3

Liberation War

Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers,
Our home to foreigners.
We have become orphans, fatherless,
Our mothers are widows.
With our lives at gun point we are cruelly beaten with fire,
we are weary, we are given no rest.
Arabs rule over us; there is none to deliver us from their hands.
Our skin is hot as an oven with the burning heat of famine.
Women are vanishing in the South, virgins in the towns of the South.
Southerners are just shot dead, young men are compelled to murder their brothers, and boys stagger under loads of wood.
The joy of our hearts has ceased; our dancing has been turned to moarning [*sic*].
The crown has fallen from our head; woe to us, for we have sinned!
For this our heart has become sick; for these things our eyes have grown dim; for the South is devastated; Arabs roam over it.
But thou, O lord, dost reign for ever; thy crown endure to all generations.
Why dost thou forget us for ever; why dost thou so long forsake us!
Restore us thyself, O'lord, that we may be restored!
—P. K. Mabuong, 1967

The prophet Jeremiah composed the book of Lamentations six centuries before the birth of Christ. The Weeping Prophet bemoaned Israel's transgressions, God's righteous indignation that had wrought Jerusalem's

destruction, and the Jewish exile to Babylon. Despite Israel's claim to being God's peculiar nation, its sins would not go unpunished. This truth notwithstanding, Jeremiah's underlying theme was that God had not forsaken his people; on the contrary, providence was working amid their suffering.[1]

The First Sudanese Civil War (1955–72) produced rippling effects throughout the South's physical, ideological, and spiritual landscapes. According to Ali Mazrui, the conflict "was widely regarded as a religious confrontation between a Muslim government in Khartoum and its armies, and Christian liberation fighters in the South."[2] Against this backdrop, P. K. Mabuong used the Bible to transform South Sudan into a new Zion. In an article published in *SANU Youth Organ Monthly Bulletin*, Mabuong replaced the words "Judah," "Zion," and "Mount Zion" from Lamentations chapter 3 with "the South."[3] And yet, more than merely being a confrontation between members of different religions, the *Bulletin* piece is illustrative of two critical ways in which some intellectuals framed the war: first, in the blending of racial and religious identities in framings of the Sudanese state and state actors; and second, in the transformation of the conflict into a spiritual war with biblical antecedents. These developments mark the war as a critical chapter in the history of South Sudanese political theology.

Mabuong was not alone in linking Arabs to spiritual or biblical oppression, as others expressed that the conflict was spiritual warfare being waged in the physical realm. Religious thought provided an important spiritual hue to the racial dynamics of the war, becoming a space for southerners to articulate the extent of racial division and hostility. Some positioned Arabs as inhuman evil agents being used by Satan to war against God's people. Through a series of calculated insertions, Christians in South Sudan likened their circumstances to biblical Israel's history with Egypt and Babylon. While the Sudanese government and its soldiers were linked with Egypt and Babylon, southerners—like their Israelite predecessors—were marked as God's beloved, destined for national liberation.[4]

This chapter pushes against one recent contention that despite "incendiary religious restrictions, the frame of the conflict hinged on elite choices regarding land and resources, which inspired an ethno-racial perspective rather than a religious one."[5] The war witnessed the creation of a theology that maintained that providence was leading southerners to victory. Southern intellectuals framed the conflict as a liberation war in which racial and religious identities became increasingly interwoven. Southerners could claim to share not only a racial and cultural identity but also the spiritual

experience of oppression. These streams of thought encouraged the idea of an imagined community united by race, politics, and spiritual experience and provide a lens into how southerners understood their history and national identity.

ARABIZATION AND ISLAMIZATION

The Christian thought that emerged in this period developed from a context of state-sponsored Arabization and Islamization. The government's Arab and Islamic policies began to emerge during the early independence period. In 1956 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that "Sudan is in the main a cognate part of the Arab world. Our policy towards the Arab League is to support it, to strengthen it and draw strength from it."[6] This policy manifested itself in the Arab-Israeli conflict that year, when Sudan sent volunteers to assist the Egyptians after Anglo-French-Israeli forces invaded the Suez Canal. While the condominium government had regulated major Islamic institutions, one of the models advanced at independence was an Islamic parliamentary republic, which the Umma and Khatimiya camps supported. In July of that year the Mahdist Umma Party and Khatimiya People's Democratic Party (PDP) replaced the al-Azhari government and elected Abdallah Khalil as prime minister. The publicly financed Department of Religious Affairs (DRA) was founded in 1956 and was purposed to promote Islam among non-Muslim, non-Arab Sudanese communities (particularly in the South). The DRA's establishment ushered in the government's targeting of education, and Ziada Arbab was one of the leading figures in this process. In February 1957, Arbab announced government intentions to take over mission schools. Implementation began two months later. In 1958 Arbab was appointed minister of education and justice.[7]

The government's Arab and Islamic push initiated a major parliamentary crisis. In 1956 a national committee was appointed to draft a constitution that would be presented to the Constituent Assembly. The proposed constitution included Islam as the religion of state and Arabic as the national language. The Arab-Islamic push was coupled with northern resistance to federation, an opposition partially rooted in a fear that it would mean eventual separation. In March 1958 the first parliamentary elections were held, and another Umma-PDP coalition government was formed. While the Umma government appointed three South Sudanese ministers, the Liberal Party had its nominations ignored. In response, southerners sought support from non-Arab MPs. The government was unable to pass the constitution,

leading to a stalemate. On June 16, 1958, all southern MPs walked out when the Constituent Assembly rejected the federation proposal. Unable to handle southern demands and economic problems, the coalition government was in a precarious position. On November 17, 1958, the army conducted a coup. Parliament was dissolved, and General Ibrahim Abboud assumed control. The new Sudanese leader tried to eliminate unrest in the South with Islam and Arabic.[8]

School programs were soon Arabized, and missionaries were removed from the educational system over a five-year period, until their final expulsion in 1963–64. By September 1958, church schools had to provide Islamic instruction for Muslim students. Those who embraced Islam were given advantages in school recruiting. The gradual transferal of Christian teachers to the North meant a reduction in religious training for southern Christian students.[9] In Ziada Arbab's speech published in the December 27, 1958, issue of the *Bahr El Ghazal Daily*, he suggested that the education question (and Islam's role in it) was crucial to establishing national unity. Claiming that "our growing Sudanese nation is rich with its spiritual potentialities," he stated that national understanding could be reached through the study of Arabic in southern village and elementary schools. "We cannot build a good community and a sound Sudanese nationality," Arbab argued, "unless we take aid of the religious doctrine and quote from the philosophy of the Islamic Sharia."[10]

In February 1960, the Friday Law replaced South Sudan's Sunday holiday.[11] This decree—which allowed Christians free time to attend church services—was confronted by students at the forefront of the "Sunday Protest."[12] Missions (particularly Protestant missions) had stressed the importance of their students needing rest on Sundays, and secondary students were aware of the state's Islamizing intentions toward them. Protest from the Rumbek Secondary School was particularly virulent. After Fr. Paolino Doggale printed protest papers, he and the Rumbek student leaders were arrested and sentenced to prison. Perhaps the pinnacle of antigovernment angst occurred in the wake of the 1962 Missionary Societies Act. It demanded that Sudanese pastors be registered and licensed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Endowment and that registered church workers be paid by this ministry, aiming to allow the government unlimited interference with missionaries. Section 3 stipulated that no missionary society or member do any mission work outside the terms of a license granted by the council of ministers. The act's ultimate intention was clarified in 1964,

when the government ordered the expulsion of all foreign missionaries from South Sudan.[13]

SOUTHERN RESISTANCE

As the Sunday Protest demonstrated, many southerners were not content to stand idly by while the government enacted its policies. In 1962 Fr. Saturnino Lohure, William Deng, Clement Mboro, and Joseph Oduho formed the Sudan African Closed Districts National Union. When the headquarters moved to Kampala, the name was shortened to the Sudan African National Union (SANU). Consisting primarily of southerners, the organization pushed for complete separation. In 1963 the SANU founded *Voice of Southern Sudan*, a magazine published from Britain with missionary assistance.[14]

In July 1963, Saturnino and Oduho visited Europe to procure financial assistance and support. In Rome they formulated the idea of a guerrilla movement that would need propaganda to rouse the support of exiled southern intellectuals, former Equatorial Corps members, southern students, and others. Saturnino proposed that this military wing be named the Sudan Pan-African Freedom Fighters to attract Pan-African sympathizers throughout the continent. SANU members opposed his suggestion, preferring a name with local meaning. In the end, administrative secretary Severino Fuli suggested the indigenous name Inyanya. The Inyanya borrowed its name from the poison of the Gabon viper. Joseph Lagu—who was commissioned as a lieutenant in the Sudanese Army before joining the resistance movement—suggested that the spelling begin with *A* (which he believed would be easier to pronounce). A policy paper dated July 31, 1963, outlined a program based on two foundational aims—to wage a liberation war against Arab imperialism for complete southern independence and to fight another war against illiteracy.[15] It is useful to note that people in the Upper Nile disdained and rejected the term Anyanya, choosing instead their own names reflecting the Anyanya's goals but with greater appeal to their own culture. The Dinka of Bahr el-Ghazal, for example, named the southern military Koc Roor.[16] A loose phrase used by the Dinka to describe the Anyanya, it means "people of the forest" or "guerrilla fighters" in Dinka—those who fought with hit-and-run tactics. The Anyanya fighters were also deemed Koc Roor because they were considered to be living in the forest or bush, not having a permanent home.[17]

On September 30, 1964, the first seminar on the southern problem was held at the University of Khartoum. Being hitherto unable to crush the southern rebellion, the government was forced to appease its critics and improve its image. In mid-October 1964 it announced that University of Khartoum students would be allowed to publicly discuss the southern dilemma. On the evening of October 21, the student union held a meeting to discuss the Southern Problem and concluded that the situation would never be resolved as long as the regime remained in power. The government then reversed its decision and banned future meetings. The following evening, students defied the ban by holding another meeting on campus. This decision led to a clash between students and police. Known as the October Revolution, the uprising led to Abboud's overthrow and replacement by a transitional government responsible for supervising elections.[18]

While the October Revolution may have given southerners reason to hope that change was on the horizon, internal divisions loomed. When the Abboud regime was unseated, William Deng wrote to the new civilian prime minister, Sirr el Khatim el Khalifa. Deng stated that, for all intents and purposes, the SANU was ready to return to the February 1958 circumstance, when the first Constituent Assembly was elected (provided that there be a clear northern commitment to federation this time). The SANU exiles in Kampala, however, did not support this position. A national convention to reorganize the SANU was held in Kampala in November 1964. While Oduho hoped to be reaffirmed as president, Joseph Lagu solicited SANU deputy secretary general Aggrey Jaden to challenge Oduho so that he would not run unopposed. Nugent School alum Jaden defeated Oduho by a single vote and won the presidency. Oduho subsequently formed his own faction (the Azanian Liberation Front), and Deng refused to accept his demotion. Deng's former colleagues announced that they had suspended him from occupying any office.[19]

The SANU was beset with personality, factional, and ethnic differences over policy. R. O. Collins once noted that the organization's most public failure was its incapacity to establish a viable SANU organization outside Sudan's borders. And yet, underground southern cells developed outside the SANU fold. One of them—the Southern Front—was a rival southern political organization in Khartoum. In March 1965 the Round Table Conference in Khartoum was the first meeting to directly address the South's future within the country since independence. While all the northern parties there refused to accept separation as a solution, the southern parties—including the SANU—were divided. Santino Deng's Sudan Unity Party stood for na-

tional unity, while the Southern Front, Anyanya, and SANU wanted secession. No resolution was achieved. William Deng backed away from self-determination and stayed as leader of SANU "inside" to work for a federal solution, while Oduho and Jaden returned to Uganda as leaders of the separatist SANU "outside." The new government pursued military action against the Anyanya and worked with southerners who favored unity.[20]

A CHANGING CHURCH

While the war years saw major changes within the national political fold, significant evolutions were also in store for the Sudanese church. Sudanese Christian communities at independence were prototypical mission station communities that depended on non-Sudanese individuals for major leadership (though locals provided limited leadership).[21] The Dinka church primarily comprised students, former students, and those who had moved to towns or near mission stations. It was smaller in comparison to other groups like the Moru, who—though a smaller ethnicity—had nearly the same amount of people confirmed during Bishop Oliver Allison's 1960 tour of the South as the Dinka did. Before the 1960s the Nuer church was also small, with Christianity limited to three mission schools that few Nuer attended, even following the government's 1947 effort to begin encouraging education. While South Sudan's population around independence was approximately 2.8 million, this number dwarfed the number of Christians in the South that the Roman Catholic Church, Church Missionary Society (CMS), and American Presbyterian Mission collectively tallied in 1956: 206,751, or approximately 7.4 percent of the South's estimated 1955 population. Most of these Christians were located in Equatoria province and, perhaps as a direct consequence, were singled out for Islamization and Arabization.[22]

After the nationalization of mission schools, evangelizing became difficult for churches, and with the foreign missionary expulsion of 1963–64, the military government intended to end Christian proselytizing in the South. And yet, the expulsion encouraged an opposite result: South Sudanese rather than Europeans or Americans directed Sudanese churches. To be sure, decreasing Western missionary influence during the period was evidenced long before the expulsion. In 1944, the Catholic Church ordained its first Sudanese priest (Guido Akou) since 1887. Eight years later Daniel Deng Atong was consecrated the first Sudanese Anglican bishop, and Ireneo Dud became the first Sudanese Catholic bishop. Dinka clergy officially took the reins of Anglican missionary work among the Dinka when missionary

Leonard Sharland returned to England in 1959 and was not replaced by a European. Though the CMS mourned the missionary expulsion, it boasted just six missionaries in the South at the time. By 1964 the Episcopal Church had fifty-seven Sudanese pastors, while the Catholic Church ordained twenty-eight Sudanese between 1955 and 1964.[23]

In addition to the changing demographics of Christian leadership, the lay demographic was also changing. Conversions started to rise in the late 1950s, and Catholic baptisms at Isoke and Torit increased significantly from 1960 to 1964. In 1961, Roman Catholic missionaries in eastern Equatoria mobilized clergy and catechists and campaigned to bring people into the church. More than seven thousand people were baptized that year. No random initiative, the campaign was done in response to the approaching enactment of the Missionary Societies Act.[24] In late February 1964 the *New York Times* reproduced a Reuters report that—statistical accuracy notwithstanding—indicated growth in the South Sudanese Church since the national census a decade before. Listing the South's population at approximately three million, it stated that "Roman Catholic missions from countries other than the United States claim 400,000 to 500,000, the Church of England 120,000 and the American Mission of the Upper Nile (Presbyterian and Reformed), about 3,000."[25] Conversion to the local evangelical church in the southern Blue Nile also increased after the expulsion. The Sudan Interior Mission had secured a foothold to work among the Uduk at Chali in 1938. Chali district had belonged to the Upper Nile province (in the South) until July 1953, when it became part of Blue Nile province (in the North).[26]

Among the Nuer there were hitherto few Christian converts outside the small, literate, and missionary-trained elite. Nonetheless, many viewed the burning of a southern church in Khartoum and the expulsion as crucial turning points in their attitudes toward the government and, consequently, their willingness to rebel. While early Nuer converts appeared on the Ethiopian frontier during the war, western Nuer regions were spared some of the war's worst effects because of unusually high floods that restricted troop movements. Consequently, western Nuer did not experience the move toward Christianity as those in the East did. Nevertheless, Nuer now exposed other Nuer in rural areas to Christianity, and the Christian teachings so presented appeared less foreign than missionary instruction.[27] References were made throughout the war to the songs and prophecies of Nuer prophet Ngundeng Bong, a late nineteenth-century figure who emerged as a leader around the time that condominium authority was starting to assert itself in the South. Southern Nilotic peoples have a long

tradition of religious leadership by inspired figures, and anthropologist E. E. Evans-Pritchard termed these figures "prophets." Douglas Johnson has noted that many Nuer have drawn parallels between the teachings of Christ and Ngundeng.[28]

The civil war era was a period of significant religious change for the Dinka. A combination of factors generated new displacement and migration. Some young men went to North Sudanese cities to pursue different livelihoods, while the war forced others into refuge outside the country. Both movements led to a greater openness to Christianity, an attraction rooted in exposure to a world beyond cattle camps and recognition of the need for new resources that education provided.[29] During the 1960s many Jieng boys and young men left the South for North Sudanese urban centers, and as black youth sought opportunities in largely Muslim and Arab settings, many found a sense of solidarity in Catholic and Protestant "clubs."[30] Club attendance meant learning to read the vernacular language and studying the Bible. The majority converted to Christianity, a faith that provided a foundation for a new communal identity. The Anglican congregation in Khartoum North became a primary gathering point for young Dinka migrants. While an indigenous African church started to emerge among the Dinka during the sixties and seventies, and Christian adherence grew, these developments were principally driven by Dinka movement from their cattle camps and villages. In this vein, the geographic expanse of Christian belief was what it had long been: Christian growth during the sixties still happened in towns, cities, and now refugee camps.[31] "To be a Christian," writes Jesse Zink, "still meant that Dinka had to leave the landscape in which they had been raised."[32]

BLACK CHRISTIAN LIBERATION

Government attempts to inculcate the South with Islam and Arab culture gave way to violent military operations and atrocities that drove thousands to flee to neighboring countries. Many churches, schools, and villages were destroyed in the summer of 1965, forcing many to flee into the bush or take exile in Zaire or Uganda. Northern troops destroyed Sudan's Anglican theological college (Bishop Gwynne College), compelling students and staff to leave with their families to Uganda. In October 1969 the Ecumenical Programme for Emergency in Africa reported that approximately 180,000 Sudanese refugees were spread throughout several East African countries, West Cameroon, Europe, and the United States.[33] Amid massive southern

flight after 1963, Andrew Wheeler has noted, "in the insecurity and deprivation of these years great numerical growth took place, as well as a profound spiritual deepening."[34]

Within a milieu of violence, rebellion, and exile, various individuals from several segments of society—including refugees, clerics, Anyanya, and others—spiritualized their circumstances in extraordinary ways. Within this discourse, God was positioned as being concerned about the southern plight and working out their deliverance. This rhetoric was racialized in that southerners demonized Arabs and the Arab regime while framing themselves as God's special people analogous to the Israelites. The dissemination of this thought in personal and public spaces suggests a link between private religious views and the political goal of national independence; it represents a defining moment in the narrative of Sudanese political theology.

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To begin, Arabs were demonized in varying ways. Southerners driven to prevent a new chapter in the history of Sudanese slavery cited Arab intentions to enslave blacks as a motivation driving government policies. Slavery, as a result, became a central element to an articulated paradigm of racial war. In 1963, exile Zacharia Duot de Atem wrote to his former teacher that "the Northern Sudanese . . . are actually attempting to transform the Southerners into a servile people who will always be the servants of the muslims. . . . They are determined to convert us into an abundant source of slaves for the Arab World."[35] Another example comes from President Ibrahim Nyigilo of the Southern Sudan Christian Association. In January 1962, refugees in East Africa established a sister organization called the Sudanese Christian Association in East Africa (SCAEA). Headquartered in Kampala, members sought support from Christian organizations and communities in East Africa and farther abroad, wanting to draw global attention to the persecution in Sudan. Although it took on the appearance of an organization aimed at assisting refugees, it was actually a front organization for the SANU. The financing body of the liberation movement, it secretly raised funds, facilitated contacts, provided accommodations for members, and promoted SANU and Anyanya political and military goals. The association's scholarship program was perhaps its greatest legacy, producing most of the southern leadership after the war (including a young student named John Garang).[36] In Nyigilo's letter to the UN secretary general, African heads of state, and church leaders, he remarked,

> We would not accept unity based on our national degradation, cultural and political slavery. The African everywhere, is rediscovering the African image and personality, you would not ask us to suffer the fate of Arab racialism and colonialism. In such a nation as the Sudan is constituted today, the African shall remain nothing but a slave . . . at the best a second rate citizen. We have no choice but to fight for freedom.[37]

The SACNU (the acronym occasionally used by the exile movement in 1962) implored Milton Obote to recognize that liberated African nations were responsible for helping to free Africans still struggling under a foreign yoke. Arguing that Sudanese nationalism was part of the Pan-Arab movement and had never positioned itself with Africanism, southerners were suffering under a yoke akin to their ancestral bondage: "in the Sudan the Arab invaders are holding the four million Negroes in chains, who[se] grandparents they had in the last century raided and sold into slavery. [Arabs] call the great nilotics and nilo-hamites, verily the Negroes here, slaves."[38]

After witnessing atrocities caused by security forces in Juba and Wau, Bishop Ireneo Dud expressed to the minister of interior that this "inhuman behaviour" could not secure God's protection.[39] The perception that southerners were struggling against people who were operating outside the confines of humanity and God's grace embellished the seemingly ingrained nature of northern Arab cruelty. As an unnamed writer expressed to a priest in 1965, "I do not trust an Arab in my life even when an Arab says he has seen GOD I would not believe so."[40] The notion that one's actions could expel people—and Arab soldiers specifically—from God's grace was also expressed in poetic verse by J. M. Deng in the April 1971 issue of *Grass Curtain*. *Grass Curtain* was published from London by the Southern Sudan Association, an organization formed in 1970. Directed by Mading de Garang, at one point the Anyanya High Command revised and adopted a plan to use the *Curtain* as an effective medium for the movement.[41] Invoking the legacy of past invasions and fifteen years of war, Deng lamented, "They feel free now / To lay you waste. . . . / Defying the Almighty's great hands / In their reckless disregard of humanity."[42] Joseph Lagu similarly levied the "inhuman" label on the government when in a 1971 issue he exclaimed that Khartoum's response to Anyanya development programs in the countryside had "always been inhuman, brutal and barbaric."[43]

Some clerics inferred that the troubles they faced were nothing short of devilish, claims implying that policies that stifled the church and wrought

suffering were essentially evil. An October 1965 letter written by Eduardo Mason, Sisto Mazzoldi, Domenico Ferrara, and Herman te Riele to Bishop Dud and all southern clergy and laity expressed such sentiments. Each author occupied positions in Sudanese Catholic leadership: Mason had been the vicar apostolic of Bahr el-Ghazal before his appointment as vicar apostolic of El Obeid; Ferrara was the prefect of Mupoi; Mazzoldi was the prefect apostolic of Bahr el-Gebel; and Riele, the prefect of Malakal.[44] Expressing sorrow at the violent deaths of priests Barnaba Deng and Arkangelo Ali, they cited Matthew 5:11 ("blessed are those that are persecuted for Christ's sake") and acknowledged that the southern church "carried on valiantly as faithful disciples of Jesus, in the midst of trials and difficulties which were meant by the devil to take the faith from you and to take you out of the Church."[45] A Comboni priest of Dinka Malwal background, Barnaba Deng had the distinction of being ordained by Cardinal Giovanni Montini—the future Pope Paul VI—in 1959. Police mounted a deadly search for him after he was accused of assisting the rebels. Fleeing to Wau, Deng was eventually arrested and killed. Arkangelo Ali was ordained into the Catholic priesthood in 1946. On the morning of July 21, 1965, military trucks burst into the Rumbek mission compound. The two fathers stationed there were ordered to walk in front of the soldiers. After being taken under the veranda, Fr. Ali was killed. The soldiers hid his body.[46] Later that year Fr. Avellino Wani started a letter to Bishop Dud by echoing the belief that spiritual warfare was operating in the conflict: "Before greeting you, I would insul[t] the devil! . . . How much it tries to destroy and wickedly demoralize and despairingly disperse us! But in vain."[47]

An anecdote from William Levi sheds further light on the perception that spiritual forces were operating in Sudan. Born in 1964 to Messianic Jewish parents, Levi's family lived in the village of Moli, in Equatoria. In his autobiography *The Bible or the Axe*, Levi notes that the situation in Sudan had become increasingly tenuous in 1965. "No one was safe. . . . Churches were burned, schools closed, and crops destroyed. . . . Later that year [1965], my parents decided that the time had come to leave their beloved homeland. With heavy hearts, they set about the difficult task of moving to Uganda."[48] He recalls one religion class from his days as a grade two student in Nyakaningwa. Although the anecdote took place during the postwar period of the 1970s, it illustrates how the people and events of the day were perceived through a spiritual point of view. Ephesians 6:10–13 was the topic of study, and as the class contemplated the meaning of the scripture, the teacher—Levi's grandfather—stated:

> "There is an enemy . . . one who would erase the name of Yeshua from our country, and would gladly shed our blood to gain his ground. Who can name our enemy?" . . . A hand went up. "The Muslims of Khartoum are our enemies. They would like to drive Christians from this country." A murmur of agreement filled the room, until my grandfather silenced it. . . . "No. . . . We do not struggle against flesh and blood. . . . Satan is our enemy. He blinds the eyes of the Muslims to the gospel message."[49]

Amid accusations that Arabs were "inhuman" in their cruelty and fighting on the wrong side of spiritual warfare, southern clerics and laity requested God's help in dealing with such foes. These sentiments were often expressed in private correspondences. Michael Maror Liec reacted to the missionary expulsion by praying that peace could be achieved peacefully: "All the priests of ours . . . are deported back by the Arabs, but nevertheless God is great. Let us pray to God so that we achieve our country without blood(shed)."[50] Former mission student Elia Seng Majok, writing as a political refugee in the Central African Republic, prayed that through God's help the Arabs could be chased out and defeated despite their strength. For this Majok asked former teacher Fr. Matordes to help "by praying for us to get our freedom."[51] Refugee Juliano Kita, writing from the Congo, closed one letter to a Catholic brother with the hope that "God help us from Arbation [Arabization]."[52]

In the midst of travails with the government, southerners invoked specific moments from biblical Israel's history. One such instance occurred after the expulsion of American Presbyterian missionary Dorothy Rankin. Rankin found herself in the government's crosshairs in early 1961. Charged with "causing ill feeling and hatred towards the Government of the Sudan" at her Doleib Hill station, Rankin was summoned to appear before the police investigator at Malakal on April 25, 1961.[53] Two incidents were in question: one in which she reportedly criticized the quality of the food (in reference to school regulations) and another in which she reportedly punished workers who had worked on Sunday by lowering their pay. Even though permanent undersecretary of the interior Hassan Abdulla stated that the evidence was not sufficient or reliable enough to warrant legal action in courts, there was enough evidence to warrant administrative action. In an irreversible decision, Rankin was ordered out of the country on August 20, 1961.[54] The following month, one of Rankin's students wrote a letter to her that likened her situation with that of biblical Joseph:

> God will help us. There was a man named Joseph. That man was . . . sold to the Arabs and was taken away by the Arabs. There was a famine in their land. When he interpreted the king of Egypt's dream he was made chief of the dura store. And when his brothers came he recognized them but he didn't tell them who he was, because he wasn't angry at them and even gave them grain. Now don't you be upset, for God doesn't hold any hard feeling, and He loves all, except those who refuse His Word He punishes.[55]

While the biblical narrative describes the group that enslaved Joseph and brought him into Egypt as "Ishmaelites"—people who perhaps came from east of the Jordan River—the student's decision to describe them as "Arabs" is significant, given the government's Arabization policies at the time.[56] While not as direct as Mabuong's insertion of Arabs into Lamentations 3, this student's letter reads as an attempt to place the missionary expulsion in an older narrative of Arab mistreatments of God's people.

Fr. Jerome Siri, writing from the Congo, related his contemporary experiences with biblical Israel's exile to Babylon. Siri had been ordained a Catholic priest in December 1948. He worked among the Zande for seven years and subsequently worked in the new Rumbek Vicariate. Siri was with Arkangelo Ali the day he was killed by government soldiers. Narrowly escaping, he reached Doruma in Zaire and translated and revised Christian texts into Zande.[57] Writing to Monsignor Domenico Ferrara, Siri expressed hope that God would quickly answer their prayers if he did not intend for them to suffer as long as their Israelite forebearers: "Here we feel out of place and homesick. If God does not intend to have our captivity as . . . long as that of Babilon [*sic*], let Him listen to our sighs."[58]

In Severino Fuli Boki Tombe Gaʾle's 2002 autobiography, he references how Old Testament narratives were applied to contemporary circumstances. Born in Nimule in 1922, he was baptized in 1934 and eventually joined Juba's Province Headquarters Training School. After his training had concluded, Severino became a junior accountant in Juba and became politically active in Khartoum. With the likes of Abel Alier and Hilary Logali, he created a network of underground cells that gathered funds inside Sudan to support the armed liberation struggle. Severino joined the liberation movement in Uganda in July 1963.[59] As God had offered providential aid to the Israelites in their journey to the promised land, Severino offers an elaborate description of God's assistance after reaching Uganda. After advancing fifty meters

past the Ugandan border, he relates that he called a halt. Kneeling down and facing Sudan, he prayed the following:

> Lord Jesus Christ . . . I thank you for the wonderful assistance you have accorded us in our flight . . . guide my kids and indeed the entire family-members who have been thrown into destitution in Defence of your Christian faith and our cultural identity and origin . . . which are being annihilated by the Arab North Government. . . . Help me, Lord, to stand up like a man and like a man die, if necessary, in defence of our Christian Religion and Faith.[60]

Once in Uganda, he framed a fortuitous development with another moment in biblical history—Israel's journey to the promised land. In 1967 the Parliament of Uganda passed a Trophy Act, which allowed Ugandans to sell an unlimited number of tusks, rhino horns, and reptile hides. One day, Ga'le was shown a particular batch of trophies that "was to be known from then on as the ANYANYA MANNA. Like in the case of Israel's Manna which maintained the Jews until they reached the promised land, the ANYANYA MANNA also sustained and indeed saved the ANYANYA-Eastern Command from collapse until . . . 1969."[61] The decision of Rankin's student to reference Joseph, Fr. Siri's mention of the Babylonian exile, and the labeling of Ugandan trophies as manna each illustrate the ways in which Sudanese used biblical history to encourage themselves and understand their circumstances.

Some refugees and those who remained in the South used songs to express their hopes and fears. In some lyrics, God was approached and described as the providential agent that could change their lot. Several Kuku-Balokole songs written in the mid-1960s were mixed with expectation for God's deliverance and pleas for pity. Before the Torit Mutiny, most of the Kuku people who lived in southwestern Equatoria believed in their ancestral spirits. Their well-being was largely attributed to their relations with these spirits. An abundant harvest, for example, reflected happy spirits, while natural disasters were attributed to their societal neglect.[62] Christianity's arrival—and particularly the Church Missionary Society—marked a new era in Kuku religious belief systems, and after the mutiny, many Kuku fled to Uganda, where during funerals "youth sang hymns, emotionally-laden songs, and beat drums all day and night to alleviate psychological pain."[63]

Balokole connections to South Sudan can be inferred in part from the travels of Sosthenes Dronyi, a teacher who converted to Christianity amid the East African Revival and became an evangelist. By the 1960s he resolved to undertake itinerant lay preaching throughout the region, and it

is estimated that through him thousands in Uganda, Kenya, the Congo, and Sudan accepted Christ. As he is remembered in part for advocating African church music, it is possible that some of these Kuku-Balokole songs were indirectly inspired by or connected to Dronyi (or written by Kuku refugees in Uganda).[64] Durham University's Sudan Archive contains manuscripts of three songs that were translated and transcribed by Enoch Lobiya, including one that contains the lyrics:

Ti yi moronic ko to'diri
Anyen yi tete'ya
Kujön kune a ti Sudan nikan
Nun wone konyen
Ko yi i döru kata ni
Let us in reality struggle
That we may win.
The soil of the Sudan is ours
God pity us
Here in the grass[65]

Another Kuku-Balokole song expressed a similar message, though with more of a tone of dread:

Jur likan lo
Lunasirik kuwe kulo rite ko Merok
Sudan 'du'dudyö
Lunasirik Nun wone konyen
My brothers!
Our land is occupied by enemies
The Sudan is ending
Brothers, let God pity us.[66]

One song expressed hope in the following lines:

Momo'yi ta Nun
Talo juwe i boro kata
Yesu ko rinit duma lwögu
Na nutu
You who are driven to
The bush—pray to God.
Jesus has great power
To save people.[67]

The Comboni Archives in Rome are flush with letters written by those who acknowledged God's providence in the inexplicable ways their lives had been spared. Several cited God as directly intervening in their encounters with Arab soldiers. Fr. Adelino Fuli, rector of St. Augustine's Minor Seminary at Tore, recounted an attack from Arab soldiers in which he expressed that God had helped them escape with the effect of bullets passing over their heads.[68] Athian Joseph shared with Fr. Arthur Nebel a similar story of God's saving action in the lives of three men who were heading to Juba despite shooting and house burning in the area. "The Arab soldiers . . . began firing [at] them across the Nile," Joseph wrote. "One of the soldiers said: 'Dak Abuna Kabir; be human edrib' (shoot him), but God had put an unseen shiled [*sic*] behind which H. Lorship stood with his flock. Three-four bullets passed by them but none of them so far was touched."[69] Felix Kule stated that God assisted Anyanya forces in a clash against Arab soldiers. After stating that the Anyanya had shot down a plane in Maridi, Kule wrote, "The Almighty God punished them that day by confusing them thus shooting each other while the tactful Anya-Nya made their way off without any losses."[70]

Just as clerics noted God's work in their encounters with Arab soldiers, exilic stories regularly featured recognitions of divine intervention. A letter written by "D. Paul" (Fr. Paolino Doggale) recounts a tale in which priests at Tore Minor Seminary accused of harboring Anyanya soldiers were pursued by government troops. These troops had orders to arrest them and destroy a nearby mission. After mentioning that physical destruction had occurred, Doggale noted that "through God's Providence the Priests and the Seminarists managed to escape and fled to Congo."[71] Writing from the Central African Republic, Alfredo Akot Bak wrote to an Italian priest that God had assisted his trek to the Congo. Despite sadness on hearing that missionaries had been expelled, he expressed that only God knew when the South would be delivered from the Arabs' hands.[72] Bro. Gabriel Ngor similarly recognized God's hand in his passage to Uganda. After stating that the towns of Juba, Torit, Maridi, and others were nearly empty because of widespread killings done by government forces, Ngor explained to Fr. Giuseppe Gusmini that after eight days roaming in the bush in adverse conditions, his well-being could only be attributed to God's help.[73]

Finally, there was the confidence that southerners were special in God's sight and that he was concerned with their success and freedom—as his children. This sense of national destiny provided a sense that God would reward southern efforts in the face of uncertainty, an important spiritual undercurrent to the struggle. As one anonymous writer asserted in 1965,

"The present conflict . . . is not only a Political, social, Economical, but also a Religious and [Racial] . . . issue. How it is going to be solved, and when, the answer rests with God and his abandoned children of the South, who are beseeching Him to bring peace."[74] While the imagery of God's children praying for peace was perhaps meant to evoke sympathy, *Nouvel Observateur* reported Anyanya dances that included the line "We the children of Mary will kill the Arabs," words that illustrated the union of spiritual identity and racial warfare.[75]

One war song read as follows:

The war is hot: Enemies are strong;
But Lord's people will not be defeated at all.
If we are with him, he would save us,
He who can't change, we shall defeat . . .
he had agreed you, to be his people;
In the work of the King let us [trust],
Let us be strong in his power.[76]

One Kuku political song expressed the author's request of God for deliverance:

Yi kwkwaddu nun lo
Yi kwkwaddu nun lo gweja yi
Yi kwkwadou lepen ti yne tiki yi
Toliyen nikay na Southern Sudan
We pray to God
We pray to you who created us
We pray let Him give us
Our freedom of Southern Sudan[77]

In Rodolfo Deng's letter to Fr. Nebel, he expresses his conviction that victory was assured because of their special relationship to God. Despite the recent deaths of priests Arkangelo Ali and Barnaba Deng at the hands of Arab soldiers, Deng was convinced that the righteousness of their cause and divine assistance would ensure their eventual success: "We shall not surrender . . . the road to Liberty is 'de facto' one of bloodshed. We shall win because the truth is on our side . . . Confident in God's Providence, of History and in our . . . Mother Mary we shall fight on . . . we have the mightiest of all weapons—Prayer."[78] When Pope Paul VI visited Africa in 1969, Emedio Tafeng conjectured that the papal visit was a sign from God meant specifically for southern Sudan. Tafeng, chairman of the Revolution-

ary Council and president of the Anyidi government, addressed a letter to the Pontiff and conjectured that "perhaps Your visit is a God sent occasion to mark the beginning of our human recognition and eventual Liberation from the hands of our destryers [*sic*]."[79]

PEACE WITHOUT FREEDOM: THE ADDIS ABABA AGREEMENT

General Jaʿafar al-Nimeiri seized power in Sudan on May 25, 1969, ending the period of parliamentary politics that the 1964 October Revolution had begun. Public opinion generally accepted the new government, as party politics had been unable to solve the Southern Problem. Nimeiri, despite an attempted coup in 1971, regained his position, and the May Revolution continued. In March 1972 it achieved what no Sudanese government had done yet: ending the civil war.[80]

Negotiations commenced at the Addis Ababa Hilton Hotel on February 16, 1972. Conducted with Haile Selassie's blessing, there was a basic understanding that the talks would produce a plan for regional autonomy rather than a separate southern state. Though the Southern Sudan Liberation Movement originally demanded a southern state, African governments in the 1970s were opposed to secessionist movements. Selassie, himself fighting secessionists in Eritrea, was among this number. The long conflict reached its conclusion when Nimeiri announced the following month that a peace settlement had been reached. The specifics of the Addis Ababa Agreement were multilayered, but the key component was that it granted regional autonomy to the South under the governing umbrella of the national government. The World Council of Churches, All Africa Council of Churches, and Sudan Council of Churches worked as intermediaries and messengers for both sides.[81]

William Levi attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony in Chinyaquia, where Lagu and Nimeiri commemorated the agreement. "As the fragments of the delicate ribbon fluttered to the ground," he noted, "a great roar erupted . . . southern Sudan would have the authority to govern her own affairs without interference from the North. For millions of Sudanese refugees, it was a chance to go home at long last."[82] One group of exiles employed the theme of Babylonian exile to memorialize the refugee return. A sign carried between bamboo poles was adorned with a quotation from Jeremiah 23:3: "Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them. The returnees."[83] Given P. K. Mabuong's earlier borrowing from Jeremiah's Lamentations to decry the South's situation, the recogni-

tion that God was now bringing the refugees back to the South brought the situation full circle. While those people evoked an Old Testament prophet, others hearkened to Nuer prophet Ngundeng. Peter Gatkuoth Gual was a deputy for Abel Alier, minister for southern affairs and leader of the government negotiating team at Addis Ababa. Following the agreement, Gatkuoth met with Lou chiefs, who told him that Ngundeng had predicted that peace would come from the east (Ethiopia's direction); a Nuer with a left-handed mother (which Gatkuoth's mother was); and a slim left-handed stranger (which described Alier).[84] Thus, people placed the Addis Ababa Agreement within longer prophetic traditions.

The changes experienced by the Sudanese Church during the war continued into the postwar era. In 1976 the Episcopal Church of the Sudan (ECS) became an independent province within the Anglican Communion. Within the Catholic Church, the vicariates and prefectures were elevated in 1974 to metropolitan sees in Khartoum and Juba and five suffragan sees. The Sudan Council of Churches conducted development projects in both North and South Sudan, and other Christian agencies like Norwegian Church Aid worked with various medical, government, and educational programs throughout the South. These agencies were involved in the arrival of Ugandan refugees into Sudan following Idi Amin's first demise and then Obote. "Only someone who experienced these years in southern Sudan," Wheeler wrote, "can adequately appreciate how the Churches grew in size, in their evangelistic and developmental endeavors, and in their institutional complexity."[85]

* * *

During the First Sudanese Civil War, activists infused spirituality into their language of racial resistance, marking an important development in the evolution of South Sudanese political thought. Several understood the war as a spiritual contest, and in this vein, figures like Joseph Lagu and Paolino Doggale conceptualized southerners as a community defined not only by their racial and cultural identity but by their favorable position in a narrative of oppression and liberation.

The public and private spaces in which southerners theologized their circumstances speaks to the fact that this theology was not aimed exclusively at non-Sudanese audiences for self-serving, sympathy-conjuring purposes. Personal religious views or thoughts expressed in private correspondences are different from public prophetic affirmations of faith. And yet, while this

book is principally concerned with what happens when politico-religious views are announced, the similarities found in public and private articulations speak to a theology that was not confined to the public sphere. One must conclude, then, that the thoughts examined in this chapter were not artificial or intended primarily to generate support from outside supporters (even if they did, in fact, help to render such support).

The circumstances in which this rhetoric emerged—during the infancy of decolonization, in sub-Saharan Africa's first postcolonial state, and among this religious minority—invite the South Sudanese case to be placed in conversation with other contemporary instances of revolutionary movements in which race or religion were primary points of division (Zanzibar and South Africa come to mind).[86] The South Sudanese case provides a provocative lens into race and religion as public and policed political identities. Southern intellectuals, rather than approaching race and religion as mutually exclusive subjectivities, used theology as a crucible with which to define race. Finally, the Christian discourse highlights the ways in which biblical metaphors and imageries shaped the thought of a diverse cadre of southern thinkers. Religious messages were carried outside traditionally devotional contexts by clerics, laypeople, civilians, and soldiers. This reality points to the importance of expanding the scope of sources used to trace the influence of religious thought on early postcolonial political imaginaries.

Chapter 4 examines another theology that emerged in another war against Khartoum: the longer Second Sudanese Civil War.