Islam and the Dinka of the Southern Sudan from the Pre-Colonial Period to Independence (1956)

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ABSTRACT

The resistance to Islam by the Dinka peoples of the Southern Sudan, up until the independence period of 1956, can be explained in that Dinka society could, in no way, utilize Islam culturally, politically, or religiously. Rather, the vibrant and ecologically powerful Dinka lifecsystem remained impervious to most outside forces.

For almost thirty years a bloody civil war has intermittently ravaged the southern Sudan. Since 1983, the reason for the bloodshed between the Islamic North and the non-Islamic South is the conflict between the Islamic North and the Nilotic Dinka, who have formed the bulk of Southern resistance to Northern hegemony. This paper will address the centuries-old resistance of Islam by the Dinka.¹

It has been argued that the swamps of the Southern Sudan formed barriers inhibiting the penetration of Islam and allowing only a slender link with the Northern network of caravan trade.² After 1821, the violence of the slave trade during the Turkiyya (1821-1885) and Mahdiyya (1885-1898) was the principal explanation for rejection of Islam by the Southern Sudanese.³ During the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium (1898-1956), the most prominent assertion of existing historiography is that the “Southern Policy” of 1930 inhibited the advancement of Islam.⁴ I will argue that the Southern Sudan was never completely isolated from Islamic exposure and that many smaller Southern groups converted to Islam.⁵ The Southern Policy, which aimed to isolate the South from Islamic elements in the North, was so poorly enforced that it failed in its endeavor. Rather, Islam was rejected for centuries because, as a life-system, it could not be utilized within the structures of the Dinka political, cultural, or religious society. Thus, until independence in 1956, the Dinka neither rejected nor accepted Islam, but, rather, co-existed beside it.⁶

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This paper is divided into two parts. Part I will consider Southern exposure to Islam, historically, and the failure of the Anglo-Egyptian “Southern Policy”. Part II will argue that the Dinka political, cultural, and religious institutions, up to 1956 (Sudan’s independence), were not in a position to integrate with that of the Northern Sudanese Islamic state.

Part 1 — Historical Contact with Islam

Islam, Christianity and perhaps Judaism may have been features of Sudanese civilization from earliest times. The Islamic states of Sinnar and Darfur traded with the Dinka and they had trading, cultural, and military contacts with many Islamic peoples. During the Turko-Egyptian period (1820-1885) and the slave trade, the Arab dealers did not themselves engage in hunting down slaves, but relied mostly on native suppliers or middlemen. For example, in 1860, 110 armed Muslims accompanied by 1,000 Dinka undertook extensive raids against other Dinka groups. Later in 1865, stations built on the Bahr El Zeraf conducted raids for slaves with the aid of Nuer clans, whilst certain Dinka entered into the slave trade for themselves. Hence, in the early years of the Turkiyya, Dinka people were exposed to Islam by way of Muslim militiamen fighting alongside them for their own gains.

The slave trade was not the only representation of Islam in the Southern Sudan during the Turkiyya. Islamic teachers, or fekis, also made their way into the Southern Sudan following Northern traders in order to proselytize. Members of the Egyptian government attempted, peacefully, to introduce Islam into the Southern region and during this period many Southern groups were converted. During this period, a deputation of Agar Dinka chiefs travelled to Lado to complain to Emin Pasha, a European Muslim convert, that merchants had been seizing their children. Emin Pasha was a Muslim and trusted by the Dinka, therefore it appears the Dinka did not always view Muslims in a negative context.

By 1863 slavery and violence increased. With the removal of the previous weak Egyptian administration, the Northerners no longer needed to collaborate with various chiefs. They built permanent bases (zeribas) and directly plundered the surrounding Southern groups. The influence of these Muslim Northerners now extended beyond their trading activities and Islam spread through the sanction of raiding expeditions under the guise of religion. At this time, more Southern peoples became Islamicized, particularly those living in and around the zeribas. However, the Dinka, exposed to the traders in much the same fashion, remained strangely impervious to Islam.

During the Mahdiyya, many Southerners, including Dinka, joined the Mahdists to drive out the colonial Turko-Egyptians. In 1884 units of the Egyptian army, which comprised many Southern recruits, joined the Southern insurgents and the Mahdists. At this point, the Egyptian administration in the Bahr-al-Ghazal collapsed, and eventually vanished from the province. In 1898, the Sudan came under the domination of the Anglo-Egyptian Condo-
minimum, and by this period many Southern groups had been Islamicized, however, the Dinka collectively did not number among them.\textsuperscript{19} It has often been argued that the Anglo-Egyptian Southern Policy, promulgated in 1930 by the Civil Secretary, Harold MacMichael, isolated the South from the North and halted the penetration of Islam into the Southern Region.\textsuperscript{20} However, "Southern Policy" failed in one of its major objectives: to inhibit further Islamic influence. There were a number of administrative and economic reasons for this failure. Burton argues that colonial rule in the Southern Sudan can be viewed as beginning with a general lack of administrative policy, and then to a policy of benign neglect.\textsuperscript{21} This factor, coupled with the world depression, affected British policy in the South.

Shortly after 1930, the Sudan was plagued by the oncoming depression, and staff in the Southern region were drastically reduced. Few Southerners were trained and promoted, and significant numbers of Northerners remained.\textsuperscript{22} Arab-Dinka contact was widespread, particularly among the peoples sharing common grazing grounds of the Bahr-el-Arab/Kir River, and in the Western Twij region. However, adoption of Islam was on a minor scale among these Dinka,\textsuperscript{23} even though, according to Dominic Akeg Mohamed, a Twij Dinka, during this period Dinka and Bagarra contact was common in his home town of Gogrial:

Intermarriages went on between each side and both of us constantly raided the other, not only for cattle but for women and children. Strangely, there was little adoption of Islamic culture or religion amongst the Dinka, even though there were a sizeable number of Dinka with Bagarra names.\textsuperscript{24}

Within a few years of Southern Policy, MacMichael's directive had failed. In 1937, the government's technical staff in the Upper Nile Province included 61 Muslims and only 33 non-Muslims. The province police had 3 Muslim officers and 199 Muslim NCOs. At Malakal, there were 35 Muslim artisans and 7 Muslim clerical and technical staff. The Egyptian irrigation department at Malakal employed 267 Muslims. In the Shilluk district, Muslim staff outnumbered non-Muslims by 15 to 9. The whole province employed 472 Muslim artisans. As for the elimination of Muslim Northern Sudanese traders, the jellaba, in 1938 the District Commissioner at Bor admitted that the hoped-for Greek and Syrian petty traders were unwilling to operate in his district.\textsuperscript{25} As late as 1941, British officials in the South were still perplexed and confused as to the exact meaning of "Southern Policy."\textsuperscript{26} Others were baffled as to the need for any Policy in the first place, as the Dinka people seemed impervious to all alien religions and cultures. In 1947, one District Commissioner complained that fear of Islam in the South was unfounded, particularly for the Dinka:

Even among the degenerate potbellies of Raga, after a century of Arab connections, there is little trace of Islam and amongst the 600,000 Dinka of the B. el-G [Bahr-al-Ghazal] I doubt if there are 100 genuine Muslims.\textsuperscript{27}

Other administrators noted that Islamic contact between the Southerners and Northerners was beyond their control. In 1944, Christian Southern girls
were marrying *jellaba* Moslems at Wau because they could afford bigger dowries. Even Southern Muslims were proselytizing non-Muslims during this period. According to Abdelmoniem I. Younis, a Southern Muslim,

> My grandfather was a sheikh of the Tijaniyya and he was an imam. He was Islamicized by Western Africans and even in the 1950s there were a lot of Nigerians in Raja. Many people came to the house of my grandfather and some were converted to Islam. However, the Dinka were not religious, they only went to the *kujur*.29

The administration continued to employ Northerners, and *jellaba* continued to traverse the region; only trivial signs of creeping Northern influence were suppressed.30 The failure of Southern Policy can be seen in the admittance, made in 1954 by the Governor of Upper Nile Province, that the Sudanese *jellaba* held a “semi-monopolistic position in the local economy.”31 Thus, Southern Policy did not halt the infusion of Islamic elements into the Southern region, and the Dinka were exposed to Islam for centuries. Dinka indifference to Islam must be explained by other means, for unlike many other Southern groups32, they remained impervious to the adoption of Islam, culturally, politically, and religiously.

**Part II — Dinka Political, Cultural, and Religious Institutions Versus Islam at Independence (1956)**

It has been argued that East African cattle pastoralists or semi-pastoralists with non-centralized political organizations have not embraced Islam or Christianity with any enthusiasm.33 Rigby demonstrates the Gogo of Tanzania were unable to incorporate Islam into their society34 and his insights will be borrowed to demonstrate a similar incompatibility within Dinka society at the dawning of Sudanese independence in 1956.

**Dinka and Islamic Political/Economic Structures**

A comparison between the Islamic state of the Sudan and that of the Dinka reveals two diverging political mechanisms. Bernard Lewis argues that in most modern-day Islamic states, power is located at the center of the community, the *jamaa*, which is fixed and unmoving. Thus, most Islamic societies are corporate bodies located in cities or towns. Islamic society seeks stability and provides an effective system of political mobilization; it binds the people in a common front.35

In contrast to the fixed unmoving political model above, the Dinka political system, the cattle camp (*wut*) is non-fixed and non-stable. Moving for much of the year, it relies upon the relationships between relatively mobile groups of herdsmen.36 The Dinka do not live in large permanent settlements. The few towns which existed in the Southern Sudan were staging posts in the days of the slave trade.37 During the Condominium, Dinka political society remained diffused and dispersed, and at any given point in time, when the cattle camp reached a certain size, “fission and fusion” occurred and an ambitious man,
usually a master of the “fishing spear”, gathered a group of his own kin, as well as others, and set off to form his own camp. This example is indicative of the political quality of the Dinka whose cattle camp is centrifugal and is in direct opposition to unification and non-fusion espoused in many Islamic societies.

The meaning of leadership differs between the Dinka and most Islamic States. The authority of an Islamic ruler is generally absolute and is subject to the Holy Law of the Qur’an; he is the final arbiter in judicial disputes and commands military power. Conversely, in Dinka society, leadership contains only minimal authority, and historically, Dinka chiefs exercised a limited measure of control over their people. Nor did they command any form of tribute. Their ritual authority enabled them to arbitrate in cases of witchcraft accusation and homicide. However, they commanded no judicial authority in the settlement of disputes and had no military power. Hence, prophets of outstanding reputation have not been numerous in Dinkaland and only two names are widely known, Cyer Dit and Ariandhit, both of whom acquired rudimentary political power as a response to external stress.

Political language and law in Islam comes from the Qur’an. It is written and immutable. In the Northern Sudan, a woman’s word in court is worth less than that of a man. Conversely, Dinka law is fluid and is not written; disputes are settled by consent. The word of a woman is accepted equally with that of a man, and both have identical rights to a hearing. The Dinkas never developed a law of crimes. Instead there existed a body of customary rules which might be termed a law of remedies. What may be termed a crime in Northern Sudan is regarded as a mere civil wrong in the eyes of the Dinka, for any offence, however serious, is compensable. Even homicide can be indemnified by payment in the form of cattle to the relatives of the deceased person. In Dinka society, human beings and cattle are substituted for each other and are linked in their quasi-legal transactions. Hence, law serves a different purpose within Dinka society than it does in Islamic society. Regulation and redress of behavior in Dinka society is achieved by means of rules specifying rights and obligations, rather than through the authority of a chief or a state. Enforcement tends to be diffusely sanctioned, expressed as an exchange process rather than as punishment. Due to this legal fluidity in Dinka society, warfare between segments is a common event. This factor is in direct opposition to that of Islamic society, where anarchy is avoided at all costs. In sum, Dinka and Islamic political systems diverge. Ultimately, it can be argued that Dinka society is inherently democratic, whereas Islamic political systems are inherently autocratic.

The structures of Dinka and Northern Islamic Sudanese societies are radically different. Most Islamic societies are not egalitarian; there has always been a scribal class, and the condonement of slavery confirms it is a society of hierarchy. There is an inherent inequality between rich and poor, old and young, and male and female. In many Islamic state-systems we see service rendered to someone, who, by virtue of his control of land or other goods, can command dependable patronage on a continuing basis. Those who have
control of the resources and the wealth are able to institutionalize it. Conversely, Dinka society is egalitarian, and societal decisions are worked out at the grass-roots level in a consensual fashion. The primary reason for Nilotic egalitarianism is that their economy is based on ownership of cattle. Hierarchical relationships, which depend on the extraction of service symbolized by tribute, cannot arise in Dinka society because cattle, as a form of wealth, can breed or die of disease. Additionally, raiding of cattle between Nilotic and non-Nilotic groups is common. Thus, there is a consistent opportunity in which to crosscut hierarchy and lose or gain wealth during which the rich may fall and the poor may rise.

Mainstream Islamic society encourages permanent settlement, rights in property, and political rights. In 1956, land ownership did not develop in Dinka society nor did the popularity of clientage as an organizing social and political principle. Hence, for practical reasons, hierarchical relationships could not exist in Dinka society.

Culture — Dinka versus Islamic Society

In terms of gender relations, Northern Sudanese women and men exist in separate social, economic and political spheres. The average Islamic woman is subordinate to her husband; her marriages are, for the most part, arranged, and she rarely attains political ascendancy over men. In Sudanese Muslim society, the majority of women are pharaonically circumcised.

In Dinka society, gender relations are, for the most part, egalitarian and men and women exist in the same sphere. Historically, Dinka clans had female chiefs and there were many instances of older women exercising considerable influence on the side of law and order to stop fighting. In the sphere of work, the division of labour in these societies is based on a complimentary opposition between female and male tasks. There is no child-marriage and circumcision is not practiced among the Dinka as it is with most Sudanese Islamic women. Some Dinka practice the custom of love-marriage, although arranged marriages are more common. Should a Nilotic woman find her husband's surroundings unsatisfactory, she may return to her natal homestead and insist that she will not be married. Separate spheres for men and women do not exist in Dinka society, nor do harems. Dinka women could never "seclude" themselves, as their services are needed pastorally, and their dislike of clothing differs from Northern Sudanese women who cover themselves in public.

Islamic and Dinka marriages take place for different reasons. Marriages in most Dinka social systems move out of the local circle to new, non-cousin relations to build community ties with non-relatives. Conversely, the Northern Sudanese practice cousin marriage allowing the wealth to remain in the family. Northern and Southern marital practices are a major factor encouraging the separation of both peoples, coupled with negative views of each other. Dominic Akeg Mohamed argues:
Marital integration between North and South will always be difficult. There has always been an unwritten law that among Muslim Sudanese, you do not marry a slave. On the other hand, the unwritten law of the Dinka is that you do not marry a slave trader.61 With these customs, it is easy to see how little integration has taken place between Southerners and Northerners. By 1956, Southern women had more legal rights than those in the North. During the Condominium, the British did little to alter the relationship between Northern Sudanese men and women, hence Islamic females remained on a lower social scale with little access to the judicial system.62 However, in the South, women obtained a degree of liberty, when rural courts were established to promote personal rights. Thereafter, women found it easier to obtain divorces.63 Authority is viewed differently in Dinka and Islamic societies. According to Ismail Abdalla, a Northern Sudanese, obedience to parental authority is keenly observed in Muslim society. There is deference by the young to the elderly, by women to men, and to those who have political power. Authority is inculcated with the aid of Islamic Sudanese traditional education, the kuttab, or Qur’an school, along with parental upbringing.64 Culturally, the Dinka observe a clear principle of gerontocracy.65 However, this does not extend to embracing political or authoritarian structures imposed from outside their clan structure. Due to their transhumance, few of them attended schools until recently. Nor do parents teach a system of authority structures, because there is a separation of younger people from older people for much of each year. Bona Malwal asserts it is mainly the peer group and the age sets which regulate the behavior of their individual members in Dinka society. Hence the Nuer and Dinka attitude to authority is one of touchiness, pride, and reckless disobedience.66 Certain Islamic practices pose a “social conduct” problem for the Dinka. In the eyes of the Dinka, Islamic prayers violate a strict social code in that, to pray towards Mecca, one has to kneel on one’s knees with one’s posterior in the air. In Dinka society, this act would be a serious breach of good manners, because when naked, one never leans forward but always remains upright. The only way a Dinka could pray in the Islamic fashion would be to adopt Islamic dress. Historically, the Dinka despise clothing except on rare occasions.67 Although there is much ethnic strife, the sense of nationhood in Northern Sudan is far stronger than that in the South. Islam, to a certain degree creates an Umma, a nation and community, and a sense of unity combined with a shared culture. It provides a most effective system of political mobilization.68 However, the Islamic criterion of group identity and loyalty in times of crisis does not exist in Dinka society. In their homes, the Dinka have no consciousness of themselves as a nation, and a Bor travelling in Raik country may well find himself insulted as a foreigner rather than be accepted as a fellow Dinka.69 With the exception of a few prophets, who have temporarily united the Dinka against a common foe, nothing ties Dinka society together except the language itself.

Claims of Muslim descent have been important for incorporating Islamic doctrine and beliefs into a community. I. M. Lewis’s model of Sufi Islam70 in
pastoral Somalia argues that Sufi Muslim genealogies and Somali genealogies performed the same function because of a popular claim of descent from the Quraysh, making possible the adoption of Islam. In the Northern Sudan, Sufism has historically been popular because of similar claims of descent. However, the Dinka would find it difficult to utilize the model above as they cannot claim single descent from any one lineage. Genealogies of the Dinka are aggregational or associated and cannot be placed into any one pyramidal system; constant fission and fusion works against this process. Hence, utilizing geneology as a factor in claiming Islamic descent cannot work in the Dinka context. Thus, there are many differences between the Islamic and Dinka social systems, and a closer look at Dinka, Islamic, and Christian religious concepts also reveals a number of divergences.

Dinka Religion and Islam

Historically, the Dinka have found little attraction in Islam as a religion. Abdelmonem Younis, a Southern Sudanese Fertit Muslim, argues that Southern Muslims attempted to proselytize the Dinka without success during the Condominium period:

My grandfather was a Muslim holy man based in the Bahr-al-Ghazal and was converted by the Tijaniyya during the Condominium period. We had many Dinka friends and my grandfather tried to teach them about Islam. But, most Dinka would not embrace Islam or Christianity. They were animists and would only go to the kujur.

There are a number of theories and arguments relating to the Dinka and their religion. According to Francis Deng, Nilotic religious thought shows a closer resemblance to the classic religions of the Middle East than to traditional religions of Negro Africa. Godfrey Lienhardt argues that the Dinka religion is phenomenological rather than theological. Rigby argues that only by measuring the compatibility of Islamic religious concepts and that of the individual African religion can there be an understanding of the possibility of syncretism between the two. The merits of the above arguments will be tested by comparing Islam as a religion to that of the Dinka.

There are some similarities between the Dinka and Islamic religion. Historically, Islamic and Dinka holy men fulfilled the same purpose during the Turkish and Anglo-Egyptian Condominiums. Both inspired war against foreign invaders. Dinka holy men are viewed as vehicles and representatives on earth of divinity; they are always hereditary masters of the fishing spear, hence they inherit their powers from their ancestors. The two most widely known Nilotic prophets were Cyer Dit and Ariandhit, who died in 1948. This description of Dinka holy men also resembles that of the Muslim Sudanese holy man, the Mahdi, who inspired the revolt against the Turko-Egyptians as well as that of his son, Abdul Rahman al Mahdi, who led the Ansar religious movement during the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium. Abdul Rahman was believed to have inherited special powers (baraka) from his father. Hence, both the Muslims and the Dinka produced religious leaders as a response to outside forces.
Islamic and Dinka religious thought may have a correlation with regard to ancestral links. Among many African societies, Islamic influence enters where spirits are thought to live in the nether world until the day of resurrection. In Dinka society, the ancestor might be represented in a dream by a totem animal.\textsuperscript{78} Similarly, Muslims make sacrifices and give alms to obtain success or ward off evil and some of their charms contain Koranic verses.\textsuperscript{79} However, in most other respects the Dinka and Islamic religions are radically different.

During the Condominium, missionaries attempted to introduce Christianity into the South by translating the Bible into the Dinka language,\textsuperscript{80} whereas the Qur'an was not translated, remaining in Arabic. Theoretically, Christianity should have been more successful in the South than Islam, however, neither religion was enthusiastically embraced by the Dinka.\textsuperscript{81} The answer lies in the fact that Christianity and Islam are religions whose major power is derived from writings in a book. The Dinka, however, derive religious power from nature and the world around them, rather than from a religious tome. This is better understood when it is noted that the Islamic and Dinka religions have been drawn from two radically different environments. Dinka religion places much emphasis on a non-stable moving environment that has historically relied on the forces of nature for survival. It is best described by a Pojulu Southern Sudanese:

> Our religion is part of life itself; it is a tradition that has been incorporated into holistic life. Our laws are evolutionary, drawn from nature and our everyday experiences and challenges.\textsuperscript{82}

Dinka religion, unlike that of Islam, appeals to the power of nature, the land and its animals. Islam has been largely described as a religion which was born from an urban environment; it assumes, for the most part, that the practitioner exists in a stable and fixed setting.\textsuperscript{83} Hence, both religions developed adaptations to different ecological environments.

Both religions view the concept of “God” differently. The Nilotic language does not contain a word for God, and in Dinka religious thought there exists no concept of God as understood in Christian and Islamic theology.\textsuperscript{84} The closest concept is that of a high divine force or formless divine “wind”, Nhialic,\textsuperscript{85} which is associated with clan-divinities represented by animals and other species, and free divinities which establish relationships with individuals.\textsuperscript{86} Hence, Islamic and Dinka religious concepts differ and religious powers stem from different sources.

Contrary to the teachings of Islamic doctrine, totems and the spirit world play a large part in Dinka religious life, and animal totems represent a small part of the family of gods which are an important part of their cultural life system.\textsuperscript{87} Ancestors are periodically represented in a dream by an appropriate totem animal. Thus, the ancestor who comes to fetch a dying man might appear in his animal form.\textsuperscript{88} Likewise, the spirits which affect a person can be lineal ancestors, a wide range of paternal and maternal kin, even close affines of one’s wife.\textsuperscript{89}
The cosmic belief systems of Islam and Christianity differ radically from that of the Dinka. In Nilotic religious thought, there is no life after death. The concept of divine authority and power into which one is finally absorbed, popularly associated with Christianity and Islam, cannot be understood by many Nilotic peoples. According to Mum Kou Aru, a Bor Dinka,

As we understand it, with Islam you are supposed to do good things here on earth and then when you die you go to paradise. But we believe in the world that exists at this moment. Those that die become spirits and linger on earth; they are always nearby to advise us, returning in the form of dreams to inform us when we need advice or do something wrong. Therefore, we do not need to be concerned with life after death.

Thus, the Dinka do not believe in the heaven and hell concepts popularly understood in Christianity and Islam. Rather, Islam has always been viewed by the Dinka as an authoritarian religion where God is inaccessible. Wal Duany, a Nuer, argues:

Islamic religion has a complicated line of succession to God with social structures that run counter to that of Dinka religious thought. First you have the Imam, the senior fiki, the junior fiki, and then yourself. One is expected to go to a mosque to pray. In our own culture and religion we are egalitarian; there is no real line of religious succession and no such thing as a special place in which to pray. We enjoy direct accessibility to God.

Hence, Dinka religion is viewed as far less structured than that of Islam. There is no holy book (the Qur’an) which must be learned by heart. Nor are the Dinka bound by the need to pray five times a day. There are no written religious rules which bind Dinka society together.

Part of Islamic religious authoritarianism includes the study of theology, which forms a great part of a Muslim child’s life. Most male children are expected to read and learn the Qur’an by rote memorization. However, the Dinka do not teach their children theology, rather, they observe their elders administering religious rituals, absorbing the lessons of life at their own pace. The Dinka understanding of the powers of the universe are learned by instinct and unstructured observation, rather than by rote—as it is done in Islamic religious schools. Thus, the power of Dinka religious thought is pervasive throughout Dinkaland. There are few similarities, and many polar opposites, in the Islamic religion versus that of the Dinka.

Conclusion

Dinka non-acceptance of Islam up to the independence period is explained by observing that Islam does not fit easily into any aspect of their society. Contrary to arguments, the Dinka in the South were historically exposed to many Islamic elements from slave traders for centuries, whilst other Southerners attempted unsuccessfully to convert them to Islam. Nor was the Southern Policy of 1930 a major factor in halting the infusion of Islam in the South. It was so poorly executed and enforced that many Islamic jelabas remained, as did much of the Muslim civil service. Politically, the Dinka have had little use for Islam because their society is not centrally located, or hierarchical, but rather
egalitarian. Leaders had no need to increase their power, for the role of the ritual Dinka priest was incompatible with conversion to Islam, and continual political fission and fusion directly opposes the Islamic ideal of unification. The most important difference, culturally, is that Dinka women live far more equitable lives than do their Northern sisters, and men and women occupy the same sphere socially. Periodically, women have inherited spiritual and political power. Religiously, the two life-systems have no meeting of the cosmic minds. The origin of each religion stems from a different base, nor is there any agreement on the meaning of God itself, hence there could be no syncretism between the Dinka religion and Islam. Thus, Dinka society has historically resisted Islam, as it is impossible to incorporate it politically, culturally and socially.

NOTES


3. See Gray, History.


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15 Soghayroun, *Muslim Factor*, p. 4.
16 See Abbas Ibrahim Muhammad Ali, *The British*.
20 See note (4) above.
22 The fourteen northerners still employed in administrative posts in 1931 were “highly trained and experienced Government servants and their replacement by less efficient southerners was not...practicable.” (Daly, M. W. *Empire on the Nile*, Cambridge University Press, 1986, p. 412). Further hindering Southern Policy, many governors in the South were against MacMichael’s Policy. See letter from the Governor of Bahr-el-Ghazal Province, R.D.C. Brock, to the Civil Secretary in Khartoum dated 22nd March, 1930, from *Extracts of Confidential Documents of British Administrators in the Southern Sudan on British Southern Policy in the Southern Sudan from 1930 to 1954*.
23 Letter from the British Governor of the Province in Wau dated 13/2/30 marked “strictly confidential,” from *Extracts of Confidential Documents of British Administrators*.
24 Personal interview with Dominic Akeg Mohamed, a Twaj Dinka, in Miami, Florida, August, 1992.
25 Daly, *Empire*, p. 412.
27 Letter to the Governor of Equatoria Province, signed D.G.B.G.A. (See *Extracts of Confidential Documents of British Administrators above.*
30 Daly, *Empire*, p. 414, for example dress.
31 Letter dated 1st October 1954 to an unknown man by M. O. Yassin, Upper Nile Province, Governor’s Office. See *Extracts of Confidential Documents of British Administrators*.
Lewis, *Political Language*, p. 31.

41 Lienhardt, *Western Dinka*, p. 131.


46 Lewis, *Political Language*, p. 70.


49 For example, up until 1925 the Nuer were still raiding the Dinka for cattle. (Titherington, “The Raik.”); Schneider, *Livestock*, p. 209.

50 See Lewis, *Political Language*.

51 Lienhardt, “Western Dinka,” p. 129.


53 Personal interviews with Musa Adam, whose grandmother was a chief of the Agar Dinka, Isiah Deng, a Gic Dinka, whose mother remembered numbers of female chiefs at the beginning of this century, Martin Koshwal, an Atuot, and Dr. Mum Kou, a Bor Dinka, in Hamilton, Canada, November 1993.


56 Titherington, “The Raik,” p. 184. When a girl reaches marriageable age, suitors visit her father to bargain (or bid) for her hand in marriage. The man offering the most cows as bridewealth wins the girl. (Personal interview with Helena Lueth, an Agaar, and Andrew Mayen, a Bor Dinka, in Washington D.C., May 1993.)


58 Personal interview with Aker Duany, Indiana, August, 1992.


60 Deng, *Africans of Two Worlds*.


64 Abdalla, “Structural Impediments,” p. 152.


67 Personal interview with Wal and Aker Duany, Bloomington, Indiana, August, 1992.

68 Lewis, *Political Language*, p. 4.


70 Which was predominant in the Northern Sudan until recently.

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71 Lienhardt, “Western Dinka,” p. 133.
73 Deng, Dinka Cosmology, p. 3, 5.
74 Lienhardt, Divinity, p. 32.
76 Lienhardt, Divinity, p. 206.
77 Lienhardt, Divinity, p. 73.
83 See Lewis, Language of Islam.
84 Deng, Africans of Two Worlds, p. 46.
85 Deng, Africans of Two Worlds, p. 46.
86 Lienhardt, Divinity, p. 30.
87 Personal interview with Martin Koshwal, an Atuot Dinka, Isiah Deng, a Cic Dinka and Musa Adam, an Agar Dinka, in Hamilton, Ontario, November 1993.
88 Lienhardt, Divinity, p. 72.
89 Deng, Africans of Two Worlds, p. 46.
90 Personal interview with Mum Kou, a Bor Dinka.
91 Deng, Africans of Two Worlds, p. 46.
94 Personal interview with Isiah Deng, a Cic Dinka, Musa Adam, an Agaar Dinka and Mum Kou, a Bor Dinka, in Hamilton, Canada, November 1993.