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Rebellious Schooling in a Violent (Post)colony: Expanding the Field of Education History in South Sudan, c. 1905-1972

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Abstract
Educational pathways in colonial and postcolonial spaces often range far beyond the classroom. Reconstructing histories of this wider terrain of education reveals long-running arguments over what types of new knowledge might be most useful for living well amid war and within fast-changing colonial and postcolonial states. These debates over the provision of useful knowledge—including military, mechanical, linguistic, and religious training—are a window into how people have discussed changing ideas of authority, class mobility, and the future. We trace a wider terrain of education in southern (now South) Sudan, where education histories have generally either focused on a handful of mission-founded formal schools or hagiographies of powerful military men with PhDs. Drawing on archival evidence and interviews gathered in South Sudan since 2019, we argue that histories of education in colonial and postcolonial Africa are crucial to understanding intellectual histories in everyday life.

We need histories of post/colonial education beyond the classroom. Colonial and postcolonial spaces contained multiple forms of education even after the arrival of schools in colonized lands. A wide field of intellectual possibilities opens if we avoid categorizing education as either informal or formal; we can also evade the automatic centering of formal school education that overlooks informal pedagogies that exist beyond the classroom. This also offers new chronologies of change: histories that begin with the arrival of formal school education can struggle to place themselves within a much wider terrain of learning systems and standards of useful knowledge. In practice, however, these multiple forms and values of education overlayered each other, creating multiple possible pathways to different forms of power, based on parental and personal

assessments of what constituted the most valuable knowledge. By exploring this wider terrain of education, historians can decenter colonial governments' and missionary educationalists' theories, practices, and internal fights. We can also reject a perspective presuming that a deficit model of education had preceded formal schooling—there has always been a lot of learning going on. Instead of taking an occupier's (or headmaster's) perspective, we suggest rebuilding the field of colonial and postcolonial education studies from the ground up.[1]

This approach allows us a wider view of historical debates over education. For many colonial (and even postcolonial) subjects, classroom-style forms of written education were only one type of potentially valuable knowledge and qualification, providing pathways to emerging forms of power and models of adulthood alongside many others. This wider view allows us to explore the plurality of standards and definitions of good knowledge within what Jess Auerbach calls "educational journeying."[2] We can thus explore arguments over the most useful forms of education for navigating and living well within modern histories of colonial conquest, the expansion of religious authorities' reach, and (post)colonial state-building projects across the world.

We argue that histories of this wider field of education are central to building histories of political thought from below. We test these possibilities here by exploring the continuities and connections within a pantheon of educational spaces and systems that evolved throughout colonial occupation—including forms of classroom-based schools and seminaries—and which continued to evolve in tension with formal school education systems, up to the present day. Here, through new empirical oral and archival research conducted in South Sudan over 2019-2022, we find people investing in or rejecting different kinds of formal schooling systems and practical modern education. Their choices reflected debates over the use of new forms of knowledgeable authority accessible via literacy, religious study, and employment in new colonial institutions (in schools, offices, and more commonly, in military work). People's decisions about what to invest in, especially regarding the education options and careers of their children, indicated their analysis of the hierarchies and opportunities within shifting colonial systems. Decisions on where to send their sons and daughters—into the army, the mechanic's workshop, the cattle camp, the seminary or the mission school—reflected ideas about changing class, gender, and wealth systems, and what types of education might provide security and prosperity in the future.[3] Broader histories of

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[1]See A. J. Angulo and Jack Schneider, "Between the Global and the Local," *History of Education Quarterly* 63, no. 2 (2023), 151. For the turn towards grounded perspectives on post/colonial education, see also Parimala V. Rao, "The Historiography of Indian Education 1920-2020: The Socio-Political Influences on the Growth of the Discipline," *History of Education* 52, no. 3 (2022), 20.

[2]Jess Auerbach, "Expanding Available Futures: Ideological Contestation in Angola's Emerging Higher Education Sector," *Comparative Education Review* 66, no. 1 (2022), 144.

[3]Here we are working alongside Hilary Falb Kalisman, "The Historiography of Education in the Modern Middle East," *History of Education* 52, no. 2-3 (2023), 311-29; Rebecca Swartz, "Histories of Empire and Histories of Education," *History of Education* 52, no. 2-3 (2023), 442-61; Auerbach, "Expanding Available Futures"; and Jacob Udo-Udo Jacob and Margee Ensign, "A Brief Social History of Education in Nigeria," in *Transactional Radio Instruction: Improving Educational Outcomes for Children in Conflict Zones* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

education allow us to explore these evolving ideas through everyday terminology and conversations, what we call *vernacular theory*, which lies at the heart of new colonial and postcolonial intellectual histories.[4] We test this approach here by exploring how parents and students argued over the utility and potential power of different forms of education in the colonial and early postcolonial world. What was worth knowing?

Diffuse educational pathways in southern sudan

These arguments are most visible in places where there was very little systemization of formal school education through the colonial period.[5] We focus here on southern Sudan (today South Sudan after independence in 2011). Before, during, and after the colonial conquest of Sudan by the British and their rule under an Anglo-Egyptian Condominium from the capital city of Khartoum from 1898 to 1956, people sought out a variety of forms of training and schooling, in various places, taking up a variety of skill sets and powerful knowledge for rapidly changing times.

This lack of systematized educational provision means that most histories of education of southern Sudan focus on the (under)development of missionary and then state school provision. This developmental critique rightly exposes a history of colonial and postcolonial education that has been characterized by strategic neglect and deliberate disruption. This created a piecemeal, incohesive school system marked by educational inequality and that truly aimed to create compliance and fear of authority rather than empowerment or development.[6] But this focus on formal educational systems means that histories of education in southern Sudan are centered either on tensions between missionary- and administrator-led schooling during colonial rule; or on the (re)construction of educational systems after repeated civil wars from the 1960s to the present.[7] This developmental critique is often driven by the idea that universal basic

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[4]Emma Hunter, "Dialogues between Past and Present in Intellectual Histories of Mid-Twentieth-Century Africa," *Modern Intellectual History* 20, no. 2 (2023), 637; see also George Hamandishe Karekwaivanane, "'Tapanduka Zvamuchese': Facebook, 'Unruly Publics,' and Zimbabwean Politics," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 13, no. 1 (2019), 55.

[5]Here we use "formal education" specifically to mean mission-run schools, which became state schools in the 1960s.

[6]Peter Adwok Nyaba, *South Sudan: Elites, Ethnicity, Endless Wars and the Stunted State* (Nairobi: Mkuki na Nyota, 2019), 18; see also Leben Nelson Moro and Nikita Tolani, "Education in South Sudan: Focusing on Inequality of Provision and Implications for National Cohesion," *South Sudan Studies Association* (2021), 6.

[7]Lilian Sanderson, "A Survey of Material Available for the Study of Educational Development in the Modern Sudan, 1900-1963," *Sudan Notes and Records* 44 (1963), 69-81; Lilian Sanderson, "Educational Development in the Southern Sudan 1900-1948," *Sudan Notes and Records* 43 (1962), 105-17; Lilian Sanderson, "Education in the Southern Sudan: The Impact of Government-Missionary-Southern Sudanese Relationships upon the Development of Education during the Condominium Period, 1898-1956," *African Affairs* 79, no. 315 (1980), 157-69; Lilian Sanderson and Neville Sanderson, *Education, Religion and Politics in Southern Sudan. 1899-1964* (London: Ithaka, 1981); Iris Seri-Hersch, "Education in Colonial Sudan, 1900-1957," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017). For contemporary literature, see Kuyok Abol Kuyok, "'Not Yet Uhuru': Interpreting the Education System in Post-independence South Sudan," *World Journal of Education* 9, no. 3 (2019), 82-93; Augustino Ting Mayai, "War and Schooling in South Sudan, 2013-2016," *Journal on Education in Emergencies* 8, no. 1 (2021), 14-49; Yosa Wawa, "Civicness in South Sudan Secondary School Curriculum," South Sudan Studies Association,

education fundamentally has a peacemaking function, and that a collective curriculum could build societal cohesion and peaceful development. This deficit model still drives most education research in South Sudan today, highlighting the impacts in terms of lack of human capital; failures in provision, curriculum development, and policy; and the personal risks teachers face.[8]

The second main subject in education historiography in this war-torn ex-colony is the rebellious secondary school and university student, who often appears in biographical studies. Because education systems have been so narrowly constructed by colonial administrators and then closely restricted by wars, histories of modern education often end up being studies of the early student careers of today's mostly PhD-holding, mostly military-trained statesmen. Histories of student leadership commonly are narratives charting the emergence of nationalist leaders from the formal school system, and often serve as backdrops to the array of autobiographies the leaders write themselves.[9] In these autobiographies, getting access to formal school education (and often, getting expelled for political organizing) is a key part of trajectories to leadership; to quote the famous aphorism of Dr. John Garang de Mabior, rebel leader of the second Sudanese

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2021; Anders Breidlid, "Education and Armed Conflict in Sudan and South Sudan: The Role of Teachers in Conflict Resolution and Peace Building," *Journal of Advances in Education Research* 4, no. 3 (2019), 122-35; Merethe Skårås and Anders Breidlid, "Teaching the Violent Past in Secondary Schools in Newly Independent South Sudan," *Education as Change* 20, no. 3 (2016), 98-118.

[8]For approaches focusing on human capital, see Mayai, "War and Schooling in South Sudan, 2013-2016"; for discussions of provision, see Merethe Skårås, "Educational and Social Challenges in the Reintegration Process of Former Child Soldiers," in *The Power of Resistance*, vol. 12, *Culture, Ideology and Social Reproduction in Global Contexts*, ed. Rowhea M. Elmesky, Carol Camp Yeakey, and Olivia C. Marcucci (Leeds, UK: Emerald Insight, 2017), 243-63; Merethe Skårås, "No Textbooks, No Peace? Historical Narratives in South Sudan," in *Teaching Peace and Conflict: The Multiple Roles of School Textbooks in Peacebuilding*, ed. Catherine Vanner, Spogmai Akseer, and Thursica Kovinthan Levi (Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature, 2022), 139-53; Berhane Woldemichael, "Decentralisation amidst Poverty and Disunity: The Sudan, 1969-1983" (PhD diss., London School of Economics and Political Science, 1993), 286-331; Denise Bentrovato and Merethe Skårås, "Ruptured Imaginings amid Emerging Nationhood: The Unsettled Narrative of 'Unity in Resistance' in South Sudanese History Textbooks," *Nations and Nationalism* 29, no. 3 (2023), 1041-56; David Longfield, "Educational Development in South Sudan: Conscious Design or Spontaneous Order?," *Economic Affairs* 35, no. 2 (2015), 178-96; Breidlid, "Education and Armed Conflict in Sudan and South Sudan"; Cyprian Amutabi and Martha Nyantiop Agoot, "Determinants of Disparities in Primary School Enrolment in South Sudan," *Cogent Education* 8, no. 1 (2021), https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/2331186X.2021.1989996; HyeJin Kim et al., "Viewing the Reconstruction of Primary Schooling in Southern Sudan through Education Data, 2006-2009," *Prospects* 41, no. 2 (2011), 283-300; Clement Lado Lako, Josje van der Linden, and William Deng, "South Sudan Inclusive: Education in a War-Torn Area," in *The Burden of Educational Exclusion: Understanding and Challenging Early School Leaving in Africa*, ed. Jaques Zeelen et al. (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2010); for discussions of risks, see Ursina Bentele, Malish John Peter, and Owen Ndoromo, "Strengthening Knowledge Ecosystems Annex: South Sudan Case Study," SwissPeace, November 2021; Kuyang Harriet Logo, "Gender Equality and Civicness in Higher Education in South Sudan: Debates from University of Juba Circles," South Sudan Studies Association, 2021; Ishmael I. Munene and Paschal Wambiya, "Bridging the Gender Gap through Gender Difference: Aiding Patriarchy in South Sudan Education Reconstruction," *Africa Education Review* 16, no. 5 (2019), 86-101; Rachel Ibreck, Naomi Pendle, and Alice Robinson, "Bridging Divisions in a War-Torn State: Reflections on Education and Civicness in South Sudan," South Sudan Studies Association, 2021.

[9]There are similar historiographical trends in Sudan, as noted by Heather J. Sharkey, *Living with Colonialism: Nationalism and Culture in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); also see Falb Kalisman, "The Historiography of Education in the Modern Middle East," 3, 10.

civil war from 1983 to 2005, these leaders used both "the gun and the pen" to fight for liberation.[10]

The gun and the pen do not have equal weight in histories of post-colonial conflict. South Sudan, like many other such nations (such as Angola, Korea, Yemen, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Liberia), has a militarized political historiography that rarely engages with educational organization as not just a civic good destroyed by war but as a tool in conflict. Here we work to re-center histories of education in postcolonial conflicts to bridge this civil-military, "pen"-"gun" divide. This will help us avoid reproducing histories of only "the education of (anti-colonial) elites."[11]

This article is part of a new wave of research since 2018 that has criticized developmentalist approaches to education studies in the Sudans.[12] This has included new work exploring the inequalities created by educational access, especially from the 2000s onward, and how education access has been a tool of patronage and counterinsurgency.[13] Exploring the history of the idea of education in post/colonial spaces, we argue, opens new ground in emerging research on post/colonial histories of class formation, patronage, civic cultures, and political theory, taking up Andrew Epstein's question of "what it means to be an educated person."[14] This article therefore argues for approaching histories of colonialism and modern states through new histories of political thought and praxis, investigating how ideas of power, leadership, and modernity were theorized and propagated within education systems through and after colonization.[15]

Researching educational histories beyond the institution

The missing history of education beyond the schoolroom, especially during long civil wars for the second half of the twentieth century, was the initial driver of our research partnership over 2019-2022. We aimed to tackle the above theoretical questions at the same time as uncovering what we hoped would be a treasure trove of archival and

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[10]Deng Atem, "Can South Sudan Find a New Day?" *Ramciel Magazine for the Diaspora*, Feb. 22, 2018, https://ramciel2024.ramcielmagazine.com/can-south-sudan-find-a-new-day/; James Alec Alic Garang, "It Takes a World to Educate a Child: A South Sudanese Perspective on the Crisis," *Enough Project*, April 7, 2014, https://enoughproject.org/blog/it-takes-world-educate-child-south-sudanese-perspective-crisis-0, para. 6.

[11]Swartz, "Histories of Empire and Histories of Education," 457.

[12]See Gabrielle Daoust, "Education and the Critique of Liberal Peacebuilding: The Case of South Sudan" (PhD diss., University of Sussex, 2017); Seri-Hersch, "Education in Colonial Sudan, 1900-1957," 15.

[13]Daoust, "Education and the Critique of Liberal Peacebuilding"; Tarnjeet Kaur Kang, "Community Self-Determination in South Sudan: A Return to the Subaltern" (PhD diss., University of Illinois, 2018); for discussions of patronage, see Julia Duany, Rebecca Lorins, and Edward Thomas, "Education, Conflict, and Civicness in South Sudan: An Introduction," South Sudan Studies Association, 2021.

[14]Andrew I. Epstein, "Maps of Desire: Refugee Children, Schooling, and Contemporary Dinka Pastoralism in South Sudan" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 2012), 53; following Duany, Lorins, and Thomas, "Education, Conflict, and Civicness," 6; Danielle del Vicario, "The Lives, Deaths, and Afterlives of John Garang: History-Making and Politics in Sudan and South Sudan" (PhD diss., University of Oxford, 2023); Majak D'Agoôt, "Taming the Dominant Gun Class in South Sudan," Africa Centre for Strategic Studies, May 2018.

[15]Following Falb Kalisman, who notes the centrality of histories of education to "histories of capitalism, the environment, time, emotions, knowledge and childhood." "The Historiography of Education in the Modern Middle East," 4.

oral historical evidence. Historical education research in Africa has been dominated by established mission and state archives, which focus on classrooms and textbooks. We reviewed key mission and government archives, including the Catholic Comboni Mission in Rome and the newly established South Sudan National Archives in Juba, which we use here. We then took a two-pronged methodological approach.

First, we set out to conduct a wide range of oral historical interviews with subjects who were both teachers and students between 1956 and 2005, a period including roughly thirty-nine years of civil war. We ran three phases of consultations, working in the midst of deep crises of educational leadership and waves of university strike actions in both South Sudan and the UK, and within a timeline that ensured we maintained safe and ethical standards that depended on the provision of COVID-19 vaccine access in South Sudan. In each of these consultations, we focused on a network-led "snowball" method, tracing students and teachers who worked and studied through the civil wars, including within the militaries and internal "liberated territories." We slowly gathered photographs, memories, stories, and songs from around a hundred South Sudanese men and women, the oldest of whom began their educational journeys in the 1940s.

Second, we sought out surviving historical education documentation by the Anya-Nya rebel forces during the first civil war, taking place circa 1955-1972, as well as similar archival stashes of the Sudan People's Liberation Army and Movement (SPLA/M) rebel group from the 1983-2005 civil war that we suspected still existed. In our interviews, we asked for copies of self-created publications and textbooks. We sought to record the military education and drills that were integrated into rebel school life in the 1990s and 2000s. Finally, in 2022, we traced surviving archives of SPLA/M educational plans and draft versions of curricula since the late 1990s—initially thought lost by their authors—at the Maridi Teacher Training Institute in Western Equatoria.

In this article, we draw on interviews with those educated under colonial Condominium rule and during the rise of the Anya-Nya rebellion. Our material allowed us to explore a wider history of education since roughly the 1850s through stories and work histories of these elderly people's parents and grandparents, cross-referenced with the archival documents in the South Sudan National Archives and the Comboni Mission Archives in Rome. The article takes up South Sudanese debates over the nature and purpose of modern education that have been ongoing since the late nineteenth century; and it traces these conversations through the rise of anti-colonial organization in the 1940s and into the Anya-Nya guerrilla wars and refugee camps in the 1960s.

This article first turns back to the 1850s to 1910s, exploring the knowledge and skills needed to work within (and challenge) the commercial slaving and trading systems arriving over these sixty years, a period that also included three different armed invasions from the north and southeast. Then, with the establishment of British local administration under Condominium rule beginning in the late 1920s, we trace emerging layers of governmental, military, and technical education overseen by colonial and then southern Sudanese and Sudanese agents over the next forty years, through the

formal independence of Sudan in 1955 and during the start of the Anya-Nya rebel insurgency in the south.[16]

This approach scraps the current periodization of education history in Sudan and South Sudan. Like many postcolonial African countries, most education literature in southern Sudan has identified the arrival of mission education as the beginning of education in the south, coinciding with the creation of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium colonial government in 1898 after the British re-invasion of Sudan. In our view, this is an artificial marker of the beginning of education history in southern Sudan, as it foreshortens the precolonial era and draws a bright (and colonial) line around what is considered education. Our much wider chronological lens allows us to see the development of (complex and competing) models of useful and powerful knowledge. We start to unpack South Sudanese debates over time on the evolving idea of what education is and what it can do, both for its subject and to society: What is a qualified modern leader? What does one need to know to navigate postcolonial states and insurgency against them?

Getting educated during the violent establishment of colonial authority

Southern Sudan was subjected to the fragmented and often-violent authority of successive Ottoman, Mahdiyya, British, and northern Sudanese commercial and administrative orders over the 1830s to 1900s. During this time these authorities built a trade network and raided forts, docks, and waystations that cut into both old and new political communities in the south.[17] These sultanates, trading empires, kingdoms, and acephalous political communities cut across today's borders; from the 1900s to the 1920s they were "pacified" in a series of military clashes and agreements with colonial forces, including the Belgian, French, and British armies, including village-burning campaigns and aerial bombardment.[18] Imperial policy in this period was to administer as little as possible, coercively recruiting porters and soldiers and training a few drivers and technicians from the population, demanding tax in labor and cattle in order to fund the creation of the police stations and road infrastructure that enabled militarized modern rule.[19] The few missionary posts that were opened—at the White Nile trading ports of Gondokoro, Kaka, and Holy Cross in the 1850s and '60s—mostly did not have schools, and the mission stations barely functioned until the mid-1920s.[20] But

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[16]A note on language: although the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium was not an instance of formal British colonial rule but a specific form of shared administration, we still refer to it as such here for convenience, in keeping with the established South Sudan shorthand regarding colonial rule. Secondly, before South Sudan's independence in 2011 southern Sudan was an administrative region, so we refer to the region as "southern Sudan" when describing pre-2011 events and actors.

[17]The *Mahdiyya* refers to revolutionary army and the 1881-1899 government of Muhammad Ahmad bin Abdullah, the Mahdi, and his Islamist followers, who overthrew the Ottoman administration in Sudan that had been established in 1821. British and Egyptian forces then reconquered the Sudan in 1898 and established joint Condominium rule.

[18]For a survey of this history, see Douglas H. Johnson, *South Sudan: A New History for a New Nation* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2016), chapter 3.

[19]Sanderson, "Educational Development in the Southern Sudan."

[20]Sanderson and Sanderson, *Education, Religion and Politics*, 59; Seri-Hersch, "Education in Colonial Sudan, 1900-1957," 3.

navigating this rapidly changing political landscape required all sorts of new education and expertise.

Various forms of military, linguistic, and technical skills and knowledge were needed by African and foreign commercial and military authorities, and by their armies and private offices. Most visible throughout the 1800s is the work of translators and interpreters, trained and hired to facilitate communication between the authorities and traders of the Bari, Zande, and Shilluk and their Ottoman and British counterparts.[21] More broadly, specialists, who included hunters and ironworkers, medics and midwives, rainmakers and various spiritual authorities, had of course long genealogies of training and apprenticeship and worked widely.[22] Many workers, often prisoners of war, largely acquired military and diplomatic skills through on-the-job training and apprenticeship. In 1905 a "technical school" for carpentry, reading, and writing was set up in Wau. Its first forty-seven pupils were mostly Zande and "Jebelawi" (Equatorian refugees from Mahdiyya and Condominium wars farther south), and some "tokens of submission" such as Rumba, the son of Zande chief Rikita and government hostage after the famous Zande leader Yambio's defeat.[23] By 1911 the Catholic brother Consolaro had nicknamed this school the "princes' college" because it had about eighteen such "tribute" sons like Rumba as students. At around the same time, Rok Rec, later the famous chief of the Aliam Toc section of the Agar Dinka, was captured at eight years old by a British patrol in a retributive village-burning campaign on the River Naam, and was traded between various armed British and Sudanese commanders, through which he obtained work as a police interpreter and then prison sergeant in Wau in the first British administration system in the 1920s.[24] Similar notes on early military education are scattered through colonial paperwork; Mohammed Murgan, originally from Bari lands near Juba, had obtained literacy skills and military experience as a *bulkamin* (quartermaster sergeant) in British armies in the 1910s and 1920s, becoming "quite enlightened" in his wide reading; by 1955 he was a storekeeper and political agitator in Malakal.[25]

This is the already existing educative context for the arrival of mission school systems in the 1920s. These schools were established at the same time as the expansion of local military training: by 1925 British officers were formally recruiting military forces

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[21]See Cherry Leonardi, *Dealing with Government in South Sudan: Histories of Chiefship, Community and State* (London: Boydell & Brewer, 2013), 5-6; Cherry Leonardi, "South Sudanese Arabic and the Negotiation of the Local State, c. 1840-2011," *Journal of African History* 54, no. 3 (2013), 351-72.

[22]Leonardi, *Dealing with Government in South Sudan*, 6; Scopas Poggo, "The Origins and Culture of Blacksmiths in Kuku Society of the Sudan, 1797-1955," *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 18, no. 2 (2006), 169-86.; Douglas H. Johnson, *Nuer Prophets: A History of Prophecy from the Upper Nile in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994); Leif O. Manger, "Traders, Farmers and Pastoralists: Economic Adaptations and Environmental Problems in the Southern Nuba Mountains of the Sudan," in *The Ecology of Survival: Case Studies from Northeast African History*, ed. Douglas H. Johnson and David Anderson (London: Taylor & Francis, 1988), 155-72.

[23]Santandrea, "The Story of Wau Mission Schools, 1095-1932," Comboni Archives Rome (hereafter CAR) D556/7, pp. 3-4.

[24]Beer, "Note on Chief Rok Rec (Bakhit Reihan) Senior Chief of the Aliam Toc Section of the Agar Dinka, Rumbek District." South Sudan National Archives (hereafter SSNA) Torit District 67.

[25]Abdalla to Commandant of Police, Upper Nile Province, "Mohammed Murgan," Oct. 5, 1955. SSNA Upper Nile Province 67.B.3.

locally, not just hiring "irregulars."[26] In 1922 Wau's technical school was competing against the "miserable army school," the local bishop noting that "several pupils have deserted it to join ours."[27] Histories of Sudanese education have focused on the establishment of primary and secondary school institutions, but actually most of the schools set up were "bush" (elementary village) schools.[28] These bush schools were generally co-educational and much more numerous. Politician Kosti Manibe remembers people of all ages, men and women and young children, attending bush schools, depending on their interest in literacy and their work obligations outside of school.[29] Bush schools were often far from mission stations, and some offered not much more than vernacular literacy instruction: "If one passes from writing on the ground, that is when one is given a book and paper and a pencil."[30] In some bush schools, though, local histories and geographies were taught, and these schools replicated quickly.[31] Stanislaus Paysama, a southern Darfurian captured by slavers around 1904, was freed and settled in Wau, where he obtained literacy in a bush school and then himself taught in bush schools around Wau from 1921 to 1926.[32] While there were only about four hundred pupils in "formal" schools by 1920, there was a much wider circuit of bush schooling.[33]

The first primary schools were constructed in the 1920s within this much wider world of trade education and modern technical expertise—a world of waged interpreters, medical dressers, dockworkers and sawmill workers, truck mechanics—and much older Sudanese systems of medical education, blacksmithing, cattle herding and veterinary medicine. Students who fell out of classes at the Wau technical school went on to teach spoken English in army barracks.[34] Brendan Tuttle has recently written a biographical profile of Solomon Col Adol, the first game ranger at Bor in 1941, who had an early education herding in cattle camps in eastern Bor before entering the mission school at Malek in 1926 and then teaching at the Bor bush school that opened in 1933, serving mostly families of retired soldiers and ex-slaves in the small town.[35] Janet Lo Liyong's parents received a similar education in the early 1920s: her mother, Christina Kamala, worked as a teacher after bush schooling in Yei, and her father became a medical assistant.[36]

This colonial wealth in military, linguistic, administrative, and mechanical knowledge created colorful careers before the real growth of British colonial administration

[26]Johnson, *South Sudan*, 108.

[27]Santandrea, "The Story of Wau Mission Schools, 1095-1932," CAR D556/7, p. 9.

[28]These bush schools fed students into only twenty-two boys' and eight girls' elementary schools, two boys' intermediate schools and one boys' trade school in southern Sudan by 1926. Sanderson, "Educational Development in the Southern Sudan," 43.

[29]Kosti Manibe, interview in Juba, June 24, 2019.

[30]David Tombe, interview in Juba, June 26, 2019.

[31]Severino Fuli Boki Tombe Ga'le, *Shaping a Free Southern Sudan: Memoirs of Our Struggle, 1934-1985* (Limuru: Loa Catholic Parish Council, 2002), 80.

[32]Stanislaus Paysama, *Autobiography: How a Slave Became a Minister* (Khartoum: n.p., 1990), 48.

[33]Sanderson, "Education in the Southern Sudan," 163.

[34]Santandrea, "The Story of Wau Mission Schools, 1095-1932," CAR D556/7, p. 13.

[35]Brendan Tuttle, "Solomon Col Adol (1909-1971), Game Ranger and Animal Collector in Bor, South Sudan," *Archives of Natural History* 50, no. 1 (2023), 49-66.

[36]Janet Lo Liyong, interview in Juba, April 18, 2022.

in the 1930s. Abuol Nhial, from the Parak clan of the Dinka Athoic section, went to school in the inaugural years of the Malek and then Yoanyang missions before leaving to work as a timekeeper in the administrative office in Malakal in 1934, where he allegedly embezzled funds and headed to Khartoum. He then left Sudan via Kassala into Abyssinia, where he apparently worked for the Italians in Eritrea before enlisting with the King's African Rifles. He was discharged in 1942, after which he volunteered as a gaffer (foreman) at Tel el Kebir in Egypt, probably in its massive wartime depots and workshops, and then joined the Royal Navy as an English, Italian, Swahili, Arabic, and Dinka grade 2 interpreter, ending up in Palestine and the Trans-Jordanian Frontier Force. According to a British security document in the South Sudan National Archives tracing Abuol's career, he was discharged in 1948, and headed back to Bor, "where he arrived broke wearing a fashionable lounge suit on 14/5/48."[37]

Getting education and defining authority in the late colonial period

Like many rural and peripheral areas of empire in Africa, colonial administration in southern Sudan was threadbare yet highly militarized until the 1930s, focused primarily on the extraction of sufficient revenues and food supplies from residents to sustain colonial control of the region. By the late 1930s, British colonial policy in southern Sudan still sharply restricted access to English-language and post-primary education. But by the early 1940s, the demand for cheap local administrative labor forced a reversal.[38] From 1929 onward, attempts at increasing taxation and organizing the new authorities established to collect this taxation in the form of labor, cash, and food all needed literate imperial workers.

Histories of formal state schooling strongly focus on this period, marked by the opening of three intermediate schools that by 1933 were fed by thirty-three boys' and eleven girls' elementary schools, still only a total student body of around three thousand among a population of roughly two million people in the south. Classroom buildings were only erected permanently in the late 1930s (and, in Bahr el Ghazal, in the late 1940s).[39] The first southern secondary school opened in Atar in 1948, eight years before Sudan won independence from British rule.[40] Bush schools steadily grew; according to available records, there were 263 bush schools with a total of at least 7,500 students in 1932, growing to over 11,500 bush school students by 1948. From interviews we know that these schools were taught in dozens of local languages and by the schools' own graduates, and that they reflected their teachers' own didactic interests in literacy and local history.

It is still possible to compile oral histories of this period through interviews with elderly graduates of these bush schools in South Sudan. The narratives we collected show how engagement with these systems of formal modern education and literacy

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[37] Cumming to Governor, Upper Nile Province, Malakal, "Abuol Nhial - Repatriation Of," May 28, 1948, SSNA Upper Nile Province 67.B.1.

[38] Johnson, *South Sudan*, 114.

[39] Sanderson, "Education in the Southern Sudan."

[40] Fuli Boki Tombe Ga'le, *Shaping a Free Southern Sudan*, 117; Sanderson and Sanderson, *Education, Religion and Politics*.

involved conversations over the purpose and possible uses of this worldly govern-
mental education. These discussions shaped, and were shaped by, wider dynamics in
southern Sudanese anti-colonial and political thought and organizing over this period.
Literacy and governmental knowledge obtained through colonial employment and
schooling provided the tools for an industry of petition- and letter-writing seeking
to both bend and gain access to colonial administrative power. In the South Sudan
National Archives' holdings, these letters were written and circulated from the 1930s
onward by court clerks, port workers, soldiers and police at army stations, and mission
groundskeepers.[41]

Education under early colonial rule therefore required a wide array of instruction in
various technologies related to colonial governance, along with core southern Sudanese
knowledge and skills. Edward Momo remembered being taken to learn from "some
prominent people who were good at certain skills in the village" as "part of education,"
and particularly enjoying learning from the local blacksmith.[42] Southern Sudan has
many stories from the 1930s onward about when different communities realized the
possibilities of new skills. For example, Severino Fuli's autobiography of his life as a
political activist recounts a 1934 case where a woman called Kide killed her husband
in a fit of madness, after which her paternal uncle was put on trial in her place and sen-
tenced to prison; however, when the British district commissioner came to Opari in
January 1935 to review cases, one of Kide's brothers, Sosipatro Kenyi—who was study-
ing at Okuru Intermediate School—appealed to him specifically in English (translated
to the crowd by a colonial staff interpreter). The English DC immediately acquitted
the uncle. In February, school enrollment boomed; an English-language administra-
tive education was suddenly a valuable item to get in Opari.[43] It also depended what
education was on offer and whether that was what parents wanted their children to
know. In Catholic-run primary schools, for example, the curriculum included exten-
sive training in digging ditches, making bricks and tiles, and cutting timber, which
matched and extended domestic instruction in how to make nets, dig fields, build gra-
naries, build hunting traps, and so on.[44] For lazy children, the school was a useful way
of drilling very similar types of practical, disciplining knowledge into them.[45] In Yei,
where colonial administrative systems had been relatively well established since the
1920s, bush schools were actively built by residents in a model similar to the self-help
systems among the Luo and Kikuyu, specifically to provide the useful tool of literacy.[46]
Elsewhere, especially where colonial administration was still pursuing punitive armed
campaigns into the late 1920s, this formal education was generally considered a waste

[41]Cherry Leonardi and Chris Vaughan, "'We Are Oppressed and Our Only Way Is to Write to Higher
Authority': The Politics of Claim and Complaint in the Peripheries of Condominium Sudan," in *Citizenship,
Belonging, and Political Community in Africa: Dialogues between Past and Present*, ed. Emma Hunter (Athens:
Ohio University Press, 2016), 74-100.

[42]Edward Momo, interview in Juba, June 21, 2019.

[43]Fuli Boki Tombe Ga'le, *Free Southern Sudan*, 39-40.

[44]Fuli Boki Tombe Ga'le, *Free Southern Sudan*, 71.

[45]Edward Momo, interview in Juba, June 21, 2019.

[46]K. J. King, "Nationalism, Education and Imperialism in the Southern Sudan (1920-70)," in *Conflict and
Harmony in Education in Tropical Africa*, ed. Mervyn Hiskett and Godfrey N. Brown (London: Routledge,
1975), 299.

of a young person's important time; in Nuer and Dinka communities, this necessitated a quota system where each chief had to provide twelve children at the district commissioner's order each school year.[47]

This is fertile ground for histories not just of education and anti-colonial organizing, but also of political thought. The process of navigating and choosing educational options in this increasingly wide terrain fostered a conversation about what skills (literary, administrative, religious, medical, military) might be required to master the modern future, and what new forms of authority were being created by these new skills. Ideas of how best to resist and mitigate the diverse impacts of conquest and colonialism shaped discussions about the purpose of different types of learning. The debate between the parents of our interviewee David Tombe over what form of colonial education to provide him summarizes the spiritual, secular, and military pathways to authority that opened in this period of colonialism. David wanted to pursue a job in the colonial administration or agricultural project office, but his father wanted him to go to the military college to gain the skills needed to continue the family struggle against the successor to the Ottoman and Mahdiyya regimes. David remembered:

> My mother said they're letting me go to the [mission] seminary. My father said [no,] all these things are not correct. If I were to go to the military college, I could have gone, because he wanted me to be in the army. Then my mother said, "No, you don't have to go to the—this boy does not have to go to the army. Because it has lost so many children, what is the use of going to the army? Let this fellow go to the Kenisa [Ar. church]." Then my father said "No, there is nothing [there].… . If he goes to the army, he will fight for the land, he will fight for the country. And that is what was started long ago, by here, by the ancestors." When they fought the Arabs [the Ottoman and Mahdiyya invasions] in southern Bari, in Kelang, at a place called Tarlobah, my great-grandfather Lanyong [also known as Yekisu] was killed there in the battle, west of Karpeto River … there are war songs about him.[48]

David's mother, however, eventually won this battle over the most useful (and safest) specialty for him, and so David went to the seminary for his education, becoming a Catholic priest.

This much wider array of educative pathways—including (where it was accessible) boys' formal, civil schooling in English, but also regional seminaries, military schools, technical training in sawmills, at river ports, in hospitals and clinics—also arrived at the same time as other colonial buildings and institutions, not least in the form of prisons and a taxation system. For colonial administrators and some of their subjects, all of these various new colonial sites were useful primarily for discipline; in 1938 the Equatoria governor noted that "the true object of education is to enable the community to adapt its whole life in the best possible way to meet the conditions under which that life has inevitably to be lived."[49] Some parents therefore saw schools and prisons

[47] King, "Nationalism, Education and Imperialism," 298.

[48] David Tombe, interview in Juba, June 26, 2019.

[49] Governor of Equatoria to Secretary, CMS, Prefect Apostolic Juba and Vicar Apostolic, Juba, Nov. 28, 1938, SSNA Torit District 30.E.1.

as roughly similar options for recalcitrant teens. In 1948 one Stephen Bilal wrote to the Equatoria governor asking for his "uneducated" son Michael to be sent to Kober Prison in Khartoum, where "boys are trained well as prisoners but after several years he can come out an artisan who can maintain himself and respect people whom are higher and older than himself." Unfortunately for Stephen, he was told Kober was "already full and there is a long waiting list of young persons for admission," and that he should apprentice Michael "to a strong master."[50] School administrative files in the archives in Juba record many teachers' often violent punishments of students for infractions via beatings or detention; after strikes over teachers' racism and a lack of food in 1960, several students were sentenced to multiple years' imprisonment.[51]

The rise of school protests and strikes over poor conditions and the racist maltreatment of students in the 1940s and '50s must also be placed within wider and longer histories of civil disobedience, including strikes and tax evasion, dating back to the arrival of direct colonial administration in the 1900s.[52] We have reconstructed a longer timeline of strikes and protests from the South Sudan National Archives and Comboni Mission Archives, which has started to document a wider spread of strikes beyond the well-known incidents at Rumbek Senior Secondary School in 1951 and across many schools in 1960-61.[53] With formal senior boys' school education focused on gaining the skills for bookkeeping and clerking for the colonial authority, it is not surprising that these tools were tested in waves of petitions, strikes, and protests at elite schools like Rumbek. Less well documented are similar strikes at vocational and technical training centers. In 1943 ten young men from Isoke left Palotaka Teachers Training School on strike after sustained disciplinary problems and punishments that academic year—"an apparently frivolous reason," according to their teachers.[54] At Torit Technical School in July 1954, students organized against what they saw as the futility of their educational pathway: they "did not see any scope in the five years" of study completed at the school since they were not automatically employed by the government at the end of the course and they did not go to Khartoum for further study. On a visit conducted by the vicar apostolic, a group of students asked him "whom did the school belong to"; they petitioned the bishop to dismiss the headmaster, who had apparently been "calling them pygmies and people of the bush." The bishop refused, after which students began a sustained strike.[55] Schools were one of the main places where people were brought into close contact with the explicit racisms and exploitations of state authorities, and therefore where protest and resistance were articulated through the modern means of petition, appeal, complaint, and direct action.

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[50]Sadig Bilal to Governor Equatoria, "Directors Source Yubu Mission School Attached," April 17, 1948, SSNA Zande District 17.H.1; Daniell to Saddig Bilal, "Stephen Saddig Bilal's Son," April 22, 1948, SSNA Zande District 17.H.1.

[51]Christopher Tounsel, *Chosen Peoples: Christianity and Political Imagination in South Sudan* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2021), 248.

[52]See Kang, "Community Self-Determination in South Sudan"; Tounsel, *Chosen Peoples*.

[53]See for example SSNA Torit District 17.A.1.1 on the 1951 strike at Rumbek. For this archival reconstruction work we are also grateful to Ellie Gosley, Cardiff University.

[54]Liuth, "Palotaka Teachers Training School: Visited 7th and 8th October 1943," SSNA Torit District 17.B.1.

[55]Education Secretary VFM Juba, "Torit Technical School Strike," SSNA Torit District 17.B.1.

Education systems within the anya-nya rebellion

Taking this wider view of education from the 1800s to the 1950s, therefore, highlights two main dynamics. First, it provides a holistic view of the multitude of modern civil, technical and military educational options that grew under colonial rule, and which became part of family conversations (like David Tombe's) about children's future careers and leadership paths in this modern world. Here we can see changing ideas about what southern Sudanese leadership and authority was needed and what skill sets it would require. Second, this wider view allows us to put schoolboy protests into context among a wide wave of resistance by a range of skilled and graduate workers in agricultural projects, the civil service, technical training sites, and the military, not least at the Nzara Agricultural Extension site in 1954 and with the mutiny of Equatoria Corps soldiers at Torit in 1955. These strikes and uprisings were repeatedly squashed by civil and military means, but they mark the beginning of southern Sudan's slide into war.

The Sudanese officials who inherited the levers of government when Anglo-Egyptian colonial rule ended in 1956 increasingly used counterinsurgency-style military policing and collective punishment for these strikes and uprisings over the following decade, at the same time as paternalistic and often racist attempts were made to educate and (in their view) modernize southern citizens into their new nation. These processes—documented elsewhere in detail—created escalating disorder over the subsequent decade.[56] This also created slippage between the categories of school student and rebel outlaw. In waves of school strikes across seminaries and primary and secondary schools from 1960 to 1963, students were detained for months, and strike leaders were sentenced to imprisonment for up to five years and subjected to lashings and beatings.[57]

These years are remembered—mostly in autobiographies and personal stories—as a time of crucial political education. By the early 1950s the process of Sudanization (replacing colonial with Sudanese staff, mostly from the much more extensive education systems in the north) had begun to make national racial, social, and religious hierarchies explicit and immediate. The late politician Clement Janda recalled the paternalism of new northern Sudanese teachers "saying 'we have come to help you people'—we said go back, we don't want your help." Janda remembered the nationalization of Christian mission education in the late 1950s also as a process of radicalization. In December 1959 Loka school students, including Clement, returned from their vacation to find European mission teachers replaced with northern Sudanese teachers; this was swiftly followed by the Sudan military government changing the national day of rest to Friday, sparking the Sunday strikes in 1960.[58] The switch from providing instruction in English to providing it in Arabic was seen as a further undermining of the purpose of education as a tool of power—if Kenyi of Okaru (above) had been taught in

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[56]See Øystein H. Rolandsen and Cherry Leonardi, "Discourses of Violence in the Transition from Colonialism to Independence in Southern Sudan, 1955-1960," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 8, no. 4 (2014), 609-25; Øystein H. Rolandsen and Nicki Kindersley, "The Nasty War: Organised Violence during the Anya-Nya Insurgency in South Sudan, 1963-72," *Journal of African History* 60, no. 1 (2019), 87-107.

[57]Tounsel, *Chosen Peoples*, 250-51.

[58]Clement Janda, interviewed in Arua, April 5, 2017.

Madi or Arabic, he would not have been able to rescue his uncle from prison. Striking at schools was increasingly seen explicitly as anti-government action, and networks were built between schools; two weeks before the December 1962 exams at Nugent Intermediate School in Loka, Juba Commercial Secondary School students circulated a letter to all Loka students asking students to leave for Uganda to take up arms to liberate themselves from the northern "Arabs." Because he was a school prefect, Janda was arrested in these 1962 strikes after around three days of organized striking, which involved a scout system for spotting teachers and students assembling in a defensive circle on the basketball court in front of the chapel to confront the headmaster and the police. On the fourth day students were loaded into trucks, ostensibly to take them home; one of Janda's schoolmates, Jones Lukadi, remembered how the truck driver took them directly to the police station in Yei, where fifteen students were arrested and taken straight from there to the prison.[59] Girls' schools were also mobilizing. Agnes Lokudu recalled swearing oaths of loyalty to the rebel movement on the Bible as part of waves of strikes over 1963 and 1964. She was arrested (while head girl) for leading a strike but continued to distribute anti-government letters sent to her by southern teachers and scouts. Agnes escaped to Uganda with her fellow student Margaret Nyuon in 1964.[60]

The growing civil war thus directly involved (and broke) the limited formal educational provisions in the south by the time the war began in earnest in 1963. With missionary teachers expelled from the country in 1962, state attacks on school children and graduates escalated over 1963-1965. Formal education was seen as a weapon of insurgency, and closing schools was therefore a counterinsurgency strategy.[61] By 1963 regional armed groups started to organize under the collective name Anya-Nya, building an uprising that would only end with a peace deal in 1972. In most historical literature, formal educational institutions are understood to have either closed or been "removed" to Khartoum by 1964-1965, with most school students fleeing home or to Uganda or Congo. However, by dispensing with a false binary of informal versus formal education and an overfocus on school sites, we can see a much wider range of education that continues in this period, for both these dispersed students—whose educational journeys are only documented to date in a few autobiographies—and in bush schools within rebel-held territories. By 1973 the World Bank documented about two hundred bush schools serving twenty-five thousand children in Anya-Nya areas.[62]

Students are therefore not a separate category of actors or a full-time role: here, the label describes a part-time or potential role and also acts as an honorific to describe an individual's potential for modern authority. The war forced many people not just into refugee camps but into lives on the road for the next eight years. After briefly studying at a relocated school in Khartoum, Joseph Abuk decided not to return after a school holiday at home in Juba, and instead joined an Anya-Nya camp before deciding to make

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[59] Jones Lukadi Yosepa, interviewed in Juba, March 18, 2020.

[60] Agnes Lokudu, interviewed in Juba, April 17, 2022.

[61] Duany, Lorins, and Thomas, "Education, Conflict, and Civicness in South Sudan," 11; Yosa Wawa, *The Southern Sudanese Pursuits of Self-Determination: Documents in Political History* (Kampala: Marianum Press, 2005), 230-31.

[62] Duany, Lorins, and Thomas, "Education, Conflict, and Civicness in South Sudan," 12.

Figure 1. Wurda Tombe and General Emilio Tafeng's secretary at Morta, 1969. Reproduced with permission from Wurda Tombe.

a run for Uganda with four friends.[63] Kosti Manibe was two years into Rumbek Senior Secondary School when it closed, and he was stuck in Lui until 1966, "totally lost in terms of what was next," until he managed to get a lift into Uganda from Anya-Nya

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[63]Joseph Abuk, interviewed in Juba, June 23, 2019.

soldiers traveling to get medical supplies.[64] Many graduates of bush schools, both men and women, from before and during the war, went on to both teach and rally others into action—including fighting or running supplies for the rebels. Agnes Lokudu wrote extensively about the southern political situation while at secondary school and then as a teacher in Uganda. Along with studying, mostly in Ugandan refugee schools (including at Bombo, then famous as a central refugee site for finding school places), students worked as scouts, supply runners, fundraisers, and recruiters. Some were recruited as soldiers, including through threats and abductions.[65] The Sudan government intelligence paperwork in the Juba archives contains records tracking students crossing into southern Sudan to fight during the school holidays. The first police post to fall to the rebel army was reportedly captured by schoolboys on the Ethiopian border.[66] Anya-Nya organizers and recruiters like David Dada, a former prison warden, Philip Yenkeji Yangazi Loro, and Simon Jada, a soldier and Torit mutineer, visited schools across Uganda. Many students also ran to Congo, and around sporadic schooling in camps, they organized supply lines into the south. While at school in Agoro in Uganda in 1969, Victor Wurda Tombe helped to provide salt and maize flour to visiting Anya-Nya fighters, taking wounded men to Kitgum hospital ("interfering with my studies"); by 1970 Victor was in Kampala for secondary school and ran medicine, supplies, and visiting foreign agents north to Arua, Kaya, and Morta, in coordination with Philip Yengkeji at Arua (Figure 1).[67] Patrobus Sebit was in the second year of primary school in Ombasi (learning to write on the soil) when the war arrived, and after fleeing to Aba in Congo in 1964, he worked as a supply runner. "[The message leaders gave] was that there was gross injustice, and that therefore [the] people whose eyes were 'open' or enlightened, had to go to the bush."[68] Patrobus also helped to organize camp meetings where Anya-Nya politicians would give speeches and collect money and food.

This is where we can begin to reconstruct the organization of the Anya-Nya territories' bush schools. By 1966, some students who fled to Uganda and Congo were beginning to return to liberated areas to set up bush schools and teach in them. Ndole Ndoromo went to Congo in 1964 after Gulumbi elementary school was burned, but he returned to Yei in 1967 and started a school under Anya-Nya administration.[69] The war precipitated the idea of school education for some residents: Tom Ohia Joseph, born in Bor and growing up in Lopit near Torit, "began to think about going to school" when his family cattle were stolen by the Anya-Nya. He attended Imegeje Primary School, run by Anya-Nya teachers "who had been taught during the missionaries' time," although "they were not so fast in teaching."[70] By early 1970, when Anya-Nya forces finally consolidated under Joseph Lagu's leadership, the large rebel base at Owiny

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[64]Kosti Manibe, interview in Juba, June 24, 2019.

[65]Edward Momo, *Resilience of the Human Spirit: The Story of Edward Momo* (Kampala: n.p., 2015), 16.

[66]Mom Kou Nhial Arou, "Regional Devolution in the Southern Sudan, 1972-1981" (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1982), 51-52; Scopas Poggo, "Ethnicity and Race in Modern Sudan," in *The First Sudanese Civil War: Africans, Arabs, and Israelis in the Southern Sudan, 1955-1972*, ed. Scopas Poggo (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 96-99; Edward Thomas, *South Sudan: A Slow Liberation* (London: Zed Books, 2015), 78.

[67]Victor Wurda Tombe, interviewed in Juba, April 20, 2022.

[68]Frazer Ayamba and Patrobus Sebit, interviewed in Arua, April 8, 2017.

[69]Ndole Ndoromo, interviewed in Juba, June 23, 2019.

[70]Tom Ohia Joseph, interviewed in Juba, June 21, 2019.

Ki Bul apparently had not just a primary school with curriculum supplies but also visiting lecturers from Makerere University in Kampala teaching management studies and administration courses.[71]

Starting to reconstruct this history of education within a postcolonial civil war allows us to explore emerging ideas of what knowledge was needed for rebellion and for a post-liberation future. Interviewees reflected on what type of education people thought they needed to gain—in schools, in rebel camps, in refugee spaces—according to different aspirations: to survive and live safely, or (for some) to become leaders in the near future. Several interviewees, like David Tombe above, remember their parents expecting sons to take up arms in a long familial tradition of armed resistance to colonialism, as family leaders and good men. A combination of some education and military experience became a clear pathway to leadership and authority: Edward Momo recalled how he wanted to join the Anya-Nya because he didn't want to be seen as a coward, and because he was "convinced beyond doubt that, if I joined the movement … we were going to become officers." These ideas were encouraged by Anya-Nya recruiters who told Edward—at that time, a graduate of elementary school—that "we want people like you who are educated. When you go there, you'll be promoted, you'll be the officers. And you'll be driving, you know, in Jeeps and so forth." Instead, Edward's mother and aunt gathered money to send him to Uganda to school, and Edward recalls deliberating over whether education "outside," or experience "inside" was more important.[72] Talking about education gained and lost is thus a way to explore shifting ideas of what skills and knowledge are needed for new forms of authority.

Conclusion

This brief survey of a wide educative terrain emphasizes the real possibilities of African modern educational histories beyond the school, within and across colonial and postcolonial conflicts and borders. We have tried not just to challenge the dominant definition of education as formal schooling, but also to challenge the standard chronologies of modern (colonially derived) education and to integrate a wider world of knowledge systems, from the Ottoman system onward.[73] Looking beyond what university students, for example, get up to in anti-colonial movements allows us to explore wider ideas of what education and powerful knowledge can do to help those learning it both navigate and lead in violent, dangerous times and places. Here we have sought to demonstrate how tracing this history of diverse educational systems and useful knowledge can illustrate evolving ideas of what knowledge was (or was deemed) most potentially valuable, by young people and their parents and kin, for shaping anti-colonial wars, building new societies, and attaining personal and collective wealth and security.

Educational histories are also crucial in colonial and postcolonial contexts for exploring evolving class systems and forms of authority. Our case study illustrates how

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[71]David Ben-Uziel, *A Mossad Agent in Southern Sudan: 1969-1971. An Operation Log* (Hertzliya, Israel: TevaHadvarim, 2017), 92-93.

[72]Edward Momo, interview in Juba, June 21, 2019.

[73]Falb Kalisman, "The Historiography of Education in the Modern Middle East," 4.

older and newer forms of education together continue to produce a diverse array of forms and standards of South Sudanese leadership—including prophets and practical spiritual authorities over land and water alongside new Christian catechists and priests-in-training, vets and medics using both vernacular and clinical knowledge and resources, military authorities with variously practical and formal training in generations of colonial and anti-colonial armies, and civil administrative assistants, interpreters, and clerks using a mix of oral and written political skills. Modern education in southern Sudan has always been entangled in military systems. This study provides ways of looking at generational ideas of power and leadership, and it supports new arguments for a more complex understanding of emerging class systems in colonial and postcolonial spaces.[74]

Our study supports the argument for histories of education that can help us understand "power, colonialism, race relations, foreign policy, and environmental education."[75] We follow Parimala Rao in pushing for a turn toward ordinary people's perspectives on education as a response to mostly elite histories of intellectual life: here we have tried to demonstrate the wide possibilities of educational and intellectual histories that have been left unstudied in any depth.[76] We argue that histories of education can help to ground new scholarship on everyday intellectual history within people's everyday lives, jobs, and plans for changing futures. We see new directions in the history of education for a way toward studying political thought in the everyday.

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[74] For South Sudan, for example, see D'Agoôt, "Taming the Dominant Gun Class"; Joseph Diing Majok, "War, Migration and Work: Changing Social Relations in the South Sudan Borderlands," Rift Valley Institute, 2019; Nicki Kindersley and Joseph Diing Majok, "Class, Cash and Control in the South Sudan and Darfur Borderlands," *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal* 7 no. 4-6 (2022), 283-306.

[75] Angulo and Schneider, "Between the Global and the Local," 153.

[76] Rao, "The Historiography of Indian Education," 21.