROSS, 11 Jan, 1990.

Never in memory had rural Dinka experienced such widespread displacement or mixed with so many alien peoples. Insecure, with a high percentage of orphans among their numbers, many looked to the churches for support.⁷² Large scale baptismal services saw over 2,000 initiated in Itang during 1989. At Pinyudu, Pastor Andrew Mayul of Bor baptised 1,601 people in June, 1990.⁷³

Women, many of them widowed, assumed prominent roles in church leadership. Known in Dinka as *Nyiir ke Nhialic*, the 'Girls of God,' their compositions echoed across the camps as they gathered to pray for the sick and bereaved. They established centres where orphans could be fed, taught and nurtured. In the ECS Mary Acol Deng was designated 'Deacon of Women.' Among leading Christians was Major Debora Agergum, an Agar woman, renowned since the 1960s as a combatant and commander with the Anya-nya guerrilla forces. When she was not providing training with the SPLA she supported the church in a variety of ministries, often leading in public prayers.

Pastors and lay people exhorted one another to leave ethnic and denominational divisions behind, focusing on their unity in Christ. Fr Dominic Matong recalled how,

. . . they organised visits to different places, sometimes composed of ladies, young men, evangelists, going to Pinyudu or Dimma. They visit back and forth from one camp to another. It is like the old church we hear of in the Bible. When those people come from Maban [Nuba Mountains] they bring all the possible news. Then they all come from different churches. The people talk and pray and have a small feast for them. They talk and they pray, and talk and pray. It is so nice to look at. . . . When we went to Pinyudu we had to sit in the evening and students came to sing. It went on until 12:00. I became really relaxed to see this sort of thing happening. The social cohesion from the past is being replaced by the Church. There is no alcohol. The youth would be with us all evening. The Bor youth were singing Christmas songs. They ask hard questions. They sing and dance.⁷⁴

Sundays found churches packed to capacity, Nuer, Anuak, Dinka and other groups meeting in shifts. United services found Catholics, Presbyterians and those

⁷² Pinyudu became known as the 'camp of children' for its 17,000 unaccompanied minors. Founded in Nov 1987, it had 54,621 inhabitants in two years, 40% of whom were unaccompanied children largely from Bahr el Ghazal. Of the total refugee population estimated in 1990 at 350,000, 133,500 were under age 15. 'Pinyudu' is an Anuak word meaning 'land of the ostrich feather,' also spelled *Pugnido*, *Pignudo* and *Funyido*.

⁷³ Andrew Mayul Ajak from Bor area, had been recently trained and ordained by Bishop Nathaniel.

⁷⁴ Fr Dominic, Rome, 1989.

from the ECS using each others' languages, exchanging their songs such that few of the newly baptised had any knowledge of denominational distinctions. Though the Episcopalians and Pentecostals had previously been in tense competition, they worshipped harmoniously in ECS churches. Father Benjamin Madhol of the Catholic Church frequently led large, united services where Protestants and Catholics blended without distinction. So close were ties that Peter Bol Arok, a Bor Dinka, was ordained an ECS minister by Presbyterian clergy. As in Khartoum, ecumenical celebrations reached their crescendo on Christmas Eve when massive crowds marched singing throughout the night.

For the first time Catholics experienced the avid Bible study and public prayer conducted by lay people of the Protestant churches. Observing Protestant familiarity with the Bible, Fr Dominic drew an analogy between the method by which an aged *beny bith* transfers his hereditary office and the strategy used by Protestant missionaries to promote Bible knowledge. The sacred spear, having 'fallen from heaven' is a sign from *Nhialic* verifying priestly and prophetic vocation in a clan. When a *beny bith* is weak and no longer able to conduct communal sacrifices, his 'son,' sometimes still a small boy, is required to replace him. His hands guided by elders, the boy wields the spear in the cardinal directions and mimics the killing of the sacrificial victim. In doing this he exerts the full authority of his elder:

It is the same with the Protestants. They have given the real spear of the Bible to their people. They have trusted them. The Catholics of the past did not believe that the Bible could be handled by simple people. The only feeding received by the people was in Sunday services, but then it is diluted by the thinking of the minister. This is not adequate. Nor were lay people allowed to make the invocations themselves.⁷⁵

Fr Dominic also contrasted the practices of prayer and intercession, here conducted by Dinka women of the ECS:

I was suffering with rheumatism and fatigue. By their prayers and enthusiasm they raised me up. In the Catholic Church it is not the same. There everyone depends on Abuna to raise them up. The Catholics have come to like being now the ECS.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Fr Dominic had for several years participated in translation of the Dinka Bible with the Summer Institute of Linguistics and come to appreciate the value of personal Bible study. Interviewed in Rome, 1989.

⁷⁶ Two Catholic priests served the camps, Fr Benjamin Madhol and Fr Dominic Matong, though Fr Dominic was, until 1989, prohibited from full priestly duties.

Further parallels were drawn between the form and content of the prayers of traditional Dinka and those prayed spontaneously by Protestant Christians. ECS commitment to *Nhialic* was likened to ancestral veneration of Divinity:

Many in the Episcopal Church, as I have seen them, really try to make themselves near to the God they respect [*theek*]. They pray in earnest, they are authentic. . . . Even if you find a young man or a girl, they say the prayers the same as the old man or women in the village will pray to the deity in the village. They ask for deliverance from trouble, that wealth may be restored, that they may be relieved from suffering. It is like in old times. . . . The Protestants find it [prayer] so easy. They speak so easily in a very simple way. If there is a way that the Dinka are to get into the way of their ancestors, then it is through becoming close to the Protestants. They are very close to our traditions in relation to deity and to God.⁷⁷

Though CMS missionaries, like their devout converts, had been ruthless in condemning the divinities of the Dinka, they had allowed sufficient latitude for a distinctively Dinka form of prayer and piety. The vocabulary, directness and fervent spiritual qualities which typified traditional invocations found continuity in refugee churches.

5. The Dinka Church in the 'Liberated Areas'

The years since Sudan's second civil war began in 1983, have seen the Dinka apprehending and adapting Christian faith on several fronts, but nowhere was this process more dynamic than among Dinka of the former CMS sphere in the SPLA controlled 'Liberated Areas.' On the East Bank, the charismatic ministry of Bishop Nathaniel Garang Anyieth was the focus of growth amidst devastation and displacement. To the West, among the Agar and their neighbours, equally momentous events were underway. In 1939 these two regions were heartland of the Dinka 'revival.' Five decade later their peoples, many now displaced, are again constrained to examine the gospel.

During the 15 turbulent years following national independence churchlife among Dinka on the East Bank had been negligible. The 'Archdeacon Shaw Memorial Church,' proposed by CMS for Bor town as early as 1957, had never been

⁷⁷ Fr D Matong, Rome, 1989.

built. In the entire Parish from Kongor to Bor, the 'Mother of all Churches,' St Andrew's at Malek, remained the sole 'permanent' church building.⁷⁸ It was levelled in 1964.

With the Peace Agreement lay Christians returned home zealous to replicate their experience in the North. Many perceived God's blessing in the advent of peace and envisioned the South as a 'promised land' of renewed opportunity. Among the most active Christians were respected polygamists like Solomon Ajith whose initiative saw completion a large Church at Bor in 1974.⁷⁹ With the arrival of newly ordained Nathaniel Garang in 1976, the church was often filled to capacity. Fresh from Nairobi Pentecostal Bible College, he offered short pastoral courses and by 1980 seven of his students were ordained.

In 1984 Nathaniel was consecrated Assistant Bishop and posted to Bor, heartland of renewed civil war. At Christmas, 1985, Northern soldiers garrisoned in the town, shelled the church compound. Nathaniel and his family survived and by May had joined towns-people taking refuge in the countryside.⁸⁰ Until this time the ECS had existed primarily in population centres on main roads. Now, as the 'townies' joined rural relatives, they brought their faith at a time when conflict and religious polarisation were again on the rise.

A native of the area, Bishop Nathaniel moved easily among rural populations and was enthusiastically received by them. A pastor observed how the Bishop and clergy,

... are living with them in their areas. They are sleeping together. They are taking food together. They are praying together. They are opening the Bible together. And they are looking, ah, is it true?⁸¹

Using the idioms of his people, Nathaniel was an avid evangelist, willing to train committed Christians, male or female, and encourage their initiatives. With his

⁷⁸ The Bishop's Letter' appealed for funds to build a Church in Bor, *SDR* 27, Vol 10 (Spring 1957). The large Church at Malek, standing alongside a Government elementary school, dispensary and police post, was still used primarily by school boys. Canon D Brown, 'A Dinka Parish on the Nile,' *SDR* 43, Vol 15 (Spring 62).

⁷⁹ Most of these were low level professionals with a modicum education, serving as nurses and policemen or in the local council, fisheries, public works and on the roads. Solomon Ajith was a Hospital dresser who, assisted by his wives, organised contributions and construction of the Church. In 1986 Bishop John Malou had eleven energetic men serving on his Council for the Area Wau, nine of whom were polygamous.

⁸⁰ Among civilian casualties in this attack was evangelist Jacob Akci.

⁸¹ A Mayul, interview, 1990.

Pentecostal underpinnings he taught that the Holy Spirit intervened miraculously in all areas of life, offering hope amidst growing insecurity.

Eight decades after the arrival of Archibald Shaw the Bor and Tuic Dinka began entering the Church in substantial numbers. New believers declared that, "This is our time; *Nhialic* has kept us for this time. *Nhialic* has come among us slowly and we did not know it."⁸² Only gradually had Divinity revealed himself among a reluctant people. In this Bishop Nathaniel played a central role for he stood both in the lineage of the keepers of ancestral divinities, and in the lineage of *Macuor*. Explaining the history of revelation a Bor layman observed that:

. . . at that time Macuor was preaching to them on this way and they didn't believe Macuor from the white people . . . So now they believe Nathaniel, huh? He is taking the really way that Macuor gave to them, and they rejected it. "Ah! *Nhialic de Macuor!*" It became, really, this is the way Macuor gave it to us, and now Nathaniel is giving it to us. But that time we didn't believe because we assumed that Macuor is just the way of *khawajet*, the way of the white people, come to destroy our mind. But now, they believe, "Oh! Nathaniel, from our family, and he is the one, he is the one who is from Garang, and his name is called Garang, and now *shatan* which is named Garang is no powers to him now. And all his family, Garang, no power to the family. And his mother, huh?, From Lirpiou area! Ah! *Wena nyanda!*"⁸³

Nathaniel was appropriate to this mediating role, first, because of his personal lineage. Not only was he *Garang*, bearing the name of a widely acknowledged free divinity, but his mother came from the family which had long maintained the respected cult of Lirpiou, the *jok* of 'the cool heart' at Gwalla.⁸⁴ With this pedigree Nathaniel now came as a Christian Bishop, preaching the message originally brought

⁸² "*Kene ke thada; Nhialic aci wo tiit ne tha. Nhialic aci ben woyic emaath, ku kucku rot.* Bishop Nathaniel, interviewed in London, March, 1990. These words were the basis for several new songs, one by Mary Aluel Garang; also AM1 in the previous chapter. Rev A Mayul frequently declared that "It is the time of Repentance." In 1911 Shaw had written that "the Christianising of these Jieng tribe must be done by Jieng missionaries." (CMSA Acc 111).

⁸³ *khawajet*, meaning Europeans, Arabic. Last phrase, 'He is the son of our daughter!' Interview in English with Stephen Aweldit, Addis Ababa, July, 1990.

⁸⁴ Among the Bor Dinka Lirpiou has enjoyed a prestigious reputation for over a century. Referred to by CMS missionaries and described by the Seligmans after their 1910 visit, the spear has a well documented history. In 1946 it was believed to have inspired two young men to murder Court President Joseph Maciek Deng. By order of DC Bor, Major J F Cummings, Lirpiou was confiscated from Gwalla and 'imprisoned' in the National Museum in Khartoum. Adherents attributed cattle plagues, floods and famines to its absence. When in 1971 Abel Alier negotiated its return, Southerners of every status and background attended ceremonial sacrifices. A local divinity became a symbol of national reconciliation and renewed blessing. Alier (1990) 83-4, 88. B Alier Buttic, 'The Cult of Lirpiou Spear,' *Heritage*, (March 1982) 47-60. Lirpiou's return was accompanied by the first Constitutional affirmation of indigenous African religion: "Heavenly religions and the noble aspect of spiritual beliefs shall not be insulted or held in contempt." Article 17c, 1973.

by Archibald Shaw. What once seemed alien concepts were now ingrafted within the spiritual heritage of the Dinka. Indeed, it was now apparent that the true *Nhialic* of Dinka origins was one and the same with that preached by Macuor. New converts declared that, "The *Nhialic* of Macuor, he is *Nhialic!*"⁸⁵ Only now had the teaching of Macuor been confirmed and legitimated through Bishop Nathaniel.

In a region where, perhaps 18 mostly small churches had been scattered along main roads in 1982, there were, by 1991, 120 churches and innumerable 'praying centres.' New churches were built at every former government outpost or chief's court, often sites where none had previously existed.⁸⁶ Constructed under thoroughly local initiative, the mud and thatch structures sprang up in even the most remote areas.

Some 73 pastors served the congregations of Bor Diocese, most trained and ordained by Bishop Nathaniel after 1984. They were assisted by 48 lay evangelists and numerous women's workers.⁸⁷ Here again women played a prominent role, serving as lay teachers, evangelists and ministers of healing. If no pastor or evangelist was available, as was true in perhaps 20 parishes, a mature Mother's Union member was given leadership, under whom a male evangelist might serve if he was less experienced.

These developments occurred during the 1980s as numerous East Bank Dinka were seeking asylum to Ethiopian refugee camps. By May 1991 the Mengistu regime in Addis Ababa had fallen and refugees surged back to their homelands en masse. Within six months of their return, still unsettled, fighting erupted between SPLA factions on the East Bank. In October, 1991, tribal raids executed around Bor left an estimated 3,000 civilians dead and prompted yet another exodus, this time toward the

⁸⁵ *Nhialic de Macuor, yen e ke Nhialic!*

⁸⁶ In the Diocese of Bor the 13 court centres between Duk Faiwel, Duk Fadiet and Anyidi had no churches prior to the 1980s. SPLA/M authorities initially adapted Parish boundaries to delineate their 'payams,' local administrative areas. Likewise, church leaders occasionally adopted military terms to describe ecclesiastical administration.

⁸⁷ Bishop Nathaniel gathered church workers for intermittent courses, each lasting several months. Given the flow of populations it is difficult to obtain accurate statistics. Rev A Mayul estimated in July 1991 that 85% of the population of the Tuic Dinka, between the two Duks, were attending church. Only 15% remained faithful to their *jak*. In a Diocesan Report written in October, 1991 Bishop Nathaniel counted the following within the Diocese of Bor: 2 Archdeacons, 4 Rural Deans, 31 Pastors, 25 Deacons, 72 Evangelists, 30 Mother's Union workers, 101 women's workers with badges and 36 Lay Readers. Discrepancies may be due to population movements.

southern borders of Sudan.⁸⁸ Divested of their cattle, land and possessions the survivors exist, at the time of writing, in refugee camps, most having thrice suffered displacement.

On the West bank in the ECS Diocese of Rumbek, rural Agar, Gok and Ciec Dinka were also entering the Church in unprecedented numbers, but here without a central figure comparable to Bishop Nathaniel. From the early 1980s Rev Benjamin Mangar, also an ECS pastor with Pentecostal training, propagated the 'Alleluya Church' with its zealous lay leadership and charismatic theology. By 1987 Mangar was in Khartoum, had been consecrated bishop, and was propagating the 'Alleluya Church' among the displaced. Though some churchmen in Bahr el Ghazal viewed his movement with apprehension, it was soon integrated, providing a positive lay dynamic within the ECS.

Without an ECS Bishop resident in either the Dioceses of Rumbek or Wau, Bishop Nathaniel offered sporadic oversight and Rev Abraham Mayom, newly arrived from Ethiopia, was appointed Diocesan Provost.⁸⁹ Archdeacon Reuben Macir, who had established Dinka Congregations in Khartoum two decades earlier, was, for a period, the only Episcopal priest residing in Rumbek Diocese.⁹⁰ He conducted itinerant evangelism and, responding to the demands of growth, opened Dhiau Kuei Bible College near Akot. By 1993 the College had 160 students in training for pastoral leadership, over half of whom were women.⁹¹

In an area which in 1982 had only nine churches and preaching centres there were, a decade later, a total of 260. These were served by 270 church leaders, half of whom were women.⁹² Evangelism extended to regions where no Christian presence

⁸⁸ Virtually all cattle were raided or wantonly slaughtered and women and girls were abducted. The raids and ensuing exodus occurred in October and November, 1991. Some estimates suggest that over 5,000 were killed. Retaliation continued on both sides with considerable loss of life.

⁸⁹ Officially Bishop Gabriel Rooric, residing in Khartoum, has oversight for the Dioceses of Rumbek and Wau but has not visited these Dioceses since his 1988 consecration. Abraham Mayom Athiaan Deng, Agar Dinka (b about 1953) attended Bishop Gwynne College. Joined the SPLA 1984; was ordained priest and served the Churches in refugee camps in Ethiopia; moved to Nairobi in 1991, serving as Provost for Rumbek Diocese.

⁹⁰ Of his 1987 call to be consecrated Bishop under former Archbishop Elinana Archdeacon Reuben said: "I did not see what was the use of being a bishop in Khartoum. The work that needed to be done was here." Diana Witts, *Celebration and Suffering in the New Sudan*, CMS Report, February, 1993.

⁹¹ A College had been opened at Malek in 1991, but was disbanded to be re-established at Ame displaced camp in 1992. *Dhiau Kuei* means 'the cry of the eagle.'

⁹² In 1993 each of 270 churches is estimated to have an average attendance of 500 adults. Witts, *Celebration*. In 1992 church workers totalled 161: 8 pastors, 128 evangelists and 25 Mother's Union workers. Listed were 38 parishes, 74 sub-parishes and 123 preaching centres; the Diocesan population estimated at

had previously existed such as the Agar section of Pakam, a population known for their conservatism and aggressiveness. In Pakam a single evangelist, Luel, 'a very strong lady,' founded 23 churches.

In the ECS Diocese of Wau, largely within the former Catholic sphere, Rev Abraham Mayom planned seven Archdeaconries with churches to be founded at several former Catholic stations.⁹³ Reminiscent of the missionary era, Abraham spoke of the 'Trinity Factor,' envisioning a school and dispensary alongside each church.

The Catholic Church in the region was also experiencing growth, though not as dramatically as that of the ECS.⁹⁴ Pastoral care was assumed by Fr Benjamin Madhol, assisted by some 30 catechists and, intermittently, several Italian clergy.⁹⁵ Exemplifying trends elsewhere, a single catechist in an area north of Gogrial listed over 200 people whom he had taught and baptised during a three month period.

In ways that would have been inconceivable during the missionary era the Christian Church and its precepts have been apprehended, and given fresh expression on new frontiers within Sudanese borders and beyond. Small communities of migrant Christians have gathered in parts of Northern Sudan where, for centuries, there has been no Christian presence. In urban centres and rural villages, Dinka, long seen as among the most 'conservative' of Southern peoples, have revealed remarkable creativity and adaptability within the Church.

E. Christians in conflict: spiritual and military

The encounter with Christianity has always provoked tensions as people reassess familiar assumptions. In the rapidly expanding churches among Dinka of the

1,150,000. A Mayom, 'Statistics of Churches and Personnel in the Diocese of Rumbek in 1992,' Feb, 1992. 'Church' here denotes a community with a building, usually of wood, mud and thatch; at 'preaching centres' people meet less formally, usually under trees.

⁹³ The old CMS stations of Akot, Panikar and Bhar Gel were to be revived, along with the Catholic stations at Nyamlel, Mayen and Kwajok.

⁹⁴ Where Fr Rudolph Deng suggested in 1992 that, *at most*, one quarter of the Dinka in the former Catholic sphere might claim to be Christians, Rev Abraham Mayom estimated three quarters in the former ECS sphere.

⁹⁵ Caesar Mazolari was made Apostolic Administrator for the Diocese of Rumbek and occasionally resided in the 'liberated areas' as conditions allowed.

'Liberated Areas' the conflict with *jak* remains paramount. Below we will examine the new forms which this confrontation has taken and suggest its meanings for people whose indigenous institutions are increasingly threatened. As Christians struggle to survive amidst civil war, many have taken up arms and openly support the Liberation Movement. New tensions arise surrounding the substance of Christian faith which is both the source of spiritual liberation and reconciliation, as well as a motivation for armed resistance and political liberation. This conflict is addressed in the final section below.

1. Christian conversion and the decline of the *jak*

Recent church growth among Dinka in the former CMS sphere has been accompanied by reports of miraculous or supernatural phenomena with little precedent, even during the 'revival' of the 1940s. With medical care virtually non-existent prayers for divine healing with the laying on of hands are integral to Christian life and worship. Reports circulate that people as well as cattle have been miraculously healed. Visions, prophecies and visitations by angels are recounted. Simultaneously, there have been numerous reports of dramatic confrontations between Christians and the *jak*.

Tension has increased when indigenous practitioners have felt their prestige and livelihood threatened by the evangelistic successes of the Church. In 1944 Daniel Deng Atong described events among the Nyarweng which have recent parallels:

. . . it has come home to the pagan priests that their trade, (i.e., the cattle, and corn etc. which they get from the people after playing on their fears of death or disaster) is being undermined. Therefore they have been trying in various ways to discourage those who were already believers and to dissuade any who may have been thinking of responding to the Christian teaching. For instance, if a believer loses a loved one through death, these pagan priests quickly seize the opportunity, and they put it to the believer that the god he had given up was angry with him, and that is why his child or wife or brother had died. In this way they have managed to deceive some, but they have failed in many cases to frighten the people, and many were made stronger by the temptation. Praise God.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Daniel Deng Atong, 'Report on Kongor and Duk Area, 1944.'

Bishop Nathaniel believes that the *jak* were always self-seeking beings, capable of providing few benefits for their adherents. Only recently, however, have their destructive qualities been fully revealed. Some hold them responsible for death among even their most devout followers:

You know those of Lirpiou, they have no people. . . . Those of Bar, they have no people. . . . The leaders of these spirits have very few followers any more and their children are dying. This spirit killed them. So the Dinka people realise that keeping this spirit destroys people, so they move away from that spirit. They know it is bad spirit and they move away to the Church. . . . And then those outside they don't like to come to *jok*. They only give cows. They don't let Lirpiou to come near to them. They give them cows. When man say, you, *fulan*, bring cows, they just give it and then avoid. They only come and eat, *bass*, and then go back. And then those who are inside, one day he can die, one day.⁹⁷

By the late 1980s entire Dinka families, including those of several venerable *baany jok* and *baany bith*, had publicly declared that they had 'cast out' their *jak* and were followers of Jesus Christ.⁹⁸ Numerous accounts circulated of events paralleling those underlying the song of Nyanroe in which she castigates her dead brother for his blind loyalty to *jok* (AM1). For many, these were empirical proof of the danger and diminishing returns of the *jak*. Demonstrating their impotence and betrayal is the story of the *tiet*, now deceased, who had ten wives but not one child to survive him. There was the man who offered a bull to ensure protection from attack by the Murle but, upon returning from his sacrifice, found his son had just been killed.⁹⁹ Increasingly Dinka ask if they have not been deceived, some even demanding that the *baany jok* make compensation for cattle sacrificed to no positive effect. Christians often describe the confrontation with *jok* as an emotionally charged event in which they engage in spiritual warfare. Called by a new convert, Christians march into his homestead singing loudly, beating drums and pans. Summoning the authority of

⁹⁷ Interview with N Garang in London, March, 1990.

⁹⁸ Often described as *Nhialic de Kanitha*, the "Nhialic of the Church." Conversions of indigenous religious leaders have been widely and consistently reported. Among Bor Dinka some keepers of Lirpiou and Mangok, and among the Tuic Bor, keepers of Dengdit and Atem, renounced their *jak*, voluntarily burnt the objects associated with their cults and requested Christian baptism. This applied equally to what Lienhardt called 'free divinities' and local 'clan divinities.' An Agar Dinka pastor estimated that three quarters of the Agar *baany bith* along with numerous *tiit*, have embraced Christian faith. Interview with Rev A Mayom. Recent accounts need to be compared with perceptions of those who are not part of the church community.

⁹⁹ These and many other episodes were recounted by Rev A Mayul and S Aweldit during interviews in Addis Ababa, 1989.

Christ, a leading Christian commands the *jok* to depart, never to return. The *lec jok* or “idols” are frequently burnt amidst triumphant celebration.¹⁰⁰

These displays are obviously disquieting for Dinka who remain loyal to their *jak*. Equally so, may be the siting of new churches. Traditionally the communal shrines of divinities are erected on the prestigious high ground in Dinka villages. When Christians declare their intention to build a new church they often select this location in direct competition with the keepers of divinity. In such assertive action new converts are frequently the most zealous.

During 1987 several young Christian men in Bor area were intent on burning the *lec jok* of their clans, so provoking the hostility of their elders. Tensions ran high when it emerged that they also wanted to construct new churches in the area. Two clans, the keepers of Mangok and Lirpiou, began a heated controversy, each asserting that their divinity was more powerful in fending off the encroachments of the Christians. With their confrontation verging on violence SPLA administrator Kwol Manyang intervened threatening use of force. Ultimately the two *jak* capitulated, both reportedly explaining that they had never themselves claimed to be *Nhialic*. Since they had come from *Nhialic* they were dependent upon him. If the Christians were building churches for prayer to *Nhialic* their followers would not prohibit them. Indeed, they were free to join the Christians in prayer.¹⁰¹

Bishop Nathaniel described a similar situation when Lirpiou was invoked by its keepers to defy the Christians. Again, the *jok* demurred, acknowledging the supremacy of *Nhialic*:

So when the spirit speak through that man he say, ‘No, I have no power to fight. If God is my father I go to ask him. I have my power from God. So I have nothing to do.’ So when people see this, others say, ‘Why do you take our cows if you have no power to chase God away? Go away! Lirpiou, go away!’ This

¹⁰⁰ The burning of *tim jok* has become an important sign of spiritual victory as revealed in the new songs. Recently, several Britons, while visiting the ‘Liberated Areas,’ heard that Bishop Nathaniel had received an ‘urgent’ message via SPLA radio. They expected it concerned the repercussions of military conflict. Instead, he was informed that a number of ‘idols’ had just been burnt. *Lec jok* or *tim jok* literally mean ‘wood of *jok*,’ the wooden pegs where the *jok* reside. ECS Dinka Christians speak of them commonly as ‘idols.’

¹⁰¹ Elders complained that such disrespectful actions which threatened the stability of the clan, had not occurred since the 1940s. If the youth no longer respected the *jak* of their clan, they should at least leave the elders to ancestral loyalties. Lirpiou, or ‘cool heart,’ based at Baidit, was known for its benign and self-controlled temperament while Mangok, based with the Juet clan at Jale, was recognised for its aggressive and punitive character. When they finally capitulated, the *jak* said *Ok koc ke Nhialic*, “We are people of *Nhialic*,” the subjects of *Nhialic*. Though the Christians were not punished, SPLA authorities imposed a fine of some 50 cows on each of the two clans responsible for the conflict. Interview with Mac Maika, London, Jan, 1993.

make people [leave the] spirit and then join God. It happened in Gwalla and it happened in Angakwei, and other villages.

An Agar pastor described how a group of churchmen, walking in a rural area near Rumbek, caused a *jok* to 'confess.' The Christians encountered a spear which a *beny bith* had stuck in the path to prohibit their passing. Pulling the spear from the ground they threw it in the bush. As they continued they heard the voice of the *jok* crying to its keeper, "I am a bad person. Tell the people of God that I am an evil person!" The churchmen laughed and said, "Aha! The devil has confessed!"¹⁰²

Though such narratives describe the *jok* as weak, insecure and dependent, they are also portrayed as greedy, vindictive and murderous. When they are threatened, the *jok* are said to employ several tactics in a bid to retain power. In a family where all but a few have become Christians, the *jok* sometimes band together. Numbering "eight or eleven" they confront those still under their sway, demanding loyalty. This tends, however, to be counter productive as individuals realise that the greedy *jok* will devour all their possessions. Their only recourse is to seek the deliverance of Christ through the ministrations of the Church.

Converts are sometimes fearful that a *jok*, having been 'chased away,' will return to take revenge. Wanting the protective power of the Holy Spirit, they plead to be baptised immediately upon confession of Christ. Occasionally church leaders concede, stipulating that the newly baptised undergo catechetical training and join groups of Christians in evangelism, so reinforcing commitment through public witness. The efficacy which baptism is believed to possess is further illustrated by the convert who asked to be baptised together with all his cattle. This is in keeping with traditions in which *Nhialic* is petitioned to impart *wei* simultaneously upon people and cattle.

Accounts such as these come from Dinka territories across the former CMS sphere. Because they derive solely from Christian sources a degree of bias might be acknowledged. Certainly the perceptions of non Christian observers need to be

¹⁰² 'Yen e ran rac. Leke koc Nhialic ven e ran rac!' *Ran rac*, literally 'bad person,' translated 'sinner' by ECS Christians. Interview, Rev A Mayom in Nairobi, Sept, 1991.

¹⁰³ One wonders to what degree these concepts derive from the New Testament imagery of Mark 5, where Christ confronts a demon who says 'my name is Legion.' Occasionally people have deceived the *jok*, while they go to call for the Christian exorcists. Interview, Rev A Mayom, Nairobi, Sept, 1991.

compared. Nevertheless, it is clear that, in the perception of numerous Dinka, the authority of the *baany jak* is diminishing as the *jak* yield authority to *Nhialic*.

The 'Intellectualist Theory' of conversion in Africa propounded by Robin Horton bears analysis here. Horton suggested that tribal peoples have tended to relinquish their lower, mediating 'spirits' as their geographical and ideological boundaries have opened up. Needing a more inclusive cosmology to cope with an enlarging universe they have often embraced the Supreme Being presented by Christianity or Islam. The Dinka, with their pastoral migrations, have long shifted between a secure 'microcosm' and the wider 'macrocosm' of their near neighbours. This, suggests Horton, is mirrored in a religious system which combines lower mediating powers with a prominent Supreme Being. The fact that this cosmology has proved sufficient to existing needs is a further reason for the long-standing resistance of the Dinka to embrace a new, monotheistic religion.

The recent movement of the Dinka toward Christianity appears, in some respects, to confirm Horton's theory. Though they have long acknowledged *Nhialic*, he is now becoming more accessible and more fully defined. These developments must, however, be seen as part of a historical process of religious evolution and, at present, amidst the impact of war. The transformation of Dinka social and religious institutions presently underway is more drastic than any case studies considered by Horton.

Dinka from widespread regions recall a time when their ancestors experienced a more direct relationship with *Nhialic* than is common among traditionalists today. Once they 'knew only *Nhialic*,' Deng who was '*Nhialic* himself,' and the clan-divinities, for whom the *beny bith* was the unsurpassed mediator and focus of social cohesion. During the 1950s Lienhardt was told of the rise in the number of free-divinities in Northern Bahr el Ghazal, accompanied by a proliferation of religious practitioners. Assertions of witchcraft and the use of fetishes had also increased.

¹⁰⁴ Horton proposes a 'basic' African cosmology with a two-tier structure. As a society is exposed to new relationships and ideas the boundaries of the microcosm weaken and systems related to lesser spirits prove inadequate. Interest shifts toward a more elaborately defined supreme being. When available, the monotheism of Islam or Christianity, has been selectively used to evolve a system adequate to the macrocosm. Horton stressed the importance of the pre-existing thought-patterns, values and social matrix in determining the new synthesis. R Horton, 'African Conversion,' *Africa*, XLI/2 (April 1972) 85-108; 'On the Rationality of Conversion,' *Africa*, 45/3, (1975) 219-235; on the Dinka especially, 227.

These he attributed to the erosion of Dinka political autonomy which had altered the structures of society and encouraged increasing individualism.¹⁰⁵ Among the Bor Dinka the role once assumed by the *beny bith* gave way long ago to the *baany jak* who, with other practitioners, have continued to multiply. Once respected *jak* have been invoked by disreputable *tiet* whose promises and predictions have proved false or contradictory. Christians and traditionalists alike acknowledge that Dinka religion has deteriorated as *Nhialic* has been eclipsed.

Some Christians present a more radical scenario, saying that *Nhialic*, supreme and solitary, was once invoked by *baany bith* whom he endowed with unsurpassed spiritual authority.¹⁰⁶ These priests were, however, corrupted by greed, and yielded to disreputable powers who have increasingly assumed control. Given this version, contemporary Christians deny that, in supplanting the *jak* with the faith of Christ, they are bringing a new religion. Rather, they are restoring the direct relationship with *Nhialic* which once typified Dinka religion. Said an Agar pastor, "The people accept [the Gospel] easily because it was already in the blood and it has come like a rain which comes suddenly."¹⁰⁷

Nevertheless, the *Nhialic* of Christianity introduces qualities previously unknown. Traditionally the uninitiated layman considered himself unworthy to invoke *Nhialic* except in the most extreme, life-threatening circumstances. In the church all Christians are encouraged to make petitions directly to *Nhialic*, a freedom especially valued amidst war and displacement.

The single, unifying authority of *Nhialic* is perceived by many as essential to victory in the present war. One young SPLA combatant from near Bor was asked why his people were converting to Christianity. He explained that the *jak* were known to possess power in local disputes between neighbouring clans, but the present war was national in scope and here the *jak* were impotent. In combat with the 'Arabs' only the supreme power of *Nhialic* is adequate. Presumably the *Nhialic* of the Church, being

¹⁰⁵ A *baany bith* is quoted as saying, 'Everyone now wants to be a master.' Lienhardt, *Divinity* 104-6, 169.

¹⁰⁶ Many educated Dinka assert that their people were and remain fundamentally 'monotheistic.' See Lienhardt's quotation from a Dinka Christian, *Divinity* 138.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Rev Abraham Mayom Athiaan, Sept, 1991.

universally recognised, is also capable of uniting diverse Dinka groups with their Southern neighbours in battle against a common enemy.

As much or more than other Dinka, those of the Upper Nile have undergone profound social upheaval in the years since 1983. Repeatedly assaulted, whether by government forces, or their fellow Nilotes, they have been displaced and decimated. A pastor from the Tuic (Bor) described the rites frantically performed by *baany jak* in October, 1991, when confronted with advancing forces:

The people had heard the Nuer were coming, so each of the *baany jak* sacrificed his own cow to his *jok*, saying that his *jok* will protect the people and their cattle. When the Nuer came all the cattle were killed or taken to Nuer area. The *baany jak* depend on the cattle for sacrifices to their *jak*, but, since the cattle were taken they had nothing to kill to their *jak*. One of the *jok* said, 'The Nuer came and attacked us and they took my cow.' Because the *jok* allowed such a thing, the *beny jok* said, 'Now *jok*, you go, follow.' and *jak* have gone with the cows to Nuer country.¹⁰⁸

Dinka traditionalists have long been exhorted by their Christian minority to renounce their *jak*. It is now the *jak* who are personified as deserting their adherents. Understandably, many survivors of these raids sought entry into the Church. At Ame displaced camp near the Ugandan border some 550, predominantly Dinka, were baptised at a service in March, 1992. Among them were three *baany jak*, one of whom announced to the crowds,

You have no need to fear me. I have no more *jok* in my body. My *jok* has gone to Nuer to follow my cows.¹⁰⁹

Displaced, stripped of cattle, and deserted even by *jak*, people have sought security in the Church. Never in known history has society been so radically destabilised nor has there been such an abrupt and widespread shift of spiritual loyalties. Asked about this movement a pastor stressed the desperation of the moment:

In fact, they are looking for safety . . . Whenever the [Government] soldiers are coming they try to make some idol to move these Arabs not to come. And whenever they kill [sacrifice] these, whether five cows or bull or what, the Arabs come and burn down their houses, do what. And so they are fed up. As the Christians told them, the god they are worshipping will not protect them. The right God to worship is the one of Christianity. So they say they will try this God now. Since they have tried all this god since and satan never protect them, so

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Rev M A Gak, 14 May, 1992.

¹⁰⁹ The man was from Jale and so it is likely he was a keeper of Mangok; interview with Rev M A Gak, 14 May, 1992.

they are looking for safety. This is what I witness. And I am not sure myself if they are truly converted or they are just looking for a god where they will find safety. . . . The big word is really *protection*. Their consciousness is around property. They defend their cows, their property. When they see their children; there are no more houses, no more milk, they are conscious of property, so the theme is, "Don't loose hope, this God will protect you."¹¹⁰

During the 1960s displacement and instability in Equatoria contributed to remarkable growth of the Church among peoples from that region. Two decades later Nilotic regions have been similarly shaken and their peoples have experienced an even more radical movement.¹¹¹ Dinka Christians have often asserted that when their people embrace Christianity their decision is carefully considered and their commitment is unshakeable.¹¹² However, the degree of insecurity and desperation which accompanies this movement, raises new questions as to the depth and longevity of commitment.

2. Jesus Christ, reconciliation and armed resistance

Among Southern Sudan's diverse peoples missionaries preached Christianity as a faith of inter ethnic understanding, reconciliation and unity. At the same time they envisioned that the South would constitute a secure 'Christian Buffer-State,' an African-Christian bulwark against the southward advance of Islam.¹¹³ Both visions of the Christian gospel--as a source of reconciliation and solidarity, and as an aspect of defiant self definition and resistance--have attracted Dinka toward the Church. Both visions also find expression at the various levels at which Dinka Christians interact among their clans, with neighbouring ethnic groups, and with the 'Arabs' of Northern Sudan.

¹¹⁰ Interview with Rev M A Gak, Tuic Bor, 14 May, 1992.

¹¹¹ Nevertheless, some pastors deny that the war has had any impact, reaffirming that '*Nhialic* has come among us slowly' Said Pastor A Mayul, "We don't know, it is God who knows. He divides the time, the time for death for the people, and the time to let people repent. So, it is not our answer." Interview in Addis Ababa, 1989.

¹¹² Typically, Rev A Mayom said, "We know the minds of our people. If he says he believes, you believe him. He will not go back." Interview, Nairobi, Sept, 1991.

¹¹³ See the quotation of Bishop Allison opening this chapter. 60 years before the first GMSM missionaries established themselves on the Upper Nile the veteran missionary, Krapf, envisioned a 'thin white line' of mission stations across Africa which would serve as a bulwark against the advance of Islam. Referred to in A R Cook, 'Report of GMSM,' Jan 1906, (CMSA G3 S/01).

At the time of writing the central rite of Christian reconciliation, the Eucharist, has not become a prominent, regular, component of worship among ECS Dinka Christians in the 'Liberated Areas.'¹¹⁴ Nevertheless, ECS clergy and evangelists claim that sacrificial theology is essential to their preaching and to church growth. Reminiscent of the 'revival' message of Daniel Deng Atong, parallels are drawn between Dinka and Hebrew sacrificial traditions, both of which, it is affirmed, find their fulfilment in Christ.¹¹⁵ Among Christians Christ is exalted as the 'Lamb who was slain,' selected by *Nhialic* himself, and offered once for all to atone for human sin.¹¹⁶

This sacrificial imagery has served as the basis for unity between members of neighbouring clans, distinguished as much by the *jak* they invoke as their lineages and geographical boundaries. As rural Dinka repudiated their *jak* they found a broader basis for solidarity within the Church, as Bishop Nathaniel described:

They feel better because, now [traditionally] we have boundaries. One has his own *jok*. He eats things of his *jok*. But when we burn all these things we bring them all together and we meet together, so they feel better, more better than before. There is a tribe, another tribe that always fight with another tribe. When we build church here we bring all these people, clans, in one family so there is no quarrel between them. You see. And there is changes, changes because there is love between people. They eat together. They pray together.¹¹⁷

As the *jak* gave way to Christ, clan divisions, some marked by long-standing disputes, often abated. Also diminished were distinctions of status, age and sex, so pronounced in conventional sacrificial rites. During special occasions Christians assembled for feasts, sharing in common the meat of bulls provided by prominent Christians.

¹¹⁴ This is due to churchmanship as well as logistical limitations. In general, Pentecostal influences have not stressed the importance of the sacraments. As well, churchmen have sometimes been reluctant to celebrate Holy Communion if the customary imported utensils were not available.

¹¹⁵ Of the 195 Old Testament selections included in *Pioc de Lek Theer* (1950), none describes Jewish sacrificial rites nor is any passage from Leviticus included. The sacrifice of Isaac and the true religion of Micah (6:6-8) are among the few which might be pertinent.

¹¹⁶ In Dinka religion it is the communal sacrifice of an ox which brings hostile parties together, atones for sin, and restores harmony with *Nhialic*. The *baany jok* appoint the time for sacrifice, and designate the appropriate victim by colour, markings and sex. The sacrificial emphasis is central to the teaching of Bishop Nathaniel in Bor area as well as Archdeacon Reuben Macir in Agar. *Nyok ci nok*, 'the Lamb that was slain' appeared in *Diet ke Jieng* 1 and 51, and in many of contemporary songs. It is tempting to suggest that, due to large scale, and in some regions complete, loss of their herds, Christianity is attractive on economic grounds, but this is firmly refuted by clergy.

¹¹⁷ This and the following quotation describe events in Bor area during 1991 prior to the influx from Ethiopia and SPLA factional fighting which followed. Bishop N Garang, interview in London, 1991.

Der has his own *jok*, Banydeng; and Koc has Bar, Bar himself; and then Gwalla has his own Lirpiou; and then there Pale has his own *jok* also. But here we build a church in Kurnya; we build church at Marang. In this church we gathered all of them during the time of Christmas or all these things. We kill bulls and then we come together and eat, girls and young people, which has never been happening to the Dinka people. We eat together.

Among Christians these communal feasts do not constitute sacrifices, but their sacrificial associations cannot be fully discounted. By tradition oxen are seldom slaughtered and devoured apart from sacrifice, and these church gatherings are essentially religious celebrations presided over by clergy and accompanied by hymns and prayers. When several *baany jok* were invited to partake, they asked if they would be harmed, presumably by an inhospitable divinity. Rural Dinka were frequently surprised by the degree to which entrenched social prohibitions and boundaries were visibly transcended at such gatherings.

More difficult to overcome are the prejudices of Dinka toward neighbouring ethnic groups.¹¹⁸ Only with the upheavals of the 1980s have large segments of the rural Dinka population come into direct contact with other tribes. Under certain circumstances the growing Dinka church has coexisted with remarkable harmony in mixed communities. Exemplary were some episodes in Ethiopian refugee camps. However, the *vernacular* nature of ECS Christianity, its culturally specific music and theology, and the inclinations of many converts, mitigate against inter-ethnic worship. Particularly difficult have been periods when large numbers of displaced Dinka have surged into new regions, as occurred in Equatoria. Here the Church, its own members traumatised, has often proved impotent in suppressing tensions. Nevertheless, as destructive as inter-ethnic hostilities have been, few Dinka see them as insoluble, in contrast to the entrenched enmity between North and South.

Many Southern Sudanese speak as if there were an absolute dichotomy between the 'Arab' and Muslim North and Black African, Christian and traditionalist South. The reality, with its long history of migrations and intermarriage, is more complex.¹¹⁹ Nevertheless, this polarisation, with its racial, religious and political

¹¹⁸ Neighbouring non-cattle herding tribes are referred to as *duor*, (sing *dor*) or foreigners *juur*, (sing, *jur*). Both may suggest cattleless, agricultural societies whose manner of life is considered weak and inferior.

¹¹⁹ The writings of Dr Francis Deng document the history of this interaction, especially between the Ngok Dinka and their neighbours to the North. See especially, *The Man Called Deng Majak* (1986) and *Africans of Two Worlds* (1978) 129ff; *Dinka Cosmology* (1980) 117ff.

associations, encourages Christian conversion as a symbol of defiance and differentiation. Observing the rapid expansion of their church, some Dinka converts emphasise the strategic importance of their territories, along the Northern frontier of Southern Sudan. Reminiscent of the concept of a 'Christian Buffer-State' they see themselves as the first defence, in both religious and military terms, against the Southward advance of Islam.¹²⁰

Reasons for religious polarisation are varied and complex, extending from 19th century encounters, through Condominium policies, to the brutality and forced Islamisation which have alienated Southerners since independence.¹²¹ Christian missionaries have undeniably played a part, teaching that "Christianity is the only true religion." Noteworthy is Archibald Shaw's vernacular *Dinka Catechism* which contrasted Christianity with Islam, critiquing both the *Koran* and the Prophet. As national independence approached all existing copies were recalled and destroyed.¹²² It is doubtful, however, that such teachings did more than undergird existing attitudes.

As the character and teachings of Christ have been conveyed they stand in stark contrast to Islam in the Sudanese context. During decades of war Christians have taken comfort in Christ's courageous self sacrifice, his righteous suffering, redemptive death, and promised future kingdom. Contrary to accusations that missionaries sought to foment anti 'Arab' hostility among Southerners during the 1960s, most missionaries invoked Christ's example and encouraged forgiveness, peaceful co-existence and non-violence, teachings perpetuated by many Sudanese clergy today.¹²³ Faced with an Islamic state bent upon supplanting Christianity with

¹²⁰ Other observers suggest that the Church among the Nuba peoples of Kordofan is in a more vulnerable and strategic location.

¹²¹ During the post colonial period many negative stereotypes of the 'Arabs' and Islam have proliferated in even the most remote Dinka areas. While Christianity was long perceived as an aspect of foreign rule, the British departed and Christian missionaries ultimately left authority in Sudanese hands. By contrast the threat of 'Arab' control and Islamisation has intensified.

¹²² Shaw was perhaps the strongest missionary advocate of government restrictions on Muslim influences in the South. Shaw at Malek, 14 Aug 1910; Memorandum of Interview with Rev A Shaw, 9 Dec 1915. (CMSA Acc 111; Precis book, 14, 29). "*Ptoc de Dukor*, An Instruction for Enquirers," contained 100 questions and answers, 19 of which pertained specifically to the beliefs and practices of Islam. For the English translation of numbers 89 to 100 which accompanied the Dinka text, see Appendix. It is not clear whether CMS or Condominium officials called for the withdrawal.

¹²³ Regarding accusations made against missionaries by Northern officials see *The Black Book on the Expulsion of the Missionaries from Southern Sudan: An Answer* (1964); M O Beshir, *The Southern Sudan. Background to Conflict* (1970) 86; Sanderson (1981) 387ff. Most Sudanese churchmen have maintained a non violent stance: *The Church God-Wants-Us-To-Be. Final Document of the Diocesan Synod*, 23 Nov, (1991) 6.

Islam, however, this Christ often appears ill equipped and incongruous.¹²⁴ One Dinka pastor said, "The verses which talk about God's action [biblical accounts of God's judgement against the oppressors] are really working," . . . but, "I believe that the verses that speak about reconciliation are not active at the present time."¹²⁵

Among Dinka Christians Christ is pre-eminently the Mediator who has 'descended from heaven' to reconcile humankind with *Nhialic*.¹²⁶ As such he is not easily associated with warfare, as the following anecdote illustrates.

During 1987 the present author was abducted and held for two months by the SPLA. One of our armed guards was a middle aged Dinka man who had briefly attended school and was a Catholic Christian. He offered encouragement, assuring me of the protection of *Nhialic* and the companionship of Jesus Christ. Observing a leather packet on his neck I asked why he needed the "medicine of *Cajun*" if he was a Christian. He responded saying, "I have killed hundreds of people. I cannot carry the cross of Christ into the place of killing. When the war is over--when God has brought peace--then I will wear my crucifix once again." Traditionally the *baany bith* does not enter the battlefield: even more so the Christian Divinity of peace. For protection against the enemy the soldier felt constrained to rely on the lower powers manipulated by *tiet*.¹²⁷

For some combatants, Jesus Christ, rather than an inspiration in battle, is sought to lift the defilement which killing brings. Traditionally a warrior who has killed is prohibited from presenting himself before his divinities until he has been purified through sacrifice. Violation could bring misfortune upon his clan. Returning from battle Dinka combatants sometimes came to Fr Matong for confession, saying,

¹²⁴ On Being the Church in Damazin, Pastoral Letter from Archbishop G Zubeir to Christians in Damazin, 28 Nov, 1991, Catholic International, 1-14 March, (1992) 233.

¹²⁴ Some Sudanese Christians have expressed a feeling of betrayal that, during two civil wars, Western Christians have limited their assistance for 'the Christian South' primarily to humanitarian aid. This is in sharp contrast to Muslim allies of the Khartoum government who have contributed substantial military support.

¹²⁵ Observed this pastor, "Any song which attaches to the war, they are interested in it." Interview, 1992, name withheld.

¹²⁶ Christ embodies a number of indigenous Dinka ideals of human behaviour. He is likened to the brave man who gave his life in substitution for his condemned brother. He is similar to the good herdsman who went to retrieve cattle which had been raided and for their sake was killed.

¹²⁷ More recent reports during 1993 suggest that the cross is increasingly used as a talisman among combatants. Crucifixes are worn in battle and crosses are carved on trees around rebel camps. Certain usages would appear to parallel those of devout Muslims who wear Koranic verses, an increasingly common practice of the 'enemy' in the Sudanese civil war.

“We have killed so many people. We don’t feel worthy to go to prayer. We ask God to forgive us because we are afraid to present ourselves among people in the Church.”¹²⁸ For some at least the spiritual implications of war are of serious concern.

SPLA soldiers have embraced Christianity in growing numbers. Bishop Nathaniel recalled how, early in the war, soldiers “smoked the Bibles” they found, using the pages to role cigarettes, but later “they repented and wanted Bibles to read.” They have helped local populations construct churches and, when possible, join in prayers. During operations they have built portable prayer shelters saying, “We cannot continue unless we take *Nhialic* with us.”¹²⁹

If Dinka Christians reveal ambivalence about the person of Christ as a rallying point for battle, they find inspiration elsewhere, though they have not, to date, evolved a coherent form of liberation theology comparable to that in Latin America and South Africa. Increasingly, the songs and sermons of ECS Christians draw upon Old Testament imagery of liberation. As God led his ‘Chosen People’ in battle and liberated them from slavery, returning them to their homeland, so he will do for the Dinka.

Only one hymn among those first translated into Dinka, appears appropriate amidst military conflict. Marching to battle, Kalashnakoffs in hand, combatants sing *Onward Christian Soldiers*. When missionaries envisioned a ‘Christian Buffer-State,’ it is doubtful they anticipated at what cost it would be attained. Today the Christ they preached provides solidarity and hope among beleaguered populations. It is a mark of the seriousness with which they embrace this conciliatory Christ that he exists so uneasily in battle.

¹²⁸ Among SPLA soldiers it was understood that they had fought and killed under orders from a military authority and did not necessarily kill of their own volition. Fr D Matong, Rome, 1989.

¹²⁹ In 1992 there were eight ECS Dinka clergy among SPLA soldiers, two of whom had been ordained while enlisted. Though active soldiers, they serve as chaplains when opportunity allows. Only on Sundays are all allowed to pray. Said a pastor, “Because they are also soldiers they cannot preach those verses which can give them weakness.” Interview, 1992.

CONCLUSION

The decades since Sudan achieved independence have brought far reaching changes to Dinka peoples, but none more drastic than the years 1983-93, of which the Dinka hymn proclaims, "death has come to reveal the faith."¹³⁰ During this decade, marked by massive loss of life and displacement, Christianity has found expression in diverse settings, from the Dinka congregations, clubs and shanty town shelters of Northern Sudan, to the thatched churches in newly evangelised regions of the South. On the Southern frontier the displaced gather for worship as do their kinfolk in refugee camps across the borders in half a dozen countries.

The motivations for this expansion are complex and varied. Many Christians describe the miraculous act of *Nhialic* who "has come among us slowly, and we did not know it." Indeed, the past century reveals a remarkable shift in the meanings of Christianity, the Church, and Christian conversion among Dinka peoples. Alongside theological interpretations, however, the historical and political background cannot be discounted.

During half a century of Condominium rule Christianity gradually became the religion of small numbers of mission educated youth and 'townies.' When the British departed, political power was left largely in the hands of Northern Sudanese. As Southerners saw it, one form of colonial rule was replaced by another. Christian missions were soon supplanted by the emissaries of Islam and Arabism, under the sponsorship of the new regime. The hostilities which flared into civil war drew upon

¹³⁰ See the song by this title by Mary Aluel Longdit Garang in the Appendix.

the distrust instilled during the previous century, perpetuated by Condominium policies of separate development.

The brutality of the 17 year civil war which ensued, saw the growing polarisation of the nation, with Christianity increasingly allied with the Southern struggle for self determination. For many Southerners this was a period when the person of Christ and the ministries of the Church became essential to their identity and their survival. As Christians they asserted that they were neither Arab nor Muslim, but Black Africans whose heritage pre-dated Islam. Nevertheless, most rural Dinka were still relatively secure with their cattle, and as yet, little influenced by these trends.

Until recently Dinka youth comprised the majority of first generation Christians. During the 1960s young men migrated to urban centres in Northern Sudan. Severed from the integrated, cattle-based society of their kinfolk, they created Christian enclaves in a predominantly Muslim environment. In this context ECS churches, far from negating the cultural identity of Dinka converts, provided communities in which vernacular language, music and communal values could be maintained. To some degree this trend has continued during the 1980s, providing solidarity and continuity for the influx of the newly displaced, both young and old.

The growth of the Church across swaths of rural Dinkaland since the mid 1980s has, in part, been encouraged by the radical destabilisation of indigenous institutions under the impact of a second civil war. In some regions, the Dinka have lost most or all of their cattle, the central unifying symbol of Dinka experience. To a degree unprecedented in recent history populations have been forced to flee ancestral lands. Both of these losses have struck deeply into the sense of continuity and well-being of rural Dinka. Displacement has fragmented comparatively secure and isolated communities, thrusting them into contact with previously unknown peoples and ideas. Confidence in ancestral divinities and 'powers' has been widely undermined, not least when they have proved impotent in the face advancing armies.

Coinciding with this upheaval has been the emergence of a confident and creative community of Dinka Christian leaders. Church expansion has occurred primarily among Dinka from the former CMS sphere where responsibility devolved to

indigenous Christians at a comparatively early date. Bishop Nathaniel, with his dual spiritual lineage, embodies ideals of self determination and direct reliance on *Nhialic*, reminiscent of the 'revival' era.

Lay and ordained ministers are evolving a distinctly Dinka syntheses of churchmanship and theology. Of importance is the concept that the Dinka are 'returning' to the unmediated relationship with *Nhialic* which once typified that of the *baany bith*. The atoning sacrifice of Christ is understood as a fulfilment of the aspirations of Dinka sacrificial rites. Christian teaching has become more accessible through the continual reinterpretation of biblical narratives, especially from the Old Testament, in light of contemporary experience. An outpouring of new vernacular Christian songs reflect the contextualisation of theology, and serve as the texts for preaching and instruction.

While ECS churchmen have made concessions to Dinka values in such contentious areas as polygamy, they have remained uncompromising concerning the renunciation of ancestral divinities and 'powers.' It appears that it is precisely this radical approach which has drawn large numbers of rural Dinka. During a period of upheaval when the structures of society, and the spiritual powers which reflect them, are severely undermined, the Church offers hope of a revolutionary, new spiritual and social order under the messianic lordship of Christ.

Conversions which have occurred so rapidly during a period of great loss, raise questions as to the depth and longevity of commitment. For the present the structures being evolved within Christian communities appear supple and responsive to the profound needs of the time. Music, liturgy, drama and worship provide encouragement, give vent to profound emotion, and offer a unifying vision of *Nhialic*, his immanence and salvation.

Women and youth assume prominent responsibilities in spheres once narrowly defined by sex and age. The reconciliation achieved among Christians at local levels, though often tenuous, provides models for peaceful coexistence at inter ethnic and regional levels. Unlike 'missionary Christianity,' the church which is emerging is a broadly integrated phenomenon growing from the spiritual, psychological and social experiences of a people in transition.

Many educated Dinka have viewed the missionary era as one of heightened, but unfulfilled expectations. Those who, as children, were adopted into a new Christian lineage by missionary 'parents,' often felt, in adulthood, that they had been neglected and betrayed. In the late 19th Century Daniel Sorur and Salim Wilson, having been severed from their people, found their home among European Christians whose religion and culture they saw as the antitheses of those of their former slave masters. Both men toured European countries, trying to raise support for their oppressed peoples. Each confronted the lethargy and racism of European churches such that Sorur cried imploringly, "Our brothers, why have you forsaken us?"

Similar bonds were formed between Dinka youngsters and missionary 'fathers' throughout the Condominium era. Nevertheless, many former students believed they and their kinfolk had been treated with prejudice and neglect. At independence the Dinka, like most Southerners, asked how 'Christian' Britain could betray them to the North. The missions had propagated a faith which anticipated a safe and prosperous future under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, but, even as the missionaries withdrew, the faith they brought was being severely tested.

During two brutal civil wars Sudanese Christians have looked to the world-wide Church for solidarity, and tangible assistance. In terms remarkably like those of Daniel Sorur, they have pleaded for concrete intervention. During the present civil war, like the 'silent war' before it, they have often complained of being isolated and rejected by the international church.

The Dinka have long distrusted foreigners, preferring to rely on their own devices, and proven ancestral divinities. Recently, however, even their *jak* have been betraying them. In great extremity the Dinka have always turned to *Nhialic* as the final and ultimate source of their salvation. Now, largely in isolation, Dinka Christians are forging their own tenacious expression of Christianity. The reconciling blood of Christ mingles with the self assertion and defiance of the Dinka, so long derided by the missionaries. Together these may, by the design of *Nhialic*, offer hope of their survival and the restoration of *wei*.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACR	Comboni Missionaries' Archive, Rome
BGC	Bishop Gwynne College (ECS)
<i>BDD</i>	Bun de Diet ke Duor
CIVSEC	Civil Secretary, Sudan Government Archives, Khartoum
CCL	Circular letters of Donald C Casson (CMS)
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CMSA	Church Missionary Society Archives
CRO	Central Records Office, Khartoum
DC	District Commissioner
<i>DD</i>	<i>Diet ke Duor</i> , 'Songs of Praise'
<i>DG</i>	<i>Diet ke Gum</i> , 'Songs of Suffering'
<i>DJ</i>	<i>Diet ke Jieng</i> , 'Songs of the Dinka'
<i>DJD</i>	<i>Diet Jot ke Duor</i> , 'New Songs of Praise'
EMI	Editrice Missionaria Italiana, Bologna
FO	British Foreign Office Archives
GMSM	Gordon Memorial Sudan Mission (CMS)
HHStA	Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchive, Vienna
<i>KD</i>	<i>Kitap de Duor</i> , Dinka Prayer Book (CMS)
<i>DCCS</i>	<i>National Directory, Catholic Church of Sudan, Secretariat of the Sudan Catholic Bishops' Conference</i>
NSCC	New Sudan Council of Churches
PRO	Public Records Office, London

RCC	Roman Catholic Church
SAD	Sudan Archive, Durham
SCC	Sudan Council of Churches
<i>SCR</i>	<i>Sudan Church Review</i>
<i>SDR</i>	<i>Sudan Diocesan Review</i>
SIM	Sudan Interior Mission
<i>SNR</i>	<i>Sudan Notes and Records</i>
SPCK	Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge
SPLM / SPLA	Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement/ Sudan Peoples Liberation Army
SPP	L Sharland, Private Papers
<i>SSMM</i>	<i>Southern Sudan Mail Bag</i>
SUM	Sudan United Mission
VF	Verona Fathers/Comboni Fathers
<i>VSS</i>	<i>Voice of Southern Sudan</i>

A GUIDE TO DINKA PRONUNCIATION

The following guidelines are fairly standard for the pronunciation of Dinka words appearing in the text. Dinka language does, however, possess numerous dialects, four of which occur among songs presented in Chapter VI. For this reason some variant spellings of Dinka occur in the Appendix.

Double vowels represent an extended or breathy vowel.

- g** The letter 'g' is always as in *gain* and not as in *George*.
- c** The letter 'c' is always pronounced 'ch' as in 'church,' and not as in 'crock.' Thus *Ciec* is pronounced *Chiech*, and *Nhialic* is *Nhialich*.
- ny** The combination *ny* is pronounced like the Italian 'gna' in *Bologna* or the Spanish 'ña' in *la Cañada*. Thus *beny* is pronounced like *benny* with a very slight and lifted 'ya.'
- dh, th, nh** These combinations are pronounced with the top of the tongue pressed more firmly against the teeth than in English.
- ŋ, γ, ε, and ɔ** are letters added to the Roman alphabet.
- ŋ** is pronounced like 'ng' in *singing*.
- γ** has no equivalent in English; but approximates the Arabic 'gh' or the English 'h' with the middle of the tongue pressed to the roof of the mouth leaving a smaller space for air.
- ε** is pronounced like the 'a' in 'bat'.
- ɔ** is pronounced like the 'o' in 'lot'.

Final consonants are often softened in pronunciation: a final 'c' sounds somewhat like 'j,' 'k' somewhat like 'g,' and 't' somewhat like 'd.'

This tendency to slur the final consonant is most pronounced in the Bor dialect. *Lek Jot*, the Dinka New Testament published by the CMS, was printed with final letters in italics so that they can be slurred in Bor dialect but articulated in other dialects such as Agar.

GLOSSARY OF ARABIC AND DINKA WORDS

<i>Abuna</i>	(Ab) from <i>ab/abu</i> , 'father'; used for Christian 'priest,' Father. <i>Abundit</i> , (Ab-Dk) 'great father' (RC)
<i>Aciek</i>	(Dk) Creator divinity, synonymous with <i>Nhialic</i> , <i>Acieng</i> , adjectival form
<i>adeh</i>	(Dk) reflective exclamation
<i>acor</i>	(Dk) malign witch
<i>acuuk roor</i>	(Dk) black ants of the forest
<i>Ajang</i>	(Dk) form of <i>Jieng</i> , <i>Monyjieng</i> , personal name
<i>akuma</i>	(Ab) government
<i>amaγou, amaγou ee!</i>	(Dk Bor) 'O my mother!' exclamation in extremity
<i>apeth</i>	(Dk) person with an evil eye
<i>atiep, pl atiiip</i>	(Dk) shade, spirit of dead
<i>bai, baai</i>	(Dk) homestead, homeland, state, land & people, according to context
<i>bazinger</i>	(Ab?) armed slave soldiers
<i>beny bith, pl baany bith</i>	(Dk) master of the fishing spear, ritual priest
<i>Diangdit</i>	(Dk) 'big three,' the Trinity (ECS)
<i>dhura</i>	(Ab) sorghum, staple food of Sudan
<i>ee</i>	(Dk) reflective affirmation, 'yes'
<i>durieth</i>	(Dk) deceiver, tempter, devil
<i>fulan</i>	(Ab) somebody, anybody
<i>gol, pl gal</i>	(Dk) dungfire, gathering place, indicates both human social unit and the cattle they possess

<i>jellaba</i>	(Ab) Northern Sudanese trader, merchant
<i>'jihad; jihadiyya</i>	(Ab) religious or 'holy war'; army which executes such a war
<i>jok, pl jak; joŋ rac</i>	(Dk) 'power,' 'spirit,' in broadest, generic sense; 'bad <i>jok</i> '
<i>Jongdit Lajik</i>	(Dk) 'Great and pure power,' 'Holy Spirit' (CMS)
<i>Khawaja, pl Khawajet</i>	(Ab) Europeans
<i>kitab</i>	(Ab) book
<i>kajur</i>	(Ab) diviner
<i>Krithiano</i>	(Dk) Christian (CMS)
<i>lec jok</i>	(Dk) wooden peg, shrine of <i>jok</i>
<i>lo tweng</i>	(Dk) go forward, 'progress'
<i>Mahdi, Mahdiyya</i>	(Ab) 'Divinely-chosen one,' his movement
<i>main (or many)</i>	(Dk) poem, prose in Dinka
<i>maliaka, pl malaikai</i>	(Ab) angel
<i>ma'mur</i>	(Ab) district officer, official
<i>melek, meleng</i>	(Ab) king, adjectival form
<i>mith, pl miith</i>	(Dk) child
<i>morah</i>	(Ab) cattle camp, enclosure
<i>Muonyjieng</i>	(Dk) 'Dinka,' 'man of Jieng,' alternatively, may call themselves simply <i>Jieng</i> , especially on East Bank; corrupted forms are <i>Jienge</i> and, possibly, <i>Dinka</i>
<i>mudir, mudiriyya</i>	(Ab) governor of province; his seat
<i>nadi, pl nadiin</i>	(Ab) club
<i>Nhialic</i>	(Dk) literally, 'the one above,' supreme being of the Dinka
<i>Oyee!</i>	(Dk) exclamation, joyful, determined
<i>pan abun</i>	(Dk) 'house of the fathers,' mission station
<i>piir</i>	(Dk) life
<i>rakuba</i>	(Ab) temporary shelter of grass mats

<i>ran Nhialic</i>	(Dk) respected 'person of God'
<i>ran wal</i>	(Dk) medicine man
<i>razzia</i>	(Ab) raid, often for cattle
<i>Shariah</i>	(Ab) Islamic law
<i>theek</i>	(Dk) to respect, honour
<i>thakool</i>	(Dk) 'school,' transliterated
<i>tiet</i>	(Dk) diviner
<i>tim jak</i>	(Dk) 'wood of <i>jak</i> ', peg or shrine of a divinity or power
<i>toc (toic)</i>	(Dk) dry season grazing lands
<i>tukhl</i>	(Ab) House or hut constructed of mud and thatch
<i>Turuk</i>	(Dk) 'Turk,' applied to light skinned foreigners
<i>tuany</i>	(Dk, Agar) foreign exploiter, one who comes, exploits and leaves
<i>wa yiyee</i>	(Dk) exclamation
<i>wa, wadit, wada</i>	(Dk) 'father,' 'great father,' 'our father'
<i>wakil</i>	(Ab) agent, deputy
<i>waraka (waraga)</i>	(Ab) paper
<i>wei</i>	(Dk) literally, 'breath and life'; life force, dynamism; often used for the human 'soul' by missionaries
<i>Wei Santo</i>	(Dk/Italian) construct for 'Holy Spirit' (RC)
<i>wut; wunabun</i>	(Dk) cattle camp; cattle camp of the Fathers/mission
<i>yath, pl yeeth</i>	(Dk) clan divinity
<i>Yekalu</i>	(Dk) transliteration from Hebrew 'temple,' employed in ECS Bible translation
<i>zariba</i>	(Ab) cattle enclosure made of branches

APPENDIX A

LE PENE DEI NEGRI SCHIAVI IN AFRICA

selections by **Danial Sorur Farim Deng**

*Below are translations of Chapters I, X and XII of *Le Pene dei Negri Schiavi in Africa* by Daniel Sorur, (first published in 1888; here from "Euntes Docete" XVII, 1964, pages 51-95). The passion of Fr Sorur's writing and the scope of his vision provide an unparalleled insight into the thought of a liberated Dinka slave who became an educated Catholic churchman.*

However, Fr Sorur's writings present challenges to the translator, and it must be acknowledged that this is a tentative draft. His sentences are often extremely long, with numerous qualifying phrases, his verb forms contradictory, and grammar erratic. Future attempts deserve the careful attention of a professional translator. Nevertheless, it is felt that these passages, even in this tentative state, provide insights pertinent to this thesis.

Outline of the original booklet:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| I. Our Perpetual Slavery | XI. The Burial |
| II. The Capture | XII. Abandonment by All |
| III. The Separation | XIII. Difficulty in Conversion |
| IV. The Torment | XIV. The Harvest of Nigrizia |
| V. The Flood | XV. The Few Harvesters |
| VI. The Forced Labour | XVI. A Tear for Africa |
| VII. Cowardice | XVII. A Word for the Civilised |
| VIII. The Abandonment | XVIII. The Five Talents |
| IX. Abandonment in Old Age | <i>Dear People of Verona</i> |
| X. The Double Death | |

I. OUR PERPETUAL SLAVERY

If we consider the history of those regions of Europe which, through the Catholic Church, have had the good fortune of receiving civilisation, we doubtless find that they have been subject to every kind of barbarism, including slavery. But as soon as the Cross of Christ was lifted among them barbarism was abandoned. This was the Cross upon which the Redeemer died to free the slaves from eternal death, and by his death made them his brothers. For him there is no distinction between slave and master for all are the work of his holy hands. When the religion of Christ

appeared in the Roman Empire it was solely through the preaching of the Gospel that this abominable harvest of human beings was brought to an end. This happened despite the furious persecution inflicted upon Christ's followers. Likewise, the Cross and the light of the Gospel shone upon other empires and kingdoms of Europe so that the greed which made slaves of other peoples was demolished and humanity began to appear beautiful, liberated from its bondage.

However, some European powers took up slavery, carrying off a great multitude of Blacks from Africa to America where they sold them or forced them to work in the mines and cultivate the fields. This they did even though they had the good fortune of knowing and worshipping the true God. These were the first who brutalised humanity, maltreating these poor Blacks, beating them harshly and forcing them to shelter where even a beast would not want to sleep, as you might say.

When these masters saw that their slaves were of no further use, whether because of old age or because they were worn out from their exhausting work in the mines, they left them to rot in their filth. They found the stench given off by these benighted creatures so unbearable that they fled from them. But who came to assist them as they endured such trials? It was the servants of God, urged on by the love of God for their souls. They rushed everywhere consoling them in their miseries, washing them from their horrible stench, and feeding them with the alms which they begged from door to door. Even then their charity was not satisfied with so many beautiful works of corporal mercy. Rather, it spurred them on through ardent zeal. Preaching the divine word they led them into the true path of spiritual life. Burning with the fire of divine love (of which they were full) they taught them not only good manners, but, overcame the vices which encumbered these poor Blacks, and guided them toward a life of sanctity and virtue. These servants of God knew very well that the Blacks, even though a different colour, were like themselves. They too were children of the Heavenly Father, before whom not one of these creatures appears ugly. Indeed, they worked among them with the same zeal as that with which they worked among the whites.

But slavery was not yet at an end in America. Confronting the question of slavery in 1861 ten Southern States decided not to liberate the Blacks. Rather, they seceded from the Union, formed their own confederation, chose a president, and founded their capital at Richmond. Amassing a powerful army they fought the Union Army for four years with incredible energy. Ultimately, however, they lost the war, and their capital of Richmond was burnt. Only then were they obliged to free the Blacks whom they had maltreated to the last drop of their blood.

If these American Blacks were very lucky, having obtained the freedom given them by God through the death of his son Jesus Christ, the fate of the Blacks in Africa was different. The Turks invaded and brutalised those who lived in Black Africa and defiled them with the curse of Islam, steeping them in those despicable mysteries. Not content with this, they continually sent men from tribes in deepest Africa to capture more slaves. The Turks considered the Blacks to be unbelievers because they refused to accept their religion. So it was that the Blacks became their chief merchandise.

I have spoken of our perpetual slavery from several points of view. In moral terms we have been condemned in this manner due to the transgression of Ham, the forefather of the Blacks. It is said that, because we are his descendants we are continually subjected to slavery, now to one people, now to another. We are always the worst treated, with no one to come to our help and put an end to this cruel barbarity.

It is true that for some years some European powers have tried to lift the present yoke which oppresses the poor Blacks in Africa, but in spite of what is said, such intentions have never proved effective. Oh, if that wonderful grace could fall upon us as it did upon the Blacks of America! Ah, that we might be liberated from slavery to the Turks! But what a pity, if God does not raise within his Church new

sons of the quality of St. Louis, King of France, Goffredo di Buglione, like Corrado the Emperor of Germany, like Ludwig Giovanna, like Richard the King of England and Philip of France, and many other saints and pious Christian princes. Let them not only set out for the Holy Sepulchre and other places sanctified by the pure body of Jesus, but let them liberate those unhappy Blacks of Africa. For them also the blood of the Redeemer was poured out. Let them unleash their enthusiasm so that they might preach the holy Gospel with liberation! However, this will never be done as long as those Kings continue to accumulate gold in their coffers, unless it be through a powerful miracle of the Highest. Is my lamentation fair or not? I know of many who have heard specific cases of slavery in Africa. Certainly they empathised, but in the end they do nothing to relieve those who are oppressed from their burdens. Will we never be liberated then? O! Never! Let me say, my dear readers, we will never be liberated. And why? Because at the present the world is busy getting rich, creating princes, creating dukes, and perhaps enthroning Kings. All the while those who are unhappy are offered pity but they are not helped! By the viscera of Jesus Christ I plead with you to help, you who belong to the religion of Christ and profess all that is said by his Church! You, Kings and monarchs, for all that you hold dear on the earth, I implore you to have pity upon the Blacks. Free them from the Turks! O, you who are content, be moved by their misery, and offer yourselves as liberators of those poor ones who suffer such calamities.

X. THE DOUBLE DEATH

When a poor Black slave has been worn out by his long, unbearable suffering and old age, and is near to death, he is thrown out onto the sand in barren land. He lays utterly alone, with no one to comfort him. There is none to tell him of God, or of his inevitable and terrible judgement. No one tells him of his soul, or of Hell and the eternal torment which it contains. He turns his head around, knowing that death is near. There is no escape from its terrible sickle. He breaks out in a cold sweat and his features begin to change: the eyes no longer see the light; the hands don't move; he is stiff, in all his body he thinks that every breath is his last one. At last the poor creature is dead. And immediately he finds himself in front of his Creator; before his Divine Redeemer. He is before the one who redeemed him, Jesus who created Him, Jesus who is his God. Now he must be judged by Jesus who knew the poor Black. And what sentence will be given by that inexorable judge? Ah! His soul is stained. I don't mean by original sin. I do not refer to sins which he cannot avoid because he has never been baptised. Rather, I mean other kinds of evil sins. Will he be sentenced to eternal death? Oh! What a death! Throughout, his deplorable life on earth his existence was full of pain. Forced to do hard labour, it was filled with bitter suffering, his life an aching void. And yet, after this he will be damned! He will die not only in his body, experiencing the separation of soul from flesh, but also spiritually. Having his soul separated for all eternity from his High God, he will dive into the abyss of Hell with no hope of redemption. Endless misery, misery without comfort!

Isn't this, beloved readers, a death truly worthy of the compassion of the Christians who know what Jesus Christ has suffered for the sake of his miserable soul? Isn't this a death worse than the one assigned to the heretics, schismatics, the Protestants, and a thousand other sects who were separated because of their arrogance? They separated themselves, building a damn between themselves and the holy, immutable stone, the holy Immaculate, the Bride of Christ, the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church. The terrible condition cannot be denied or hidden, for even these rebels from the Roman Church, will ultimately have an opportunity to be reconciled with God. When the last time comes for their stay on this earth, they may still reject their heresies. But a slave, who has never heard of God his creator or the Church of

God, how could he desire this or imagine it? They are more lucky, those Christians who, deep within their hearts, can give sincere thanks to God. When they reach the last moments of their mortal life, they can at least invite the minister Jesus Christ to come near and comfort them. They may receive the final assistance which was given for this purpose, the Holy Sacraments. Oh, yes! And a thousand times more the Christians, yes, better still, the Catholics! By the great mercy of God you have been born and converted within the Holy Roman Church, as I myself have. Would you not likewise want your brothers in God to partake of what you have so freely obtained by grace? Who may participate in such grace, if not the miserable Black slaves whose disgrace must be brought to an end. Their bodies are barbarously oppressed, made the slaves of the Muslims, while their souls are enslaved by the Devil. For the sake of everything you hold dear in the world, have compassion, pray, help and give donations. Come to aid of these poor Blacks. Help to lift them from their misery and they will faithfully hope that God will generously reimburse you. One day he will repay you one hundred times the cost of your Christian charity on behalf of the miserable Hamites.

XII. ABANDONMENT BY ALL

The abandonment by all! Oh yes, it is so, the abandonment by all! For a very long time word has been coming about the abolition of slavery in Africa. Perhaps this has been circulated for Turkish interests, but it has not been put into practice. Today we still see a long line of slaves being carried to the market by the *jellaba*. Why then should we waste our efforts trying to encourage those who, moved by the love of God, wish to see us free?

Why should they work on behalf of those poor souls, running to assist those already in the battlefield so they can emerge winners in the war against the devil? But if we are forsaken by all, we will at least turn to our God, because he has created us to love him, to serve him, and enjoy him for eternity in Paradise. He will have mercy upon us. Even Jesus Christ himself felt the bitter pain of abandonment. He found himself forsaken by the very ones whom he blessed and even by his closest friends. He prayed to his Divine Father asking him in love: *Pater ut quid dereliquisti me?* Oh Father why have you forsaken me? We likewise should say the same. Indeed, we say it to our brothers in Christ Jesus, to those who had the good fortune of being born in the heart of the Holy Roman Church, those who seem to have forsaken us. *Fratres nostri ut quid dereliquistis nos?* But if no one will give us succour among such a multitude of Catholics, if none will give alms or offer prayers which have value before our heavenly Father, then we will turn to Mary of sorrows. She is the one who weeps at the foot of the cross of her dying Son. We will pray to her saying: O Powerful Virgin, you whose Holy Heart was pierced by cruel swords: You whom your dying son gave to us as Mother in the Person of St. John, turn your tender gaze upon us. Free us from the hands of those tyrants, the Muslims, for we too are children of the Highest. For us too Your Son Jesus died upon the hard wood of the tree. Oh Mother, you whose mercy has never neglected any wasted soul, we who know you, we come to you. We beg you to have mercy on us, and remove the curse cast upon our brothers because of Ham. You too have suffered greatly for our sake. Beneath the Cross you were also thinking about the souls of our brothers, and about our souls, that, by the mercy of God, they would not be lost forever.

We beseech you not only to have mercy upon our sinful souls, but upon the souls of those poor Blacks. Be merciful even though they do not know your and our God, though they do not honour You as Mother of your and our God. Yes, yes, Mother, hasten to stop those disasters and sufferings which the poor Hamites endure

at the hands of the Turks. We will be devoted sons, and spread your holy devotion across the expanse of Africa which God will assign to us in the season of harvest. We will cultivate and harvest the good grain for his Kingdom throughout all eternity. Amen.

And you, O Catholics who assist us, and those of you who would not help us, let us turn to the Cross. Let us gaze upon the Cross that we may see the love revealed by our God, for he has not forsaken us to the misery in which we are all born because of Adam. There, I say, we will see that he does not distinguish between White and Black, yellow or red, but he dies to free us all, all. And if you will still be hard, unwilling to help, we will go to Jesus who died not only for you whites, but also for us Blacks, and will join Our Heavenly Father to ask him with love and with faith, repeating the words that Jesus whispered in his last moments. *Pater noster, Pater Noster, ut quid dereliquisti nos?* We may be assured that He, touched by our tears, will free us from the slavery of the Muslims over our bodies, and that of Satan over our souls. Forever, forever.

APPENDIX B

AN INSTRUCTION FOR ENQUIRERS, 1927

EXTRACT ON ISLAM

The Dinka Catechism, Pioc de Dukoor, An Instruction for Enquirers, by Archibald Shaw, was published in 1927 as one section of the 'Tentative Edition' of the Gospels and Acts by The Religious Tract Society. Each section of the volume was self contained with its own page numbering. The original was published in Dinka with interlinear English translations. The Instruction consisted of 100 questions and responses providing Dinka catechumens with basic teaching on Christian doctrine and practice. The 20 selected below (pages 23-29) provide teaching on Islam. As national independence approached orders were given that all existing copies of the Instruction be destroyed.

81. Q: *How do we know that Christianity is the only one true religion?*
 A: Because Jesus has told us "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me."
82. Q: *Where did the Mohammedans get their religion from?*
 A: From Mohammed, an Arab who lived in Arabia 600 years after Christ, and who called himself the prophet of God.
83. Q: *What is their religion founded upon?*
 A: It is founded upon the Koran, which Mohammed wrote in Arabic, and which only learned men can read.
84. Q: *What does the Koran contain?*
 A: The Koran contains some true stories from the Bible, mixed with many other things, some of which are not true.
85. Q: *How do we know that it is not a book sent by God?*
 A: Because it pretends to take the place of the Bible, and because we find in it things that we know are not right.
86. Q: *Name some of the things the Koran tells us that are not right.*
 A: *Having four wives and many concubines, permission to make slaves, and hating and killing people because they are of another religion.*
87. Q: *What do the Mohammedans think about their prophet?*
 A: They think that Mohammed will intercede for them at the Day of Judgement.

88. Q: *Did Mohammed himself ever promise to intercede for them?*
A: No. Mohammed never said that, but he himself acknowledged that he was a sinner, and prayed to God for forgiveness.
89. Q: *What do Mohammedans believe about their heaven (aljanna)?*
A: That it is a place where they will have hundreds of wives, and enjoy themselves and feast, as men do here on earth.
90. Q: *What does the Mohammedan religion require them to do?*
A: To say the "kalima," to give alms, to say the prayers five times a day, to keep the Fast, and to go to the pilgrimage to Mecca.
91. Q: *Are these things able to bring salvation to anyone?*
A: Only faith in Jesus Christ Whom God sent can save a man.
92. Q: *What else do Mohammedans in this country believe in?*
A: They like to make and wear charms, which they believe will help and protect them.
93. Q: *What good things are there in the Mohammedan religion?*
A: Their belief in the One True God, and their separation from idols.
94. Q: *What are the signs of a true religion that can help men?*
A: A Saviour Who can intercede for us with God, the way to get power to live a holy life, and an inspired Book sent from God.
95. Q: *How do we know that Mohammedanism is not a true religion?*
A: Because it has no saviour to tell about, it gives no power to live a good life, and the book it has is not from God.
96. Q: *What things are there in Mohammedanism that are specially wrong?*
A: The way it denies that Jesus is the Son of God, and that he died on the cross; and the permission it gives to slavery, polygamy, and to divorce for any reason at all.
97. Q: *Why is it wrong to catch and sell men as slaves?*
A: Because we ought to do to others as we would like them to do to ourselves, and because God has made all men free.
98. Q: *Why is it wrong to have more than one wife?*
A: Because in the beginning God made one woman for one man, and because Jesus has told us that the husband and wife become one.
99. Q: *Is it right that a man should divorce his wife whenever he wants to?*
A: No. It is a sin to divorce a wife for any cause except adultery.
100. Q: *Why is it that many people like to become Mohammedans?*
A: Because it is an easy religion, and allows men to do many evil things that please them, and teaches them to despise others.

APPENDIX C
INDEX TO DINKA SONGS

ORIGINAL TEXTS IN DINKA

(with selected English translations not appearing in the text)

Songs which appear in the Appendix in *both* 'original' (traditional) and 'revised' ('christianised') forms are designated by an 'O' or an 'R' after their identifying numbers. Songs which appear below in *both* Dinka and English are designated by a 'D' or 'E' at the end of their numbers.

THE SONGS OF DINKA CATHOLICS

1. *Primal ancestors and the Prayerbook*

CPB137	<i>God and our ancestors of old</i>	342
--------	-------------------------------------	-----

2. '*Progress*' and faith: School Songs

SS135	<i>The Bishop</i>	342
SS137	<i>Maria is feared</i>	343

3. *Indigenous song recreated: Father Matong*

DM1OD	<i>Nhialic has people who worshipped</i>	344
DM1RD	<i>Nhialic has the person whom he sent</i>	
DM2OD	<i>The evil that befalls people</i>	345
DM2OE	<i>The evil that befalls people</i>	346
DM2RD	<i>Prayer in time of national calamity</i>	
DM2RE	<i>Prayer in time of national calamity</i>	347
DM3OD	<i>Our creator descended from heaven</i>	348
DM3OE	<i>Our creator descended from heaven</i>	
DM3RD	<i>Our creator descended from heaven</i>	
DM3RE	<i>Our creator descended from heaven</i>	349
DM4OD	<i>No man should hate another</i>	
DM4OE	<i>No man should hate another</i>	
DM4RD	<i>No man should hate another</i>	350
DM4RE	<i>No man should hate another</i>	

4. Abuna Athiaan Deng: revolutionary poet

ADG1	<i>Deng and Muhammed</i>	351
------	--------------------------	-----

THE SONGS OF DINKA ANGLICANS

2. Nhialic versus jak: 'Songs of the Dinka'

DJ7	<i>The book of heaven</i>	353
DJ3	<i>Jesus help us</i>	
DJ18	<i>A changed heart</i>	
DJ49	<i>We declare</i>	354
DJ46D	<i>What killed him?</i>	
DJ46E	<i>What killed him?</i>	355
DJ22	<i>Lord of peace</i>	
DDA58D	<i>What the heart desires</i>	356
DDA58E	<i>What the heart desires</i>	357

3. Solidarity among aliens: 'Songs of Praise'

DJD73	<i>Fill our hearts</i>	357
DJD121	<i>He died and rose again</i>	358
DJD44	<i>Go and come</i>	

4. Song amidst war: 1983 - 1993

a. Songs of celebration and growth

AM4D	<i>Nhialic has come slowly</i>	359
AM4E	<i>Nhialic has come slowly</i>	360
BDD266	<i>The feast of the town</i>	361
BDD183	<i>Windstorm</i>	362
DG689	<i>Church committees</i>	
BDD184	<i>Have you prepared?</i>	363
AM1	<i>Eaten by jok</i>	
BDD177	<i>Cool Heart</i>	364

b. 'Songs of suffering'

DG448	<i>Cover us</i>	364
DG372	<i>Conflict with death</i>	365
DG480	<i>Who created us?</i>	
DG480	<i>Let us return</i>	366

c. 'Government songs'

DG307/328	<i>Building your house</i>	367
DG387	<i>Left hand and right</i>	
DG413	<i>Life and death</i>	368
DG373	<i>Owners of the land</i>	369
BDD86D	<i>Death has come</i>	
BDD86E	<i>Death has come</i>	370
DG801	<i>The Pipeline</i>	371

THE TEXTS OF DINKA SONGS

1. Primal Ancestors and the Prayerbook

NHIALIC KU WARKUAN THEER (CPB137)

GOD AND OUR ANCESTORS OF OLD

Rok ku Diɛt, Dinka Prayerbook, (Wau: 1950) 137.

Ayee, yeku miith Aciek, yeku Wada nhiaar ee,
 Ayee, Nhialic aci raan cak, ee, aci raan cak,
 ee kecin kerac, kecin thou.
 Garaŋ, ca loi kedä, ku yin Abuk ca loi kedä?
 Garaŋ ku Abuk, ee, wek aci miethkun rac.
 Garaŋ ku Abuk, ee, wek aci Nhialic dhol.
 Nhialic aci kuc ok ee; ok a miith raan, ee.
 Ok aa miith raan ci Nhialic dhol.
 Nhialic aci yenyin pɛɛn ok ku tem thou ku lɛŋ, ee.
 Garaŋ ku Abuk, ee, wek aci miethkun rac.
 Buk Bɛny Acieŋ cak ok wac eŋo? Buk wac eo? ee.
 Aci warkua wac riŋ weŋ ku thok.
 Ba riŋ la lim tene acuok kedä?
 Bi raan awar e riɛm e lan baai kedä?
 ŋeny e Nhialic aca acuk dhal.

2. 'Progress' and faith: 'School Songs'

THE BISHOP (SS135)

'School Song' No 135 as recorded by F M Deng, in *Dinka Songs* (1973) 253-4. The original Dinka lyrics are not included with Dr Deng's copy. Sanderson notes that this song in praise of Bishop Mason and Fr Pasina, must have been composed between 1958 and 1959. The Islamising influences referred to could not have been prior to 1958; Pasina was prohibited from re-entering Sudan in 1959. (1981) 253, 404-5.

We shall honour our Lord
 We shall honour the Bishop,
 We shall honour Edward,
 He is the master at our head
 Our Master appointed by the Creator to keep us
 He is given life to keep us

And given power to keep us
 We are the children of Mary
 We are the children of Mary, the Immaculate
 Our Immaculate Mother.
 Let us honour the Bishop
 Let us honour Edward.
 May our master Edward sleep in peace.
 The master with life will sleep in peace.
 He has put the land in order
 The land is held by our master
 The land is held by the master of the Christians
 The Great Mason is the master
 of the Christians of Bahr el Ghazal
 And he is the master of the world.
 I honour the master
 Ayom of my father, we have arrived
 Bussere, we have arrived
 Our big home, the mission of Kwajok
 Our mission will go to the big town
 The followers of Father Fazzine will bring the cloud.
 We are honouring our Father
 He is the master to overcome the evil
 that confronts us
 When the evil spirits come,
 Mohammed comes to break our divine laws
 Mathiang Guk comes to break our divine laws
 Our big Father is the protector.
 Our Father Fazzine is showing us many things
 The many things of God
 Our father has spoken
 Ecclesia
 Our master will put the land in order by his Church.
 The mission of Kwajok, we build with our hand
 We build our home with our hands and our hearts
 The Head Priest here
 And our Mother Kapila here
 She came with her own flank
 her girls who could not be counted
 Then the people who lumbered in the woods
 And those who dug the ground
 The school was built
 Kwajok was built
 Our home was built.

MARIA IS FEARED (SS137)

'School Song' No 137 as recorded by F M Deng, in *Dinka Songs* (1973) 255-6. Original
 Dinka lyrics are not included with Dr Deng's copy.

Maria, our Mother, is feared by evil spirits
 Cries arose in the middle of the day
 Mother
 Help us
 The war of evil spirits,

Our mother is feared by spirits.
 We cry and call you with a loud voice
 O O O
 And you come to save us from evil spirits.
 The war is grave
 The war against the spirits of the world.
 We shall fasten our hearts
 We shall bear no fear
 When our mother is near.
 Spirits fear your name
 Maria our mother is feared.

3. Indigenous song recreated: Father Dominic Matong

NHIALIC ELAŋ KOC THEER WAAR YE DOOR (DM10D)

NHIALIC HAS PEOPLE WHO WORSHIPPED HIM LONG AGO

Dominic Matong 1, Original Hymn in Dinka

Nhialic elan kɔc theer waar ye door,
 ya Abuŋ Deŋ ke wa Garaŋ
 ku yayi rook ba ya wil ciet e pɛɛi,
 Nhialic elan kɔc theer waar ye door,

ɣɛn nak Mabior ci Nhialic thiok
 bi wa ɣok yiek wei ɣɛɛ Deŋ Abuk,
 ka wei ɣɛɛ, Deŋ Abuk, ka wei ɣɛɛ, ka wei ɣɛɛ,
 ka wei e weŋ ku raan,
 ɣɛn nak Mabior ci Nhialic thiok
 bi wa ɣok yiek wei ɣɛɛ (2)

NHIALIC ELAŋ RAANDEEN CI TOOC (DM1CD)

NHIALIC HAS THE PERSON WHOM HE SENT

Dominic Matong 1, Revision in Dinka (DM1RD)

(English translation, DM1CE, is in the text):

Nhialic elan Raandɛɛn ci tooc,
 ce Jesu guop, Wenden Juol,
 bi ɣok bɛn lɛk te buk duor Wun
 bi ya wil ciet e pɛɛi--
 Nhialic elan Raandɛɛn ci tooc. (2)

ɣok juar Acuil Wen Nhialic
 ci Nhialic thiok, bi wa ɣok yiek wei ɣɛɛ,
 Wa Madhol ka wei ɣɛɛ, wa Wendeen kawei ɣɛɛ,
 ka wei ɣɛɛ, ka wei ɣɛɛ,
 ka wei e raan e pinynhom,
 ɣok juar Acuil Wen Nhialic,
 bi wa ɣok yiek wei ɣɛɛ-- (2)

Acuil toŋ yen, nhiɛɛr Nhialic,
 bi Wa ɣok yiek wei ɣɛɛɛ--
 Acuil toŋ yen, ci dɔɔr bæi,
 bi Wa ɣok yiek wei ɣɛɛɛ--
 Acuil toŋ yen, e kɔc koc,
 bi Wa ɣok yiek wei ɣɛɛɛ--
 Acuil toŋ yen, cin ke wɛɛr ye,
 bi Wa ɣok yiek wei ɣɛɛɛ--
 Acuil toŋ yen, wei bæi,
 bi Wa ɣok yiek wei ɣɛɛɛ--
 Acuil toŋ yen, kɔc matic,
 bi Wa ɣok yiek wei ɣɛɛɛ--
 Acuil toŋ yen, cin ke thoŋ kek,
 bi Wa ɣok yiek wei ɣɛɛɛ--
 Acuil toŋ yen, miɛt puou bæi,
 bi Wa ɣok yiek wei ɣɛɛɛ--
 Acuil toŋ yen, dhol lo nhial,
 bi Wa ɣok yiek wei ɣɛɛɛ--
 Acuil toŋ yen, Nhialic bæi piny,
 bi Wa ɣok yiek wei ɣɛɛɛ--
 Acuil toŋ yen, Wuoot matnhom,
 bi Wa ɣok yiek wei ɣɛɛɛ--

KEREC CI KOC YOK

THE EVIL THAT BEFALLS PEOPLE (DM2OD)

Dominic Matong 2, Original Hymn in Dinka. Father Matong notes that this hymn is sung in time of war or when a community confronts a major epidemic such as small pox.

Ok mith Aciek ɣee ok cie diɛɛr ke bi ok nyaai
 Ok mith Aciek
 ɣee ɣok cie diɛɛr ke nyiei ook ee . . . (X2)
 Yake Wa door apath, ee
 ka leng ke bi lueel nhiak ee . . . (X2)
 Nhialic aleng ke lueel (X2)
 Yake Wa door apath ɣee
 ka leng ke bi lueel rial ee
 Nhialic aleng ke lueel! (X 2)
 Yin wel ping Nhialic
 ɣee meenh col Deng
 yen ci la lony luang e peei
 Yin wel e ping Nhialic ee . . .
 Aciek athiok ku ben elueel e mec ɣee Nhialic ɣee--
 Aciek athiok
 ku ben e lueel e kec ɣeet.

THE EVIL THAT BEFALLS PEOPLE (DM2OE)

Dominic Matong 2, Original Hymn in English

We, the children of the Creator, are not fearful
 of what may take us away,¹
 we children of the Creator
 we are not fearful of what may take . . . (X2)
 Let us rightly worship our Father
 for one day he will have the final word²
 Nhialic will have something to say. (X2)
 Give appropriate worship to our Father
 for in the future he will speak with authority
 Nhialic has something to say!
 Oh Nhialic, hear what the people say,
 This is why a man called Deng
 fell down from the beyer of the moon
 Oh Nhialic, hear what the people say
 The Creator is near, though the people say he is far;
 The Creator has arrived
 though you think he has not yet come.

PRAYER IN TIME OF NATIONAL CALAMITY (DM2RD)

Version of *KEREC CI KOC YOK* by Dominic Matong 2, Revision in Dinka

γok mith Aciek γee, γok cie diær
 ke bi γo nyaai, Kiritho yen ace lueel
 γok miith Aciek γee γok cie riooc
 ke bi ok nyaai xee
 Kiritho yen ace luel
 Yake Nhialic door apath ee
 ka leŋ ke bi lueel Nhiak ee
 Kiritho aci γok yiook
 yake Nhialic door
 ecok γee ka leŋ ke bi lueel rial, ee,
 Kiritho aci γok yook,
 Yin wel piŋ Nhialic, ee,
 ee Jethu Bany, yen ci bən piny
 Pan e Nhialic, yin wel piŋ Nhialic, ee.
 Ce Jethu Bany yen, ci bən piny,
 ku bi dɔɔr bən;
 Yin wel piŋ Nhialic, ee

 Ce Jethu Bany yen, ci bən piny, bi γok bən piooc
 yin wel piŋ Nhialic, ee
 Ce Jethu Bany yen, ci bən piny, bi γok bən γɔɔr;
 yin wel piŋ Nhialic, ee
 Ce Jethu Bany yen, ci bən piny, e rin Pirda;
 yin wel piŋ Nhialic, ee
 Ce Jethu Bany yen, ci bən piny, ke ye naar Wuoot;

¹ Death, war, etc.

² When we die he is judge of all our actions.

yin wel piŋ Nhialic, ee
 Ce Jethu Bany yen, ci Tim Ciriū ket kuurnhom;
 yin wel piŋ Nhialic, ee
 Ce Jethu Bany yen, ci thou e rienkua ku buk pir;
 yin wel piŋ Nhialic, ee
 Ce Jethu Bany yen, ci γok luok tene joŋ rac;
 yin wel piŋ Nhialic, ee
 Ce Jethu Bany yen, ci γok nyuoth dhol la paan Nhial;
 yin wel piŋ Nhialic, ee
 Ce Jethu Bany yen, ci γok nyuoth yin Wun Madhol;
 yin wel piŋ Nhialic, ee.

PRAYER IN TIME OF NATIONAL CALAMITY (DM2RE)

Dominic Matong 2, Revision in English

We children of the Creator are not afraid,
 of what may take us, Christ has said it,
 We children of the Creator have no need to be afraid
 of what may take us away,
 Christ has said it.
 Let us offer appropriate worship to Nhialic
 because of the words he will say tomorrow
 Christ has told us,
 Worship God properly,
 for he has something to say in future
 Christ has told us,
 O Nhialic, you hear the words!
 for the Lord Jesus has come to earth,
 from the house of God,
 O Nhialic, you hear the words!
 It is the Lord Jesus who has come down . . .
 so that peace may come;
 O Nhialic, you hear the words!
 It is the Lord Jesus who has come down
 to teach us;
 O Nhialic, you hear the words!
 It is the Lord Jesus who has come down
 to save us; . . .
 . . . for our salvation; . . .
 . . . he is the uncle of all Nations³ . . .
 . . . has carried the cross to the top of the rock⁴
 . . . has died so we might have life; . . .
 . . . has snatched us away from the devil; . . .
 . . . has shown us the road to heaven;
 . . . has shown us the Lord Almighty;⁵ . . .

³ Here, the paternal uncle who carries the spiritual authority of the family. He is the one most feared by the children. One must not cannot argue with him beyond certain limits because of the power to bless or to curse which he possesses.

⁴ Suggesting the manner in which Jesus brought salvation.

⁵ *Madhol* may be translated 'powerful' and is applied primarily to Nhialic.

ACIENGDA KA LONY NHIAL (DM3OD)
OUR CREATOR DESCENDED FROM HEAVEN

Dominic Matong 3, Original Hymn in Dinka

Father Matong noted that this song might be sung at any sacrifice to *Nhialic*, but especially when the sacrifice is directed to Deng. The Dinka term *lony* literally means 'to fall', but in a religious context suggests one, such as a prophet or 'power', who is sent to earth by *Nhialic* or divinity.

Aciengda ka lony nhial e wei weng ku raan,
 Ci wa be ben ku buk looi angu?
 Lok Bany rook, (X2 from "Ci wa...)
 Alony e lit yen Waa;
 Aciengda ka lony nhial e wei weng ku raan,
 alony lit yen wa-Madhol,
 Aciengda ka lony nhial e wei weng ku raan.

OUR CREATOR DESCENDED FROM HEAVEN (DM3OE)

Dominic Matong 3, Original Hymn in English

The Creator has descended to earth
 for the souls of cattle and men
 Now that our Father has come what shall we do?
 Let us go to adore the Lord, (X2)
 Our father has descended with resounding noise,⁶
 The Creator has descended to earth
 for the souls of cattle and men
 Let us pray to the almighty Father.
 The Creator has descended to earth
 for the souls of cattle and men

ACIENGDA ACI BEN PINY (DM3RD)
OUR CREATOR DESCENDED FROM HEAVEN

Dominic Matong 3, Revision in Dinka

Aciengda ka lony nhial
 ku bi wei e raan ben piir
 Ci wa be ben ku buk looi ango?
 Lok Bany door.
 Aciengda aci ben piny
 Aciengda ka ci ben ku bi wei raan ben piir,
 Aci rot mat yen Wa Madhol!
 Aciengda ka ci ben piny ku bi wei e raan ben piir.
 Aci rot mat yook Banyda,
 Aciengda ka ci ben piny

⁶ Like the noise of thunder.

ku bi wei raan ben piir.
 Aci rot mat yen Wa Madhol,
 Aciengda ka ci ben piny
 ku bi wei e raan ben piir.
 Ci Wa rot mat ku buk looi ango?
 Lok Bany door,
 Aci rot mat yen Banyda . . .

OUR CREATOR DESCENDED FROM HEAVEN (DM3RE)

Dominic Matong 3, Revision in English

Our Creator has descended
 to save the *wei* of mankind
 Since our Father has come what shall we do?
 Let us go to worship the Lord.
 Our Creator has come down
 Our Creator has come to save the life of mankind
 He, the Almighty Father has met with us
 Our Creator has come to save the life of mankind . . .

[lines repeated]

DIET E CIEN RAAN MAN RAANDET (DM4OD)

NO MAN SHOULD HATE ANOTHER

Dominic Matong 4, Original Hymn in Dinka

Father Matong notes that this is a hymn of reconciliation usually sung at large communal sacrifices for those who have quarreled. Though the Dinka have been at war since the beginning of time this hymn expresses the people's underlying desire that hatred should cease throughout the lands of which they know.

Diet e cien raan man raandet
 Nhialic e waa diet ecien,
 raan man raandet e piny thok aram. (X2)

Gut Ngong Jok--Diet e cien raan man raandet
 Nhialic e waa diet ecien,
 raan man raandet e piny thok aram. (X2)

Le guot Agaar--Diet e cien raan man raandet . . . (X2)
 Gut Apung Giir-- . . .
 Le guot Lueec-- . . .
 Le guot Jurcol-- . . .
 Gut Tuiny Ayuel-- . . .
 Gut Tuiny Bol-- . . .
 Gut Ngong Kuol-- . . .
 Le Guot Malual-- . . .

NO MAN SHOULD HATE ANOTHER (DM4OE)

Dominic Matong 4, Original Hymn, in English

No man should hate another,
Nhialic our Father it should never happen,
 that one man hates another
 any place, even to the end of the earth.

Up to Ngok of Jok no man should hate another,
Nhialic our Father it should never happen,
 that one man hates another
 any place, even to the end of the earth.

Up to Ajaar-Diet no man should hate another . . .
 (. . . and etc.)

NO MAN SHOULD HATE ANOTHER (DM4RD)

Dominic Matong 4, Revision in Dinka

Diet e cien raan man raandet
 Nhailic e waa diet ecien
 raan man raadet e pinynhom eben thok aram. (X2)

Ku buk Nhialic ñic, diet e cien raan man raandet
 Nhailic e waa diet ecien
 raan man raadet e pinynhom eben thok aram. (X2)

Ku buk nhiaar; diet e cien raan man raandet . . .
 Nhailic e waa diet ecien
 raan man raadet e pinynhom eben thok aram. (X2)

Ku nhiaar ku rot . . .
 Ku loiku long . . .
 Thek Wur ke moor ku kocdit . . .
 Ku buk rot ci nak . . .
 Ku bi kor liu . . .
 Diet e cien raan . . .
 Ku bi cueer liu . . .
 Ku liu jam e lueth . . .
 Ku e kook liu ku dit e puou . . .
 Ku ting luoidu, bi rondeek liu . . .

NO MAN SHOULD HATE ANOTHER (DM4RE)

Dominic Matong 4, Revision in English

No man should hate another
Nhialic our Father it should never happen,
 that one man hates another anywhere,
 even to the end of the earth.

So that we know *Nhialic*,
 no man should hate another
Nhialic our Father it should never happen,
 that one man hates another anywhere,
 even to the end of the earth.

So that we love [him] . . .
 no man should hate another
Nhialic our Father it should never happen,
 that one man hates another anywhere,
 even to the end of the earth.

So that we love one another . . .
 So that we keep his Law . . .
 Respect your father, your mother, and the elders . . .
 We should not kill one another . . .
 There should be no adultery . . .
 There should be no theft . . .
 There should be no falsehood . . .
 There should be no covetousness and greed . . .
 Look after your duty and don't be lazy . . .

4. Abuna Athiaan Deng: revolutionary poet

DENG KU MUHAMMED BAAI SUDAN (ADG1)

DENG AND MUHAMMED IN THE LAND OF SUDAN

Acie pal wien-nhom yen raan e kɔc guəl cok.
 Acie cuet buoŋ e lɔɔr yen aluiny kuc lööŋ e dheen.
 Ku lööŋ a wan-wan.
 Acie puɔl be baai wat yen aderjoŋ kuc biook
 ku akuen e kac ke.
 E rin ril biook e raanic tene biook e weŋ.
 Ku metil ace nyuc e baai nhom,
 bi kuat ya tek thok e kak e baiyic,
 aye baai tek thok ke roŋ kec lööny piny.

Acin awuoc thin buk piu e kiir dek
 e bieny tok ɣo yin Mohamed.
 E rin e yin, ɣok ace dhieth pan tok.
 Acin Awuoc thin buk ayaŋ e Wuontok rɔm ɣok e yin.
 E rin rɔm ɣok rin e baai.
 Acin wuoc thin buk cath e dhol toŋ e piir ɣok yin
 E rin ci ɣo dhieth pan tok.

Det, duk e ɣen be liaap e lööŋ e Nhialicdu.
 Ku duk e ɣen be liaap e lööŋ e ciɛŋdu.
 E rin yin acie ɣa, ku ɣen acie yi.
 Na nhiaŋ ke rac tene raan cin guop awuoc;
 e rin ci yen e kuatdu, ke ɣen acin theny ke yin.
 E rin ci weikie e ŋaaŋ e luc-luc e raan cin guop a wuoc.
 Na nhiaŋ wet-wet ku man bioth, ka yin aci ɣen be wat.
 E rin na welku wien nhom, ke yin a kuc biooth.

Ku yok ace dhol ton e piir mat yok yin.
 E rin kuc yin rot, ku kuc nhiak ku waar akol e Sudan.
 Na ye dol tene manh e baai ci kuoc luoidu col atol.
 Ke yok acin theny yok e yin--
 e rin cin pei wei e cieta puoth e luocic.
 Wele yondu thok te wic piandu,
 ku yen abe yondie welthok te wic piandie.
 E rin yin acie ya, ku yen acie yi.
 Ye nhialicdu leec aniendu yic e thon e moor ke wur.
 Ku yen abe nhialic die ya leec anien dieyic
 ethon e ma ke wa.
 Ku duk en be liap e loon e nhialicdu,
 ku duk yen be liaap e loon e cieta.
 E rin yin acie ya, ku yen acie yi.
 Yen ac Deng ku yin acol Mohammed.
 Wundit akec thiek yic de kan pal wei akol giir
 ku akol cool wen loc.
 Wundit akec rienke kan waar e rin men wuot kok yen.
 Wundit akec kan kat enuekic
 ku nyien baai piny tene a miit.
 Ariek wuor-kuandit ku ren wuor-kuandit acuk be kan puol
 be kek kan juak cin e koc cath.
 Ku yen e tene riencie.
 Nyaie yi cin ya guop,
 be weikie lok pier anien denic te laau.
 E rin yin acie ya, ku yen acie yi.
 Deng ku Mohamed baai Sudan.
 Na nhiar ba rienku tiit, ka nhiar aya ba riencie tiit.
 E koc rec yen.
 Ku yen aci piir cik ba thon ma ku wa tiit e koc rec yen.
 Yen aci kot guot piny ku ba piir thiekic
 e kac cie dhiel tiit.
 E koc e yen wic bik kuat e ke cie pienden
 weec wei e piny nhom.
 Piny ye abak ke da, ku piny ye abak kene wer kuandit.
 Piny ye keriec eben dhiap ku cil det.
 Piny ci thian e men ku nhier.
 Piny ci thian abiok-rual ku accok.
 Piny thiokic ku mecic.
 Piny ci thian e miat e piou ku arem.
 Piny ci thian a riooc ku keec.
 Piny ye raan pel nyin pierde cok te puoth.
 Piny ye thoral wun piek e wirric.
 Yen adhil buoc pa pierdie cok te puoth.
 Be Pierdie cist men de e tek-tekic ku luoyic.
 E rin na cie keya, ke pierdie ku tau thin die,
 acin wetdeic.
 E kuer awukol e kackie yic, ku kuer awukol e piny nhom.

THE COMPOSITIONS OF DINKA ANGLICANS

2. Nhialic versus *jak*: Songs of the Dinka

THE BOOK OF HEAVEN (DJ7)

by Daniel Ayup (Ciec), published 1944

Waragan tɔ nhial,
 ee Baibol, abi o nyuoth ka yeku baai,
 Ok aŋot e o kuɛk nyin e o kec guɔ nyic ee.
 Te bii Wa, Ke yen ee ye, Na tul wada,
 Ke Wa bi o puɔc piiny ee. Ku buk rot jɔt pinyabak.
 Adɛɛkdhoor yen ee jɔŋ e nyicku Wa panda, panda, panda.
 ʎan abi ʎanhom yiɛn wɛl Wa, ku Ōan abi jai Adɛɛkdhoor;
 Ku buk gueer luan Aciɛŋ yene wɛl lueel akɔlic, cɔl Yecu.

JESUS HELP US (DJ3)

by Daniel Ayup (Ciec), published 1941

Yecu kony o,
 Ok aci gai wei ku alan ran e tɔ nhial ke weikua, ee
 alan ran e tɔ nhial, piɛŋke wet de Kritho bak rot juiir.
 Ci Wa ʎeet tɔŋ wɔk, Randit aluak bai.

A CHANGED HEART (DJ18)

by Yithak Majak (Agaar), published 1947

Diɛte puou ye waar, ʎɛn aade dhuk puou ciɛɛn;
 La loc etɔŋ Bɛnydit e puɔn nyic ke puoŋ,
 ku nyic kerac, yen ee puon ye wei waar ee.
 Yecu de dɔɔr, ba ŋu looi ee?
 Aŋaŋ ba yi yiɛn ceŋ e dɔɔr ne piny nhom,
 kony aŋaŋ bi yi gam.
 Yecu Bɛnydit cut rɔt,
 Cut rot Wa, ba lɔŋdu ya cɔɔl tethiok, e yi thiok etɛn;
 Ba lɔŋdu ya cɔɔl, ku gam.
 Agu ʎɛn ci guɔp tuc e tuc ee!
 Yaa nan atuɔc kadi; caa nɔŋ Aliɛɛr e Ran e o kuɔny wei;
 Ci o bi laak ne riɛm e Wada; ci o bi laak!
 Jɔk ayɔɔt wut ee, ago kɔc moot ci men e lai!
 Joŋ rac, ayi yee, joŋ rac abo!
 O tiem ci men e thok. . . . Adhom raan abi tiik kɔɔr;
 Akee jɔk yen alooi ye; jɔk o yiɛk atɛɛr ee,
 joŋ rɛɛc e theec e kamaan,
 Amel e Kritho Wa, keek theec jɔk ke.
 Jɔk yɔɔt wut ee, ago kɔc moot ci men e thiel!
 Joŋ rac, ayi yee, joŋ rac abo!

O tiim ci men e thok. . . . Adhom raan abi tiik kɔɔr;
 Ku kee jok yen e loi ye; ci jok o yiək atæɛr ee;
 jɔŋ ræɛc e theec e kamaan,
 Amɛl e Kritho Wa, keek theec jɔk ke.

WE DECLARE (DJ49)

by Deng e Malual (Nyarweng), published in 1947

Jur cɔl Aweeŋ aci eliep mat a kaci liep aa tok ɛɛ;
 Kek wei ke meth, ku wei ke raan, kek ya lɔŋ enɔŋ Yecu.
 Jur cɔl Aweeŋ aci eliep mat a kaci liep aa tok ɛɛ;
 ɣan ye Bor yɔɔk, ɣan ci Aleerdie puɔl,
 a we bi Alier puɔl, ku yuku
 Yecu lɔŋ bi wɔ yiɛn weikuɔ.
 ɣan ye Twic yook, an ci Aleerdie puɔl,
 a we bi Atem puɔl, ku yuku
 Yecu lɔŋ bi wo yiɛn weikuɔ.
 ɣan ye Nuɛɛr yɔɔk, ɣan ci Aleerdie puɔl,
 a we bi Abiel puɔl, ku yuku
 Yecu lɔŋ bi wɔ yiɛn weikuɔ.
 Wɔ bi lɔŋ looi ne piɔn koor,
 Ku pɛlku tiɛɛl; yen abi Wa wɔ wel piɔth,
 Nhialic Wa, piŋ lɔŋda,
 Wo kaci maar; a wɔ bi roth dok
 ciɛɛn Wa buk lɔŋ looi ne Rin lajik ke Yecu.
 Yaka nyiɛɛl cuet
 Nyiɛɛke waade lan yen ke mit?
 Ne cie them yen e yoke yen lan yen ke mit a muk kɔc
 Nyiɛɛke waade lan yen kerac?
 Ne cie them yen e yoke yen lan yen kerac a nek kɔc!
 Thiecku Wa Bɛnydit ne lɔŋ,
 Tuku wɔnhiɔl, kumku wɔnyin, wɔk abi lɔŋ de rieu looi;
 e yii cɔɔr, e yii ŋɔl, e yii miŋ,
 ku mɛnh koor, ku raandit, ku tiŋdit.

WHAT KILLED HIM? (DJ49D)

by Nyanroor de Duɔɔt (Nyarweng), first published 1947

Wut Aweeŋda, ku yaka tak e ke ci Ye nok!
 Kaaye awaac ke gupkuo, ka ke jak rac,
 kek ke ci e cɔk gum e Tiɛmageer.
 Ajuiny ajam, Ye na ye raan ci Aleer cuɔny, ke lɔ ke ye;
 Na ye luan e Aleer wa, ke panden kaci bi tɔ ke cin arok.
 Kee lueth eei; wɔk kaye kɔc ke Yecu, a wɔ cin agɛm.
 Aye raan de Paguith jam,
 Na ye kɔc ke Akɔi kek aaci nhiim mum ne kueth.
 Waragan e yene ɣok gɔɔr eei,
 Yen ci rot wel ke yen e pɛle jɔŋda;
 Cuk cɔɔr, Ku cuk miŋ; ku dɔɔr kaye ræɛc peen,
 Bɛnydit ba wɔ nyuoth ceŋ de ɣɛɛr.

WHAT KILLED HIM? (DJ49E)

by Nyanroor de Duoot of Nyarweng, first published in 1947

This song was composed when Nyanroor was a young convert and newly married. For a period she returned to veneration of *jok* but today, as an old woman, is active within the Church. Lines designating the speakers have been inserted and were not part of the original song.

Christian: Our tribe of Aweng,
What do you think has killed Him?
It is the wrongdoings we ourselves have committed,
the things of the bad *Jok*,
They caused him to suffer on the Cross.

Pagan: The people of] Ajuiny said,
If someone has burnt Aleer, then let it be upon him;
If it is the house of father Aleer,
then his home will not be without mourning.

Christian: It is a lie; we are people of Jesus,
so this threat will come to nothing,

Pagan: The man of Paguith says:
Those people of Akoi,
they have become reckless
because of their abundance.⁷
The paper on which cattle are recorded,⁸
has it been substituted for our *jok*?

Christian: Are we blind and are we deaf,
and has peace been hindered by evil?
The Great Lord shows us how to abide in light.

LORD OF PEACE (DJ22)

by Yithak Majak (Agaar) first published in 1947

Benydiit de dɔɔr, yin ya lɔŋ aba puou miɛt, ee!
Wa Randit, nyuɔɔthe cit bi Ajaan yi nyic;
O kaaci rier wo Muɔnyjan, o ci rier o Jan col.
Melenɛ de dɔɔr abi Agaar juiir, ku buk luot ne thuɔŋ tok,
Duke ran de cɔk dɔŋ wei o kaalik;
. . . na pet owuɔk ci men e cuɔɔr.
ku buk guɛɛr pan nhial ee!
Te bii Wa, Kabi ben akol de Bi jok ciɛɛc wei ee!

⁷ The region of Akoi was known as a productive area. Perhaps they are saying such ridiculous things because they have eaten so much.

⁸ The only paper commonly known at this time was that brought by local officials to record court cases. The paper (Arabic, *Waraga*) of the Bible is here assumed to be the same insignificant paper which is forcing people to abandon their ancestral *jak*.

Na bɔ Yecu Ke jiiir luat! Na bii wade
 Wa ben abi ben bi jiiir miɛɛn Majɔŋ de dɔɔr
 amuk weikua ne cuec;
 Na bɔ Wa e kabi ben akol de bi jok ciɛɛc wei ee!
 Acii ran nɔŋ Abiel lueel, na pelke jɔk,
 ke we bi piir e ŋu ee?
 Ok aabi thou acuk gam e kerac wa,
 ok aabi thou ku Jam ran nɔŋ Mathiaŋguuk,
 na pelke jɔk ke we bi piir wek dukoor?
 Ok aabi thou acuk gam e kerac wa, ok aabi thou.
 Acieŋ puɔɔth kuc Muɔnyjaŋ, Ceŋ athiɛɛi cii Jaŋ baai!
 Ceŋ puɔɔth kuc Thaan col, Ceŋ athiɛɛi cii Jaŋ baai!
 Ye Wa o yɔɔk yedi ee?
 Ye Wa lo jam, Ye pelke tiɛɛl, ku yak ceŋ e dɔɔr.

WHAT THE HEART DESIRES (DDA58D)

by the Right Rev Daniel Deng Atong.

Hymn No 58 from *Kitap de Duor*, 1956, p 325; Tune P.T. (D.D.A.), taken from Philippians 2:21: "*Keek kedhia aaye ka ke gupken koor, ke cie ka ke Yecu Kritho.*"

- 1) Raan eben ran ceŋ tiɔp nhom,
Aye ŋɛk ke koor piɛu loi;
Ka ke dikde ku nhuomde,
Benke piny nhom ceŋ neyum.
- 2) Ku kayuku cok ne nyic,
Ke ye ya ciɛlic eben.
ŋɛk kee lui yeya, thieep rɔt;
Nyic lan yen ke ci bi tɔ.
- 3) ŋɛk kee rɔt kɔɔr jɔŋ thinde,
Jɔŋ yee ŋɔɔth ye bi ye piir:
Ku bi thonde tiit ke ciɛm;
Thon rɔt lei man ye yac door.
- 4) Raan! yin cie lei, piŋ kene,
Wurdun nhial Ducieŋdiitdu,
Ee nyin kuany ne yin terac;
Ee yi tuɔc Yecu Wende.
- 5) Yecu Kritho Duwerdu,
Man e ci rɔt nyɔŋ ne yin;
Ee bɔ bi yin nyuɔth Wur nhial;
Nyuth yi nhiɛardiit cen yi nhiaŋ.
- 6) Ee cɔk rɔt cɔk nɛk ba piir,
ee cɔk rɔt cɔk dui ba dem;
Ee cek rɔt cɔk thiep ka tok;
Thon lo cuei de Tiɛm Ageer.

WHAT THE HEART DESIRES (DDA58E)

by the Right Rev Daniel Deng Atong

- 1) All people who dwell on the earth,
Each does what his own heart desires;
The things for his well being and glory,
That he may dwell on earth with pleasure.
- 2) But actually we know,
That all this is hollow.
Each working for himself, to taste for himself;
Knowing that he will not endure.
- 3) Each one finds a small *jok* for himself,
A *jok* from which he hopes to gain life:
So that even as he awaits his death he may eat;
Just like the beast who cherishes his stomach.
- 4) You, Person! You are no animal, listen to this,
Your Father above, Your great Creator,
Took pity upon you in your misery;
He has sent you Jesus his Son.
- 5) Jesus Christ your Redeemer,
The one who gave himself for you.
Has come to reveal your Father above;
Showing you his great love with which he loves you.
- 6) He allowed himself to die so you might live,
He allowed himself to be tortured
so you might be healed;
He allowed himself to experience all that is painful
Even the suffering death on the Cross.

3. Solidarity among aliens: *Sons of Praise*

BIIKU ENOŋ BENYDIIT NE ƳER DE PIOUS (DJD73)

FILL OUR HEARTS

by Martha Ajak Wel (Bor) first published in the 1970s

- 1) Ran ye ben ne Ƴen ke buo ke Ƴer piou,
Kelke Ƴen be nyincie kum te laar Ƴen wade.
Piath de piou ayen wuo Ƴook ye tietke kol ben ben,
Ba wek lo neem wedhie.

*Chorus: Thioŋ wuo piath ne yiin Yecu Benydiit,
Agute kol biin wuo tak wade,
Agute kol biin wuo neem.*

- 2) ʎen dhiau piɔu ne thon cii Bɛnydiit thou ne wuɔk,
ʎen dhiau piɔu ne riɛm ecii dhiɔm
ne wuɔk wuɔdhiɛ,
ŋa bii piɔu bii kɔɔc ne luɔi de yic te len bɛn wadɛ,
Ku thiic kapiɛth?
- 3) Yiin bii waar ne riɛm de ater de thou.
Rɛɛc de piny ayen wuɔ kum nhiim.
Kum wuɔ nhiim ne welku yic Bɛnydiit.
Wuɔ ye ŋɔŋ ne dhiende piɔu wuɔdhiɛ,
Wuɔ cii welku bai wuɔdhiɛ.
- 4) Wuo ye riɔc ne kɔc ku cukye riɔc ne yiin,
Ca ʎa piɔu be gok ne riinye ca lɔc ku waan.
We riɔc ne kɔc ku cak ye riɔc ne ʎen,
Yeŋa be we ya luɔk te ye wek riɔc ne kɔc?
- 5) Yeŋa be welku leu ne luɔi kedhiɛ?
Te ciene yiin e kaac ne wuo piɔɔth.
Wuɔ ye miith ke kuan de Judath Bɛnydiit Yecu,
Wuɔ ye rɛɛc akol ku mɛtku wɛɛr.
Yeŋa be we ya luɔi ne piɔn lɔyɔm?

EE CII THOU KU BE RɔT JɔT (DJD121)

HE DIED AND ROSE AGAIN

by Mari Acol Deng Awai (Twic), during the 1970s

*Chorus only: Buk waak, buk waak ne riɛm,
Buk waak ne riɛm de Wene cii thiɔŋ ne Jɔŋ Lɔjik.
Buk waak, buk waak ne riɛm.
Buk waak ne riɛm de Wene cii thiɔŋ ne nhiɛɛr ku dɔɔr.*

'WE CA BII NYAAŋ WEI CII THUM, ʎEN Lɔ KE ʎA BUɔ' (DJD44)

GO AND COME

by J. Kot (Ciec); John 14:8; 1970s

- 1) Cut rɔt Bɛnyden de rɛm, ye wuɔ riar.
Bar Awa, lɔɔr ku bar.
Wuɔ dur mɛɛr roor, cuk riɛɛr temec.
Wanmaath Yecu bere wuo ya neem.

*Chorus: Bar Awa, lɔɔr ku bar,
Wuɔ dur mɛɛr roor cuk riɛɛr temec.*

- 2) Yiin ye Wankaai de nyan cithiei,
Bar Awa lɔɔr ku bar.
Wuɔ dur mɛɛr roor cuk riɛɛr terac,
Aciin rɛɛc kɔn wuɔk ya tiaam.

- 3) Buk laak Amen tɔ nhial,
 Bar Awa loor ku bar.
 Wuɔ dur mæer roor cuk riæer terac.
 Miɔc wuɔ ne door ku yum de piou,
 Bar Awa loor ku bar.
 Wuɔ dur mæer roor cuk riæer terac.
- 4) Thiɔŋ wuɔ piɔth wuɔdhiæ,
 Bar Awa loor ku bar.
 Wuɔ dur mæer roor cuk riæer terac.
 Yiin buk ya leec athæer,
 Bar Awa loor ku bar,
 Wuɔ dur mæer roorcuk riæer terac.

4. Song amidst war: 1983 - 1993

a. Songs of celebration and growth

NHIALIC HAS COME SLOWLY (AM4D)

from Rev Andrew Mayul, Addis Ababa, 1989

Nhialic aci ben ne wɔ yic amaath, ku kuc ku rot,
 Akaac ku amer wɔk piɔth ɣer locar,
 Yin thiecku wa, Benydiit de door to nhial,
 ɣen acoot ne loŋ, Wada, ɣen acoot ke loc piny nhom,
 Ku aril buk koc ne ŋeen locar,
 agut te bin wo cuop ka wo ci yec, [?]
 Tuoce wɔ ɣer de Beny buk ting, jɔŋ de yith,
 bi wok pioc e loŋ ci gɔɔr.
 Buk loŋ lom amaath, amaath wɔdhiæ, kecin ran doŋ cien.
 Ku jol ben du juir ku wɔ ci yith lom.
 Akol bin piny luk, ku jal wɔ luk,
 abe naŋ aayai de raan,
 Nhialic ci weidu ci rot wel,
 ba lek Kritho ci ɣerdu nyuɔɔth.
 Wun de keriec, acin guop anger acak,
 agut kom, ku diæt, ku lai rokiç.
 Yic de yiith eben, acuuk be kan thian.
 Aba liny, aba liny,
 agut kol ber rot piŋ jaŋ mac yiik, [?]
 Raan eben ee ciæk Nhialic, ke cin ciin de jok,
 Joŋ adhuom ye rot ɣei ne wok,
 Ku Kritho, Malen de Maleek, aken wɔ kɔn waan.
 Nhier e wer ɣen wɔk, ku thon den ɣen aken ku col,
 aken ku them.
 Ayen wɔ yien a jueer ku nyuoth wɔ ka bɔ tuen.
 Wen de raan abe tuoc ewil
 ke reer ne piu cielic kecin nhuɔm de wun.
 ɣeer aci be leu ne cuol, abe ne dai ee raan eben,
 agut raan ken gam,

Te ḡot ee cin ke ken thok twom,
 ku guir ku rot lɔn ben ok pal kerac.
 Ku duk rot wai, acien ran ecak, amaan guop wei, [?]
 ku wei ke guop abe don piny,
 ku la wei ke Nhialic nhial.
 Thok de kaḡ ace yet, Nhialic abe luoide loi.
 Piny aci cak ne wok goku riok,
 Piny aci waarnhom, aci waar e nyok.
 Yuku tɔ ne Yecu yic ku Yecu ne wo yiic.
 Yuku piɔn awadantɔ nhial loi,
 Menh de Beny aci kok na wɔk, kaci wɔ war ee piny nhom.
 Ee wɔk wɔdhia, wɔ kuan reec wut, wɔk dier e wei areet.
 Duke e kok ewei, ok kuc wei.
 Tene cieke ke ake ye wei ke nyok.
 Wei ke menh ci rot cɔ thou ne maath.
 Yin aya baba, ba thou ne mathdu?
 Aliu, aliu, γen ci rot de gam thou ne maath!
 Yin aya mama, ba thou ne mathdu?
 Aliu, aliu, γen ci rot de gam thou ne maath!
 Yin aya wanmath, ba thou ne mathdu?
 Aliu, aliu, γen ci rot de gam thou ne maath!
 Yin aya nyankai, ba thou ne mathdu?
 Aliu, aliu γen ci rot de gam thou ne maath!

NHIALIC HAS COME SLOWLY (AM4E)

Recorded during an interview with Rev Andrew Mayul, Addis Ababa, 1989. The translation of some phrases remains unverified.

Nhialic has come among us slowly
 and we didn't realize it.
 He is standing, shining into our hearts.
 I ask you, Lord of peace who is in heaven,
 I am calling with the people of the earth,
 with our entire strength we stand firm
 until you reach us.
 Send us the brightness of the Lord
 that we may see it, the *Jok* of Truth,
 who will teach the law that is written.
 We receive the law slowly, slowly,
 all of us together, so none of us is left behind.
 And you prepare your coming
 after we receive the truth.
 The day you judge the earth, the day of our judgment,
 all people will be relieved.
 God, is there any changing in life? [?]
 Tell Christ to reveal your brilliance without hesitation.
 Father of all, Creator free from exhaustion,
 you who create even the insects,
 the birds and forest animals,
 the truth of all truth, we will never hide it. [?]
 Every person was created by God,
 without the hands of *jok*,

the *jok* of deception which floats among us.
 And Christ, King of Kings, has not deserted us.
 The unsurpassing love, for which he died,
 could not be paid for
 We could not test [?] it gives us a good reward
 and reveals the truth which comes ahead.
 The Son of Man will be sent when the moon rises
 in the centre of the waters
 without any father to care for him.
 Brilliance which cannot be quenched by darkness
 will be seen by all people,
 even by those who have not believed.
 If the days are not yet fully counted⁹
 let us pray that he might forgive us our sins.
 Return O *wei*, you created person,
 until the *wei* refuses the body
 because the body will be left behind,
 and the *wei* of *Nhialic* ascend.
 The end of all things is near,
Nhialic will do his work.
 The land has been created for us
 and we have spoiled it.
 The earth has been ransomed,
 it has been ransomed by the Lamb.
 We are in Jesus and Jesus is in us.
 Let us do the work
 that is in the heart of our Father in heaven.
 The Son of the Lord has been longing for us
 and ransomed us who are in the world.
 We, all of us, mankind who refuse his fellowship,
 we treasure *wei* so greatly.
 Don't be so cautious for your *wei*
 for we can't comprehend *wei*.
 When they were created they were the *wei* of the Lamb.
 This is the *wei* of the son
 who has sacrificed himself for a friend.
 You also, daddy, will you die for your friend?
 No, no, I will not agree to die for a friend?
 You also, mama, will you die for a friend?
 No, no, . . . (. . . brother, sister . . . [end])

THE FEAST OF THE TOWN (BDD266D)

by the Right Rev Benjamin Mangar Mamuur, from mid 1980s

Yeŋo daa, ci yai bi rom ci yai bi rom peen?
 Cie yan de Gai, Wen de Nhialic,
 Yan de Emanuel
 Yan de Yecu,
 Yan de Kritho,
 Yan ci piny nhom tuom,

⁹ The days for his return.

Na loor

Wan Acol, Aleluuya, (X 2)
 Melen Agock, Aleluuya (X 2)
 Ne Cuëibet, Aleluuya (X 2)
 Ne Thiet ku Tony, Aleluuya (X 2)
 Ne Malakal, Aleluuya (X 2)
 Ne Yambio, Aleluuya (X 2)
 Ne Bai Rumbek, Aleluuya (X 2)
 Ne Jõnkulei, Aleluuya (X 2)

Yan ci piny nhom tuom,
 Yan de Gai Emanuel, Yecu Kritho,
 Yan ci Piny nhom tuom aye ook wõdhia,
 Aleluuya, Alleluuya.

WINDSTORM (BDD183D)

by Mary Anai Kon (Bor), based on Jon 14:17

Yuku Nhialic leec bi wuok ya wal door.
 Yuku Beny leec bi wuok ya thiei ne cuec, (X 3)
 Yuku Kritho leec,
 Yuku Dianðit leec,

Akol Puute yom,
 Akol Gute thom,
 Akole kothe tun.

Abene rau tem piny,
 kole e Madhika
 abene rau dum ne piny nhom (X 3)

CHURCH COMMITTEES (DG689)

by Makedelena Yaar Garang, 1980s

- 1) Akutnhom de *Jol Wo Liec*,
 akoor be Nhialic be piõny eben
- 2) Akutnhom de *Thandei*
 akoor be Nhialic be piõny eben.
- 3) Akutnhom de *Ten de piir*
 akoor bii ye nhom be tak apieth.
- 4) Akutnhom de *Daithiith*
 akoor be yenhom be cieth apieth.

*Chorus: Yoku Benydit leec
 acii wuok nyan Wel kedhia,
 aya to ne Baibolic (X 4)*

Raan tok: Benydit acii Wuok nyan Wel kedhia
 aye to ne Bibolic. (X 4)
 Nhialic e wo tuoc Wanton de
 be karæckuo ben waak
 ku beer wo tuoc Jondit Lajik
 ben wo bi thion wadhia.

HAVE YOU PREPARED? (BDD184D)

by Moses Kulang Garang, 1980s

Youth, ca rot juir.
 Kuai ca rot juir.
 Acueny Geren juir rot,
 ku loor Beny gon cii yi loc,
 gon cieke yin,
 Ku *Youth* Acueny Geren ace muony,
 Abi lo ne yai,
 Wo ye rem de tiet de Nyon cithiei.
 Kolnyan eya thiec,
 Maran eya thiec,
 Dinjak eya thiec ee,
 Ye yeke te noi, beer ben,
 eke muk ayan dit de Gai Emanuel?
 Acin kerac, We bake,
 We ci nhiim yien maar ne ya theer,
 Aya ayan de Beny Derem,
 aba jat nhial, ne kon cueddie,
 Bi we ye nyic,
 men yan Malek, Malek.

EATEN BY JOK (AM1)

by Nyanroe (Nyarweng)

received from Rev A Mayul, Addis Ababa, 1989

Raan ci rot ca mer jong rac,
 abii jok cwet ke miarde. (X 3)
 Gei ku rot ne cin de beny, cin e de manth ci theei
 Manth ci tuoc de piir atheer, raan ee yook ku ke lo gam,
 Ci be Dhiau ne raande. Ci raan gek.
 Akol bo tweng abii ne wok kwin ci koth.
 Wel ke pan de cuol kai wo mor, ku yin ke ok reec,
 ka ci wok pen, panhom athiei.

COOL HEART (BDD177)

by Mari Ameer Malek, based on I Peter 4:7-8

Piou lo loηlooη, aba piou loεεieεei,
 Anyiirkuo nyankene mioc bi lo cueny,
 aciit ke meen Nhialic,
 aba dhilkoo ric ee,
 Yen ci jok cuany panhom de Toη Akok.

b. "Songs of suffering"**COVER US (DG448)**

by Mathayo Marial Cuor, Kanitha G. Aroou, 1988

- 1) Aye ok Nhialic, aye ok, aye ok ba wo liec ee,
 Ku thiei aniinkuo; thiei tene,
 piny to o thin be ya piny te lojik,
 ca looi wo,
 te yene puony thin, te yene luoi thin,
 te ne puoc kocku thin,
 ba wo liep yeer eten, eten.

Chorus: Kum wuok ne yi wuok ci deeu de dist
 Bom wo, Nhialic bom ok ne run ci reec,
 ku ya piir ne gamdu Nhialic. [X 2]

- 2) Koc ye maan koc ye laat,
 Koc ye lom ne lucidun
 lojik aye thiei [X 2]
 Luel Nhialic we Kirithanoi, guomke keriec,
 ku ka ba guor to koc reec wei,
 koc ye we man ne loη e Nhialic [x 4].

Raan tok:

- 1) Aditpioth--Jam e tuenny.
- 2) Aye mar--aye roth koi
- 3) Aye tiit e--cam bai ne jok.
 Luuya [X 4]

Raan tok: Aya ke gum, aya gum, aya ke gum.
 Toη koc e we man;
 Beny gem rot Kritho gem rot
 be we nyuoth guom we koc ye gam [X 2]

Koc ke jak aye dol ye ya, yaa,
 a kuc ke be tuol lan wel piny rot [X 2]

Nyan be nyop kene wen be nyop,
 ne luoi da awac duoke luoi deka co ke ye koc piir,
 Ho met we wene joη reec cii kum theei e Nhialic,
 Wuda, duone wo met wei na a wany de koc rac.

Bom wo Nhialic bom wuok ne run ci reec
 ku bu ya piir ne gamdu Nhialic.

CONFLICT WITH DEATH (DG372)

by Duruka Acol Makeeth, Maar Church, 1987

- 1) Yin raan eben tɔ ne pinynhom,
 Wel nhial athiok
 Wɔ be dhiau ne kol be ben yei yei Nhialic
 Ke wɔ kuc ka rɛɛc yoku loi Nhialic ewɔ cak
 ke leei wɔ ne jak bɔku met kupiny,
 jɔk atɔ ke ye tim de mac ci wei ɣɔn den e ye,
 ajɔl dhum ne kɔc be kuom kou mɛc.

*Chorus: Wɔ ye kuan da atɛɛr ke thuɔu
 Wɔ cin yiic adheɛn geer Jan ne mɛndhe,
 ci rial de Beny cen wɔ geer ne Wantɔnde.*

- 2) Rɛɛc de piny aci gɔl te nyic,
 ku be thok te nyic
 Wɔ ye cuɔl de rɛɛc, Wɔ ye dhiau ne riŋ,
 ku bai ku piir de tiep thok de kaŋ a ci thiok,
 a wɔ be mam ne wei, Wɔ cin nhial ku piny.
- 3) Te ye wo rɛɛc de piny yoku dɛny luɛk,
 ke jɔk ago doŋ luak thok a jal buth ci lei, ɣɛŋ
 ne raan be yiɛi be dɔk
 cien gam ace ben ke wei
 Yoku Nhialic liim, ne wei be doŋ ke rial.
- 4) Yoku leec ne nhuom te cen wɔ biɔth ne luak.
 Wɔ ye dier ne thuɔu,
 ku reec ku weei ke Beny dɛɛn tɔ nhial.
 Nɔŋ raan be ruok ne piny nhom?
 Piir lojik atɔ nhial.
- 5) Yoku leec, wɔ dhien de lojik ne piny nhom ageer,
 Nhialiny ɣon cak piny, aŋot ke bæiku roth,
 ku ka ken ku gam.
 Ben de nyuoth ne Baibolic, ku ka kenku piŋ,
 ne rɛɛc de Adem ke wuok.

WHO CREATED US? (DG480)

recorded during an interview with Rev A Mayul in Addis Ababa, 1989

composed in an Ethiopian Refugee Camp; based on Isaiah 18

Yin buku thiec Nhialic ecek ok, ce yin ecek ok?
 Yin buku thiec Nhialic de rem,
 Ye ŋa ecek wok? Ce yin ecek ok? Nhialic de rem
 Yin buku thiec Nhialic ecek ok, ce yin ecek ok.
 Ping longda yomkua roor
 Jɔl dier ewok Aciek ecek ok
 Nhialic de rem wo kor tiop

Ku yin along de lau [?]
 Ping longda tipkua roor
 Jɔl dier wok Aciek ecak ok
 Nhialic da rem wo kor tiop
 Buku yin ya long ne lau
 Ping longda yomkua roor
 Jɔl dier ewok Aciek ecak ok
 Nhialic de rem wo kor tiop
 Buku yin along yela
 Ping long ye wok yi col
 Ping dhien de tiep kua roor.

LET US RETURN (DG480)

by Stephen Mathieng, Panyidu Church, Ethiopia, 1989

- 1) Wɔ thiec Nhialic ne Weikuɔ,
 thiec Nhialic ne panda
 Wɔ thiec Nhialic ne miithkuɔ,
 Yin e Benydit a yin ye Lɔŋ,
 Yin Benydit a yin ye door.
 Yin ye Benydit a yin ye thiec, bu yin lɔŋ e panda.

*Chorus: Wa, Wa, kace piɔu ne panda.
 Dhuk wɔ nhiim panda, dhuk wɔ nhiim pand e Thudan
 Wa, Wa, kace e piɔu ne panda.*

- 2) Duku rɛɛc ye jɔl ne rɛɛc,
 duku piath cɔ jol enɔŋ wuok,
 pan a ci duɔt ne dit de rɛɛc,
 Yin thiecku Nhialic, yin thiecku Benydit,
 kace piɔu ne wuok,
 Wɔ ye miithkun ce diiu e piny,
 adhiau amayou, amayou ee,
 Kacduɔn de piɔu Wa, yen wel wɔ nhiim yin Benyditdu.
- 3) Yin tim adhiau e tɔŋ Nhialic;
 noon a dhiau enɔŋ Benydit,
 yi lei adhiau enɔŋ Nhialic
 Dit adhiau enɔŋ Benydit,
 ku rei ku kɔm a nhiim liap ne riak,
 Piny adhiau amayou, amayou ee,
 Kacdun de piɔu wa, yen wel wɔ nhiim yin Benyditda.
- 4) Ku raan adhiau ke muk e cin, ye thiec e
 Lɛ, ye na, na bii wɔ yi ya door ne tiim cok?
 Ya na na, bii wɔ yi ya door ne piiny kɔk?
 Ya na na, bii diɛt ya piir ne riŋkuɔ?
 Ye na na, bii lai ya piir ne yomkuɔ?

c. "Government songs"

BUILDING YOUR HOUSE (DG307/328)

by Stephen Dit Makok, 1988

Kritho jɔl Wo thiei, pɛl a wɛɛckuo.
 ʔɔndu acuk loi,
 Wo ca Ayekaludu loi,
 Luan de lɔŋ,
 ʔɔn de wei,
 Thiei wuɔk ci Tholomon.

Raan tok: Wo kɔɔr nhomlaau
 Emanuel, nhomlaau de tiipkuɔ,
 Ku laau de nhom pan de Thudan Beny,
 Burjuaath de pinynhom a ʔɔŋ wuok.
 Thiei ʔɔn Garang-dit
 ke miith piny Ethiopia.

Last three lines, revised (DG328):

Wo kɔɔr nhomlaau
 Emanuel, nhomlaau de tiipkuɔ,
 ku laau de nhom piny de Thudan Beny,
 Badhel ke pinynhom ayɔŋ wɔ,
 Thiei wuɔk, wɔ miithku
 buk laau buku rɛɛc tiam.

LEFT HAND AND RIGHT (DG387)

by Stephen Dit Makok, based on Matthew 2:1-2, 1988

Nhialic Yekoba, lom baiku,
 ba bai ŋɔɔr,
 ʔɔk acin nhom riel leu ben wo ŋɔɔr,
 Panda aba ŋɔɔr Yekoba,
 wene ʔɔn bu nhom laau thiip.
 Wɔ gum luek ye ʔic rou,
 Wɔ ci luaak ne ʔɔk,
 ku wɔ luɛɛk e raan keek aya,
 Riel SPLA, wa yiyeei [X 2]

ʔɔtku cam nhial,
 Tiɛm abe tɔ e ke koŋ cam,
 Baibol a cuɛc
 Pan de ʔɔk a be ciɛn e nyin.
 Tarir kuɔnke ke rou abe naŋ aʔai yoou.¹⁰

¹⁰ *Tarir*, (Ab), *Tahrir*, meaning 'liberation.' The final two words, a sign of relief.

LIFE AND DEATH (DG413)

by Martha Ameer Jon Malek, Kanitha de Tonakook, 1988

from I Thessalonians 5:17-18

1) Jeeny de Tarir

Thudan tiom pieth cii Nhialic yien wuok,
 ku gæeric thou be wɔ lær,
 Nhialiny ci wɔ cak apieth, ku yiin wɔ tiop,
 ku go rɔt dhuk be wɔ waai ne thou,
 Cuk ɲo jal wuoc ne tiome nhom?
 Keriec eben ja rɔt them ne wuok e tiom e Thudanic.

*Chorus: Be wɔ nuan ye dii yen baai,
 be wɔ nuan ye dii yen Macar e piny?
 Wɔ reer e Diktor keek atɔ na Addis,
 atiiit ke be bæn enɔŋ Thodiik,
 Læke Thodiik kene mæn SPLA abe pan de wan,
 ku leer Bongo
 Acin Mony ee jal ke cin ke ci maan,
 looŋ ken ci ke gɔɔr, ku cii ke gam,
 adhiac ke ci kaac e tɔŋ!*

2) Thou atæer ke piir, piir de wei, ku thon de wei,
 acuk ke nyic, atɔ kene Nhialiny e cak weikuo,
 Wɔ ræer ke wɔ cii duot ne dhien de pinyhom,
 Riitku wɔ piotth ku dhuku Nhialic a læec
 neke cen wɔ yien ke thin de pioi
 buku panda tiam ne riel de galam.
 Jeeny de Diktor a ræer ke ci pioi eben,
 abe mooc ne dhan, ku gæet e galam.

3) SPLA ace mony be ne dhom ci koc γɔn ci ke dhom,
 Ee reem de pei,
 Ee Jeeny ci nyuel ne riem kether pande,
 Kene tiŋ ke ye kuan ne riem de raanic
 ku cii piɔu kon rɔc ye eei,
 γen ci thok γen be gam ne luek,
 na cɔk yi nɔk ka ya a donydu,
 SPLA wa yi yeei, SPLM
 Na cɔk yi thok ka ya adonydu.

4) Jɔl nyin kuany Nhialic, wɔ ci thok,
 Yomkuɔ piny, ku raan ci thiei e pinyhom;
 Bu ɲo loi Nhialic? Diet ye ɲuet ku lai ye cuet,
 ɲoot cin ke ken thok tuom, cin de γɔɔi de Baai?
 Jɔl wɔ dutic ne pinyda, jɔl wɔ puk ne tiop Nhialic.

5) Yien wuok nhom laau, wɔ ci lɔŋ wɔdhia ne yi nhom,
 Thiei Bishopda, ku Abuunken ye cok
 be wetdu rɔt thiai e pinyhom
 te cin dhien de piɔu, ku yaan de jɔk,
 Tien ke luɔi de jɔk a jɔl riin ci reu,
 piny luit neke be gam ku be kuɔny kɔu mac
 bii ke dom ne many de Abeer
 Duku roth cɔk nyiei jok ke mæec.

OWNERS OF THE LAND (DG373)

by Mary Alueel Garang, 1991

- 1) Muke piou riiny lo weer, weer roor,
 Jeny ee yic diil, wei rot,
 acin ton ye kooe ke cinic kageie ke, Aadee!
 Coku roth riil, Wo beer ke cak, pinyda a wei rot,
 Jeny de Doktor ather yii nyic Nhialic,
 Na piir raan, ku rum e piny de ke ci nuen no?
 Coku thaar abe nan a don liih don,
 Koth ke Bai Junup panda,
 acii be com e ke pei, a Wo nyiin,
 Wo Jan men thaar duku dier e ton,
 Tarir, ton de Thudan,
 Junup abii menh kene dhieth
 Nyic akol de, yii nek wo yen kii;
 a wai pinyda tiom ciit awaai.

*Chorus: Wo ca Abakook cam pan leei,
 Wuok ka ya dooi ke bai, tiom ci riimkuo dhiom
 abe tsookda boot, piny abe cuoi.
 Non tiom kuc Wun? Bai aciit nyin wo,
 Therku bai ne neny lo cap, Bai Bai,
 Panda alo cien ne duul,
 Yoku Nhialic col, be mest piny,
 Nhialiny e cak raan ku yiin tede,
 tek aketh ke piny, buku lau ne roth,
 emen agut ather ather.*

- 2) Yena, yena e rol coote Nhialic pin,
 ci Nhialic wo maan? Ace yen, ace ye,
 Ebu roth wel te reec reer wo thin,
 Jeny man luek athaar ca agoor,
 SPLA, SPLM jate kon ciemdu nhial ku dom bai ne riil,
 A doc gon yiine Nhialic wuok,
 Macar de piny, ku com wo thin, buku luok ci ye,
 Na cuk tiom wuoc, ke luel Nhialic buku dhaar,
 beere wo liec piny, yin ee ke lei,
 Yin cuku be koon anuen lo mac,
 naar wuok Nhialic, buku panda tiam
 Ton abe thieth, ku tul piir lo yai,
 tiom ci kai ethou.

DEATH HAS COME (BDD86D)

by Mary Alueel Garang, about 1984, Dinka translation

- 1) Thon ci ben e nyooth de gam, goc ne wo,
 Ku be kooe ne wuok, raan e dier e thou,
 Duk ye dier ethuou, eya bi raan.
 Maar ne tiop nhom, yena leu rot ne,
 Luak abi weike pen thou? Wo reer,
 Piny nhom ke wo ya akeny ke piny.
 Nhom ci luel de Beny, Luuiku yii,

Piny nhom a cin raan buk ya cɔl Awada.
 Wɔ rɛɛr ne ɲek ke mɛnhe, Nhialic aken,
 Wɔ cak buk ya aluɛɛk ke kɔc ciit wuok,
 Aliu e piny nhom.

*Chorus: Wɔ ye tuur de tiɔm colic,
 Wɔ cin raan luak wei,
 Wɔ ye coor ci miɲ ne wo piɔth,
 Ku rɛɛc de wel, wel ye ke luel,
 Duluɛɲda aye wel ke gai,
 Jɔk a dhuɔm a peen wɔ ɲɛɛr.*

- 2) Wɛnku jɔk ciɛn, duku jɔk beer.
 ɲaar ne weikuo nhiim, jɔɲ e bɛn,
 Ke muk kɛɛk ku rɛɛi de baai, yi raan.
 Ku jɔk, nɔɲ raan wɛɛr ɲek ne keek!
 Raan wɛɛr raan e piath, jɔk akuɛth.
 Wɔ mɛɛc ne pɛɛl, anɔɲ piou rɛɛc de aciɛn,
 ɣɔn cene yen ne raan.
- 3) Rɛɛc ku piath amɛɛn, piny nhom abi.
 Kɔɔc te lene riim coot ye Bɛny, Bɛny,
 Raan adhiaui e piny nhom, Nhialic.
 Duɔne Wɔ cɔk ya abɛɛr ke piny nhom,
 Liec wuɔk Acieɲ e cak raan,
 Reec atɛɛr ke wuɔk, adut wɔ yeth ke
 Thiek cin raan leu e.
- 4) Dutku Wɔ piɔth aɲath Nhialiny ɣɔn,
 Yiin guɔp de raanic wei, eyic ɣɔɔr ne loɲ,
 Acieɲ e cak raan, adaai, arɛɛr teden,
 Lɔyɔm, dɛɛi ne tiip ke kɔc ye thou,
 Wel eyic wuɔk mɛn buku cɔl aɲa,
 Ce yin yi tok Nhialic, cɔk wo ye keer ke Wa,
 Yecu abi bɛn ke tɛɛm de luk,
 Ke muk caat de piny, dɔɔr ku yii de gam.

DEATH HAS COME (BDD86E)

by Mary Aluel Garang, about 1984.

In a 1990 version of this song editors have added the passage John 11:25-27.

- 1) Death has come to reveal the faith,
 it has begun with us, and it will end with us.
 O person who fears death do not fear death.
 It only means that you will disappear
 from the face of the earth.
 Who is there who can save his life and deny death?
 We who live in the world,
 we are mere sojourners upon the earth.
 as the Lord has said.
 Let us serve the truth, for upon the earth
 there is no man we can call our Father.
 We abide together equally in unity as brothers,

God did not create us to be the slaves
of mere mortals like ourselves.
This cannot happen upon the earth!

*Chorus: We are only the windblown dust
rising for the black soil.
We have no one among us to save our souls
We are blind and deaf within our hearts.
We have rejected the words,
the words spoken by our Saviour
are wonderful words!
The jok of deception has held us back
from the light.*

- 2) Put the *jok* behind you.
Do not allow the *jok* to get ahead.
He is the *jok* who comes carrying conflict,
and destruction of the nation.
Between human beings and the *jok*,
who is better, one or the other?
The *jok* herds us into the fire by trickery.
His heart is full of that evil curse,
the curse that came upon him at the fall of man.
- 3) Those of evil and good are competing with one another
The earth will stand still
and the blood of mankind will cry out, "Lord! Lord!"
People are crying out all over the earth:
"Lord, do not make us orphans of the earth,
Turn and look upon us, O Creator of humankind
Evil is in combat with us!
It has tied a burden upon our necks
which is impossible to bear!"
- 4) Let us comfort our hearts in the hope of God
who once breathed *wei* into the human body.
His ears are open to prayers;
the Creator of man is watching.
He reigns from his high throne,
he sees the souls of those who die,
Turn your ears to us: upon whom else can we call?
Is it not you alone, O *Nhialic*?
Let us be branches from the vine of your son!
Jesus will come with the final word of judgement
He bears the book upon the earth,
peace and the truth of faith.

THE PIPELINE (DG801)

by Rebeka Alok Makuei, Kanitha de Wanglee, 1991

- 1) *Nhialic* anəŋ rier ne wə
Bənydit anəŋ rier, go Jən cək dhieth
ne wə yiic ku leer Bongo, tən eci Yithaya luel
Yen kii ci bən enəŋ wuək.
Edee jolku yien dee ee!

Dee jolku yiendee yaa!
 Edee cit mən γon akol ke rian de Noa,
 γon leke ke wuok ku cuku gam.
 Loi luoidu Beny,
 loi luoi ca juier awundu Gererη ku bi baai koo.

*Chorus: Mathur de Keric eben acii bei--
 Pinyda, a wɔ jol thɔr wɔdhia ke wɔ rɛɛ,
 roordit, ku diar, ku miith.
 Tɔη thɛr Gererη ke Omer acin gaau, ee gadem,
 loku thin acin gaau, gadem,
 gadem loku thin acin gaau.*

- 2) Jon Benyda, Diktor Gererη Mabior,
 Benyda ca wɔ piη ke wɔ rɛɛ baai,
 ke wɔ ca alɛeth ke riak, ku cɔk ke nek wɔ,
 Go UN lɔ bei ku wɛl ke γok,
 Go UN lɔ bei, ku liep thukuul.
- 3) Wetdu ekedu yitok, ee kedu yitok,
 Ci γol de beeu, yin raan ci Diktor maan
 Wu ci baai riok,
 Riak ye dee, ku yen nɔη wei,
 Riak de paai e go ηundenη luel,
 'ye riiny bi ben atɔ ne riakic.'
- 4) Raan γon ee piη ci Diktor Jon, anyic luoi loi,
 Go gɔc ne dhan, bii UN ku ben wɔ kony.
 - a) Baibol ee dhan de jɔk: abii wɔ ye moi.
 - b) Batheniya ee dhan de yuir: abii wɔ ye moi.
 - c) Alɔkuthiai ee dhan de dhier: abii wɔ ye moi.
 - d) Wal acii bei ke ye dhan de bec: abii wɔ ye moi.
 - e) Toriya ee dhan de amol: abii wɔ ye moi.
 - f) Puur atɔ ke dhan de wal: abii wɔ ye moi.
 - g) Anyuol acii bei ke ye dhan de cɔk: abii wɔ ye moi.

SOURCES CONSULTED

The sources below are divided into: Works in Dinka Language, Private Papers, listings at CMS Archives, Sudan Archive at Durham University, and Select Bibliography.

Works in Dinka Language

- Katekismo, Ka bi Kristian ŋic (The Little Catechism in Dinka)* 1938 Bussere Printing Press, 68 pages.
- Kitap de Duor* 1930 (Dinka Prayer Book) SPCK, 95 pages.
- 1956 (Prayer Book with Hymns, Psalms and Hymns, Dinka Bor Dialect), SPCK, 372 pages.
- Lek Jot de Benydiitda ku Duluŋda Yecu Kritho*, (New Testament in Dinka, Bor Dialect) 1940, 1956 British and Foreign Bible Society, London, 56 pages.
- Nebel, A 1974 *Lecku Banyda yan dit rin Ruon war yam cieng Kristian Kuajok, 1924 - 1974* (booklet celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Kwajok Mission), Kwajok, 12 pages.
- Pioc de Dukor, an Instruction for Enquirers* 1927 The Religious Tract Society, London, 30 pages.
- Pioc de Lek Thæer (Ne Wel Cike Kuŋy Bei ne Baibolic)* 1950 100 lessons from the Old Testament, SPCK, 204 pages.
- Rok ku Diæt, Dinka Prayerbook* 1950 Nigrizia Printing Press, Verona, 165 pages.
- Welpiath ci Mathayo Cithiei ke Gor* 1932 Gospels, Acts and James; catechism, prayers and Psalms in Dinka Bor, British and Foreign Bible Society.

Private Papers

Bowers, J, papers relevant to Christian mission and Condominium education in Bahr el Ghazal during 1942; in the possession of the author.

Casson, Donald C, circular letters written from Malek between Jan 1942 and 1944; in the possession of the author.

Collinson, J, personal correspondence with the late Bishop J Malou Ater including an account of the revival, "The Christian Church on the West Bank of the Nile, 1938-1940," (1 April, 1981).

Sharland, L W C, annual letters, original drafts of songs, personal correspondence including rough typescript of *Memories of Archibald Shaw*. In the possession of Mrs Faith Sharland.

Church Missionary Society Archives, Birmingham University

A Shaw, 1905-1930	Acc 111
L H Gwynne, 1884-1957	Acc 18
Sudan Letter books, 1905-1934	G3 S L 1-2
Sudan Original papers, 1905-1934	G3 S L O
Precis Book, 1905-1934	G3 S L P1

Sudan Archive, Durham University

O Allison	G/S 992, 650, 1013
L H Gwynne	G/S 284, 278
H C Jackson	G/S 289, 486
H G Hickson	G/S 207, 664, 701

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alghisi, I, 1949 "Nialic, colui che sta nel cielo," *Nigrizia*, 147-150.
 1950 "Note di ittiologia Nilotica," *Nigrizia*, February, 36.
- Alier, A 1990 *Southern Sudan, Too Many Agreements Dishonoured*, Exeter: Ithaca Press.
- Alli, Abbas Ibrahim Muhammad 1972 *The British, the Slave Trade and Slavery in the Sudan, 1820-1881*, Khartoum.
- Allison, O C 1966 *A Pilgrim Church's Progress*, privately published.
 1976 *Through Fire and Water*, privately published.
 1983 *Travelling Light*, Oxford, privately published.
- Archdiocese of Khartoum 1991 *The Church God-Wants-Us-To-Be, Final Document of the Diocesan Synod*, 23 Nov, 34.
- Arkell, A J 1949 *Early Khartoum, An account of the excavation of an early occupation site carried out by the Sudan Government Antiquities Service, 1944-5*, Oxford University Press.
- Atak, A R Salvatore 1958 "Noi Denka siamo fatti cosi," *Nigrizia*, April, 5-7.
- Ater, John Malou 1973 *Out of Confusion*, African Christian Press, Nairobi.
 1976 *The Dinka Priesthood*, Unpublished Masters' thesis for Near Eastern School of Theology, Lebanon, 143 pages.
- Awet, I O and Kambaya, S T, 1989 *Primary Education for the Displaced People in and around Khartoum, March-April, 1989*, Sudan Council of Churches.
- Baer, G 1967 "Slavery in Nineteenth Century Egypt," *Journal of African History*, Vol VIII, 417-441.
- Bedri, I 1939 'Notes on Dinka Religious Beliefs in their Hereditary Chiefs and Rainmakers,' *SNR*, 22: 125-31.
- Beltrame, G [1861] 1974, *On the White Nile from Khartoum to Gondokoro, 1859-1860*. Elias Toniolo and Richard Gill, eds., 1974, *The Opening of the Nile Basin*, London: C. Hurst & Company, 129-139.
 1861 *Di un viaggio sul Fiume Bianco, lettera di Don Giovanni Beltrame*, Verona, 5-46.
 1867 "Brevi ceni sui Denca e sula loro origine" in *Rivista Orientale*, VIII, 791-806.
 1868 "Le Stagioni Presso Negri Denka e Loro 1868 Denominazione," *Bollettino della Societa Geografica Italiana* 1: 294-298.

- 1870 *Grammatica della Lingua Denka*, Firenze, G Civelli.
- Bermingham, J and Collins, R O 1984 "The Thin WhiteLine," *The British in the Sudan, 1989-1956*, Oxford.
- Beshir, M O 1968 *The Southern Sudan, Background to Conflict*, London.
- 1969 *Educational Development in the Sudan, 1898-1956*, Oxford, 18-19.
- 1974 *Revolution and Nationalism in the Sudan*, London.
- 1984 ed., *Southern Sudan: Regionalism & Religion, Selected Essays*, Khartoum.
- Black Book of the Sudan, on the Expulsion of the missionaries from Southern Sudan*
1964 Milano, Italy.
- Bonfanti, A 1964 "Espulsi dal Sudan," Bologna: *Nigrizia*.
- Bresciani, Renato, 1981, "Church and State Relations in the Sudan During Bishop Comboni's Times," *L'Africa di Tempi di Daniele Comboni*, Rome.
- Bryan, M A and Tucker, A N 1948 *Distribution of the Nilotic and Nilo-Hamitic Languages of Africa*, London.
- Burckhardt, J L 1822 *Travels in Nubia*, 2nd Ed, London.
- Burton, J W 1976 *Living with the dead: Aspects of the Afterlife in Nuer and Dinka Cosmology*. Cambridge Anthropology 3 (1): 38-60.
- 1980 "The Village and the Cattle Camp: Aspects of Atuot Religion," I Karp and C Bird, eds, *Explorations in African Systems of Thought*, Bloomington.
- 1981a *God's Ants: A Study of Atuot Religion*, St. Augustin, *Anthropos*.
- 1981b "Sacrifice: A Polythetic Class of Atuot Religious Thought," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 12: 83-94.
- 1985 "Christians, Colonists and Conversions: A View from the Nilotic Sudan," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 23: 349-69.
- 1987 *A Nilotic World*, New York.
- Buttic, Bullen Alier 1982 "The Cult of Lirpiou Spear," *Heritage*, Vol. 1, March, 47-50.
- Caravita, G 1968 "L'arte dei Denka," *Africa* (Roma), XXIII, Marzo, 350/369.
- 1968 "Vita religiosa dei Denka" in *Africa* (Roma), XXIII, Marzo, 20/38.
- "Catholic Church in Sudan: A Golden Opportunity Lost," 1984 *Pro Munde Vita: Dossiers*, Africa Dossier 28, Brussels.
- "Christians and Islamic Law In Sudan" 1983 *Afer*, Vol 25, 376-380.

- Ciccacci, Ivo 1952 "La grande Pesca tra i Denka di Nyamlell," *Nigrizia*, July-August, 102-103; 106.
- 1954 "Sorge nel cuore dell' Africa un Santuario a Maria," *Nigrizia*, Sept, 14-15.
- 1962 "il gigante invecchia," *Nigrizia*, October, 2-3.
- 1963a "Cantautori di vita Denka," *Nigrizia*, Sept, 28-31.
- 1963b "Il Denka e la sua Mandria," *Nigrizia*, November, 10-14.
- 1963c "Yath il totemismo tra i Denka," *Nigrizia*, Dec, 28-32.
- 1964a "Amuleti arma segreta dei Denka," *Nigrizia*, Feb, 18-22.
- 1964b "'il giorno piu' lungo' a Thiet," *Nigrizia*, April, 37-39.
- 1964c "Il Denka gioca cosi,'" *Nigrizia*, July-August, 22-27.
- 1965 "Canti Denka," *Nigrizia*, July-August, 25-26.
- 1966a "L'alberello di Dio, tentativi d'adattamento missionario tra i Denka," *Nigrizia*, March, 28-31.
- 1966b "Camp e casa fra i Denka," *Nigrizia*, July-August, 20-22.
- 1967a "Poesia Denka," *Nigrizia*, March, 26-28.
- 1967b *Tra i giganti del sudan*, Verona, 207.
- Collins, R O 1963 *The Southern Sudan, 1883-1898*, New Haven.
- 1971 *Land Beyond the Rivers, The Southern Sudan, 1889-1918*, New Haven.
- 1975 *The Southern Sudan in Historical Perspective*, Tel Aviv.
- 1983 *Shadows in the Grass, Britain in the Southern Sudan, 1918-1956*, New Haven.
- Comboni, D 1864 *Piano per la rgenerazione dell'Africa*, English version, Rome, undated.
- 1877 "Note varie intorno ai costumi e alla lingua dei Denka," *Il Vic. Ap. dell'Africa Centre*. 121).
- 1880 "Discoveries in Africa," Cf *Quadro storico delle scoperte africane*, Verona.
- 1991 *Gli Scritti*, Bologna.
- Cook, A R 1942 "The Southern Sudan," *Uganda Memories*.
- Cotta, G 1941 "Il sentimento religioso nelle tribu Nilotiche," *Nigrezia*, 62, 80, 94, 110.
- Crazzorlara, J P 1911 "Von Gondokoro nach Omatsch" (Da Gondokoro ad Omac), *Bericht Negerkinder*, Colonia, I, 54-64.

- Cummins, S L 1904 Sub-Tribes of the Bhar-el-Ghazal Dinkas, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 34: 149-166.
- Dal Maso, Silvio 1950 "Speranze Missionarie tra I Denka," *Nigrezia*, February, 25-27.
- Daly, M W 1986 *Empire on the Nile, The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1898-1934*, Cambridge University Press.
- De Giorgi, L 1964 *Il Denka e il suo paese: chi e e come vive*, unpublished manuscript of ethnography among the Malual Dinka, Comboni Library, Rome.
- Dellagiacoma, V 1984 *Breva storia dei Missionari Comboniani nel Sudan Meridionale. 1900-1964*, manuscript in Rome.
- 1988 *Sudanese Catholic Clergy*, Juba.
- Del Nero, A 1973 *Abuk il Cristianesimo e Maria presso i Dinka*, unpublished thesis presented to the Pontificia Facolta' Teologica "Marianum," Rome.
- Dempsey, J 1955 *Mission on the Nile*, London.
- Deng, F M 1971 *Tradition and Modernization, A Challenge for Law among the Dinka of the Sudan*, New Haven.
- 1972 *The Dinka of the Sudan*, (Case Studies in Cultural Anthropology), New York.
- 1973a *The Dinka and Their Songs*, The Oxford Library of African Literature, Oxford.
- 1973b *Dynamics of Identification: a Basis for National Integration in the Sudan*, Khartoum.
- 1974 *Dinka Folktales: African Stories from Sudan*, New York.
- 1978 *Africans of Two Worlds, The Dinka in Afro-Arab Sudan*, Khartoum.
- 1980 *Dinka Cosmology*, London.
- 1986 *The Man Called Deng Majok, A Biography of Power, Polygamy, and Change*, New Haven.
- 1988 "Dinka Response to Christianity: The Pursuit of Well-Being in a Developing Society," *Vernacular Christianity*, JASO, 157-169.
- Dinka lyrics* 1962 CMS Publications, Spearhead Press, Malakal.
- Dud, Ireneo 1951 "Religione o superstizione?," *Nigrezia*, September, 141-142; October, 157-158.
- Dud, Ireneo and Toniolo, P 1948 *The Dinka, the ethnography and culture of the Twic and Rek Dinka*, unpublished manuscript, Verona.

- Dwatuka, Gabriel W 1978 "Picking up the Pieces: Rebuilding the Church in a Sudanese Diocese," *Worldmission*, Vol 29, No 2, 42-43.
- "Egyptian Soudan" 1904 The Annual Report, 105th Year, *Church Missionary Intelligencer*.
- Ehret, C 1974 *Ethiopians and East Africans the Problem of Contacts*, Chapter V, Nairobi.
- 1975 "Some Thoughts on the Early History of the Nile-Congo Watershed," *Ufahamo*, 89-80.
- Evans-Pritchard, E E 1956 *Nuer Religion*, Oxford.
- 1960 "The Sudan: An Ethnographic Survey," In S. Diamond, ed, *Culture in History*, New York.
- Felkin, R W 1879 "Up the Nile to Uganda," *The Church Missionary Gleaner*, June, 63.
- 1879 "Up the Nile to Uganda," *The Church Missionary Gleaner*, 86-88.
- Fergusson, V H 1922 "The Holy Lake of the Dinka" *SNR* 5 (3): 163-166.
- 1923 "Mattiang Gog' Witchcraft," *SNR* 6 (1): 2-114.
- Galli, A 1980 *Brief History of the Catholic Church in the Sudan*, Khartoum.
- 1985 *History of the Comboni Missionary Institute, (1881-1885)*, Studium Combonianum, Rome.
- "General Gordon and Egypt" 1884 *The Church Missionary Gleaner*, March, 31.
- Gessi, R 1892 *Seven Years in the Soudan*, London.
- Geyer, F X 1895 "Qualcosa sul carattere e indole del Nero" *Nigrizia*, 170-176; 184-187.
- 1898 "Unsere Neger," *Bericht Negerkinder*, Colonia, 23-75.
- Gray, R 1961 *A History of the Southern Sudan, 1839-1889*, Oxford University Press.
- "The Great Soudan" 1906 *The Church Missionary Gleaner*, October, Vol XXXIII, 394.
- Grismondi, Giosue 1942 "Lo stregone lo 'spirito della pioggia,' *Nigrizia*, pp. 68-70.
- 1956 "I Denka pescatori," *Nigrizia*, 6-11.
- Gwynne, L H 1903 *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, Aug.
- Hadow, F B 1906 "Prospecting in the Pagan Sudan," *The Church Missionary Gleaner*, 1 June, 84-85.
- 1905-7 *Journal of the Rev F.B. Hadow*, published separately, SAD.

- Hewitt, Gordon, 1971, "The Sudan," *The Problems of Success, A History of the Church Missionary Society 1910-1942*, Vol 1, London, 319-349.
- Hill, Richard 1959 *Egypt in the Sudan, 1820-1881*, Oxford.
- 1967 *A Biographical Dictionary of the Sudan*, 2nd ed.
- 1970 *On the Frontiers of Islam, Two Manuscripts concerning the Sudan under Turco-Egyptian Rule, 1822-1845*, Oxford.
- Hoeben, H 1958 'The Catholic Church in Sudan: A Golden Opportunity Lost,' *Pro Mundi Vita: Dossiers*, 1/1984, 27 pages.
- Howell, P P 1951 "Notes on the Ngok Dinka of Western Kordofan," *SNR* 32 (2): 239-293.
- Huber, O and Dellagiacomia, V, eds, 1976 *Mezzo secolo di storia sudanese, 1842-1898, dall' archivio parrociale de Khartum*, Bologna.
- Jackson, H C 1960 *Pastor on the Nile, being some account of the life and letters of Llewellyn H. Gwynne*, London.
- Johnson, D 1980 *History and Prophecy among the Nuer of the Southern Sudan*, PhD Thesis, UCLA, University Microfilms International.
- 1982 "Tribal Boundaries and Border Wars: Nuer-Dinka Relations in the Sobat and Zeraf Maleys, 1860-1976," in *The Journal of African History*, (23) 183-203.
- 1987 *The Legacy of Sudanese Military Slavery in Modern Africa*, published lecture at St. Aidan's College, Durham.
- 1988 'Divinity Abroad: Dinka Missionaries in Foreign Lands,' *Vernacular Christianity*, JASO, 170-182.
- Johnston, R T 1934 "The Religious and Spiritual Beliefs of the Bor Dinka," *SNR* 17, (1): 124-8.
- Junker, W 1890 *Travels in Africa during the years 1875-1878*, 3 Vols, London.
- Kohler, O 1955 'The Early Study of the Nilotic Languages of the Sudan, 1812-1900--I' from 'Geschichte der Erforschung der Nilotischen Sprachen,' (*Afrika und Ubersee*, Beiheft 28), *SNR*, 85-94.
- Lanz, J 1857-58, *Presentazione del Cristianesi ai Denka (Kyec)*, latino e dinka, MS (CA A/109 3) 1860 Manoscritto Latino-Denka, dell 8-10, conservato dal Mitterutzner, 264 pages.
- Lea-Wilson, C A 1910 "Work Among the Jieng (Dinkas)," *The Church Missionary Gleaner*, 1 Nov, 186.
- 1912 "Real Progress," Annual Letter, *The Church Missionary Gleaner*, 1 Feb, 29.
- Liber Baptizatorum, 1842-1883* registers of marriages and deaths in the parish of Khartoum, Apostolic Vicariate of Central Africa.

- Lienhardt, G 1951 "Some Notions of Witchcraft Among the Dinka," *Africa* 21 (4): 303-318.
- 1954 'Modes of Thought,' *The Institutions of Primitive Society*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 95-107.
- 1958 "The Western Dinka," in J Middleton and D Tait, eds, *Tribes Without Rulers: Studies in African Segmentary Systems*, London, 97-135.
- 1961 *Divinity and Experience, The Religion of the Dinka*, Oxford.
- 1973 "Morality and Happiness Among the Dinka," G Outka and J P Reeder, eds, *Religion and Morality: A Collection of Essays*. New York, 108-122.
- 1980 "Self: Public, Private: Some African Representations, *JASO*, 11 (2): 69-82.
- 1982 "The Dinka and Catholicism," in J Davis, ed, *Religious Organisation and Religious Experience*, London, 81-95.
- Mackrell, J E C 1942 "The Dinka Oath on Ashes," *SNR* 25 (1): 131-134.
- Majak Kocjok, Damazo Dut 1984a "British Religious and Educational Policy: the case of Bahr el-Ghazal," in M O Beshir, ed, *Southern Sudan: Regionalism & Religion*, Khartoum.
- 1984b "Resistance and cooperation in Bahr el-Ghazal, 1920-1922, M O Beshir, ed, *Southern Sudan: Regionalism & Religion*, Khartoum.
- 1990 *The Northern Bahr al-Ghazal: people, alien encroachment and rule, 1856-1956*, unpublished thesis, UC Santa Barabara.
- Malou, Job Dharuai 1988 *Dinka Vowel System*.
- 1992 *Thuongjang, An Explanation of Dinka Orthography*, Pre-Edition.
- Mason, E 1950 *Quinquennial Report to Propaganda Fide*, Rome.
- 1956 *Le difficoltà della Chiesa nel Bahr el Ghazal*, Special Report to Propaganda Fide, Wau, May 14.
- Mawut, L L 1983 *Dinka Resistance to Condominium Rule 1902-1932*, Khartoum.
- McEwan, D 1987 *A Catholic Sudan, dream, mission, reality*, Rome.
- Miterrutzner, J C 1866 *Die Dinka-Sprache in Central-Africa: Kurze Grammatik, Text und Worterbuch*. Brixen: A Weger.
- Morlang, F 1972 *Missione in Africa Centrale, diario, 1855-1863*, Editrice Nigrizia.
- Nebel, A 1936 "Dinka Folklore," *The Messenger*, January, Wau.
- 1936 *Dinka-Dictionary with Abridged Grammar*, Verona.

- 1936-1939 "Life History of a Dinka," in *Messenger* 1936; 1937, May, June, Aug, Nov, Dec; 1938, March-July, Sept, Nov; 1939, Jan-May, June, Sept, Nov.
- 1940 "Sulla vita dei Denka - Note etnografiche," *Nigrizia*, 146-48; 1941, 11-12; 23-24.
- 1965 *Gentilezza Primitiva. Ricordi di una vita trascorsa fra i Dinca del Bahar El Ghazal*, MS, (CA A/114, 6.)
- 1968 *I Dinca Sono Così: Ricordi Di Una Vita Fra I Dinca der Bahr el Ghazal, Sudan*, Bologna: Editrice Nigrizia.
- 1973 "Dinka-Folklore," *Archiv fur Volkerkunde* 27, Germany.
- 1979 *Dinka-English Dictionary*, Bologna.
- Ngong, Akurdit 1990 *Slavery in the Sudan and the Christians Attitude towards it*, unpublished thesis for Makerere University, unpublished, 64 pages.
- Nunn, N 1950 "A Dinka Sacrifice," *SNR* 31 (1/2): 141-142.
- Olivetti, N 1922 *Vita di Missione: Lettere di un missionario del Bahr el Ghazal*, stampa, Verona.
- 1933 *Fra una tribu' di giganti, note etnografiche sulla tribu Denca*, Verona.
- Petherick, J 1869 *Travels in Central Africa*, Vol I, London.
- Piombino, L 1988 *I Denka e le Ricerche dei Missioari Comboniani*, unpublished thesis, Universita' Degli Studi di Genova.
- Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Disturbances in the Southern Sudan during August 1955, 1956*, Khartoum.
- Report of the Superior of the Bahr el-Ghazal to the VIII General Chapter of the Verona Fathers*, 1953, Nov 1, (41): 513.
- Richards, M G 1924 "The Truth Diviner (Amongst the Agar Dinkas)," *SNR* 7, 139-141.
- 1927 "Medical Treatment by Bor Witch Doctors," *SNR* 10: 141-242.
- Sacks, K 1979 "Causality and Chance on the Upper Nile," *American Ethnologist*, 6 (3): 437-448.
- "Saggi di poesia Denka" 1968 *Nigrizia*, April, 25-27.
- Sanderson, G N 1965 *England, Europe and the Upper Nile*, Edinburgh.
- Sanderson, G N and Passmore Sanderson, L M 1981, *Education, Religion & Politics in Southern Sudan, 1899-1964*, London.

- Santandrea, S 1937 "Le primizie fra i Nilotici," *Nigrizia*, 173-75.
- 1948 *Bibliografia di study africani delle Missioni dell'Africa Centrale*, Verona.
- 1961 "I Denka cantano le lodi del bue," *Nigrizia*, April, 24-25.
- 1965 "Morte violenta per i re divini Shilluke Dinka," in *Africa* (Roma) XX, 19/42.
- 1989 *A Popular History of Wau*, Khartoum.
- Santi, P and Hill, R 1980 *The Europeans in the Sudan 1834-1878*, Oxford, Clarendon Press.
- Schmid, E 1987 *Alle Origini della Missione dell'Africa Centrale (1846-1862)*, Verona.
- Schwabe, C W and Kuojok, I Makueta 1981 "Practices and Beliefs of the Traditional Dinka Healer in Relation to Provision of Modern Medical and Veterinary Services for the Southern Sudan," *Human Organization* 40 (3): 231-238.
- Schweinfurth, G 1874 *The Heart of Africa*, Sampson e Searle, London, Vol I.
- 1888 *Emin Pasha in Central Africa, being a collection of his letters and journals*, London.
- Secretariate of the Sudan Catholic Bishops' Conference 1980 *National Directory, Catholic Church Sudan*, Khartoum.
- Seligman, C G 1915 [Note to Archibald Shaw], *Man* 15: (20) 35.
- 1923 "Dreams," *SNR* 6 (2): 254-5.
- 1931 "The Religion of the Pagan Tribes of the White Nile," *Africa* 4 (1): 1-21.
- [undated] *Report on Totemism and Religion of the Dinka of the White Nile*, Khartoum: El Sudan Press (private circulation).
- Seligman, C G and Seligman, B Z, 1932, *Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan*, George Routledge & Sons, Ltd.
- Shaw, A 1910 "In the Pagan Soudan," *The Church Missionary Gleaner*, April 1, 52-53; 1 Dec, 184-185.
- 1911 Annual Letters, "Moslem Lands, The Southern Sudan," CMS, 210-214.
- 1915 "Dinka Songs" (With a Note by C.G. Seligman), *Man* 15: (20) 35-36.
- 1917 "Jieng (Dinka) Songs," *Man* 17: (34) 46-50.
- 1919 "Dinka Animal Stories (Bor Dialect)," *SNR* 2 (4): 255-275.
- 1924 "A Note on Some Nilotic Languages," *Man*, 24: (16) 22-25.

- Shukri, Muhammad Fu Ad 1938 *The Khedive Ismail and Slavery in the Sudan, 1863-1879*, Cairo.
- Sid Ahmed, S M, 1984, "Christian missionary activities in Sudan," M.O. Beshir, ed, *Southern Sudan: Regionalism & Religion*.
- Sorur, Danial Deng Farim, [1888], [1960], 1974, *A Dinka Priest Writing on His own People*, Elias Toniolo and Richard Hill, eds, 1974, *The Opening of the Nile Basin*.
- 1887 "Un Nero della nostra Missione fatto Sacerdote," *La Nigrizia*, anno V, 116.
- 1887-1888 Memorie scritte dal R.P. Daniele Sorur
- Pharim Den, *La Nigrizia*, (V) 146-152, 170-177; (VI) 56-59, 77-84, 111-119.
- 1887 'Daniel Sorur Pharim Den, Neger aus dem Stamme der Dinka,' in *Bericht Negerkinder*, Koln, 17-97.
- 1930 'Daniele Den Farim Sorur' in *Alma Mater*, Roma, (9-10): 87-94.
- 1964 "Le Pene Dei Negri Schiavi in Africa,," *Euntes Docete XVII*, Rome, 51-95.
- 'The Sudan, A Call for Help,' 1991 *Dossier, Catholic International*, 1-31 July, 619-630.
- Tappi, C 1901 "I Nilotici," *Nigrizia*, 108-111.
- 1902 "Fra gli accampamenti estivi dei Denka," *Nigrizia*, 87, 102, 122, 144, 158.
- Tessitore, R 1949 "La Lebbra fra i Denka," *Nigrizia*, September, 145-146; 151.
- 1949 "il gor-nom tra i Denka," *Nigrizia* (68) 109-112.
- 1950 "Formule di giuramento fr i Denka," *Nigrizia* (69) 74-74.
- Tescaroli, L 1961 *Poesia Sudanese*, Bologna: Editrice *Nigrizia*.
- Titherington, G W 1924 "Peace-making ceremony of Riak Dinka," *SNR* 7.
- 1925 "Magicians among the Raik Dinka," *SNR* 8.
- 1927 "The Raik Dinka of Bahr el Ghazal Province," *SNR* 10.
- Toniolo, E 1943 "Christianity in the Sudan," *Messenger*, March-June.
- Toniolo, E and Hill, R 1974 *The Opening of the Nile Basin*, London.
- Trimingham, J S 1948 *The Christian Approach to Islam in the Sudan*, Oxford.
- 1949 *The Christian Church in Post-War Sudan*.
- Vantini, G 1981 *Christianity in the Sudan*, Bologna.

- Vignato, A 1935 *Raccolta di Suggerimenti e Dottrine per utilita pratica del giovane missionario*, Verona.
- Warburg, G 1985 "Islam and State in Numayri's Sudan," *Africa*, Vol 55, 400-413.
- Wehr, Hans 1974 *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, J Milton Cowan, ed, Librairie du Liban, Beirut.
- Wheeler, A 1981 *Sudan Revival*, draft copy; paper later published in Kenya.
- Willis, C A 1928 "The Cult of Deng," *SNR* 11: 195-208.
- Wilson, C T 1882 "The First Dinka Christian," *The Church Missionary Gleaner*, 142.
- Wilson, Salim C [c 1930] (Hatashil Masha Kathish), *I was a Slave*, London, Stanley Paul and Co. Ltd.
- [c 1901] "*Jehovah-Nissi.*" *The Life Story of Hatashil-Masha-Kathish, of the Dinka tribe, Soudan*, Birmingham.
- Yath Awan Yath 1991 "The Effect of Differential Access to Accommodation on the Dinka Migrants in Khartoum--The Example of Gereif West, Sudan," *Geojournal*, June, draft copy.