



PhD thesis

Ethnic identity negotiation through dialogical self: the case of Anywaa and Nuer evangelicals in Gambella, Ethiopia
Kebede, S.

Full bibliographic citation: Kebede, S. 2024. Ethnic identity negotiation through dialogical self: the case of Anywaa and Nuer evangelicals in Gambella, Ethiopia. PhD thesis Middlesex University / Oxford Centre for Mission Studies (OCMS)

Year: 2024

Publisher: Middlesex University Research Repository

Available online: <https://repository.mdx.ac.uk/item/14v889>

Middlesex University Research Repository makes the University's research available electronically.

Copyright and moral rights to this work are retained by the author and/or other copyright owners unless otherwise stated. The work is supplied on the understanding that any use for commercial gain is strictly forbidden. A copy may be downloaded for personal, non-commercial, research or study without prior permission and without charge.

Works, including theses and research projects, may not be reproduced in any format or medium, or extensive quotations taken from them, or their content changed in any way, without first obtaining permission in writing from the copyright holder(s). They may not be sold or exploited commercially in any format or medium without the prior written permission of the copyright holder(s).

Full bibliographic details must be given when referring to, or quoting from full items including the author's name, the title of the work, publication details where relevant

(place, publisher, date), pagination, and for theses or dissertations the awarding institution, the degree type awarded, and the date of the award.

If you believe that any material held in the repository infringes copyright law, please contact the Repository Team at Middlesex University via the following email address: repository@mdx.ac.uk

The item will be removed from the repository while any claim is being investigated.

See also repository copyright: re-use policy: <https://libguides.mdx.ac.uk/repository>

Ethnic Identity Negotiation through Dialogical Self: The Case of Anywaa and Nuer

Evangelicals in Gambella, Ethiopia.

Selamawit Cherinet Kebede

OCMS, PhD

Abstract

This study explores the ethnic identity negotiation of Anywaa and Nuer Evangelical Christians in the Gambella region, Ethiopia, using the Dialogical Self Theory. The two ethnic groups are living in conflict due to different reasons such as historical narratives and cultural differences. Though they have differences on multiple issues, they are converts from their respective traditional religion to Evangelical Christianity, which is given insufficient attention in the existing literature when their relation is investigated. A case study methodology is employed to understand the peoples' perception and understanding of the dialogical self and value dissonance in their identity elements. Data was collected through semi-structured individual interviews, focus group discussions and non-participant observations of 69 respondents from both ethnic groups with varying ages, sex, and responsibilities. Through thematic data analysis, the study reveals that the Anywaa and the Nuer have ascribed identities that emphasize their group peculiarities and differences with others. However, their acquired identity, Evangelical Christianity, enables them to redefine some of the cultural elements, especially aspects of relations with ethnic others through the dialogical self. The redefinition of identity markers results in the discontinuity of some elements and the continuity of others, leading to negotiation strategies to deal with value-dissonance between identity elements that change the nature of their ethnic boundary, making it permeable or impermeable. Some of these strategies promote positive relations, while others promote negative relations among the two groups. The study suggests the need for fostering value-based reflective dialogues in individuals by different institutions, enabling them to see their relations through other lenses. Moreover, the study recommends using individuals as change agents and creating a community of practice to help peace grow from inside-out or bottom-up. The findings offer distinctive insights on how social changes like religious conversion coupled with an individual's dialogical self can redefine issues of identity by altering ethnic boundaries and how that can be used for the better coexistence among the ethnic groups.

‘Ethnic Identity Negotiation through Dialogical Self: The Case of Anywaa and Nuer
Evangelicals in Gambella, Ethiopia’

By

Selamawit Cherinet Kebede

BEd (Haromaya University, Ethiopia)

MSc (Haromaya University, Ethiopia)

Director of studies: Dr Theodros Assefa

Second Supervisor: Dr Guichun Jun

House Tutor: Dr Thomas Harvey

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Middlesex University, London

April 2024

Oxford Centre for Mission Studies

Declarations

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed



Date: April 14, 2024

Statement One

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Where correction services have been used, the extent and nature of the correction is clearly marked in a footnote. Other sources are acknowledged by mid-notes or footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

Signed



Date: April 14, 2024

Statement Two

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if approved, to be available for photocopying by the British Library and for Inter-Library Loan, for open access to the Electronic Theses Online Service (EthnoS) linked to the British Library, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organizations.

Signed



Date: April 14, 2024

Acknowledgments

First of all, I would like to thank and praise God for His abundant blessing and mercy that I have tasted in my life. I thank Him for the strength He gave me to finish this research. I achieved all through Him. Praise to Him for generations!

I have received so much support and encouragement from many individuals without whom this journey would not have been possible and I want to express my sincere gratitude to them.

My heartfelt thanks go to my precious husband, Wegderes Bekele, who supported me unreservedly all the way and by taking care of our little children, being both mother and father, during my prolonged absence because of my study. I cannot make it without him, and I owe him a big thank you. I also thank my precious children (Fikr, Keab, Meklit and Benel), who are my inspiration and strength. Thank you for being you and trying to understand me as I am away repeatedly. I will make it up to you and I love you.

A big thank you goes to my excellent supervisors, Dr Theodros Assefa Teklu, (PhD, Manchester University, UK), Research Associate, Department of Systematic Theology and Ecclesiology, Stellenbosch University, South Africa and Rev Dr Guichun Jun, Yodio Pentecostal Research Tutor, Admission Tutor, Book Review Editor: Transformation. I thank them for their academic excellence, gentle guidance, critical insights, and friendliness. I especially want to thank Rev Dr Guichun for his support not only through his critical insights, and academic excellence but also his emotional and spiritual guidance. Thank you for your prayers.

I am greatly indebted to my organization, Compassion International and my leaders, Mr Tsehaywota Tadesse, National Director of Ethiopia office and PhD candidate at OCMS, Dr Fikre Lobago, Sr Manager of partnership and my immediate manager, who have been supporting me both financially and through continual encouragement and understanding. God bless you. I cannot thank you enough. I also thank my colleagues in the organization who are cheering for me to the end. You got my back, and I am forever grateful for your prayers and words of encouragement.

I am also indebted to my brothers and sisters, Tigist Cherinet, Genet Cherinet, Zelalem Cherinet, Yirgalem Cherinet and Biruk Cherinet. Your love and support mean a lot to me and was a fuel to go forward. My special thanks go to my sister Genet (Etye), who is more than a sister, the embodiment of my late mother who is in heaven. Thank you for loving me and my family sacrificially. Thank you Zelalem Cherinet (Mashye), more than a brother, who believed in me more than I believe in myself. Thank you for your prayers and pastoral guidance. I love you all.

My sincere thanks go to Oxford Centre for Mission Studies (OCMS) and all the faculty members and staff for their love and support. OCMS has provided me with financial, spiritual, and emotional support. Thank you.

I thank the amazing Faculty members, Dr Paul Bendor-Samuel, and his amazing, hospitable, caring wife, Dr Liz Bendor-Samuel, Dr Thomas Harvey, Dr David Singh, Dr Damon So, Dr Guichun Jun, Dr Tim Keene, Dr Anne Moseley, Dr Marina Behera, Mrs Rachel McIntyre, Mrs Nadine Woods, Ms Nicky Clargo, and Ms Elizabeth Santos. Last but not least, I thank the former Librarian, Ralph Bates, who was supportive and helping all the way my journey and edited my final thesis. God bless you all.

Table of Contents

Declarations.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iii
Figures and Tables	xi
Abbreviations	xii
Chapter One Introduction and Background.....	1
1.1. Introduction.....	1
1.2. Research Problem.....	2
1.3. Scholarly Studies on Gambella	7
1.4. Rationale	11
1.4.1. Research Question.....	11
1.4.2. Research Sub-questions.	11
1.4.3. Research Aim	12
1.4.4. Research Objectives	12
1.5. Research Context: Scope and Delimitation	13
1.6. The Study Area: Gambella Regional State	14
1.6.1. Identity of the researcher.....	16
1.7. Anywaa and Nuer Evangelicalicals	23
1.7.3. Ethnic Relations among the Anywaa and the Nuer	27
1.8. Significance of the Study	28
1.9. Structure of the Thesis	29

1.8. Conclusion	30
Chapter Two Literature Review.....	31
2.1. Introduction.....	31
2.2. A Brief History of Religion and Evangelical Christianity in Ethiopia	32
2.3. Evangelicals’ Response to Value Dissonance in Different Regimes.....	36
2.3.1. Evangelicals in the Dergue Regime	36
2.3.2. Evangelicalism after 1991.....	38
2.4. Ethnic Identity: Historical Developments and Contemporary Theories	43
2.5. Ethnic Identity: Why Enduring, Ubiquitous and Problematic?	49
2.6. Ethnic Identity and Religion: Intersectionality	53
2.7. Dialogical Self Theory and Identity Negotiation.....	60
2.8. Religious Conversion and Cultural Continuity/Discontinuity	66
2.9. Ethnic Identity Negotiation.....	68
2.10. Conclusion	72
Chapter Three Methodology and Methods	73
3.1. Introduction.....	73
3.2. Case Study Research.....	74
3.2.1. Exploratory Case Study	77
3.3. Situatedness of the Researcher.....	78
3.4. Accessing Informants.....	84
3.5. Research Methods.....	86
3.6. Data Collection	87
3.6.1. Sampling	87

3.7. Data Collection Methods	90
3.8. Data Management	93
3.9. Data Analysis and Interpretation.....	95
3.10. Ethical Guidelines and Trustworthiness of the Data.....	97
3.10.2.1. Explanation of the Research before Engaging.....	100
3.11. Conclusion	101
Chapter Four Identity Markers and Ethnic Boundary Making	103
4.1. Introduction	103
4.2. Anywaa and Nuer Identity Markers: Ascribed and Acquired.....	104
4.2.1. Ascribed Identity Markers.....	105
4.2.2. Acquired Identity Marker: Religious Identity.....	111
4.3. Boundary Making and Negotiation around Identity Markers: Positioning, Depositioning and Repositioning of the Self	118
4.3.3. Rituals	130
4.3.3.3. Assimilation Process: the Nuer	136
4.3.4. Ethnic Names	138
4.4. Conclusion	139
Chapter Five Continuity and Discontinuity of Socio-Cultural and Traditional Religious Values after Conversion.....	143
5.1. Introduction.....	143
5.2. Socio-Cultural and Religious Identity Elements Continued after Conversion ...	144
5.2.1. Socio-cultural Identity Elements Continued	144
5.2.2. Discontinued Socio-cultural elements.....	153

5.2.3. Continued Traditional Religious Values after Conversion.....	158
5.2.4. Discontinued or Changed Traditional Religious Identity Elements after Conversion	163
5.3. Ethnic Identity Negotiation Strategies for the Anywaa and the Nuer.....	172
5.3.1. Reinterpretation.....	173
5.3.1.1. Reinterpreted Self-view (Self-identity).....	173
5.3.1.2. Reinterpreting Cultural Expectations.....	175
5.3.1.3. View of Ethnic Others: Collective Identity Reinterpreted.....	176
5.3.2. Framing	178
5.3.3. Dichotomization /Separation.....	180
5.3.4. Adaptation.....	182
5.4. Factors Enabling and Hampering Ethnic Identity Negotiation through the Dialogical Self.....	184
5.4.1. Enabling Factors	184
5.4.1.1. Retrospective Reflection on Cultural Consequences-Dialogue	184
5.4.1.2. Mirroring the Action with Evangelical Ideals: Depositioning and Repositioning of the Self.....	186
5.4.2. Hampering Factors	187
5.4.2.1. Societal Pressure: In-group	188
5.4.2.2. Spiritual Immaturity	188
5.4.2.3. External Push	189
5.5. Conclusion	190

Chapter Six Boundary Permeability: Towards a Theory of Ethnic Identity Negotiation

193

6.1. Introduction	193
6.2. DST in Identity after Conversion.....	195
6.2.1. DST and Identity Markers after Conversion.....	195
6.3. DST in Continuity and Discontinuity of Culture after Conversion	200
6.4. DST in Boundary Permeability after Conversion	206
6.5. Dialogical Self and Other Identity Negotiation Strategies.....	211
6.6.2. Transcendental View of Others.....	216
6.6.3. Shifting the Centre of Identity.....	217
6.7. Enabling Factors in Ethnic Identity Negotiation.....	219
6.8. Conclusion	223

Chapter Seven Conclusion

227

7.1. Introduction.....	227
7.2. Main Findings of the Research	228
7.3. Contribution to the Existing Body of Knowledge.....	232
7.3.1 Research Outputs	232
7.3.1.1. Evangelical Christianity and Boundary Permeability	232
7.3.1.2. Anywaa and Nuer Conversion and Conversion Studies	234
7.3.1.3. Collective Culture and Dialogical Self Theory.....	235
7.3.1.4. Social Agent and Social Environment in Peace Studies	235
7.3.1.5. Bottom-up/Inside-out Approach in Conflict Transformations.....	236
7.4. Practical Implications of the Findings	237

7.5. Scope and Limitations of the Study	240
7.6. Suggestions for Future Research.....	243
7.7. Conclusion	245
Bibliography.....	247
Appendices.....	284
Appendix I: Participant Consent Form	284
Appendix II: Semi-structured Individual Interview Probing Questions- For Adults.....	286
Appendix III: Focus Group Discussion: Some Probing Questions for Adult Participants	288
Appendix IV: Focus Group Discussions Probing Questions for Adolescent Group	290
Appendix V: Semi-Structured Interview Probing Question for Adolescent Participants	292
Appendix VI: Additional Questions for Adolescent Children who have Friends from the Other Ethnic Groups	294
Appendix VII: Interview Samples	295
Appendix VIII Primary Sources	333

Figures and Tables

Figure 1-1 Regional States and Chartered Cities of Ethiopia before May 2023.....	3
Figure 1-2 Protestant (evangelical) religion is distributed in the country's different regions. Source: Geocurrent map according to 2007 census data.	24
Figure 1-3 Gambella regional state. Source: Source: http://www.ocha-eth.org/Maps/downloadables/BENESHANGUL.pdf	14
Figure 4-1 Photo (March 2021 taken by the researcher): Anywaa elderly lady wearing demui, which belongs to her daughter.	129
Figure 7-1 Contact zone is created between Anywaa and Nuer through religion.	210
Figure 7-2 The religion created boundary permeability.	210

Abbreviations

OCMS – Oxford Centre for Mission Studies

GPNRS- Gambella Peoples National Regional State

ENA-Ethiopian News Agency

DST- Dialogical Self Theory

SNNPR- Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region

EPRDF- Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front

ECGBC- Ethiopian Council of Gospel Believers’ Churches

CSA- Central Statistical Agency

HRC- Human Rights Campaign

EOTC- Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church

CCCE- Council for Cooperation of Churches of Ethiopia

EECMY- Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Mekane Yesus

MYC- Mekane Yesus Church

BERA- British Educational Research Association

NNPs- Nations Nationalities and Peoples

COVID-19 – Corona Virus Disease 2019

Chapter One Introduction and Background

1.1. Introduction

This research investigates ethnic identity negotiation in dialogue with values of Evangelical Christianity among the Anywaa and the Nuer, who have the same religious belief but a different ethnic identification. These two ethnic groups live in the southwestern part of Ethiopia, Gambella Peoples National Regional State (GPNRS).¹ Among the five major ethnic groups of the region, the Anywaa and the Nuer comprise over 50% of the population. Over 70% of both ethnic groups have the same profession of faith, Evangelical Christianity. However, the two ethnic groups live in recurrent ethnic conflict due to their divergent ethnic identification, resource and power conflict, different mode, and time of incorporation into the Ethiopian government and failed resettlement programme in the area, according to the previous literatures. Nevertheless, how their new religious identity converses with their ethnic identity has yet to be studied. This research investigates how both look at their ethnic identity in dialogue with their religious values, to what extent their religious belief plays a role in ethnic identity negotiation and how it contributes to their long-standing conflictual relation. This study mirrors religion² with ethnic identity in

¹ The Gambella Peoples National Regional State (GPNRS) is one of the multi-ethnic regional states of Ethiopia. The GPNRS is designated for the 'indigenous' people or 'Minority Nationalities (a community determined, by the House of People's Representatives or its successor, to be of a comparatively smaller size of population than that of other nations/nationalities, according to Election Law of Ethiopia, 1995 proclamation no.111/1995). These are classified as the five national minorities which live in Gambella; the Anywaa, the Nuer, the Majangir, the Opo, and the Komo. (Dereje Feyissa, 2014, National Election Board of Ethiopia. 'Election Law of Ethiopia 1995.' Proclamation No.111/1995)

² Though the definition of religion is murky, the word I used here is not situated in the substantive definition of religion rather, the functional definition forwarded by Emily Durkheim in Schilbrack, Kevin, "The Concept of Religion" (*The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2022 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2022/entries/concept-religion/>>. Durkheim defined religion as

identity discourse of African studies, specifically in ethnic identity negotiation debates. This chapter comprises the background of the study, which informs what has been done so far in the study areas, Gambella region, recent developments on their ethnic identity-based conflicts, historical conversion to Evangelical Christianity, and ethnic relations. Then, the main research question with sub-question, research aim, and research objectives follow. Once the scope and significance of the study is outlined, a brief conclusion completes the chapter.

I take Dialogical Self Theory (Henceforth DST) as a theoretical framework to use and develop the concept of identity negotiation through creative third positions. The study employed semi-structured individual interviews, focus group discussions, and non-participant observations for all age groups in Gambella town among the two ethnic groups. A thematic data analysis is conducted.

1.2. Research Problem

Ethiopia is one of the East African countries where religious and ethnic pluralism is evident. There are over eighty-five officially recognised ethnic groups living together within twelve ethnic-based territories called regions (*killoč*)³ and two chartered cities, Addis Ababa and Dire- Dawa city administrations (Central Statistical Agency, CSA, 2007). There were nine regional states and two chartered cities from 1995 to 2020. Between May 2020 and August 2023, four additional regional states were created from previous Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR); Sidama Regional State (June 2020),

³ whatever system of practices unite a number of people into a single moral community, whether or not those practices involve belief in any unusual realities.

³ *killoč* is Amharic word for region.

Southwest Ethiopia Peoples Region (November 2021), Southern Ethiopia Regional State (May 2023) and Central Ethiopia Regional State (August 2023). Now there are 12 regional states or *kloč* and two chartered cities (Yimenu, 2022, p. 6; Addis standard, 2020; Borkena, 2020; Ethiopian News Agency, ENA, 2023).

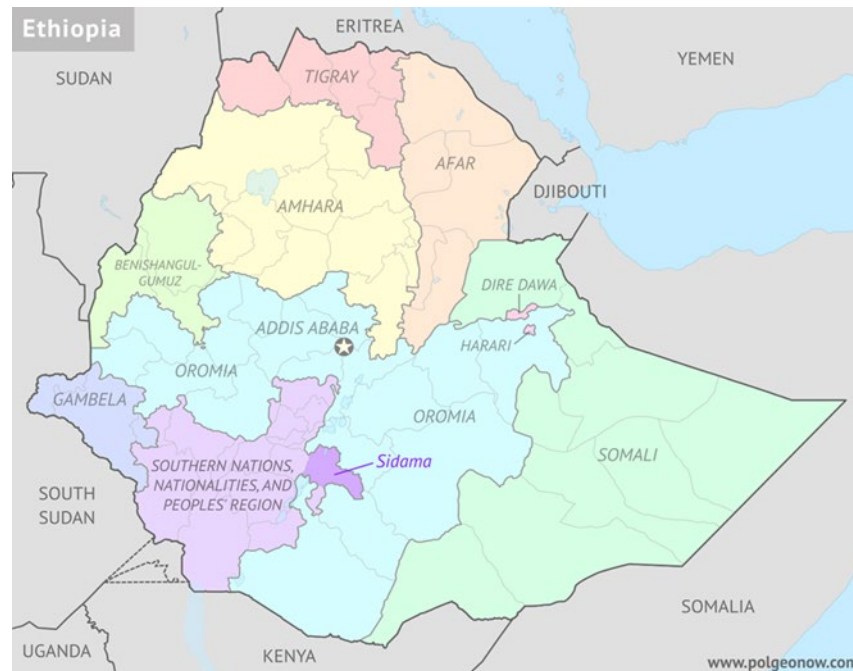


Figure 1-1 Regional States and Chartered Cities of Ethiopia before May 2023

Source: Fana Broadcasting Corporation, accessed at <https://www.fanabc.com/english/regional-states-set-formation-days-of-their-new-governments>

Ethnic federalism⁴ is the guiding political ideology and system of administration of the current government, introduced in 1991 after the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) came to power and ratified ethnic-based federalism in the

⁴ Unlike the previous governments, where there was contestation over regional and central power, EPRDF argued that the cause of Ethiopia's crisis was the failure to manage multiculturalism. According to the party belief, the previous powers subjugate and repress diversity, allowing them to economically exploit nations, nationalities, and peoples (NNPs). Therefore, as an aversion strategy for this, it places ethnic federalism constitutionally to address identity questions by granting the right to self-determination up to secession for all ethnonationalists (Fiseha, 2007, p.1, Tewfik, 2010, p.5)

constitution in 1994 (Bekalu, 2017 p. 48; Kassahun, 1995, p. 130; Rock, 1996, p. 194). Not only regions but also political parties are encouraged to be organised along ethnic lines (Alem, 2003, p. 5).

Some argue that this ideology has much significance in bringing out the beauty of the mosaic of Ethiopian people and 'might be an effective method in bringing political stability and order' (Bekalu 2017, p. 59). Some scholars also say it is an antidote for the persistent mismanagement of ethnolinguistic difference in the country (Tewfik, 2010, p. 5) and provides a set of rights for ethnolinguistic groups in developing their own culture, self-determination and political participation as indicated in the constitution in articles 39 and 53 (Jon Abbink, 2011, p. 598). Other scholars argue that it helps nations and nationalities exercise their cultural rights and celebrate diversity (Bekalu A, 2017, p. 42; Adeto, 2014, p. 120).

On the other hand, scholars noted that such arrangements highlighted a distinct boundary that brings the sense of us and them between ethnic groups and might cause conflict and collapse of the central government (Ishiyama J, 2021, p. 1025). Some also argued that the decline of the pan-Ethiopian movement, both theoretically and practically, indicates how this arrangement is not serving the multinational states of Ethiopia. For instance, Vaughan (2003, p. 286) indicated that the ethnic arrangement of the government is facing many challenges, such as a challenge to build a collective sense of shared interest', and a 'sense of us' among interacting ethnic groups.

In addition, Jon Abbink's assessment of the ethnic federalism that Ethiopia exercised for twenty years showed the return of 'the historical and traditional authoritarian governance that was hierarchical and autocratic in its culture', exercised in the rule of the past

monarchy (2011, p. 596). This is because the issue of identity brought about the struggle over power and domination.

Lacking the sense of us, economic and political power disparity among the nations and nationalities resulted in some dreadful conflicts among different ethnic groups in Ethiopia that created insecurity and mistrust in those who survived the conflict (Mengie, 2015, p. 464, Assefa, 2006, p. 435-73, Lancaster, 2012, p. 44-5).

Between 1997 and 2015, inter-ethnic conflicts (among different ethnic groups in different regions of the country) resulted in the displacement of over 120,000 and the death of over 700 citizens. Chaderjian P. (2018), referring to the International Committee for Red Cross, reported that over one million Ethiopians were displaced from their homes to the nearby regions (Internal displacement) because of ethnic-based local violence in different parts of the country. Although the natural causes of the conflict need to be investigated, the ethnic base of the clashes has been confirmed.

Particular to this research site, Human Rights Council (HRC) has recorded dreadful ethnic conflicts between the Anywaa and the Nuer, the two largest ethnic groups in Gambella Region. In August 2002, the clash happened because of ethnic competition on administrative matters between these two ethnic groups. As a result, sixty people were killed; forty-one people were injured; eight thousand seven hundred and eighty people were displaced; all houses in 8 Kebeles were burnt, and an unknown number of people sank into Baro River and died (HRC 55th special issue, 2002). Similarly, in December 2003, because of the politicised ethnic identity and competition for regional power, the conflict erupted. Due to this, one hundred-six people were killed, sixty-two people were injured, one

hundred ninety-three shops were robbed, and six thousand families were displaced (HRC, 72nd special issues, p. 233, HRC 73rd special issues, p. 248)

According to Alemante G. Sellasie (2003, p. 96), ethnicity needs to provide neutrality in the constitutions of multi-ethnic states to avert the pitfalls of ethnic federalism. This is because political actors can easily manipulate ethnic identity, creating irrational allegiances for their ethnic group. Likewise, religion adds fuel to ethnic conflict in different parts of the world. Works of literature implicate the involvement of churches or religion in the ethnic conflict in different parts of Africa, such as Rwanda and Nigeria (Longman, 2001, p. 163-186, Ngwoke, & Ituma, 2020, p. 2). However, the role of churches or religion in Ethiopia in the ethnic-based conflicts is not well studied and it is beyond the scope of this study.

Nevertheless, there is a sense of expectation that religion or Churches can play a positive role in coexistence (Ibid, p.3). As an example, even amid such a horrific genocide in Rwanda, there was an expectation that Churches could be the hope for reconciliation and positive ethnic relations; specifically, Protestant churches that lack experience in the public arena but show little effort for peace and de-escalation of the violence. (Van't Spijker, 1997, p. 244). The criticism of the churches in Rwanda is not because they were preaching hatred and violence but because of their silence and tolerance (Longman, 2001, p.82), unlike the values in their religious teaching cradles. There was an expectation that the Church and individual believers could be hope.

What is the role of Protestant churches or Protestant believers, Evangelicals in the Ethiopian context, in stopping the ethnic-based violence in different parts of the country? How are they contributing to positive relations among ethnic groups? To answer such a question, looking at the individual's reflection on some contradicting values between their

ethnic and religious identity will show us what kind of social fabric is being made. Therefore, the individual's self-dialogue when value dissonance occurs, specifically how they see the values in their ethnic identity in the light of their religious identity, is the focus of this study. In other words, how individuals think through contradicting values and position themselves accordingly is a central theme of the research.

1.3. Scholarly Studies on Gambella

The existing scholarly studies on the Anywaa and the Nuer are situated in anthropological and historical studies that emphasise their cultural differences, divergent ethnic identification, and migration history. In one of the earliest works on the Nuer, an English anthropologist, Evans-Pritchard (1902-1973), has given an anthropological account of the Nuer's lineage and political institution, which is the central theme of his book, *The Nuer* (1940). He took the environment and livelihood into account to better explain the political institution's uniqueness from other Nilotic groups such as the Dinka. However, he has not compared them with other Nilotic groups like the Anywaa except for some implicit comparisons such as marriage, where he stated that 'unlike Nuer, Anywaa lineage is endogamous'. On the other hand, Eisei Kurimoto (1992) has given an in-depth account of Anywaa and studied how they interact with other people. They consider others as 'outsiders'⁵, such as Nuer, Murel, Opo, Komo⁶ and highlanders⁷. The analysis conducted by

⁵ Anywaa people consider others who are not group members as outsiders or guests, and their status will not be changed no matter how many years the outgroup lives with them. See Dereje, 2011, and my interview with Anywaa Youth, 2020.

⁶ These people live next to each other, but Anywaa and Nuer in Gambella town are physically demarcated by marked neighbourhoods (Dereje F, 2011).

Kurimoto about their closed cultural boundary resonates with what is described by Dereje Feyissa on the existence of divergent ways of making their ethnic boundary among the Anywaa and the Nuer.

Recently, scholars have focused on the inter-ethnic conflict between the Anywaa and Nuer. Dereje Feyissa is one of the prominent scholars who focuses on the ethnic relations of the Anywaa and the Nuer in the Gambella region. In his 2011 book *Playing Different Games*, he precisely portrayed the inter-ethnic relationship between the Anywaa and the Nuer in Gambella:

The dominant pattern of inter-ethnic relations is conflict. In interpersonal and intergroup relations, friends and foes are represented in ethnic terms, and tension and violence are expressed in various fields of social interaction: from villages to churches, from schools to political parties. In cities, inter-ethnic hostility has resulted in segregated ethnic neighbourhoods. The manifestation of violence ranges from the destruction of villages to rioting in the schools; from targeting the minors and the raiding of public transport to the burning in effigy of individuals to symbolise group humiliation (Dereje, 2011, p. 10)

For Dereje, it is a group identity that has a higher place in the people's lives, and the conflict is drawn along this ethnic identity line. His description also shows the definition of a friend and foe that is only seen from an ethnic point of view. In his book, he argues that the two people have different ethnic identification coupled with resource competition and power struggle, which is why the area is conflict-ridden.

Along similar lines, other scholars mention that the conflict between the two major ethnic groups, the Anywaa and the Nuer, is long-standing and started in the 1840s. The causes are resources, power, and value-based differences (Dereje, 2005, p. 203-22; Adeto, 2014; Medhane T, 2007). On the other hand, Alula Pankhurst and colleagues (2009, p.138-79)

⁷ Nuer and Anywaa call people highlanders who came from Northern and southern parts of the country during a famine in 1974 as part of the resettlement program. They gave this name because the region from where these people came is highland in contrast to their lowland geographic terrain.

have given a slightly different reason as to why the area is conflict-ridden by mentioning the 'disruptive' resettlement done by the central government without consulting the host community and considering the cultural meaning of some 'sensitive' issues such as the physical boundary of the people, which makes the relationship among the people conflictual. Pankhurst has been critical of the resettlement programme,⁸ and tried to link it with the current conflict in the region. However, his criticism cannot exclude other possible factors, such as divergent ethnic identification, resources, and migration history⁹. Ethnic conflicts are actual conflicts which involve different factors and processes that might trigger or resolve the conflict. Therefore, it would be good to investigate the intertwinement of ethnic identification and other factors and changes, such as resources, and religious conversion, instead of seeing them separately.

The Nuer's and the Anywaa's current religious beliefs have not received enough scholarly attention in all the above scholarly works. Indeed, the role of prophets among the Nuer is one of the topics Evans Pritchard covers in his book. The prophets have been central to religious belief, illustrated as restorers of peace among the people and causes of violent conflict with their neighbouring people like the Dinka. He also mentioned the people's utter submission to the sovereignty of the prophets. In traditional religion, he showed how the Nuer prophets have a wider influence than anyone else. This has also been echoed by Johnson Douglas (1994), who shows that the Nuer receive orders from prophets to raid the

⁸ In 1985, due to the famine in the northern part of the country, the government settled many people from the north to Gambella (Kloss, H. & Aynalem, A. 1989).

⁹ Regarding Nuer migration, their history is recorded by Sharon Hutchinson (2009). Sharon has shown the pattern and history of their migration and settlement. She compared their migration and settlement history with a similar group, the Dinka people. However, little is known about Anywaa's migration history, which significantly impacts their indigeneity claim when they talk about their territory in Gambella (Dereje, 2011).

cattle of other ethnic groups like the Dinka and receive honour for the success of such an action.

This shows how the prophets influence ethnic identity and interethnic relations. Pritchard's and Douglas's account of such a role of prophets in the people's identity formation will help to see to what extent identity is negotiated after the people's conversion from traditional religion to Evangelical Christianity.

Similarly, the view and relationship Anywaa had towards the spiritual beings shaped their cultural identity, according to Dereje's argument. The image *Jwok* has in the Anywaa's world is a belligerent supernatural power that the Anywaa should resist it. Similarly, they associate the Nuer with *Jwok* because they view both as beings encroaching on Anywaa's territory (2011, p. 213). Now over 70% of the Anywaa and the Nuer have left their previous traditional religions and gods and become Evangelical believers with different worldviews, unlike their previous religion. The continuity and discontinuity of traditional beliefs and religion are discussed in chapter five.

Some scholars have given an in-depth account of how conversion looks like among different people, including the Anywaa's and the Nuer's conversion to Evangelical Christianity (Falge, 2009, p. 205-18; Kaplan, 2005, p. 111; Donham, 1999, p. 88-9; Cerenini, 2018). Dereje Feyissa (2011) also briefly accounts for their conversion to Protestant/Evangelical Christianity from traditional beliefs. However, their conversion history from traditional religion to Christianity, how much their conversion contributes to their ethnic identity negotiation, how and to what extent this conversion influences their ethnic identity, or how the new belief affects their divergent ethnic identity are understudied. This calls for empirical research on how these two people's ethnic identity is

in dialogue with their religion and the extent of their ethnic identity negotiation because of the dialogue in the self. This study aims to contribute to this identified gap by exploring how the Anywaa and the Nuer in Gambella town are negotiating their ethnic identity through dialogical self. This will help to gain knowledge, tools and skills that will help multiethnic groups manage their differences without hostility and inform policies on promoting the growth of peace.

1.4. Rationale

1.4.1. Research Question

The research will have the following main research question with subsequent sub-questions. The main research question is ‘To what extent Anywaa and Nuer Evangelical believers negotiate their ethnic identity with their new religious identity values through dialogical self and what role it plays in their conflictual relation?’

1.4.2. Research Sub-questions.

- 1) What prominent identity markers do the two ethnic groups uphold, and to what extent have these markers influenced the formation of their ethnic boundaries? Furthermore, how do these markers impact their intergroup relations?
- 2) How has the ethnic identity of individuals changed or remained consistent following their conversion from traditional religious beliefs to Evangelical Christianity? Additionally, in what ways does the concept of the dialogical self contribute to the negotiation of their ethnic identities?

3. When individuals encounter value conflicts between their ethnic and religious affiliations, how do they navigate these discrepancies using the dialogical self? Furthermore, how do these navigation strategies contribute to their interpersonal relations and conflict resolution efforts?

1.4.3. Research Aim

This research aims to investigate how the Nuer and the Anywaa evangelical believers in Gambella town are negotiating their ethnic identity in conversation with their Evangelical Christianity values, what negotiation strategies they employ and how the ethnic identity negotiation in general and strategies in particular, play a role in their relations.

1.4.4. Research Objectives

The following research objectives are set to facilitate the achievement of the research aim:

- 1) Identifying the primary identity markers of the Anywaa and the Nuer. How the markers play a role in boundary formation and how they affect their relations.
- 2) Exploring the role of religious conversion from traditional religion to Evangelical Christianity in negotiating their ethnic identity through the dialogical self, their ethnic boundary, and its contribution to their relations.
- 3) Discovering the different strategies the Anywaa and the Nuer individual Evangelical believers employ when facing value dissonance by employing dialogical self and how the strategies serve them in their relations and conflict resolution.
- 4) Educating the public regarding the role of religion, specifically Evangelical Christianity, in ethnic relations as a factor in ethnic identity negotiation.

1.5. Research Context: Scope and Delimitation

1.5.1. Scope

The research is conducted in Gambella town in Gambella Regional State where the majority of the dwellers are the Anywaa and the Nuer. It targets Evangelical believers from both ethnic groups: all first generation (converted through missionary works), second generation (children of the converts) from all walks of life, and both genders (male and female). The age group starts with age seventeen up to fifty with a few exceptions of much older people. The research addresses their identity markers and their relations with their ethnic boundary formation, what continues and discontinues after they are converted to Evangelical Christianity, how dialogical self is employed in the continuity and discontinuity, and its contribution to their ethnic boundary permeability. It also addresses the different strategies they employ when they face value dissonance and their role in their long-standing conflictual relation.

1.5.2. Delimitation

Though the conflict between the two ethnic group is prominent and draws the attention of many institutions to intervene, other conflicts between other ethnic groups such as the Anywaa and the Highlanders, the Nuer and the Mejeng are also recorded which is beyond the scope of this research. This will limit the wider understanding of the conflict situation in the entire region which should be studied to implement a comprehensive strategy for peace-building. However, the research will contribute a piece to the puzzle in the peace-building effort.

1.6. The Study Area: Gambella Regional State

According to the Central Statistics Agency of Ethiopia (2007), Gambella has been one of the nine regional states of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia since the formalisation of the new constitution in 1995. Between 2019 and 2023, three additional regional states were created; The Sidama region¹⁰, the Southwest Ethiopia region¹¹ and the South Ethiopia Region¹². Ethiopia has 12 regions and two chartered cities: Addis Ababa (the capital city) and Direedawa city administration since 1994.

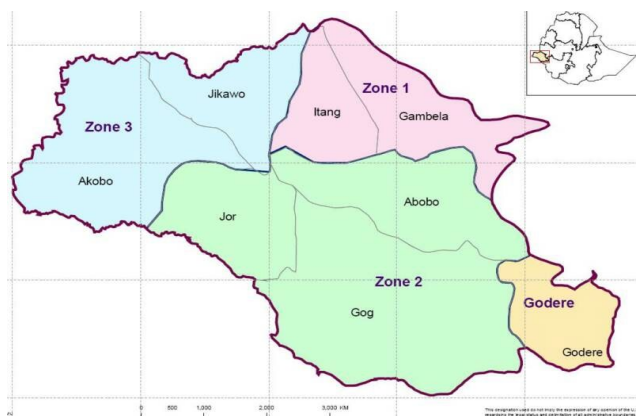


Figure 1-2 Gambella Regional State. Source: <http://www.ocha-eth.org/Maps/downloadables/BENESHANGUL.pdf>

Gambella is located in the Southwestern Ethiopia lowlands sharing a border with South Sudan and Sudan in the southwest, northwest, and north; the National Regional State of

¹⁰ In November 2019 referendum was done in one of the zones of Southern nations' nationalities and people regions, the Sidama zone. Moreover, Sidama became the tenth region in June 2020. Unlike other regions, this region comprised over 45 ethnic groups and was formed by merging five regions in 1992 (Chalachew, 2023, Briefing paper, rift Valley Institute, Peace Research Facility).

¹¹ This region was created in November 2021 after the referendum took place in 2020. This new 11th region comprises five zones and one special district: Keffa, Sheka, Bench, Sheko, Dawro, west Omo zones and Konta special district (2021, ENA).

¹² South Ethiopia Region is the third new state to separate from the SNNPR (Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region) through a referendum since the creation of the region in 1994. It comprises Gamo, Gofa, South Omo, Gedeo and Konso – and special woredas – Derashe, Amaro, Burji, Basketo and Ale (Chalachew, 2023)

Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) in the south, southeast and east; the Oromia National Regional State in the north, northeast and east; and Benishangul Gumuz National Regional State in the north (Markakis, 2011, p. 65-87).

Unlike other lowland areas in the country, Gambella gets higher annual rainfall, which makes a well-distributed surface water system and make the border with regional and international boundaries with its rivers, Akobo and Baro river (Gambella villagization centre 2011).

The region is inhabited predominantly by five indigenous groups from three Nilotic groups and some Omotic groups: Anywaa, Nuer, Mejeng (Nilotic), Opo and Komo (Omotic). There are also people from other ethnic groups collectively called 'Highlanders.'¹³ The population is estimated to be 307,096, with a proportional number of men and women (52% and 48%, respectively). The Anywaa numbered 44,581 (27%), the Nuer 64,473 (40% of the total), the Highlanders 39,194 (27%), the Majang, 9,350 (6%) and the Opo and the Komo combined 4,802 (3%) (CSA, 2007).

The religion distribution shows that there are five major religions in the region. According to the latest census, Protestant/evangelicals are 70.1%, Orthodox, 16.8%, Muslim, 4.9%, traditional religion, 3.8%, and Catholic, 3.4% (CSA, 2007). Accordingly, the region's dominant religion is Protestantism, called Evangelicals (mainly Lutheran and Presbyterian). Over 70% of the Anywaa and the Nuer are Evangelicals (ibid.). I will give more detail about the two major ethnic groups in the next section.

¹³ Gambella is a lowland region that sharply contrasts the neighbouring western highlands. This is why migrants from other parts of Ethiopia are called 'Highlanders.' (Dereje, 2011)

1.6.1. Identity of the researcher

My father was from the Amhara ethnic group and my mother was from the Oromo ethnic group. In most ethnic groups in Ethiopia, children would take the paternal line as their ethnic group, and I am considered part of my father's ethnic group, Amhara. This ethnic identity is historically identified as part of the central government and highlanders as Anywaa and Nuer call them. The feelings and attitudes towards my ethnic group is different for Anywaa and Nuer due to difference in their incorporation to the Ethiopian government which is sometimes a factor in their conflictual relation especially in the previous regime than the current one (Dereje 2011, p 130-143).

1.6.1. Gambella City

Gambella City is the capital of Gambella Regional State and is located at the confluence of the Baro and JabJabe rivers. The location was chosen for its compatibility and for its status as the centre of commercial activity between Ethiopia and Sudan (Bell, 1988). Gambella town is subdivided into three administrative zones and one special Wereda (district); namely Anywaa zone, Nuer Zone, Majang Zone and Itang Wereda. These zones are further divided into Wereda. For example, Anywaa zone is divided into 6 weredas; Abobo, Dimma, Gambella, Gambella Zuria, Gog and Jor. According to Dereje (2003), Gambella city became part of the Anywaa zone is to align territories inside the Gambella region with the presence of local ethnic groups. However, as the number of Nuer people is increasing, it is becoming a point of contention and confrontation between these people over the ownership of the city.

The city inhabited the five indigenous people of the region, Nuer Anywaa, Komo, Majang, and Opo and other non-indigenous people such as Oromo, Tigrian, Amhara, and Keffa (according to the CSA's 2021 projection). The city has a population of 144,648; males consist of 74,660 and females consist of 69,988 (CSA, 2021 projection). These populations are stratified in the city based on level of concentration, as visualized in figure 1-4 below. As is clearly seen among the indigenous people in the region, the Anywaa and the Nuer are higher in number sharing places with the Highlanders (non-indigenous people).

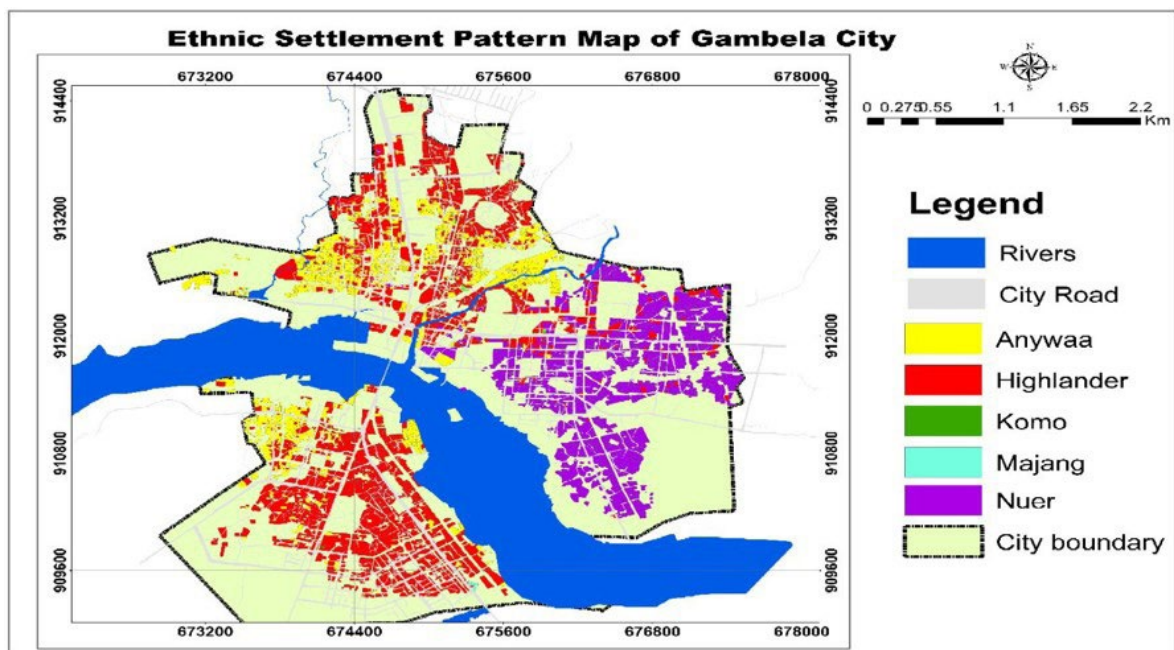


Fig 1-3 Settlement Pattern of Gambella City (Adapted from Mun Wal, Assefa and Belachew's (2023) survey on 2021)

Besides, the map shows that the Anywaa and the Nuer have distinct neighbourhoods in the city sharing their places with Highlanders but not with each other.

1.6.1.1. Anywaa

Dereje (2011, p. 35-40) noted that the Gambella region is historically identified with the Anywaa. Based on the account of Perner C. (1994), the Anywaa's arrival to the eastern side of the Akobo River is recorded as early as the 15th century and the establishment of their kingdom in the 18th century. They are riverine people living along the side of five rivers: Baro, Gilo, Akobo, Alwor and Pibor. They used it mainly for fishing, irrigation and as a place of worship and prayer. They regard water as the basis of existence, the world of immortality and the eternal home of souls (Bayelegn, 2000, p. 32-6).

The Anywaa people used a lineage system based on geography and ecology they hold (Dereje, 2011). They lead a sedentary life and are subsistence agriculturalists. They also have a strong sense of territoriality, identification with areas of the land, and ownership of the land, which contradicts the Nuer's migratory ethos (Adeto, 2014, p. 162). We find the Anywaa in Gambella city residing in three Kebeles¹⁴ of *Jikwa* and six kebeles in Akobo (Board, Gambella, 2012).

Unlike the Nuer, who have prophets, the Anywaa do not have prophets, but there are spiritual figures that occupy a specific physical boundary, called landlords. Their permission should be sought when someone wants to do different activities on their land. Asking for permission is expected not only from the Anywaa but also from other ethnic groups whenever they want to do some activities like fishing, building a house, and hunting. They are spiritual figures because they talk to the spirits of the land and ask

¹⁴ Regional states in Ethiopia are divided into zones, and the zones are divided into districts (*Weredas*), then *Weredas* or districts are divided into sub-districts (*kebeles*); so kebeles are the lowest unit of administration in regional states.

permission from the spirit in the river or forest, do some rituals, receive sacrifices from the people and pray on behalf of the people. They also perform administrative roles such as disciplining the people if they do not work properly, resolving conflict if there is any, and punish those misbehaving (Lienhardt, 1962, p. 75).

There is an account made by both Pritchard and Lienhardt (Evans-Pritchard, 1940a, p. 76-9; Lienhardt, 1955, p. 36-7) about the myth being told among the Anywaa about the village leader called *Kwaaro* or Lord. He became the leader, and the choice for leadership is associated with ethnic ritual emblems. When *Kwaaro* came to the village, he brought different things for a ritual function. These are five bead necklaces called *demui* necklaces, four spears, two stools, a spear rest, a drum, and a few other objects. These objects are now lost, but the eligibility of the headman-ship is determined by possessing one of the essential objects among the ritual emblems, the *ucuok* (*demui* necklace) emblem (Wall, 1976, p. 153).

According to Lienhardt (1962), the Anywaa recognise a transcendent Divinity associated with the sky', and other various powers or spirits. Generally, *Jwok* is a force of creation with dual nature, as a good god (*Jwok nyinalabuo*) and the bad god (*Jwok nyidungu*) or force of destruction. Unlike the Nuer and the Dinka, they have many ceremonies at the courts of headmen and nobles but few religious rituals and sacrifices. For the Anywaa, various powers or spirits are connected with particular rocks, trees, stretches of river and others (Lienhardt, 1962, p. 77-8, Perner 1994, p. 57-68, Dereje, 2011, p. 44).

1.6.1.2. Nuer

They are the largest ethnic group in Gambella, Ethiopia and the second largest ethnic group in South Sudan. Tessema and Triulzi (2010, p. 180) recorded that the first contact between Ethiopia and the Nuer was in 1898. In 2014, due to a civil war in South Sudan, there was a considerable influx (more than 200,000 people, mainly the Nuer) of the Nuer to Ethiopian territory, and now they out-number the Anywaa in some of the places in the region, such as *Lare*, *Jikaw*, *Wantua*, and *Akobo*. They also share the *Itang* district with the Anywaa and the Opo.

There are a couple of reasons why the Nuer are not living in one place throughout the year: instead, they change places according to the season. One, their place is flood-prone, so the flood drives them out, and they will go to higher places for protection. Besides, they need grain and fish to supplement their meat and milk diet, especially from July to October. So, they move to the relatively elevated and suitable ground for millet production. (Tewodros, 2007, BOARD, Gambella, 2012, p. 17). This has created conflict as the Anywaa resist giving up their land for the Nuer to practise farming.

They use different methods to overcome this resistance, such as marrying Anywaa women and adopting Anywaa children. Once they get married to Anywaa women, all the children are considered to be Nuer and all the rituals, including age initiation (painful operation on the forehead: *gar*), will be performed. The Anywaa people do not like how they penetrate their ranks through this method and think it is a shrewd strategy. On the other hand, the Nuer take pride in this because they consider themselves more inclusive than the Anywaa.

Dereje also noted that the Nuer consider their assimilation process as a basis of equality and inclusion. (Dereje, 2011, p. 32-8).

According to Evans Pritchard (1953), the Nuer's life depends highly on cattle: "They depend on the herds for their very existence ... Cattle are the thread that runs through Nuer institutions, language, rites of passage, politics, economy, and allegiances (p.182)". To show how much cattle mean to the Nuer, he stated, "The importance of cattle in Nuer life and thought is further exemplified in personal names (ibid)" They form their children's names from the biological features of the cattle. Unlike the Anywaa, who used *demui* (a cultural necklace made of blue beads) as a dowry, the Nuer used several cattle as a bride's wealth to marry a woman. The cattle are not only used for bride wealth but for ransom and other cultural obligations. They have a very tight kin relationship, supporting each other if someone cannot afford to pay cattle for different obligations (Dereje, 2011).

The Nuer's religion is polythetic¹⁵, just like the Anywaa's. There are several accounts about the role of their tribal gods in their identity, political and societal organisation. In his account of the Nuer, Prichard (1940) has shown that the prophets, 'men who are possessed by one of the sky-spirits, or gods, whom the Nuer regard as sons of Sky-god', are those who have a more significant influence on people more than anyone else in the society He also mentioned that the people of Nuer have great respect and fear. They readily follow their orders, and, in society, no one significantly influences the people other than them. They influence the political and societal relationships of the people. (Ibid, p.185).

¹⁵ It is a belief in many gods unlike monotheism, which is the belief in one God as it is in Christianity, Judaism and Islam. See the definition of polytheism in Encyclopedia Britannica, July 2023

Though the role of the prophets has been seen as more inclusive in playing a role as both spiritual figures and political authority, Prichard has shown that they have been involved in tribal-specific or identity-specific activities, such as determining the relationship with other ethnic groups. As Prichard notes:

The only activities of prophets which can genuinely be called tribal were their initiation of raids against the Dinka and their rallying of opposition to Arab and European aggression, and it is in these actions that we see their structural significance and account for their emergence and the growth of their influence (1940, p. 180).

This has been refuted by the later scholar, Douglas Johnson (1994), who asserted that such an attitude towards Nuer prophets and their role is misleading. He argued:

The Nuer prophets did not arise as crisis figures responding to external pressures such as Arab slaving and European colonialism. The origins of known Nuer prophecy lay instead in the gradual expansion of the Nuer beyond the borders of their original heartland (p. 165).

I have noticed this from my interviewees; two of the Nuer respondents told me that the prophet that is known most for his miracles and prophecy, *Ngundeng*, had prophesied about the Nuer people's leadership in the Ethiopian land, which they believe is fulfilled when Nuer man became the Gambella Regional State president before the recent government transition. The other major prophecy they heard was about their expansion into many places. They have also told me that some people have received his spirit and he has several followers in Gambella. They both confirmed that no prophecy did not come true among the things he prophesied (Individual interview, 2018).

Other scholars, such as Hutchinson and Pendle (2015, p. 415-16), have noted the role of Nuer prophets as 'interpreting figures of the moral limits of lethal violence' and how they weigh the legitimacy and claims of governments. Their analysis mentioned two prominent prophets with opposite moral visions of security and peacebuilding strategy: *Gatdeang* and

Nyachol. The first prophet's strategy revolves around the traditional cultural norms practised by the people. The latter focuses narrowly on strengthening the immediate circle and building the morale of that community. In all analyses of the Nuer prophets by Prichard, Johnson, Hutchinson and Pandle, the core idea is that the Nuer prophets have a defining role in the people's identity. They are not only spiritual figures but determine the social and political life of the people.

1.7. Anywaa and Nuer Evangelicalicals

According to *Geo-current*, written by Martin W. Lewis (2013 based on 2007 CSA), Gambella is the most Protestant region of Ethiopia, as indicated below on the map. Over 70% of the population of the people follow Protestant (Evangelical) Christianity (FDRE/PCC summary and statistical report,17, Haustein 2014).

The majority of the Nuer and the Anywaa are members of two denominations: Mekane Yesus Church (A Church affiliated with the Lutherans) and the Presbyterian Church. There are two Mekane Yesus Churches and two Presbyterian Churches in Gambella town (one for the Anywaa and one for the Nuer). These two denominations have their own written regulations on different issues. Though they put many things in the documents, the churches' position on different cultural practices is not clearly stated except they put out statements aligned with the country's constitution with one point that the culture can evolve through time. Under moral issues:

We recognize that nations have their own in-group identity, culture, language and values and these markers are God-given freedom. We will work towards acknowledgement and respect of these things not to be harmed, reduced, despised or refuted by anyone or any group or any system. We recognize that nations have the right to live out their identity with equality, respect, peace, and agreement with others. We also recognize that cultures are in a continuous movement

towards development, or improvement, or change (Ethiopian Mekane Yesus Church regulations, 2013, Article 2 p. 10).

The statement recognizes that culture as a whole or its elements can be changed partly, and the Church recognizes the diversity of the nation with their unique cultures. Besides this, it is also written that some of the moral issues are listed that may result in discipline and/or ex-communication such as adultery and polygamy (Article 3:19).

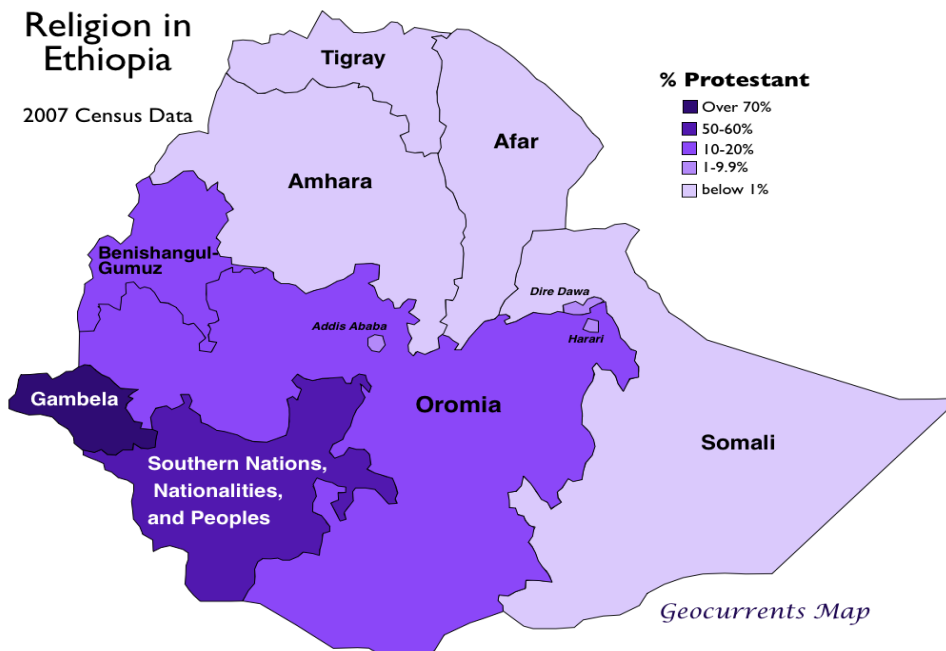


Figure 1-4 Protestant (Evangelical) Religion is distributed in the Country's different Regions. Source: Geocurrent map according to 2007 census data.

1.7.1. Anywaa Evangelicalicals

Anywaa's evangelisation is tied to the coming and settlement of Reverend Donald McClure (1906-1977) from the United States Presbyterian Church in America with his wife, Lyda. He settled with his wife in March 1938, five miles above Akobo post; soon after, he received his Anywaa name, *Odan* (Cenerini, 2018, p. 39). The Reverend designed a mission plan with some of the following thematic elements according to Cenerini. First,

Western culture vs indigenous culture: he tried to avoid any cultural imperialism such as imposing worship styles, correcting indigenous beliefs, imposing Western language, avoiding the introduction of 'customary Western rules' for church membership and not imposing a particular type of worship. The Anywaa are still using their drums and dances during worship in the Church as they used to sing and dance for their kings, *Niyiya (ibid)*.

Second: Giving holistic mission, he planned to have three missionary stations that are ninety miles apart and put five missionaries at each station who are equipped in evangelism, medicine, agriculture, education, anthropology and are fluent in the Anywaa language (Ibid, 43). Third, facilitating resources for further evangelisation: he organised a group that can work on translating the Bible into the Anywaa language, and the New Testament was printed in 1962. He also focused on educating the children by opening schools, equipping the churches by providing translated Bible teachings, and being careful not to disempower them.

Fourth, dealing with value clashes: Polygamy was one of the clashes between the cultures and the new teaching because the Anywaa are polygamous. The Reverend helped to figure out the Anywaa leaders to deal with it, and now the church leaders are not allowed to have more than one wife (Ibid,137). This is written in the Mekane Yesus Church constitution, which is given to all Mekane Yesus Churches in the country (IIN-2020).

The growth of Christianity into the lives of the Anywaa people is well recorded in the book by McClure's son-in-law, Charles Partee. Partee uses McClure's narration of the growth and taking root of Christianity among the Anywaa:

On Sunday, we had a baptism service. Seeing the second generation of *Anuaks* coming to be baptised is lovely. I was asked to baptise the baby of a girl I baptised years ago. When we begin to get the second generation, we know the Word of God is taking root (Partee, 2000).

McClure sees Christianity in the light of the Christian tradition, such as baptism among the converts. This view is different from how much and far their cultural values, which do not go along with biblical principles, are changed or negotiated. It is only an incomplete analysis of the conversion. Other factors, such as heart and value changes, should be considered. In another story, a second-generation Anywaa came to Christ, considered a sign of conversion. McClure shared the story of a young man who wanted to believe in Jesus and become baptised after hearing about Jesus from his dying friend:

Even if we had to leave Africa today, the gospel would not be lost, and the *Anuak* church will go on...When I went to Obudo's village to hold a thanksgiving service for him and to visit his family, a young boy came to me and said, "I want to become a Christian. Will you baptise me?" I had never seen him before, so I asked his name and whence he came. He said he was a friend of Obudo's and had visited him while he was sick. Obudo told him about the Lord Jesus Christ and encouraged him to talk to me about becoming Christian. The thrilling thing is that now our first-generation Christians are retelling the story of redemption and salvation, and soon there will not be an *Anuak* in the country who has not heard the gospel (Partee, 2000).

The above story explains how the Gambella Region became highly populated by Evangelical believers. However, such testimonies still might not necessarily show true conviction because, culturally, the last wish of a dying friend might be respected without any critical view on what he wishes. In one way or another, the continuous conversion of Christianity of the Anywaa has increased the number of converts in the area. The 2007 CSA data confirmed that over 70% of the Anywaa are evangelical believers.

1.7.2. Nuer Evangelicals

The Nuer encounter with Christianity is recorded in the early 20th century when the American Presbyterian Church started its mission in the Eastern Nuer. The mission to

Western Nuer was at that time by Catholics. The mass conversion to Christianity among the eastern Nuer communities began in the 1970s. At the same time, the spread of born-again Christianity and the proliferation of churches, including the Messianic groups, gained momentum in the late 1990s. More than 40 Protestant churches operate in Newland alone, where most of the Nuer reside in Gambella town. Active church members, whether they held a voluntary administrative position or participated in any of the studies or worshipping groups, their Church run programmes for children, youths, students, or women. Because of this, they could easily spend several hours in Church every day. Church conferences were where people from the neighbourhood and the entire region gathered, and it was in church services that communal matters were discussed and announcements made.

Churches played a central role in shaping Newland's infrastructure and given the Ethiopian state's limited investment in the region, they were also essential service providers. The most prominent buildings in the neighbourhood were churches, and the most extensive compounds belonged to them, thus often influencing how and where people settled. Some churches ran primary schools. Many were equipped with useful water pumps. Others offered occasional medical services. This thesis will also investigate the historical process through which churches assumed such a central role in local life, thereby offering a new perspective on the nature of Christian conversion in this region.

1.7.3. Ethnic Relations among the Anywaa and the Nuer

As scholars portrayed the two ethnic groups, the Anywaa and the Nuer, the relations that form the bases of ethnic identity between the two ethnic groups are conflictual. Historically the Nuer's expansion in 19th century towards the Anywaa land, which the Anywaa consider

cultural and territorial encroachment, is marked by their conflictual relations. The Anywaa's identification with the land and cultural meaning given to the land made the conflict a violation of cultural identity. Other causes of their conflictual relations are also listed by scholars such as resources and power competition (Fuki and Markakis, 1994, Scheel, 2004, Adeto, 2014). However, Dereje (2011, p. 20) argues there is no monocausal factor to explain their conflictual relations but a sum of many factors. In all the arguments and explanations, their conflictual relations are confirmed until today.

1.8. Significance of the Study

Religion has been considered part of ethnicity, whether primordial or constructivist, in ethnicity theories. The interaction of ethnicity or ethnic identity and religion is given little emphasis. Such treatment of religion will hinder seeing the power of religion in identity negotiation and, consequently, in a positive coexistence. This study will fill the gap in identity literature so that the interaction between ethnic identity and religion can be seen clearly. Besides, most conflict transformation strategies follow a top-down macro-level intervention instead of a bottom-up, micro-level growth of peace. Even those bottom-up approaches neglect the individually based dialogue and negotiation and focused on group level dialogue. Studying individual Anywaa and Nuer evangelicals' dialogue in the self spurred by value dissonance in their ethnic and religious identities will build on the existing literature of conflict transformation studies. This study which combines ethnic studies with conversion studies shows how ethnic identity negotiation can enhance the intergroup relationships between the two conflicting ethnic groups and the peacemaking process in the community. The theoretical contributions to the different disciplines is explained in the concluding chapter.

At a practical level, the Anywaa and the Nuer who negotiate their ethnic identity in light of their religious identity can be agents for change who promote boundary permeability that allows each other a space; one in the other. Such research findings and tools can help the different ethnic groups in the country to contextualize and adapt the findings and tools in their struggle to coexist.

1.9. Structure of the Thesis

In the following chapter, I discuss the historical development and contemporary theories of identity, the issues related to identity and otherness and the intersectionality of ethnic identity with religion. This will be followed by discussing the different identity negotiations in relation to and in contrast with Dialogical Self Theory. Since I am looking at the current state of their religious identity, the major argument around conversion in relation to culture will be discussed with a brief conclusion.

Chapter three discusses the research approach and the methods selected with their rationale. I also discuss the potential biases of the researcher and the ethical guidelines established to overcome them. Data management, analysis and interpretations are also discussed in detail.

Chapters four and five are finding chapters in the light of the research aims through Dialogical Self Theory. Chapter four discusses the dialogical self in understanding, expressing and negotiating identity markers. Chapter five is on the cultural and religious elements continued or discontinued after conversion and their effects on boundary work, permeability or impermeability and the different strategies the Anywaa and the Nuer employ to deal with value dissonance in their ethnic and religious identity elements through the dialogical self.

Chapter six discusses key elements to show how DST in its relations with identity studies and conversion studies can generate new knowledge and practical applications.

Chapter Seven is the concluding chapter where all the research findings and new knowledge are presented. Major findings, key contributions to the body of knowledge, research limitations and suggestions for further research are then discussed. This will be followed by the Appendices and the Bibliography.

1.8. Conclusion

In this chapter, I discuss the research problem from the general perspective of political ideology of the country, ethnic federalism, and how ethnic conflicts erupted in different parts of the country. Then in one conflict-ridden area, I accounted for the different studies conducted in the research area: Gambella town. As it is described, anthropological and historical scholarly studies have given substantive coverage to explain why the area is conflict-ridden and the possible way out. However, little has been done on how the two ethnic groups, the Anywaa and the Nuer, and their conversion to Evangelical Christianity contributed to their ethnic relations. Regarding this research lacuna, the main research question, subsequent questions and research objectives are pointed out.

Besides I set out the research context, starting with scope and delimitation of the research. Following this, I accounted for the study area, the two ethnic groups, their previous religious identity, and their conversion history to evangelicalism. Finally, I focused on their ethnic relations.

Chapter Two Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine and synthesize the existing literature in relation to ethnic identity negotiation in dialogue with religious identity through the dialogical self. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of the study, the chapter looks and connects ethnicity theories, dialogical theory, conversion theories and peace building models.

The research focuses on the ethnic identity negotiation of the two coreligionist ethnic groups (the Anywaa and the Nuer), Evangelicals in Ethiopia with divergent ethnic identification in the context of conflictual relations. Dialogical Self Theory is taken as a lens to see to what extent ethnic identity is negotiated. The dialogical self comprises what initiates dialogue in the self, its process (positioning, de-positioning, and re-positioning of the self), and the outcome of dialogue in the self (the third position as negotiated identity).

This is multidisciplinary research in the sociology of religion as an umbrella discipline comprising identity studies, religious studies, conflict studies and conversion studies as sub-disciplines. Its contribution addresses the sub-disciplines at practical or theoretical or both levels.

The literature review chapter has six sections including the introductory and conclusion parts. After the introduction that outlines the purpose, topic and briefing outline, the first section discusses the history of religion in Ethiopia in general and Evangelical Christianity in particular, what Evangelicalism means in Ethiopia, how Evangelicals respond to value dissonance in their religious identity and other identity sources such as politics under

different regimes. The second section shows the historical development of ethnic studies, analyses the challenges of ethnic identity and otherness and the intersectionality of ethnic identity and religion and its role in the challenges of otherness. The second section examines the different identity negotiation theories comprising, theories, conceptual basis and research knowledge on identity negotiation, especially ethnic identity negotiation in the dialogical self context. The third section investigates the interaction of ethnic identity and religion in conversion discourse and the result following the dialogue between the new religious identity and their previous cultural and religious ideals. This is because the two ethnic groups are converts from traditional religion to Evangelical Christianity that creates value level dialogue of the self with the culture.

The final section of the literature review is the conclusion that emphasizes literature especially relevant to the research aim.

2.2. A Brief History of Religion and Evangelical Christianity in Ethiopia

Religion has a history in Ethiopia since the coming of Christianity in the 4th century CE during the reign of Emperor Ezana (Esler, 2019, p. 27). The Ethiopian Orthodox Tāwahédo Church (henceforth EOTC) was recognised as an established state religion¹⁶ around the year 330. The Church had a strong tie with the state until the 1994 constitution delineated the affairs of religion and state to be separated and prohibited the intrusion of one on the other's affairs. Before the socialist Dergue regime overthrew the monarchy in 1974,

¹⁶ The role of the EOTC in the state is up to the sharing of one third of the power in the country. Before the revolution of 1974, there were three main entities in sharing power in Ethiopia; state, local authorities that connect government with the local people, *balabat*, and the Church. EOTC shared one third of the power in the country and some say, EOTC is *siso mengist* one third of the government. As Baye (2016) noted 'land was divided horizontally among the three-entities. The administrative relationships between the three entities were dependent on the dominance of one of the three entities.'

Orthodox Christianity played a role in securing the emperor's political power. In turn, it has served as a state religion partaking in political power. During this time, the political ideology was married to that time's theology ('state-religion marriage') under the narrative recorded in a compelling book called *Kabrä Nägäst* (Glory of Kings).¹⁷

The book portrayed the leaders as heirs of King Solomon and Ethiopia as a 'New Israel'. This book has been embraced both by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and political leaders. According to Girma Mohammed (2011, p. 175), *Kabrä Nägäst* has played a persuading role in national unity. Since the leaders' position, according to the book, is seen as divinely given, the regional political leaders were persuaded to stop the domestic struggle for position and focus on national unity. So, there was no room for ethnic identity to be practised and political opposition because religion and theology were used to control the consciousness of society and were highly influenced by the legitimacy of the ruling group and the call for nationalism. Religious idioms and narratives have protected the rulers' thrones (Abbink, 2011).

During this time, other religious groups, such as Islam, Evangelical Christianity, and Catholicism, had a small place in the political and religious spheres. The EOTC only dominated it. The introduction and expansion of these religious groups are highly opposed and enclaved by the action of EOTC to keep the state religion from being infiltrated by 'foreign' beliefs. Evangelical Christianity or Protestantism was among those religions

¹⁷ *Kabrä Nägäst* (the Glory of Kings) is a fourteenth century epic written in Ge'ez. According to this document, the son of King Solomon of Israel and the Queen of Sheba, Menelik I, carried the ark of the covenant to Ethiopia and founded a new dynastic line. Menelik I was hence, the true heir of Christianity, and Ethiopians were God's new chosen people. Since then, Ethiopian Emperor claimed Solomonic descent up to the 20th century (Hendrickx, 2019).

whose entrance through mission work is highly opposed by EOTC (Binns, 2016, Kebede 1999, p. 284, Ademe and Ali, 2023, p.1-10).

Evangelicalism is about a-century-old Christian movement in the country. It was initiated by Western Evangelical missions and developed by the native converts (Hailegiorgis, S E, 2010, Haustein, 2011, p. 69-79). The movement has faced resistance from established institutions such as EOTC and other government bodies for various social, political, and theological reasons. Nevertheless, Evangelicalism has shown resilience and is now the fastest-growing religious group in Ethiopia (Fantini, 2015, p. 123).

In the time of Emperor Hailesillase, I (1930-1974), missionaries came openly to Ethiopia and were allowed to do mission work. The king was eager to expand modern education and health, and hoped the missionaries would help. Since the 1970s, until the *Dergue* regime, many missionaries have come to Ethiopia and engaged in the education and health sector and given support to establish schools, teach language, and produce educational materials such as textbooks. These missionaries have significantly expanded modern education and the birth of Evangelical Churches in Ethiopia (Aren, 1978, p. 486; Crummey, 1972, p. 212). Evangelicalism has been expanding in Ethiopia since the 1960s. This time is recorded as the first evangelical church establishment and its fast growth (Haustein, 2011).

The word Evangelicalism in the Ethiopian context serves as an umbrella organisation under which different Protestant churches (denominations) develop representation and identity¹⁸.

It transcends the notion of classical Pentecostalism and mainline Protestantism. So, the

¹⁸ Recently, 2021, the newly organized council came in as an umbrella for Evangelicals, 'Ethiopian Council of Gospel Believers' Churches (ECGBC). The council has got legal body under the Federal law Proclamation number 1208/2020. (Federal Negarit Gazette of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, No 59, July 4, 2020)

word encompasses both unity and difference, and the denominations are integrally connected but not in an actual sense unified. (See Tibebe Eshete cited by Haustein and Fantini, 2013, p. 150-161). According to the 2007 census, Protestant believers or Evangelicals comprised over 13 million members (CSA, 2007). Among all religious denominations in the country, Ethiopian Protestant believers have the highest growth rate, making it one of the fastest-growing denominations in the world. In the early 1960's it was estimated that their representation was less than 1 per cent of the population. The number rose to 5.5 per cent in the 1984 census, 10.2 per cent in 1994, and 18.6 per cent in 2007. Subsequent data from the Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS) suggests that their numbers grew further to over 27 per cent in 2019 (EDHS, 2019).

The Ethiopian Evangelical Church has passed through different political landscapes. After the coming of Christianity in the 4th century, EOTC¹⁹ was a state religion until the socialist regime overtook the Feudal system, when the regime disestablished the Church as the state religion. The socialist *Dergue* regime became very hostile to religion, particularly Evangelical Christianity. Religious freedom came after the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front overthrew the military Junta in 1991 (Haustein, 2014, p. 118). These changes required Evangelical Christianity to reorient itself according to the country's politics to deal with value dissonance.

¹⁹ The name Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church came into being after the Church rejected the decision made by the Council of Chalcedon regarding the nature of Jesus Christ in 451 CE. The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo church, which used to be called the Coptic Orthodox Church, under the administration of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria, Egypt, The Ethiopian Church believed that Christ's human and divine natures were equally present through the mystery of the incarnation within a single nature, called miaphysitism. The name Tewahdo is to show the nature of Christ manifested in his nature (Encyclopedia Britannica, May 2023).

2.3. Evangelicals' Response to Value Dissonance in Different Regimes

2.3.1. Evangelicals in the Dergue Regime

After the Military Junta took over the leadership role by overthrowing the Emperor Haileseilasie's administration in 1974, Dergue, following the Soviet model, separated the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the state by declaring no interference between these two entities. During this time, there was relative freedom for some religious sects such as Catholicism, Islam, and Evangelical Christianity, but there was high 'enclavement'²⁰ on Evangelical Christianity later. The administration followed scientific socialism as a political ideology and nationalism. Nationalism was advocated in the Dergue regime as in the imperial regime.

Evangelical Christians had very little or no political interest, as some claim (Tibebe E, 2011). However, this view depoliticises the Christian community, and it is difficult to confirm that there was no political interest among them. For example, some noted that religious leaders like Gudina Tumsa (Evangelical believer of Mekane Yesus Church) had political involvement (See Decke 2008, p. 20- 21) during the Dergue regime. However, Eshete gives a couple of reasons for his stance; first, most came from the minority group in the peripheral regions, mainly the southwestern and southern parts of Ethiopia, with no history of political involvement; second, The Missionaries' teaching focuses on 'personal salvation and virtual exclusion of social activism' contributed to the Evangelical believers' minimal participation. Besides, political involvement was a contentious point among

²⁰ Enclavement is a concept introduced by Bryant S Turner (quoted in Serawit 2018) to analyse how states manage religions. He proposed two approaches to managing religions: upgrading and enclavement. Upgrading involves modernisation and partial secularisation, while enclavement is the state's act of isolating a particular group of believers.

evangelicals partly because of value dissonance in political ideologies and religion. For instance, as the Dergue advanced its ideology, the Evangelical leaders noticed that the ideology's values opposed their faith and showed hesitation to support and stand with it. Even though they have tried to participate in government projects as citizens without supporting politics, they could not escape the government's enclavement. Because they were accused of a lack of patriotism and alliance with foreigners because of their mission origin, which made them suspect. Since they are a minority, they have designed a 'collective survival strategy' (Tibebe E, 2011, p. 13-21).

In response to the government's action, they first had a prayer and dialogue forum among believers from different denominations, teaching the people through radio and newspapers about societal affairs such as justice, peace, reconciliation, and repentance. On top of this, they have founded an ecumenical council called the Council for Cooperation of Churches of Ethiopia (CCCE), which embraces evangelical denominations and other Christian denominations such as Orthodox and Catholic Churches (ibid). However, one of the council's leaders, Reverend Gudina Tumsa, was taken away by the government and assassinated in 1979 (Ezekiel Gabissa, 2014, Grenstedt, 2000, p.248).

At this point, the evangelical Church went underground in their activities. The target of persecution was the youth group, for they had shown a growing interest in religion and less interest in political ideology. The political leaders have taken this as a significant obstacle toward the vision of creating a 'new socialist man'. In order to resist the socio-political

situation of the country, the Evangelical Christians have created 'a counter-culture community (ibid, Haustein, 2014, p.115-16)²¹.

The main lesson from this era is creating dialogical forums for the people to see the political idioms and what they constitute versus what the Bible teaches about that issue. They have been doing community-level dialogues, spurred by the dissonance between political ideology and religious ideals, making people reflect and negotiate the value dissonance, by replacing political values with Biblical teachings. For example, Gospel singers sang how creation came into being especially human beings opposing to the evolution theory that the Dergue advocated.²²

2.3.2. Evangelicalism after 1991

After 17 years of civil war, the ethnic-based coalition called Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (henceforth EPRDF)²³ came to power in 1991. It announced ethnic federalism as the guiding ideology of politics and secularism as it separated the state from religion. It also gave constitutional provisions for religious freedom. Due to explicit work on ethnicity and setting the people along language-based lines, the primary identity marker, the point of competition and the struggle for representation became ethnicity. The pan-Ethiopian ideology both the imperial and military regimes hailed became a bone of contention due to the newly emerging ethnically based

²¹ an antidote for the teachings and slogans of the government through teachings at every level with all means and songs that are both the response to the ideology and a means to educate and encourage the believers (Tibebe E., 2011).

²² ዝንጅሮ አይደለሁም የእግዚአብሔር አምሳል ነኝ ከእንስሳ በላይ ስልጣን የተሰጠኝ (translated as I am the image of God not a monkey with greater authority than animals): Song Singer Dr Dereje Kebede sang in 1980s.

²³ This Ethnic-based coalition has been mutated into Ethiopian Prosperity Party (EPP) since October 2020.

identity groups. The constitution has painted boldly the people's rights regarding their ethnicity by stipulating:

Each nation, nationality, and people are guaranteed the right: a) to preserve its identity and have it respected, promote its culture and history, and use and develop its language; b) to administer its affairs within its own defined territory and effectively participate in the central government based on freedom, and fair and proper representation; c) to exercise its right to self-determination of independence when the concerned nation/nationality and people are convinced that the above rights are denied, abridged, or abrogated. (Part One, Article Two)

This provision in the constitution has been considered the most daring move because of the nature of ethnicity in the country, and its success is seen doubtfully by many African countries. Most African states except Ethiopia, South Africa, and Nigeria pursued the nation-state model by prioritising creating a national identity instead of an ethnic identity. This is because ethnicity is problematic in the African context of diversity and a challenge in state formation efforts. Though the three African countries followed ethnic federalism, its form and application differ. Nigerian federalism avoids territory-based ethnic identity, and South Africa denies self-governance based on ethnic identity; However, Ethiopian federalism bases ethnicity on territory and self-governance legitimation. It also defines the political system. (Alemante, 2003, p.78; Abbnik, 2011, p.597-98)

Likewise, the constitutional merit given to religion is equality and autonomy (Theodros T, 2017, p.6). Article 11 states:

- 1) State and religion are separate.
- 2) There shall be no state religion.
- 3) The state shall not interfere in religious matters, and religion shall not interfere in state matters.

It gives equality because there shall be no state religion, and everyone can follow any religion. Since the government does not interfere in matters of religion, religion will have its autonomy and not be influenced by the state. However, the issue of autonomy has been questioned by some scholars who argue that religion is still being used in current Ethiopian politics. As can be seen in the works of Serawit B. Debele on the Oromo religion and Haustein and Dereje on Evangelical Christianity (Serawit 2018, p. 32-36; Abbink, 2014, p. 346-63; Haustein and Óstebó, 2011, p. 768; Dereje, 2011, p. 1-2), religion is highly involved in the Ethiopian politics. This connection between religion and politics shows that religion is being used to embolden the ethnically drawn lines in the country, not necessarily to bring religion and ethnicity into dialogue at a value level for cohabitation and friendship. The new constitution, as some argued, 'awakens ethnic consciousness' (Crawford Young, 1986, p. 449 in Vaughan, 2003; Petros, 2022, p. 42-3), which was covered or ignored for a long time in Evangelical Churches.

The controversial involvement of Evangelical Churches, specifically the Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Mekane Yesus (EECMY), in emboldening ethnic identity is one issue that can be mentioned as a challenge for evangelicals' unity in the face of some political ideology. This was seen after the 1994 constitution was released, encouraging the different ethnic groups to use and develop their vernacular language. There was remorse and historical persecution from the previous kings in Ethiopia for following the 'one religion, one language' policy, as Sibilu and Barnes (2015, p. 418-35) argued. It was seen as dominance by one ethnic and one language group (Mekuria, 1997). Especially the conflict that began in 1995 over the use of the Oromo language for church service has caused so

much mistrust and disruption in the Church. This situation is depicted in Aren Gustave's study on *Evangelical pioneers in Ethiopia* (1978):

It was evident that government officials, in alliance with the clergy, formed a powerful pressure group that tried to enforce Orthodoxy to secure Amhara culture and combat Oromo consciousness, which seemed to have found an outlet in the evangelical movement (p. 427-28).

The Protestant Churches in Ethiopia comprise people of different ethnic groups that, in the past, felt hostility toward each other. As a result, the Churches in Ethiopia struggle to triumph over the historical and cultural prejudices they have inherited. They strive to use the gospel to build Christian unity amidst cultural diversity (Grenstedt, 2000, p. 248-50). In his discussion about African nations, Hans Haselbarth (1976, p.185) remarked, "Historical development has brought together tribes who, forced together and growing together into a wider fellowship, are finally identified as a nation". The same has happened among Ethiopian Evangelicals, though their togetherness is doubted to be forced as Haselbarth remarked.

Some argue that vernacular languages can be exercised where the working language cannot be understood in the congregation where I used to go. On the other hand, some argue to worship with vernacular language even though they understand the working language, for it is part of their identity. It is like creating a small community within a larger community based on language and ethnic identity. Some feared the unity of the members would be disrupted and similar identity questions could be raised from other ethnic groups too, which would be divisive and try to resist it, especially in Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia (Wondimu, 2015, p. 82-3).

Addis Ababa is a mini-Ethiopia where people from every ethnic group reside and it is my birthplace. This time, the Church accepted a different ideology from what the Bible teaches, building the identity on Christ, as some recalled, not on culture.

I saw how my childhood church was fractured; the members scattered and divided because of this initiative, using Oromo's vernacular language for worship. Most of us, as children and some adults, could not understand the need for having another worship session with a different language because we all speak and listen to the Amharic language. Besides, most of us did not realise that language is an identity marker but a means of communication. Because most are born and raised in the capital city though our parents have different ethnic groups. No one knows who is from which ethnic group except by guessing through hearing their names (specific ethnic groups have specific names using their vernacular language). The people of my age and some adults preferred to leave the Church instead of entertaining such 'divisive' calls, as they argued.

As we reflected, there is no harm in using vernacular languages for worship, but the agenda behind them was unpleasant and against the core belief of unity in Christ. This movement has been raised again in the EOTC and has prompted multiple feelings from the adherents. On the one hand, people say EOTC is not the religion of one ethnic group but all, so there has to be a book of liturgy in all ethnic groups' languages. Others say politicians instrumentalise religion to pursue a political agenda (Borkena 2023; The Reporter 2023; Adigeh Y, 2013, p. 107-23).

Regarding ethnic and religious tension, in the last few years, after the evolution of the new regime (EPRDF evolved into the Prosperity Party), as many believed, Ethiopia is at the crossroads and unlike in the previous regimes when Protestant believers have been out of

the political arena and participation, now they are holding political seats, and it is getting religious interpretation. As Østebø et al. (2021) described the change:

Previously, they essentially espoused a notion of "healing the nation" through personal conversion rather than party politics, with some of the larger Pentecostal churches even forbidding elders to become party members. However, with an influx of new Pentecostal theologies and a generation of Pentecostals no longer drawing predominantly on the experiences of the *dergue* period, there has been a greater interest in "occupying for Jesus" the seats of power (p. 12).

This strategy of the Protestant Church is not tested to determine whether it contributes to peace and reconciliation among the ethnic groups and in what way identity negotiation happens between ethnic identity and religious identity.

2.4. Ethnic Identity: Historical Developments and Contemporary Theories

Ethnic identity shares the meaning of other concepts, such as ethnic group and ethnicity. Ethnic identity is the individually experienced phenomenon or one's sense of belonging to an ethnic group, and ethnic group refers to ethnicity as a collective phenomenon. Ethnicity is seen implicitly as the sum of two, referring to collective and individual identity (Barth, 1969). So many ethnic studies prefer to navigate ethnicity or ethnic group more than ethnic identity. One reason is that ethnic identity focuses on individuals, and ethnicity and ethnic group focus on collectives. Moreover, observable behaviour is easily spotted and makes some trends while we study the group rather than individuals. With many unreconciled ideas about ethnic identity, scholars tried to define and understand ethnic identity.

Many identity theorists classify features of identity as internal interactions, thoughts, feelings, and external salience in relation to others. They classify them as selfhood and personhood (Jenkins, 2004) or social and personal identities (Harre, 1998). Others divided identity further based on how it is formed and developed (see Hewitt, 2007, classifying

identity as personal identity, biographical identity, social identity and situational identity), based on the continuum of identity formation, including the historical development (personal identity), salience (social identity) and subjective sense of self (ego identity) (Goffman, 1993).

On the individual level, ethnic identity is considered as a socio-psychological process which gives an individual a sense of belonging and identity. Individuals locate themselves in a particular ethnic group's social system based on some factors (Isajiw, 1990), such as on account of ethnic origin, ancestors, shared values, ethnic membership, real or symbolic. This identification is partly psychological (rational choice) and partly social, meaning the internal and psychological behaviour is expressed objectively on external expressions shared by other members.

These external expressions are identified by Wsevolod W. Isajiw (1993) as observable social and cultural behaviours. These are (1) speaking an ethnic language and practising ethnic traditions, (2) participating in ethnic personal networks, such as family and friendships, (3) participating in ethnic institutional organisations, such as churches, schools, enterprises, and media, (4) participation in ethnic voluntary associations, such as clubs, 'societies,' youth organisations and (5) participation in functions sponsored by ethnic organisations such as picnics, concerts, public lectures, rallies, and dances.

The above-listed ethnic behaviours are not described as whether they decide the membership of the individuals based on the observance of all or some, whether they are social arrangements by institutions such as government or social agents' rational choice. In some contexts, like Gambella in Ethiopia, institutional participation is part of the social arrangement designed by the government.

Isajiw also identified the three types of internal aspects of identity as cognitive, moral, and affective, which refer to attitudes, ideas, and feelings. The other part of cultural behaviour is external expressions such as participating in ethnic rituals. He also noted that though the two aspects are interconnected, they might not be interdependent in some situations, like a second or third-generation person who might have internal aspects but does not express the external ones. Similarly, Eriksen (2002) argued that the salience of ethnicity depends on some conditions that need to be fulfilled, such as contact and contrast. According to Eriksen (2002), ethnic identity is not a group property but an aspect of a relationship:

For ethnicity to come about, two distinctive groups must have a minimum of contact with each other and entertain ideas of each other as being culturally different from themselves. If these conditions are not fulfilled, there is no ethnicity (p. 12)

The two views commonly share the relationship aspect of ethnic identity, which is both internal and external. Moreover, the salience depends on our relationship with 'others'. From another perspective, Mercer relates identity salience with crisis. He claimed that "identity will be an issue only when it is in crisis, when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty" (Mercer, 1990: 43). The different stances on what ethnic identity is and ethnic identity salience, made the subject problematic to theorising it. Scholars have pointed out some reasons why theorising ethnic identity is problematic.

Theorising ethnicity in general and ethnic identity in particular, was found to be problematic because of its situatedness in several unreconciled polar extremes. Its different nature among individuals and groups, what it includes as content and what is not (Barth, 1970; Cohen, 1974: Vii-xv, Eriksen, 2002:79, Banks, 1996:14, Epstein, 1978), the culture vs boundary, the primordial feeling, and its instrumental expression made it difficult to

locate it. The meaning attached to it also is different for different people. There has been a primordial vs constructionist/instrumental view of ethnic identity for a longer period, and the meaning oscillates between these two views for a while. However, the opponents could not reconcile the ideas because they did not have common ground. Some tried to point out that the two ideas are in a continuum, meaning ethnicity starts with primordial grounds but goes under construction and can evolve every time in a certain space (Crawford Young, 1986). Others argue that primordial/ constructivist views are emic views that cannot be situated in the theories designed (Dereje, 2011). Though the primordial assumption of ethnicity, which bases blood ties as a factor, has lost credibility in many ways by different scholars (Banton, 1997; Eriksen, 1996), it is undeniable that the psychological feelings towards one's ethnic group based on ancestors or blood is still exercising people whether they are in industrial or non-industrial states (Vaughan, 2003; James McKay, 2010).

The most prominent scholar in the field of ethnicity and nationalism, Anthony D. Smith (2009), tried to show the 'fixedness' of ethnicity through what he called the myth-symbol complex. Enoch Wan and Mark Vanderwerf (2009) referred to him as a 'soft' primordialist. He refers mostly to what constitutes ethnicity and how that can be maintained and transferred to the next generation. Smith says, "The 'core' of ethnicity resides in the myths, memories, values, symbols, and the characteristic styles of particular historical configurations. "Myth and symbols form 'the body of belief and sentiments' that the defenders of ethnic groups wish to maintain and pass on to the next generation. These are transferred through 'ethnic socialisation' and are more or less fixed, according to him.

Contrary to this, the most cited and important work on ethnicity defining factor, that is, ethnic boundary, was by Fredrik Barth in his *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (1969). In this

vital work, Barth showed what matters most in ethnic identity. He said the contents of ethnicity are actual boundary markers of ethnicity. The content can be changed depending on circumstances, meaning "which aspect of the culture is selected by its members to construct the ethnic boundary" (Dereje, 2011). Nevertheless, the boundary is unchangeable irrespective of an individual's membership change and even the flow of personnel across the boundaries. This idea has got support from Anthony Cohen (2000), who claims:

If our methods have sufficient rigour and sensitivity, it may be feasible and legitimate to infer notions of the boundary from the group's social practice...or to its environmental management of substance activities...They do not necessarily entail the distinction of a group from its neighbour or interlocutor but rather may connect them and may thereby provide opportunities for social engagement 'across' the boundary (p. 7).

The theoretical trajectory by Smith, which emphasises the content of ethnicity considered a fundamental element, shifted towards the contact zone between different ethnic groups, which is the ethnic boundary, as stated by Cohen. Difference and otherness can get feasibility through ethnic boundaries, and those very boundaries can also be a point of contact and connection among ethnicities. This shift from ethnic to social groups has emphasised ethnicity as a context-based phenomenon that can be constructed continuously. Dereje has noted that the constructivist view of ethnicity can be of different types, such as instrumental constructivism (ibid., p.12).

An ethnic identity that is framed in a constructionist or instrumentalist view is espoused by different scholars (Barth, 1969; Phinney, 2003; Sullivan, 2012). It is derived from a sense of peoplehood within a group, culture, and a particular setting. This resonates with Heneri Tajifel's social identity theory. The constructionist view argues against the existence of essential traits in ethnic identity claimed by primordialists, which considers identity as a stable phenomenon, unlike the constructivist view. It is also seen as a multifaceted identity

that looks into ingroups (the group within) and outgroup (the group outside). In line with a constructivist view, Wimmer (2008) argued that its formation passes through the negotiation of ethnic boundaries that result in a new definition of self and others. It also depicts both group and individual identity (Phinney, 2003). Since the success of identification relies heavily on an individual's willingness, rational choice, and action, it is seen as fluid, situational and negotiated by and through the context of the group's contacts.

There is a consensus among postmodern scholars of humanities that identity in general and ethnic identity, in particular, is fluid, socially constructed and changing from time to time (Butler, 1990; Novonty,1998; Villancourt Rosenau, 1992; Young,1997). This indicates that as postmodern scholars and theorists of Marxism and modernism claim (Deutsch, 1953; Gellner, 1964; Gellner, 1983; Weber, 1979; Yuki, 2021) that, as it is mixed and remixed, through technological advancements and increased societal connectedness, it will become extinct down the road. They have promised possibilities of how the concept of ethnicity, its meaning, and its effect cannot last long. They said that as society modernised and industrialisation grew, ethnicity would fade due to developed consciousness towards other cultures and customs. Assimilationists (Gans, 1973; Gorden, 1964) also said that as an amalgamation of societies occurs and identity changes or new identities emerge, the issues attached to ethnicity might not exist.

However, this is counterargued by other scholars of identity. Political identity scholars such as Frances Fukuyama argued that the extinction of ethnic identity is not happening with the twenty-first century advancements and postmodern society that we are living in now. Furthermore, it is no more a predicament of developing countries only (See Fukuyama's

argument on the politics of identity, 2019). There are indications that ethnic identity has gained new momentum both in developing and developed countries in the present time.

2.5. Ethnic Identity: Why Enduring, Ubiquitous and Problematic?

Francis Fukuyama (2019) argued against two assertions about ethnicity: 1) the claim saying ethnicity is a fading away phenomenon as modernisation progresses. 2) ethnicity is an issue of developing nations, not developed nations. He showed that ethnicity is not fading away and the issues of identity in general and ethnic identity, in particular, are not only the issues of developing nations. Recent developments on identity showed that even in those countries where 'liberal democracy is born and raised', such as America and Britain, identity is gaining a new tone and momentum. Many mentioned the election of Donald Trump and Brexit as evidence (Langlois, 2018; Dent, 2020; Fukuyama, 2019).

Why is the issue of identity and otherness stuck to humanity? Fukuyama used a psychosocial lens to explain. According to his argument, identity is such a predicament issue to be both forgotten and diluted because there is a deep desire in every individual to be known and respected as they are and even to be recognised as superior. The recognition claim by individuals or groups cannot be stopped at the 'recognised as equal' level, which he called *isothymia*. However, it will go further until recognised as superior to others, *megalothymia*. Therefore, the issue of identity takes comparison with significant 'others'. Unlike the need for self-rule, a world without others, indicated by the Croatian theologian, Miroslav Volf (1996), the issue of recognition by Fukuyama needs others as conversant implicitly or explicitly because 'others' or in relation to others is the main factor in the salience of ethnicity and the reason why it is problematic everywhere. Volf also claims,

'The problem of ethnic and cultural conflicts is part of a larger problem of identity and otherness' (p. 3).

On the one hand, ethnic identity has no meaning without 'others' because difference speaks to the presence of others; on the other hand, people strive to live without 'others'. Philosophers such as Martin Buber (1958) explained why others are a significant part of I; he said 'I' cannot be alone for it is expressed in I -thou relationship; I is nothing without thou'. There is no self without others, according to him. However, there is a problem related to differences in the world now. There are several examples related to problems seen in the world along the lines of difference, ethnicity, religion, gender and others. Problem-related to difference does not start recently, but from time immemorial, people differentiate themselves as we and them, ingroup and out group (Banton, 1997).

The differentiating sense of 'us and them' is not in terms of giving 'right' recognition but one superior to the other, or either us or them, or 'always close to hate or identical to it' as the Croat Nobel laureate, Ivo Andric (1892-1975), expressed the difference between Churches and mosques in Sarajevo symbolising these two groups' clocks at odds. In addition to being a threat in the world and one of the biggest challenges for human rights, the issue of otherness is ubiquitous. In the article written by Kaplan (1996), only in 1996, over 50 spots were found around the world where violence along the line of difference such as ethnicity, race, language, or religion in which developed countries are included. Scholars have given different reasons why difference leads to conflict, especially ethnic differences.

As Volf (ibid) noted, one reason why ethnic difference is problematic is that people want self-rule. He puts quotes from Robin Wright's special edition:²⁴

Little Abkhazia and South Ossetia seek secession in Georgia, while Kurds want to carve a state out of Turkey. French Quebec edges toward separation from Canada, as deaths in Kashmir's Muslim insurgency against Hindu-dominated India pass the 6,000-mark. Kazakhstan's tongue-twisting face-off pits ethnic Kazakhs against Russian Cossacks, while Scots in Britain, Tutsis in Rwanda, Basques and Catalans in Spain and Tauregas in Mali and Niger all seek varying degrees of self-rule or statehood (p. 6-7).

People strive to have a space without others (or better of others), which is seen in every part of the world.

Taylor points out the reason regarding the problem of identity recognition that resonates with Fukuyama's politics of recognition argument but is slightly different. According to Charles Taylor (1994), identity is partly shaped by the recognition we receive from social settings, and if our identity is not recognised or misrecognised, it imposes harm and conflict. According to him, this nonrecognition or misrecognition can be equivalent to 'oppression or imprisoning someone in false, distorted, and reduced mode of being'. Fukuyama's argument rests upon universalising the recognition of all as human beings. Taylor is saying there is a danger in 'universalising' recognition because there is a politics of difference or identity. In his essay, Taylor demarcates between the politics of recognition and the politics of identity or difference:

We are asked to recognise the unique identity of this individual or group, their distinctiveness from everyone else. The idea is that it is precisely this distinctness that has been ignored, glossed over, and assimilated into a dominant or majority identity. Moreover, this assimilation is the cardinal sin against the ideal of authenticity. (p. 38)

²⁴ Different scholars have espoused the role of religion in different state formations, such as Malay nationalism (Mohamed M.B, 2002; Neo, 2006; Pitsuan, 1982), Ireland nationalism (Koakley, 2011; Lawrence, 1973;), Kazakstan and Uzbekistan nationalism (Yerekeshva, 2019), Nigerian nationalism (Niwanaju, 2016),

So, through universalising, we fail to recognise uniqueness and authenticity, which can be a potential source of conflict. This argument resonates with the need for 'self-rule' because uniqueness is emphasised much more than commonalities. However, Fukuyama's universalist view and Tylor's particularistic view recognise the need for others in different ways. Tylor's argument needs 'others' as conversant to one's uniqueness and receiving the right recognition from others. Fukuyama's *isothmya* also has a comparativist sense in it.

The other reason when and why differences become problematic is explained in terms of power and economic imbalance. Scholars such as Volf (1996) and Dereje Feyissa (2011) recognised how power, economic and even value differences become a roadblock to healthy ethnic relations, especially in heterogeneous communities. Volf asserted that 'the new tribalism' is born out of awareness about differences which is coupled with different imbalances in the economic and social sectors, and dealing with identity and otherness in the right way might be the call that needs great and urgent attention when we think of the future (Ibid, p10).

Making the issue of ethnic identity the top priority is one of the things that scholars insist on; Volf noted that both Christian and non-Christian's teachings keep human rights, economic justice, and ecological well-being at the centre but identity and otherness at the periphery or non-existent (Ibid, 9). Identity and otherness are recognised as the number one challenge for the human rights movement. According to Wright (1992), mentioning Kenneth Ross, Executive Director of Human Rights Watch, the issue of difference, be it religious or ethnic, is invoking violence which becomes the paramount challenge of human rights now and in the future. Samuel Huntington (2010) made a similar assertion that the future conflict will be along cultural/ethnic lines, which he called among civilisations.

Therefore, it is a call to prioritise it instead of keeping it at the margins of our reflection to bring collective consciousness and permeable boundary.

According to Durkheim (1893), "collective consciousness developed when norms and values are established and collectively shared by individuals within a given society" How are norms and values established in a given society that results in autonomy, relationship or coherence and action needs to be studied further. However, some studies imply religion is a crucial factor in giving these norms and values in society, as a stimulator of social behaviour and regulator of anti-social behaviour (Benson et al. , 1998), as something that offers emotional security to the adherents in time of stress and hardship (Lawal, 2003), as a factor that fosters solidarity and friendship (Ezeanya, 2010), as a factor of social change (Fadiyimu, 2004). In bringing the issue of difference and otherness to the centre, scholars like Volf generally recommend that ethnic identity mirror itself with other identity markers, such as religion, to minimise the damage related to identity and difference.

2.6. Ethnic Identity and Religion: Intersectionality²⁵

Religion has been playing a significant role in nation-building,²⁶ political mobilisation (Pankira, 1993; McCauley, 2014; Fox, 2018), societal development issues; like work ethics

²⁵ I used the word intersectionality here not as the original meaning is attached but in the sense of 'interdialogicality' between different identities, in this case ethnic identity and religious identity. Intersectionality advocates for 'the melting pot' concept for the meeting of different identities. The concept coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in critical race studies in the US (1998) to show the inclusivity of different identities in the self rather than treating them as exclusive from one another; such as race and sex in her case. It shows the multiplicities of identity which influence each other and keep their coherence. According to Stewart (2002), intersecting identities influence each other and melt into one coherent self which is very important for the person's 'roles relationships and concepts' cause it is important for individual's development. The theoretical frame I used is dialogical self: self made up of multiplicity of identities which can or cannot necessarily subsumed one in the other but dialoging.

²⁶ As there is a heated debate among scholars on ethnicity, there is also disagreement on how the nation is formed, what it contains, the process of formation and what forms the national identity. Some scholars like

(Weber, 1979), and a factor that gives legitimacy to action (Nijoku and Akintayo on religious extremism, 2018). Just like ethnicity, elites sometimes use religious values to control or mobilise a group of people, frame nationhood, or settle people's disagreement with the state. (Ruane J. & Todd J., 2009) When we see the studies on religion, we may find three important areas where the two are studied widely and their intersectionality.

First, in relation to conflict; in such situations, religion plays either an aggravating or reconciliatory role. As is true for ethnicity, religion serves as a mobilisation agent that gives more powerful reason and unconditional commitment to taking action (Eriksen, 1992). Second, a role in bringing development, work ethics, and new social orders (Weber, 1979, Durkheim, 2001). Third, in nation/state-building; As one ideology or content that defines communities, some scholars map the centrality of religion in nation formation, meaning how religion shapes the particular form of national identity, such as the role of Protestantism on English national identity (Kohn, 1940; Greenfield, 1992), Pietism on German national identity (Lehmann, 1982), Catholicism on Polish national identity (Zubrzycki, 2006), orthodoxy on Balkans national identity (Leustean, 2008) to mention some. Fourth, as a reconciliatory tool; Volf's (1996) reconciliation model is all about how Christians distance themselves and belong to their culture so that there will be reconciliation when the self is willing to give sacrificial love to others and pave the way to embrace others.

Brubaker (2004, 1996) and Conversi (2011) believe that nationalism or national identity is a matter of cognition or ideology, not real, stable, and fixed by itself. They argue that cognition and ideology are central to national identity formation. On the other hand, Anthony D. Smith (2009) argued against this by saying this conception is an oversimplification of the role of the state in creating nations through ideology, but there are sentiments and cognition that represent some content of the nation.

Though the issue of religion is intertwined with ethnicity, the study of ethnicity paid little attention to religion in the area of identity development and negotiation, except with only a few exceptions; for example, the work of Anthony D. Smith (2003). In his 'sacred sources of national identity', he showed how some ethnic groups have a self-conception of themselves to be divinely 'chosen people'. Obi Igwara (2009) shares this idea in his article 'Holy Nigerian Nationalism', how Christians and Muslims in Nigeria think of their country according to their religion's frame and claim the country to belong to their religion. Here religion is glued with an ethnic identity that makes the people feel and see themselves as distinctively different and sometimes special. Especially in a conflict situation, most of the time, ethnic identity joins hands with religious identity.

Steve Bruce (2003) has estimated the conflicts in the world since 1960, and three-quarters of them were found to have religious elements. This means the people in conflict justify their actions by referring to their religious texts or religious ideals. We can refer to literature on 'terrorism', such as suicide bombing, and how people justify their actions by referring to 'sacred' texts of their religion. It is also seen that there is no significant difference in intensity and form of violence between religious and secular conflicts. This has been observed in many conflicts in different parts of the world. For example, the conflicts between Muslim Albanians and Orthodox Macedonians in Macedonia, Hindu Tamils and Buddhist Sinhalese in Srilanka, Orthodox Greeks and Muslim Turks in Cyprus, Jew Israeli and Arab Palestinians (mostly Muslims) in Israel-Palestine, Muslim Hausa and Christian Ibo in Nigeria (Bruce, 2003), to mention the most prominent.

Even some scholars pointed out that religion will have an aggravating role once conflict arises, such as ethnic conflicts. The ethnic identity fused with religious identity creates an

ethnoreligious identity, which worsens the conflict (See the conflict between the Tamils and the Sinhalese).

On the other hand, people use religion as a reconciliatory tool after the conflict ends. In different countries, mine included, religious fathers mention some texts about peace and harmony and how that has a transcendental value not only on earth but in heaven. This confines the role of religion only in conflict situations, not before conflict happens. However, some scholars agree that religion plays a role in identity formation and contouring people's behaviour. In his *African Christianity*, Paul Gifford (2001) indicates:

Religion provides definitions, principles of judgment and criteria of perception. It offers a reading of the world, history, society, time, space, power, authority, justice and ultimate truth. Religion limits or increases the conceptual tools available, restricts or enlarges emotional responses, channels them, and withdraws specific issues from inquiry. It inculcates a particular way of perceiving, experiencing, and responding to reality. Religion can legitimise new aspirations, new forms of organisation, new relations and new social order.

Thus, for Gifford, religion is critical in developing a person's perspective of reality on oneself and as well as it contributes to the formation of new relations and social order. His view implies that religion does not need situations such as conflict to play its part but can contour people's behaviour and mobilise them to act in one way or another. So, seeing religion only in conflict situations will give a partial picture of the power of religion.

Recently written books by scholars like Francis Fukuyama (2019) assert that religion is beyond observing rituals, participating in worship, and the like; rather, it gives a sense of identity and answers the question "Who am I"? That is why nationalism is tied to religion. He further noted that religion gives a new way of looking at oneself. This indicates that religion plays a critical role in forming one's identity. Volf (1996) sees the intricacy of ethnic identity and religion, specifically the Christian tradition, in-depth. In his book

Exclusion and Embrace, Volf contends why religion is vital in dealing with politics of identity or difference. In his argument we need to respond to the problems of ethnic identity:

The growing awareness of cultural heterogeneity brought about by economic and technological developments of planetary proportions explains why "tribal" identity is today asserting itself as a powerful force, especially in cases where cultural heterogeneity is combined with extreme imbalances of power and wealth. It may not be too much to claim that the future of our world will depend on how we deal with identity and difference. The issue is urgent. The ghettos and battlefields worldwide—in the living rooms, inner cities, or mountain ranges—testify indisputably to its importance (p10).

In one sense, he is saying heterogeneity is not a problem, but the things associated with it. In another sense, increased awareness about our differences and cultural heterogeneities is becoming problematic, for it creates too much awareness of oneself. Either way, the need to deal with it urgently and adequately is the clarion call from Volf.

As he responds to how we should deal with the problem of identity and otherness and the conflicts raging around them, he looks into two ways and emphasises one: social arrangement²⁷ and social agency. The first one is most advocated by modern and postmodern scholars, which Volf gives less emphasis and importance. He argued that the 'right social arrangement' is nothing without the 'right social agent', and it is the social agent which creates and shapes social environments (p.7). This argument is presented softly, meaning he softened his assertion on the social environment by mentioning how Nicholas Wolterstorff (1996) argued the involvement of theologians in designing social

²⁷ How a society (or all humanity) ought to be arranged in order to accommodate individuals and groups with diverse identities living together—a society that guards universal values, or that promotes the plurality of particular communal identities, or that offers a framework for individual persons to go about freely making and unmaking their own identities. Their main interest is not social agents but social arrangements. Volf pointed out three options recognized so far to argue how they failed due to reasons. Universalist Option: encourage the focus of the people to be universal values and control our differences. Communitarian Option: celebrates communal distinctiveness and heterogeneity. Postmodern option: encourages the freedom of the individuals, autonomy, violation and to flee from universal and particular values (p.6-7).

arrangements. He said the issue of the social agents could be left to theologians. However, lots of people from different disciplines, including theologians, need to participate in designing the right kind of social arrangement. He argued the focus of theologians needs to be social agents:

Theologians should concentrate less on social arrangements and more on fostering the kind of social agents capable of envisioning and creating just truthful, and peaceful societies and shaping a cultural climate in which such agents will thrive. Important features of contemporary societies, not just the competencies of theologians, call for a sustained theological reflection on social agents (p. 11).

By bringing theology and theologians, Volf indicates how religious value shape the morale of the individual self and how that, in turn, serve to create a society that shapes the social climate in which everybody can thrive. Another scholar, Jennifer Todd, advocates this argument in terms of identity. Charged by Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus, Jennifer Todd (2006) argued that institutional changes only would be less than transformative if there is a failure to change people's identities. She argues that in such conditions it is simply 'transposing the old conflict in the new structure'.

Similarly, Zygmunt Bauman explained why the modern and postmodern options fail to create a moral in people instead of shifting the responsibility to the social arrangement. The first shifts the morale from self to socially constructed and managed agencies or floating it in the system that nobody has responsibility or authority about, what Philip Howard called the 'rule of nobody' (Bauman, 1995, p. 99). The latter encourages skirting moral responsibility, which fosters complete avoidance.

On the other hand, Pierre Bourdieu (2010) recognises the influence of social arrangement or habitus in shaping oneself. In his book, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, he showed how

the habitus, the dispositions in the past, can influence our present in such a profound and persistent way:

In each of us, in varying proportions, there is part of yesterday's man; it is yesterday's man who inevitably predominates in us since the present amounts to little compared with the long past in the course of which we were formed and from which we result. (P. 79)

He also recognised that even though the habitus with which we were formed is inveterate, new developments or contradictions can still be recognised in us but might take time until they sink into our unconscious mind. (Ibid) When they settle in with us, that will bring a new set of interactions in society. By pointing this out, he indicated the role of the social agent in making the social arrangement possible or forming it again. Besides, the sink-in process will happen in oneself through dialogue.

Therefore, a question is how both social arrangement and social agents can equally influence one's identity and how we should look out for both in bringing stable cohabitation. Because sometimes social arrangements can be a promoter or blocker for the social agent to expand self and embrace otherness. According to Hussien, and Waheed (2018), the concept of the 'common good', which is equivalent to social justice, is the arrangement that one can exercise for oneself and others and opens the door to embrace. Unlike Volf's assertion of the importance of social agents more than social arrangement, Hussien tried to strike a balance between the importance of both equally and simultaneously. Even though this is not my main argument, I recognise the importance of social arrangement in inculcating and helping sink in values in social agents. The question is, how can we create this social agent that has the potential to create a 'just society'? ²⁸

²⁸ I borrowed the word of John Rawl's Just Society to use his concept of 'reasonable pluralism', a society that advocates a fair system and cooperation.

Scholars propose that the self is negotiated through the movement of self or multiplicity of “I”. There has been a debate about the self, whether it is movable or immovable, individual or dividual (Strathern, 1988, p.13, Smith, 2012, p. 50-64). Recent scholars such as Hermans and Kempen (2010) argued that the self is movable and dialogical. They argued that the self has no core but a contact zone exercising inter and intra-dialogue. The empirical evidence from the field confirmed that the self is movable with a contact zone that promotes dialogue.

2.7. Dialogical Self Theory and Identity Negotiation

According to Stella Ting Toomey, who was the first to introduce identity negotiation as an academic discipline in 1986, the word negotiation in Identity Negotiation Theory (INT) refers to the "exchange of verbal and nonverbal messages between two or more communicators in maintaining, threatening or uplifting the various socio-cultural group based or unique personal-based images of the other in situ (Ting-Toomey, 2012, p.418). " She posits communication as a central tool for negotiation to happen. As this theory has been refined over different years, what stands out for effective communication or communication competence is 'mindfulness'. She tried to connect the term with the Buddhist spiritual practice of 'emptying oneself'; leaving behind our preconceived ideas and frameworks in order to listen to others.

The theory took communication or communication competence as a significant tool for negotiation and gave some assumptions for the realisation of negotiation. According to INT, negotiation is about 'mindfulness' or the 'mindful process of shifting one's worldview

and/or cultural behaviours' to interact with ethnic others. This is between people, not within oneself (ibid., p. 420).

On the other hand, Jackson R.L. & Elmore (2017) assert that negotiation starts with the self:

The cultural Contracts paradigm is based on the idea that intercultural relationships may or may not be coordinated, depending upon the dynamics involved (such as power, boundaries, cultural loyalty, group identification, maturity, and others). This coordination is initiated after an initial negotiation with the self. That is, social, cultural or religious identities have meaning for the individual when they are first negotiated personally (p.1-5).

According to Jackson and Elmore, negotiation extends from inside to outside. When connected with Ting Tommy's theory, negotiation has both 'reflexivity' towards oneself and 'mindfulness' towards others. As seen in Eastern and Western spiritual traditions, religion helps people to be reflexive and mindful, for there is meditative and reflective spiritual practice in all (Ting-Toomey, 2012). This might be one side to look at the role of religion to be reflexive and mindful; on the other hand, religion can impede people's reflexivity and sensitivity, as is seen in religious extremism.

Ting Toomy's identity negotiation theory focuses more on inter-communication and dialogue, not intra-dialogue. However, the concept of dialogue in INT is one basic element that builds dialogical self theory, though the concept of dialogue in DST did not come from INT but from literary science as the scholars of DST claimed (Hermans & Gieser, 2012, p.2.) It is more of a communication skill, not an identity issue. On the other hand, the identity negotiation in the dialogical self brings the self in dealing with value dissonances

and contradictions within the self, which in turn brings a better version of the self that contributes to a positive relation and cohabitation²⁹.

Scholars agree that identity is a social construct and people are made of composites of identities. These identities are their own values and underlying principles. William James (1890), who studied the self, recognised that different selves are living in rivalry and conflict (p. 309).

Sometimes in a particular situation and time, these different selves get into dialogue in the self, triggered by either value dissonance or some other external factors, as if two people are talking and arguing. Different traditions, such as psychology and literary science, recognise such a dialogue, from which Hubert Herman (1992) formulated a theory called Dialogical Self-theory (DST).

Taking a cue from James's concept of self, which is extended to the environment or environment as part of the self, and Bakhtin's multi-vocal self, Hermans conceptualised the self as a dynamic 'society of mind' with a relatively autonomous I position. The I is dynamic because it can make spatial movement among the different, I positions, and the I positions are many. Unlike James's hierarchical situatedness of I, Herman considered each I position to be autonomous and has its voice. This concept is against the concept of a self with a centre that appropriates or rejects other selves in dialogue or the self with a centre. According to Hubert Hermans (1992), the self is dialogical in which the I position, deposition and reposition itself in spatial and temporal ways. As proposed by DS theorists,

²⁹ I am using the word as a descriptive term which is similar to coexistence.

the self is not only individual but dividual, but there is also unity in multiplicity or what they call the 'continuity and discontinuity of the self'.

Similarly, Joseph, I. E. (2000) showed that the I move 'in an imaginal space (which is intimately intertwined with physical space) from the one to the other position, creating dynamic fields in which self-negotiations, self-contradictions and self-integrations result in a great variety of meanings.

A study on self by James and Mead showed that the self is interactive with the environment, and it is mutually inclusive with the environment. Hermans showed the interaction between self and culture as an example of such interaction. They argue against the tendency to see culture as a structure and process which is outside the self and self as alienated, individual from the outside world. However, according to Hermans and Hermans, culture and self are inclusive to each other and all those traditionally believed cultures as structures and processes out there, are in the self. The concept of dialogue 'decentralises' both culture and self, without the self losing its coherence. This leads to the concept of multiplicity of self with different I positions, which Herman and Vander Vonn call 'social', and still, there is continuity or unity of the self because of dialogue among the selves:

The dialogical self is 'social', not in the sense that a self-contained individual enters social interactions with other outside people, but in the sense that other people occupy positions in a multivoiced self (2001, p.250).

According to Bakhtin, the 'other' might be the 'actual' others or metaphorical. He indicated how dialogue opens the possibility of differentiation of the inner world through interpersonal relationships. According to Bakhtin's claim, Hermans adds:

The transformation of an 'inner' thought of a particular character into an utterance enables dialogical relations to occur between this utterance and the utterance of imaginal others (p. 245).

According to the above claim, the quality of the inner dialogue with imaginary others determines the dialogue with actual others. This resonates with what Miller and Prince studied (1994) the development seen in anthropology and psychology about the interaction between self and collectives. According to them, the interaction between self and collectives or self and culture is evolving towards how groups behave in individuals instead of how individuals are behaving in a group which was the big question in the field of psychology.

This makes the boundary between groups and individuals non-demarcated and very interactive. When this interaction is considered, Miller and Prince showed how contemporary cultural psychologists and social identity theorists perceive the importance of collectives in relation to the self. For cultural psychologists, 'collectives are important because a person's construal of the relation of the self to relevant social categories determines much of structure of the self' (Hogg *et al*, 2004). Whereas social identity theorists argue that 'collectives are important because a person's social categories determine much of the content of the self' (States & Burke, 2000).

The claim on the importance of collectives will assume how the social environment or the collectives fashion the self by determining the structure and content of the self. Whereas other scholars like Volf argue that it is the self that fashions or determines the structure and content of the collectives and strongly assert that the work should be on the social agent or self, not the environment. My stand on this agrees with Herman's argument that the social

agent and social environment are mutually inclusive and influence each other. How the influence comes is also discussed by DS theorists.

In dialogical self-theory, dialogue takes the pattern of turn-taking, unlike the problematic form of multivocal discussion in the Schizophrenic brain, which takes the shape of a monologue. While doing dialogue in turn-taking, there might be influence resulting dominance of one voice in a certain situation and time. The computer scientists Hofstadter (1986) and Minsky (1985) shed some light on how the brain is a community of agents or voices, and at its higher levels, it may entertain mutual dialogical relationships, 'with one voice being more dominant or active than the other voice.' The dominance might be of four dimensions according to Linell et al. (1988); interaction dominance (asymmetry in the initiative-response structure), topic dominance (one party introduces, maintains and have perspective on a certain topic), strategic dominance (having a strong impact on the conversation without needing to talk more) and amount of talk (talking a lot in conversation). According to these dimensions, when there is dialogue in the self, power and dominance play a great role in resulting in a change in the self or negotiation in the self. The factors that can bring more power and dominance are different and among those religion has a paramount role in this regard.

Religion has been a powerful factor playing a big role in nation-building, political mobilisation, and societal development issues, like work ethics, and a factor that gives legitimacy to action as much as ethnicity. Just like ethnicity, sometimes the values in religion are used by elites to control or mobilise a group of people, frame nationhood, or settle people's disagreement with the state (Ruane J. and Todd J, 2009).

Likewise, ethnicity has been another powerful factor in defining one's identity and belonging. Many scholars have noticed and made a strong assertion about the interrelation between ethnicity and religion in social processes and political mobilisation (Egwu, 1998:34, Yinger, 1994:225). Especially Yinger asserted that it is difficult to analyse ethnic order without referring to religious factors. However, what will happen when the values in the identities contradict? For example, the values encouraging killing ethnic others and the values that are seen in evangelical Christianity teaching about brotherhood and love. The contradiction and negotiation can be seen when there is a change of world view through religious conversion of people who have intricate culture and religion in intricacy previously.

2.8. Religious Conversion and Cultural Continuity/Discontinuity

Conversion is varied in definition, what it should entail, and its types. Some say it is a complete cut from the past and immersed in the present. Others define it as a change of worldview, and conversion brings a change in behaviour, attitude, emotion, and lifestyle. Scholars also classify conversion as active and passive, where the subject voluntarily decides to convert to a new religion or imposed conversion, respectively. According to scholars, religious conversion is classified as internal (Paloutzian, 1996) and external (Malony D. S., 1992; Barro & Hwang, 2007) within the same denomination and from one religion to another, respectively. What Gez, Yonatan *et al* (2021) called it 'religion mobility' or 'butinage.' These kinds of literature give little emphasis on increasing commitment to one's religious tradition, what Timol Riyaz (2022) called intra-religious conversion. Such conversion can be called processual conversion because conversion can be gradual and is a journey to be achieved as the self is invested in spiritual activities and

disciplines (Dallas et al., 1993). Studies on African religious conversion and the models developed also support this claim.

The conversion model developed by Robin Horton (1975) emphasizes the interaction and integration of African people towards a broader cosmology only facilitated by missionaries. However, Humphrey J. Fisher (1973) disagrees with African religious adaptability and instant isolation from the old and embraces the new. Instead, he claimed that conversion is processual and has three stages— isolation, merging the old and new, and negotiating the values based on core principles.

African religious conversion has given a myriad of thoughts regarding what involves conversion and whether the cultural elements are carried over to the new religion or not. This issue must be mentioned here because the Anywaa and the Nuer are converts from their traditional religion. The other reason for discussing the literature on the continuity and discontinuity of cultural elements after conversion is because it is one indicator of ethnic identity negotiation.

Religious conversion in Africa and particularly in Ethiopia is studied from conversion from traditional religion to world religion perspective, and this study also falls in this category. The major views on continuity and discontinuity of culture are rejectionist, which advocates for radical discontinuity, and contextualisation view, which advocates for maintaining 'Africanness', contextualising mission.

One of the prominent figures in African theology is Byang Kato (1992), a Nigerian theologian whose view is categorised as rejectionist. He believed in the radical

discontinuity of African tradition when there is conversion to the Christian faith. This is also advocated by other African theologians such as Turaki (2002) and Kunhiyop (2015).

However, Bolaji Idowu (1968), John Mibiti (1969) and Mercy Oduyoye (1986) advocate for the contextualisation of mission, and they are critical of the foreign mission of changing the identity of Africans. Oduyoye critiqued Kato's position 'This rejection of the African worldview by African shows how successful the Christian mission was in Alienating Africans from their Africanness' (cited in Palmers T., 2004).

On the other hand, Fischer has put the conversion process in the middle through merging the new and the old and negotiating the values.

2.9. Ethnic Identity Negotiation

In the notion of change in identity, scholars recognise that change in identity categories might be invoked by social and structural changes in society, or the change in identity categories might invoke social and structural changes in society. On the one hand, they are outcomes of the change and, on the other, the cause of the change (Mackinnon & Luke, 2002). This has been seen widely in the acculturation process and also in merging among the nations (Ireland and England). Todd has also indicated that institutional changes are not enough to create new dynamics of interaction but must be accompanied by a change in self-perception (2005). DST can explain this better.

In DST, an individual's I position movements mean a change in perception and self-view that might greatly impact the social interaction in the community because self and society are mutually inclusive. Scholars have also argued that to say the change has come in oneself, it should not be the change in the whole self or identity category, but the meaning

and values in the identity can be changed. This can change the whole notion of perception towards self and others, creating a new view of interaction that can be a tool for social transformation, such as conflict resolution.

The core assumption in DST, the positioning, de-positioning, and re-positioning of I (Hermans & Geiser, 2012), shows that there is a dialogue in oneself, and negotiation will result from contradicting positions. Specifically, about contradiction, the third position is depicted as the creative position of self that mediates the two positions and get power from that contradiction; so that it can answer the question raised in both positions. For example, so many literary scholars have tried to understand the deep meaning of John Gillespie Magee Jr's [9] (1922-1941) poem "high flight". An author and photographer, Kathryn Gabriel Loving, described John Magee as two persons struggling with dissonant values: his spiritual life and his duty as a fighter jet pilot. She notes:

John Magee was two people. The first persona was a sensitive poet preoccupied with death, and the second a rabble-rousing adrenaline junkie. His poem 'High Flight'³⁰ reconciles his spiritual, intellectual curiosity with his tendency to push the limits of physics. He was a genius at both. His poem shows his struggle and how he reconciled the differences and held them both in balance (2016).

In such a case, one identity value influences the other, and the influenced identity will be a different kind of that same identity (Todd, 2005). Hermans believes such identity can be called a third position which I call negotiated identity.

³⁰ The last verse of the poem shows the dilemma that the writer enters into

And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod:

The high untrespassed sanctity of space,

– Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.

According to Swann and Bosson (2008), *identity negotiation* can be defined as "the set of processes through which people strike a balance between achieving their interaction goals and satisfying their identity-related goals, such as the needs for agency, communion, and psychological coherence. They also noted that 'people generally conform to various principles of identity negotiation that not only facilitate smooth interpersonal interactions but also promote intrapersonal harmony.' Therefore, one goal of negotiation is to keep internal coherence by making 'peace' between the two arguing positions of self. The 'peace-making' position of self is sometimes considered a hybrid, for it has elements of both. However, in this research, negotiated identity (identity negotiation) is maintained over hybrid identity, which is given such a name by Surgen and Abbay (2012) because the negotiated identity might not be a hybrid of the two identities. However, the meanings and values of one position of the self or a particular identity element of the self will be changed when we look at it at a cultural sub-stratum level that can affect intrapersonal relations.

When there are different identity markers in oneself, there will be dialogicality, specifically in some circumstances such as conflict or friend/enemy dichotomy or even culture. This is what Bakhtin said about the multiplicity of voices or polyphonic novels surrounding the self, interacting with each other, and as they interact, there might be voices that go along or contradict. These multiple identifications of the self and interaction call the question of how these identities are related and what will be the result of interaction between these voices.

This interaction which Herman described as 'dialogue', is possible under specific circumstances. One of the 'favourable' circumstances is conflict, especially when the conflict basis is identity markers like ethnicity, religion, and others. During this time, the value differences in the voices will be vivid, and that is when the self needs to occupy a

specific position. As Herman described, when there are contradicting values in the self, the dialogue needs to involve the negotiation process. This negotiation can deliver new worldviews (Bakhtin & Emerson, 1984). This is what this project examines; how ethnic identity is being negotiated in dialogue with religious identity or religious values and what change, or new worldview will come out of this negotiation.

I examine these questions from the outlook of DST, which is a very useful tool to analyse multiple voices in the self that are contradicting or cooperating. Charged by scholars of self, such as William James (distinction of I and me) and G. H. Mead, and scholars of dialogue (Martin Buber: relation of I as I- thou and I-it) and Mikhail Bakhtin (polyphonic novel), Hermans and Kempen (1993) have combined the two trajectories and established a dialogical self which allows a multiplicity of I positions that interact in certain circumstances. Dialogical interchanges comprise some basic assumptions, such as a negotiation process comprising back-and-forth communication and decision-making. After the decision is made, the I, position, reposition, or deposition accordingly. Hermans and Kempen (ibid) argued for fostering dialogue, for it is a tool to solve problems. According to them, there is interaction within the self due to different value dissonance or multiple voices within a self. For example, the dialogue between self and culture. In this study it is noted that the interaction between religion and culture will influence the cultural or ethnic boundary by making it permeable, a boundary that has space for others. This boundary permeability is considered as ethnic identity negotiation or negotiated self in this study.

2.10. Conclusion

In this chapter I outlined the theoretical and conceptual basis for understanding ethnic identity negotiation at the group and individual levels, emphasizing individual ethnic identity negotiation and how it can be studied in the contemporary context. I start with ethnic identity comprises both profession and its salience, how salience is determined by factors such as the presence of others, and conflict. I discussed its development from content to contact zone. I also discussed how modernization and industrialization predication on the fading of ethnic identity failed, and why. This is followed by a review of the state of research knowledge on ethnic identity interaction with religion, in conflict studies as mobilization factor and reconciliatory tool, in nation building and as a source of morality but not in ethnic identity negotiation. Following this, ethnic identity negotiation is discussed by situating it in religious conversion discourse, continuity vs discontinuity of previous cultural and religious life, or distancing versus belonging from the culture after conversion.

As a theoretical framework, Dialogical Self Theory, what it is and how DST can be a tool, in negotiating identities among selves and between self and others is discussed. The third position in DST is emphasised to see ethnic identity negotiation between people in Gambella town. The discussion of ethnic identity negotiation ends with the operationalisation of ethnic identity negotiation in dialogue with religious identity through the dialogical self.

Chapter Three Methodology and Methods

3.1. Introduction

Academic research takes a careful selection of a methodology that can serve well the questions that the researcher raises. As Guichun Jun (2010) stated, a methodology is not only involved in providing theoretical concepts about the research's nature but also a guide in selecting relevant techniques to help fulfil the research purpose. For this study, I employ qualitative research, for I am looking at people's perception, experience, and view towards certain issues, which make it unfit for quantitative research. According to Gay and Peter (2000), inquiries aim to obtain an in-depth understanding of the situation, why they function the way they are, and how people perceive and understand them in the context.

From qualitative research methodologies, I choose an exploratory case study for an in-depth look at how people in Gambella town living in an open conflict situation negotiate their ethnic identity in conversation with their religious identity. I use this methodology to select several tools, such as semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and document reviews and non-participant observation, to collect data and triangulate evidence. In this chapter, I explain what an exploratory case study is and how it can fit the research question I raise and the theoretical framework I applied. I also show what my situatedness as a researcher looks like, pre-field, before going to the field, in the field while collecting data, and after the field while interacting with the academic literature. Then I show how I managed, analysed, and interpreted my data. Finally, I established a strategic plan to accentuate the trustworthiness and credibility of the data and ethical guidelines I followed

in executing this research within the code of research ethics to respect the rights, anonymity and dignity of the people participating.

3.2. Case Study Research

There is little agreement on what case study research is, whether it is a methodology or not. Some say it is a choice of what to be studied, not a methodology (Stake, 2005); others say it is a strategy of inquiry, a methodology or a comprehensive research strategy (Yin, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Others also see it as a methodology, an object of design, and a product of inquiry (Creswell, 2010). Based on this, they classify case studies as research and non-research methodology. Those who use it as a product of inquiry employ a non-research case study, and those who use it as an object of design employ a research case study. It has been proved that case study research is now common in different social science fields as a strategy of inquiry, such as psychology, sociology, political science, anthropology, and social work. Other practising professions such as business, education nursing, and community planning employ non-research case study methodology (Ibid).

Case study research or research case study is among the qualitative research methodologies. Even though there are several ways to categorise it under different parameters, it is repeatedly shown that it is among the five qualitative research methodologies based on the questions raised in the research: narrative inquiry, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, and case study. According to Merriam (2009), qualitative methods are used to better understand people's perceptions of a particular phenomenon. Within this understanding, Robert Yin (2009) defined case study as 'the study of a contemporary case in a real-life situation'. It explores an issue or a problem using the case as a specific illustration. This

definition and the purpose of qualitative research shown by Merriam have much in common with this research interest.

I investigate people's perceptions of how they negotiate their different identities, particularly religious and ethnic identities when the value of each identity is contradicted at some level. How they deal with contradictions in their beliefs and values, and how they position, reposition and deposition the self. I also examine how this negotiation contributes to peaceful co-existence and as a reconciliatory tool for the two majority ethnic groups in Gambella, the Anywaa and the Nuer. For this, a qualitative study will be the best fit to get an in-depth understanding of the Anywaa and the Nuer perception of their religious and ethnic identities, their ethnic relations, how this is related to values attached to their ethnic and religious identities, and how they are negotiating their identity. Looking at how people negotiate their identities when there is a clash at the value level is best seen in some real-life experiences like hostile relations or conflicts. Gambella region in general, Gambella town, in particular, is one of the conflict-ridden areas known in the country where ethnic-based conflict repeatedly arises, primarily among these two Evangelical ethnic groups, the Anywaa and the Nuer.

The situation can be studied using different qualitative methodologies. For example, it could be studied with ethnography, specifically comparative ethnography.³¹ According to Suryani (2008), both are the most popular qualitative approaches in social science research. Ethnography is a methodology that uses a cultural lens to understand and interpret a particular group's phenomena. In comparison, a case study looks into a phenomenon that

³¹ Ethnographic research that explicitly and intentionally builds an argument through the analysis of two or more cases (Simmons and Smith, 2019)

exists and how it occurred in an attempt to explore and explain it. For this, the researcher tries to understand people's perceptions of the phenomenon.

In this research, two different ethnic groups with different cultures are taken, except for sharing some cultural elements in common, like religion. Such groups can be studied through comparative ethnography. However, the purpose of this research is not to compare the two ethnic groups but rather to see how their ethnic identity negotiation is contributing to their conflictual relation. Therefore, comparative ethnography might not be the best fit to study the intricate issues related to their conflictual relation and ethnic identity negotiation in dialogue with their religious identity. Because the research scope is wider than what ethnography offers in terms of understanding how the two ethnic groups cultural and religious identity and identity negotiation can contribute to building peace in the region.

Based on the purposes they serve and the questions they want to address, case studies can be of different types. Yin (2010) posited three types of case studies: exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive. In addition, there are comparative case studies. Stake (2005) also included intrinsic, instrumental, and collective research case studies. In terms of the cases involved, they can be classified as single case studies and multiple case studies. This shows that different parameters are used to classify case study methodology, and there are several classifications. I am employing an exploratory case study because their identity negotiation strategies when there is a dissonance of values among their religious identity and ethnic identity, are unexplored in the area. Therefore, an exploratory case study suits the research purpose of this project.

3.2.1. Exploratory Case Study

According to Yin (2014), an exploratory case study is a case study that helps to gain in-depth knowledge of a certain social phenomenon. Such a social phenomenon may have complex causal links, no pre-determined outcome and be too complex to do a survey or experiment on. The unique feature of this case study type is that there will be fieldwork and data collection done before the final definition of the study question and hypotheses, 'observing a social phenomenon in its raw form' (Glazer and Strauss, 1967). This will help develop a conceptual framework or select an appropriate theory for the study.

Since I am new to the area and only know what is happening in Gambella through readings, I chose to do an exploratory case study. I went to Gambella before finalising the research question and my hunch to see what was on the ground, to determine the theoretical framework and which age group to interview. I started with how social inclusion looks like among children from the Anywaa and the Nuer ethnic groups. I did individual interviews, dispatched questionnaires, and tried to analyse social inclusion as a moral factor. I walked around different *Woredas* (districts), and I saw that the neighbourhoods are designated for specific ethnic groups, especially for the Nuer and the Anywaa. The schools are also different for Nuer children and Anywaa children. I saw some Highlanders in Anywaa schools, and most of the teachers were from the Highlander community. They have few common places to go and meet, such as the high school, the hospital, and the marketplace. As they told me, even in these places, they feel insecure about going about, especially at night. In the case of the Nuer, no other ethnic groups are found in schools in the neighbourhood of Nuer among the children except a few Highlander teachers.

After conducting questionnaires, individual interviews and observation, I have seen that their ethnic relation is problematic. As I could see closely, I learned that some of the children had different stands about ethnic others, and they were referring to their religious understanding that they had learned at Sunday school. I have also seen what this understanding cost them. This directed me to see how people in Gambella with the same religion, Evangelicalism, but different ethnicity, negotiate their identity towards positive ethnic relations and how they position, deposition or reposition themselves in times and situations like this. The question posed allowed me to select an appropriate theoretical framework and include more people who can realise the value dissonance in their ethnic and religious identities and articulate the dialogue in their minds. So, I included other people from different walks of life, different age groups and genders.

Exploring how the evangelicals in Gambella living in conflict deal with value dissonance emanating from their ethnic and religious identities needs exploration. Looking at any causal links between the previous traditional religion on the current ethnic identity ideals and how it contributes to the current ethnic relation can best fit an exploration or exploratory case study.

3.3. Situatedness of the Researcher

In every systematic scientific research, at least three phases require specific situatedness of the researcher. According to Neumann and Neumann (2015), the situatedness of the researcher means the mindfulness of the researcher to be aware of 'the relationship between oneself and one's context'. This will help the researcher to be maximally effective in producing, interpreting, and analysing data. The phases are identified by Neumann and

Neumann as pre-field, in the field and post-field situatedness. Pre-field or autobiographic situatedness, as they call it, is about thinking through our choice of the phenomenon, theory, field of study, and methodology and thinking about why we choose one over the other. The field phase is the data collection phase, and it requires the awareness of the researcher on his/her social characteristics and how much influence it has on the interaction in the field and in the data production. The post-field phase is the writing phase or textual situatedness, where the researcher interacts with the data from the field considering the already existing literature (ibid.). It is more ethical and flagging one's status as a data producer. I will explain below what my situatedness looks like in relation to my project.

3.3.1. Pre-field /Autobiographical Situatedness

Before going to the field, I reflected on the questions in my head, such as ‘Why am I studying identity negotiation in a conflict context?’ ‘Why Gambella?’ ‘Why Dialogical Self Theory?’

Ethiopia is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country. Recent ethnic conflicts are seen in the Western and Southern parts of the region, and these people have the same faith, Evangelical Christianity. How is their religious value helping them deal with some contradictory issues in their culture? This is to understand how they negotiate the values in their two identity sources: ethnicity and religion. My question is also, what reconciliation tool are they pulling out of their Evangelical Christianity?

Ethnic clashes in the southern and western parts of the country are not explicit until recently. However, the two major ethnic groups in Gambella (the far western part of the country) have been living in open hostility since the 20th century. Besides, the two ethnic

groups converted from traditional religions since the 1950's and the region is one of the most populated regions in the country with Evangelical believers (more than 70% of the population). This gives the researcher a context to see how they are reconciling 'love your enemies' in their religious creed and looking at each other as 'enemies' due to an unreconciled ethnic identity and other associated things. The region is a great context to see how individuals negotiate their ethnic identity while value dissonance exists. What does the individual's self dialogue look like and what is the outcome of those dialogues? I want to examine the outcomes that might surface after dialogue and how that contributes to their conflictual relationship. Besides, the principles and findings might be applied and tested in different parts of the country in the same situation, and further knowledge can be gained as a tool for conflict transformation.

I grew up in Mekane Yesus Church (MYC hereafter), and I had a bad experience regarding social exclusion, seeing ethnic division and finally, the separation of members into two different congregations using the same name. My childhood church was divided because some 'trusted Christians' wanted a worship session in their language. As some said, it is not because they do not understand 'Amharic'³² but because they want to use their language which is part of their ethnic identity. It is a way of making their ethnicity count. It was about political/ethnic identity and happened in all MYC in the city. The situation posed a question in my mind what has Evangelical Christianity done in influencing our values and facilitating changes? How are we negotiating the values we learn in the Gospel, such as transcendental friendship with others? Maybe ethnic-based riots are politically motivated,

³² The language spoken by considerable number of Ethiopians in the country though there are over 85 different languages.

but what is going on in the people's minds when values clash in their identity sources and how they deal with remained as my questions.

So, I started reading about ethnicity, religion, social inclusion/exclusion, identity, and identity negotiation, which shaped my research questions and my lens before going to the field.

3.3.2. Field Situatedness

As Nuemann and Nuemann note, the researcher needs to be aware of what interlocutors will have on him/her and/ or how the researcher impacts the interlocutors during data production. According to them, such reflection is rewarding analytically and increases data credibility. Field situatedness is about the researcher's awareness towards self and how the interaction with the respondents might influence the researcher (2015, p. 10).

My organisation, Compassion International, has child development projects there, and since it is working with Evangelical Churches, it is easy to access the Christian community through these churches. As a partner organisation, we have developed trust and good relationships with them. The partnership facilitator from our organisation's side has served there for five years, contacted the key people in the Church to help me, and I recruited two young development workers as contact persons for the informants, including themselves. Since my organisation is a funding organisation for the churches' child development projects and my being a middle-level manager in my organisation, I am aware of the existence of 'dominance and social power'; because the interpreters were introducing me by mentioning from which organisation I am coming from. Because of that, they might experience confluence as they talk with me.

To overcome such a tendency, I did my best to explain how my research is independent of the work we did as partners and has nothing to do with their performance. I was careful not to mention organisational issues, no matter how much they wanted me to discuss them. Whenever they ask an organisational question, I will direct them to the responsible manager and tell them that I am a manager for the Eastern region, not the Western part. This has given them some level of confidence to see me independent of my organisation and my role. It is not only their behaviour but also my contact may have some bias, and I have to be careful. Besides, when I ask them questions, I ask them different questions and summarise what they are saying or paraphrase so that I may know what they want to tell me.

My field situatedness indicates my interaction with my informants during interviews and focus group discussions or what Neumann and Neumann called 'contact Mechanisms'. Drawing on the Gestalt tradition, Neuman and Neuman pointed out six different ways of contact mechanisms and related them to the researcher rather than the informants. These are projection, introjection, retroflexion, deflection, confluence, and egotism. They also pointed out that confluence and projection are the most prevalent ones (ibid.: 10-11), which I have also seen in my field of situatedness.

Confluence is a tendency to agree with the idea of informants emanating from the desire for the conversation to be on flow. Both ethnic groups have oppressor-oppressed stories which demonise each other. Sometimes they ask me whether their opinion towards each other is logical such as 'Is that not bad to force people to be Nuer? Do you see the psychological damage that causes? Is that bad to keep one's identity? Such moments are tempting and sometimes force me to agree. However, later, I tried to learn to respond with questions such as, how do you see that? How does it make you and others feel?

Besides the dark history of the Highlanders with one of the ethnic groups, the Anywaa, I sometimes find myself tempted to agree with their demonisation. Because I am also a Highlander, according to their perspective, because of where I am from, and my complexion and my presence might trigger their anger. So, when they tell me about highlanders or ethnic others, I find myself agreeing because I do not want them to stop the interview. In other cases, I met some informants who did not open up as I expected, partly because the issue I raised was sensitive, such as the conflict with ethnic others or their role both in the Church and traditional administration, which is a contentious issue among the church members. When the flow is interrupted, I see myself changing the subject so that we can discuss commonly agreed-upon points, such as ministry or children. Sometimes such deviation will take me in a direction that I did not want to pursue or unrelated to the research's main objectives. I became aware of this at the first interview I did while listening to the recording.

To tackle this, I listen to my recording every night when I return to my hotel and try to improve my wording and gesture in the subsequent interviews. To ensure my informants address the main points, I drafted them well and put them in my note to look at them during the interview.

The other contact mechanism I am aware of is projection. Perceiving what the informants say according to my pre-conceived idea and expectation I have attached to the informants. Since I do not know much about them and have personal experience with the two ethnic groups, I do not project what they are saying to my expectation, for I do not know what to expect. Nevertheless, I have seen that I have a frame of what and how Evangelical Christians need to think and act. So, some of the answers were frustrating at times and

tempted me to correct them. Such as 'polygamy is right' and 'women need to respect their husbands, and they kneel down before him', which feels like oppression to me. For this, while listening to the recording every time, I find the areas where I take off the hat of a researcher and put on the hat of an Evangelical Christian. I always tell myself that I am in the field as a researcher and need to be open to new findings and perspectives according to the different contexts the informants are in and situate myself as a learner.

3.3.3. Post-field /Textual Situatedness

My textual situatedness is about my ethical stand as I process the collected data, my interaction with the collected data and the literature on the topic. It also covers how I collected, managed, and analysed the data from the field. The ethical stand is outlined in my ethical guideline approved by my institute, Oxford Centre for Mission Studies. I continuously remind myself to be true to the data I collected from the field and faithful to the voice of the informants. As I am writing to contribute, I will also be changed by the reflection of my informants, and the text is also evolved from time to time with new ideas and receptions as I progress in my writing. I will continue reading similar scholarly works and debates to argue based on my field data.

Moreover, I explain how I collected, managed, analysed, and interpreted the data systematically below.

3.4. Accessing Informants

The Anywaa and Nuer ethnic groups live in designated Kebele's. However, there are places where these two groups can interact, such as marketplaces, hospitals and sometimes hotels

but not churches and schools. There is one exception; there is only one high school in Gambella town, and both the Anywaa and Nuer children attend this high school when they finish their junior years. Therefore, there is a chance the students interact there, but as some of them informed me, they have friends mostly from other ethnic groups, such as the Highlanders but not from each other (the Anywaa with the Nuer and the Nuer with the Anywaa). Access to the informants was easy for me because of my organization and repeated visits.

I chose four churches from two denominations namely Mekane Yesus and Presbyterian. The Churches are, East Gambella Bethel Mekane Yesus congregation and West Gambella Bethel New Land Congregation from Mekane Yesus denomination. The first belongs to the Anywaa people and the second to the Nuer. The other two are East Gambella Presbyterian Congregation and Gambella Presbyterian Sobat Congregation where the first belongs to the Anywaa people and the second to the Nuer. The four Churches have over 4000 members combined. These Churches serve the local people and use the local language in their service. There are also other denominations established by the Highlanders and their service is in Amharic. These are Full Gospel, Kale Hiwot, Meserete Kirstos and others and almost all the members are Highlanders in these churches.

I obtained access to the contributors through two contact persons (One-from the Nuer ethnic group and One from the Anywaa ethnic group who are working in Compassion assisted projects as project directors). I clarified my project to them first and asked them to find me a willing and capable contributor to my project based on the criteria I set. Gambella is 714 km (444 miles) from where I live, and I cannot go to the place frequently. So, I used the contact persons I frequently converse with over the phone. When I went to the place,

these contact persons waited for me with prepared informants so that I could save the time I had there.

I explained my project to the contributors, asked for their willingness, and got their consent. I already obtained ethics clearance for adolescents from OCMS.

Arrangements about the date and place for the interviews were made. I met adolescents in their respective church vicinity, for the Church is in their neighbourhood, and it is the safest place than anywhere else. I did individual interviews with the adults at the hotels residing in their residential *Kebeles* for their safety.

3.5. Research Methods

I used multiple methods to explore the phenomenon of ethnic identity negotiation in light of the religious values in a specific place, Gambella City. I used semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and non-participant observation. The interviewees were two ethnic group members between the age of 17-75 in different professions so that I can get a range of perspectives and experiences about their ethnic identity negotiation through dialogical self after being converted to evangelical Christianity or born in evangelical believers' homes. I triangulated the answers to confirm the behaviour of negotiated identity they claim by listening to each other's story and emphasising the indicators of ethnic identity negotiation as per their perspective.

3.6. Data Collection

3.6.1. Sampling

3.6.1.1. Adolescent group

Cohen and Manion (1989) described the strength of a case study as follows:

Unlike the experimenter who manipulates variables to determine their causal significance or the surveyor who asks standardised questions of large, representative samples of individuals, the case study researcher typically observes the characteristics of an individual unit - a child, a clique, a class, a school or a community. The purpose of such observation is to probe deeply and to analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitute the life cycle of the unit with a view to establishing generalisations about the wider population to which that unit belongs (124-125).

I am looking at the individual's identity negotiation phenomenon in dialoguing with their religious values, which can help me establish inferences about the wider population of the two ethnic groups.

I employed purposive sampling; within this framework, snowball sampling is also used. I set a few criteria to select the informants. In the case of adolescent children, I chose children born in Christian families and passed through Sunday school, those who were converted to Christianity while they were at adolescent age. I also purposefully select those who had or have friends from ethnic others, especially from the Anywaa or the Nuer. Based on this, on the first round of data collection (2019) I selected 12 adolescents from the Anywaa in East Gambella Presbyterian Congregation and 12 from the Nuer in West Gambella Bethel New Land Congregation, both male and female, for individual interviews. I also selected 12 from the Anywaa and 19 from the Nuer from the same Churches for focus group discussion which comprises the individual interviewees and additional respondents. This is to expand the respondent's number and triangulate the answer they

gave during individual interviews. The interviewees are between the ages of 17-19. In the individual interviews half of the respondents are male and the rest half are female. During focus group discussion, the number of Nuer male respondents increase by three and there were 8 females in female focus group and 11 in male focus group discussion.

During the second data collection time (2021) I include seven other adolescents for individual interview to add their perspective in the research. Three respondents from the Nuer (one male and two female) From West Gambella Bethel New land and four respondents from the Anywaa (one male and three female) East Gambella Methel Mekane Yesus Congregation were interviewed during interviews for adult respondents.

I conducted the focus group discussion by dividing the adolescent informants into boys' and girls' groups, which divided the number of focus group discussions into four. I have done this to give them more freedom to talk. I set additional criteria to select adolescents for semi-structured interviews based on the friendship they have with ethnic others and the different encounters they faced related to inter-ethnic friendship and conflict after I conducted the focus group discussion. All of the adolescent respondents are second and third generations, either they heard about the Gospel from their friend or born into a Christian family where their mothers and fathers or one of them are Christians before they were born.

3.6.1.2. Adult Respondents

To select adult informants, knowledge, role in the Church, role in the government sectors, marital status, and type (inter-ethnic or intra-ethnic marriage) is considered. I used snowball sampling for some specific issues, such as intra-ethnic marriage, participation in both

Church and traditional religious roles (people who are both *Kwaroo* or *Niyiya* and ministers in the Church), and children or adults who participated in the conflict. Snowball sampling is used to track key informants on a specific and sensitive subject (Naderifar *et al.*, 2017), such as participation in the Church and traditional religion and in the conflicts. Besides these, the informants led me to another potential informant, for I did not know the place and the people well. Sometimes non-informants suggest potential informants, such as my friends who are going to school with the Anywaa or Nuer friends here in Addis.

I also consider their communication skill, either English or Amharic, for the purpose of freedom so that I may interview them without the need for translators. People can share their thoughts without fearing the judgement of those who understand their language. I used two translators, one for the Anywaa language and one for the Nuer language, for those respondents who do not speak either. Most of the respondents are converts, and I have a few born in a Christian family. The purposive sampling criterion, apart from conversion and being born in a Christian family, also include those who happened to know the traditional religion and/or participated in one way or another before conversion. I also considered the differences in age and gender between both. Most of my adult respondents are between the ages of 25-50, except for a few respondents who are as old as 60 and 75.

I have interviewed 38 individuals from both ethnic groups and four focus group discussions comprising 8-10 individuals, both from two Mekane Yesus Churches and two Presbyterian Churches of the two ethnic groups.

3.7. Data Collection Methods

3.7.1. Semi-structured In-depth Interviews

It is one of the most dominant and widely used methods of data collection in qualitative studies (Bradford & Cullen, 2012). Common methods are used in the case study approach, such as life histories, document interviews and participant observation. However, an in-depth interview is central to the case study approach as participant observation is for ethnography (Harwati, 2019). According to Braun and Clarke (2006):

Qualitative semi-structured interviews can be used as much to consider experience, meanings, and the 'reality' of participants' experiences as they can be used to explore how these experiences, 'realities', and meanings might be informed by discourses, assumptions or ideas which exist in wider society.

It is very valuable because it helps to explore subjective viewpoints³³ and understand the informants' experiences or situations in their own words (Flick, 2009; Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). There are five typical characteristics of an in-depth interview:

1) It comprises open-ended questions that mostly begin with 'how' and 'why'. This helps the respondent expound the answer instead of yes or no. 2) Key questions are preplanned, but they are loosely structured to keep the natural flow of interaction between the interviewer and interviewee. 3) It is goal-oriented: seeks understanding and interpretation. This lies in the active listening skill of the researcher, for clarity and understanding are needed while interviewing. 4) Conversational: It is not question and answer time but rather interactional, where much of the talking is done by the interviewee, not the interviewer 5) It requires systematic recording and documentation to probe deeper understanding (Guion, L. *et al* 2011)³⁴.

The researcher recorded each interview and focus group discussion with a Sony IC recorder. This helped the discussion flow easily into a friendly conversation way; it gave time for the researcher to listen more and ask questions with full attention. Listening and

³³ The subjective points under subjective theory refer to the informant's stock of knowledge about the issues under study, both explicit and implicit knowledge.

³⁴ Guion, L., Diehl, D., and McDonald, D. (2011). *Conducting an In-depth Interview*, University of Florida. Retrieved from "<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fy393>

asking without much writing will keep both the respondent and researcher at the moment of time. Because recording saves every conversation more than that of the researcher's memory, recording is a vital part of an in-depth interview. The recording is also accompanied by field notes to capture non-verbal communication and cues and reflective notes after the interviews. The researcher recorded reflections regarding their emotion and way of non-verbal expressions that the recorder could not capture. The researcher did the transcription of the recording, which helped the researcher to listen to the recording repeatedly. This increases the encounter and understanding of the data set well.

3.7.2. Focus Group Discussion /Group Interviews

In qualitative studies, focus group discussion comes as the second most utilised method next to in-depth interviews (Aicart et al., 2016). We used focus group discussions to see individual interactions, such as disagreement or empathy. Besides, we can use focus group discussion when we believe the group setting will bring out more insights (Lazar et al., 2017). It also helps to triangulate or compare the insights we get from individuals.

According to Lewis (1992, p. 20), a group interview or focus group discussion is defined as "a group conversational encounter with a research purpose". He also noted several advantages it has over individual interviews, such as revealing on what topic they reach to consensus or not, verifying the ideas gained through other methods and increasing the reliability of the responses.

The focus group discussions were done among heterogeneous groups in terms of sex, knowledge, and expertise. There were eight adult and adolescent focus group discussions: four for adults and four for adolescents. The number of participants ranges from 8-12. The

gender mix is kept well, and two major churches from the area are taken: Presbyterian and Mekane Yesus Churches, where the majority of the Nuer and the Anywaa are going.

Here, the discussions are recorded, and field notes are taken on nonverbal communication and other observations. Some reflective notes were also taken after the interviews.

The discussion areas were 1) how they understand identity and what they consider as identity markers and 2) How do they feel about their ethnic groups and the values they appreciate or condemn when they see them through the Bible. 3) what factors do they consider the causes of conflict in the area? 4) what solutions do they think of for the two ethnic groups to live peacefully? 5) what will be their responsibility in the peace-building effort?

3.7.3. Non-participant Observations

Participant observation is a key strategy in ethnographic research, but it can also be used in other research approaches, such as case studies. Participant observation is all the researcher does in the field apart from interviewing, such as photography and participation in study group meetings as just observer (Wolcott, 1999, p. 44). However, according to James Spradley (1988), there are two kinds of participants in the observation process: ordinary participants and participant observers. The first has limited activity, such as attending meetings without being part of the activities in the meeting. Whereas the participant observer is not only the audience but also a partaker in the activities of the participants (p. 53-54).

The researcher participated in their worship services and conferences both in Gambella and Addis Ababa as a non-participant observer. Another observation is by taking pictures of

emblems, statues, and signs. These observations are accompanied by taking field notes during the event and on the spot. After the event is completed, reflective notes will help to analyse and interpret the event, or the picture taken. According to Jun (2010), "keeping journals is beneficial not only for releasing the researcher's own cultural and social biases but also for identifying patterns of behaviour in the research field".

3.8. Data Management

The data management starts with organising and labelling them according to the methods employed and major finding chapters organised (according to the research question). Since I collected data at different times, as I continued organising data, it gave me time to look at the data repeatedly. This enables me to decide whether I have collected enough data to the level of saturation and whether I have transcribed irrelevant data that should be trimmed (Chang, 2008, p. 115). I keep the data in an Excel workbook so that whenever I want to see informants' responses on a certain topic, such as polygamy, I can easily select and look at them separately. I put the objective of the finding chapter as the heading so that I can know what elements I am looking for, for that chapter. Since the data is huge, I needed to go through it according to the objectives. Below is a sample of selected data logs on specific issues.

Data collection strategy				Data contents			
No.	Code	Collector	Type	Time	Ethnic group	Items	Category
1	IIA-06	Self	Interview	2020	Anywaa	Nowadays there is a lot of economic	IM/CD

						pressure that we cannot afford having many kids from many wives.	
2	IIA-19	Self	Interview	2020	Anywaa	It is hard to have many wives for there are a lot of disease that can be transmitted easily	IM/CD
3	IIA-81	Self	Interview	2022	Anywaa	It is hard to manage two, three wives and you cannot be spiritually strong	IM/CD
4	IIN-139	Self	Interview	2022	Nuer	It is only Adam and Eve in the beginning not Adam and Eves	IM/CD
5	IIN-155	Self	Interview	2022	Nuer	Bible doesn't support polygamy	IM/CD

Table 1 Sample of Data Organization and Labelling

The data log consists of three major parts: data collection strategy, data content and specific category, which are indicated in the study's objectives. In the above case, the category falls under both identity marker (IM) and continuity/ discontinuity (C/D) of some values after conversion. The data collection strategy column helps to sort and organise diverse data, and the data content column is very useful in classifying and conceptualising data for data analysis and interpretation. Each datum is numbered and hyperlinked to the text file in which the content of the data is fully described. Each text data is kept in a cloud that my

organisation provided where I can keep and access it anytime, and nobody can access it unless I give permission.

The data log table above shows the when, the who, and the what principles. The who component in the primary label shows information on who collected and recorded the data and, in the secondary table, which ethnic group said what. The third component is what the primary label tells of the data collection method and, in the secondary label, the main topic of the data. These are codes of data collection methods in primary label: I/I= in-depth interview, FG = focus group, F/N = field notes, S/R = self-reflection. Finally, the category reveals information on the aspects of the analysis, I/M = identity markers, C/D= continuity/discontinuity from past religious or traditional values.

3.9. Data Analysis and Interpretation

3.9.1. Data Analysis: Thematic Data Analysis (Example)

After transcribing the data, collected through individual interviews and focus group discussions, I have categorised and systematised them so that I can see meanings and new insights in them. I have noticed repeated ideas described differently by different people or take key words for the question raised.

The itemisation and conceptualisation process appears below:

Code	Excerpt	Subcategories	Category
IIA-06	Polygamy among evangelicals is not like others; unless they have enough resources, they don't do it. If they have enough resources, it is ok. Because	Dividing evangelical's way and	Framing

	so much disagreement comes into the house because of finance	other's way of polygamy	
IIN-273	We apply Biblical principles in the traditional way. For example, when we bless the girl or the boy, they come and sit in front of their parents and the parents take the blood of the slaughtered animal and put a mark on the forehead and a chest and prophecy about their future and the children they are going to be born. They tell about their sex too. We do the same, but we use biblical words.	Using Biblical words for traditionally set rituals	
IIN-195	Having many children is the command of God but one wife cannot give birth to many children but three or more wives. Unless we do this way, we cannot have many children. God said, 'increase in number' (Genesis 1:28 be fruitful and multiply); but one wife can give birth to only 2, 3, or a maximum of 10, and that will not be enough. One woman cannot give 20, 30, or 50 children only three or four wives can	Putting polygamy in biblical order	
IIN-155	My wife mentions the story of David how many wives he married to and still God was listening to them. And she tells me I am not greater than them and encourage me to have another wife.	Looking polygamy with those who practiced it and applying to present situation	

Table 2 Table showing Thematic Data Analysis Example

3.10. Ethical Guidelines and Trustworthiness of the Data

3.10.1. Trustworthiness of the Data

One of the key issues that the researcher needs to be aware of and work towards is the data's trustworthiness. According to Sandelowski (1993: 213-218), researchers must make their data analysis and interpretation practice visible and auditable. Lincoln and Guba (1985:219), proposed four ways that the researcher can ensure the trustworthiness of the data, namely, credibility (believability of the data not only from the researcher's side but also readers' side), transferability (implies how much the theories used can be used in similar context), dependability (since research is bounded by time and space when the setting is changed, the researcher is responsible for stating that) and confirmability (implies the researcher need to come to the data repeatedly until the study is completed to prevent potential bias and distortion; relating analysis and interpretation always through the eyes of the data).

They also suggested the potential techniques to ensure the four elements of trustworthiness, such as "prolonged engagement and persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, and member checking, to establish credibility; thick description, to facilitate transferability; and auditing, to establish dependability and confirmability" (pp 219). This is because there are threats to the trustworthiness of qualitative studies (Padgett, 1998, p. 92). These are reactivity (distorting effect of the researcher on the field), researcher bias (choosing informants that go along with their view or ignoring data that does not support their assumption or conclusion), and respondent biases (withholding information or

lying to protect their privacy or because of the sensitivity of the issue or give answers they perceive we wanted to hear instead of the truth).

In order to overcome these threats, I listen to the recording every night on interviewing day and take notes if there are any leading questions I used or sounded biased and correct in the following interview. If need be, I also meet the person again and correct the question in the way that he is taking it as additional questions. Besides, I used triangulation by listening to other ethnic groups regarding selected issues. More specifically, I employed method triangulation: using more than one method. I used in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and non-participant observation.

Above all, Saldana (2014, p. 604) regarding the trustworthiness of data is a guiding principle if the researcher wants to make a genuine contribution. Saldana said, “the bottom line is that credibility and trustworthiness are matters of researcher honesty and integrity. Anyone can write that he worked ethically and reflexively, but only the writer will ever know the truth”.

The question I raised in this project has been a question to me since my childhood. What I have learnt from the Bible about sacrificial love and family hood in Christ will always clash with what I observe on the ground, division over other lines. I also was a victim of division along the lines of ethnicity in my childhood church, and my mind asks, "What would Jesus do?" as Charles Sheldon (in his book *In His Steps*, 1896) puts it. I have a genuine motive to support the Evangelical Christians I am part of, to have a reflective reading of the Bible or reflect on their other identity markers in the light of what they have learned and believed in the Bible. Besides, as a citizen of a multicultural nation, I want to contribute to the effort to

ensure over 85 different ethnic groups cohabitate peacefully and make their boundaries permeable.

My country is at a crossroads because of the threat coming from ethnic divisions, from which Evangelical Christians are no exception. If I find other insights I never thought about or opposing views from mine, I would be open to learning about change through my informants and this journey instead of manipulating the data.

3.10.2. Ethical Guidelines

I have established ethical guidelines to protect the respondents' privacy, autonomy and be truthful in generating insights and knowledge through the data. I have focused on the ethical guidelines that focused specifically on the case study.

The first guideline set is obtaining informed and voluntary consent. I also obtained approval from OCMS education board to access data from an adolescent group. The written consent comprises different aspects such as a promise to keep participants safe and due emphasis and attention is given to a vulnerable group, children. It also indicates communicating the nature of the research clearly, their right to privacy and withdrawal at any stage of the research. Their autonomy will be kept in the production of the thesis by changing their names and places (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015, p. 304-305).

As I am dealing the human subject, I followed the principles of ethical guidelines by Levian (1986, p.99). Respect, beneficence, justice, that are about treating the respondents as autonomous and protect those that can be exploited easily, such as children. The second is making sure doing no harm the least, and maximizing benefit and minimizing the harm, at

best, that comes through participating in the research. The last one is sharing both the burden and benefit of the research with the participants.

Based on Roller and Lavarka's principles to applied qualitative research designs, I have established five ethical guidelines for my research.

3.10.2.1. Explanation of the Research before Engaging

As part of the right and respect of the person, I am aware that the informants need to have enough information about my research and the objective of the research. It is their right to ask questions and explore further about the study. If they do not want to answer some questions, I should not insist or intimidate them into talking. In every encounter with the informants, I have been what the research was about, and after even we started the interview, some posed and asked me again what my research was about and why I was asking that particular question. I politely answered their questions and asked them if they were still willing to continue.

3.10.2.2. Asking for Permission

I have recorded all the interviews and focus group discussions; I also take some pictures of their artefacts, cultural emblems, and our interview session. Before starting the questions, I asked all informants if they would participate in the research and got their consent. I prepared the consent form both in English and Amharic. Some signed, and some wanted me to read and gave me their consent without signing.

3.10.2.3. Protecting and Informing the Rights of Participants

I have informed them that their interview will only be conducted if they are willing. They are informed that they can ask any question as we do the interview and withdraw themselves at any point if they want to. The recording was also done with their knowledge and consent.

3.10.2.4. Confidentiality of Data

I kept the data confidential, all digitised and accessed only by me. I transcribed the data so that no one would have access to read the data.

3.10.2.5. Confidentiality of the Informants

I used pseudonyms to protect the names of the informants and the names of places and churches specifically to keep the shared information and the informant confidential.

3.11. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explained the methodology, methods, and systematic process I employed to analyse and interpret data. I have also established principles for trustworthiness and formulated ethical guidelines; the first is to ensure the credibility of the research, and the latter is to protect the identity and privacy of the informants and the information.

I employed a qualitative approach to the study, exploratory case study methodology. I chose the approach over the others for it helps to understand people perceptions and experiences on particular issues, ethnic identity negotiation through dialogical self as a

case. Besides, the methodology gives access to different and flexible way of obtaining data.

Three main methods are used in this research: semi-structured individual interviews, semi-structured group interviews (focus group discussions), and non-participant observation.

Data obtained through the three methods, are transcribed, stored, itemised, analysed and interpreted systematically. Data is analysed thematically. In order to ensure the credibility of the research and ensure the privacy of informants, five ethical guidelines are set, and informed consent is obtained from the participants.

Chapter Four Identity Markers and Ethnic Boundary Making

4.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to answer one of the research questions that examine the identity markers, The Anywaa and the Nuer profess and how the markers play a role in boundary works, formation and negotiation. It is arranged in three sections with their sub-sections. The first section presents the primary identity markers the Anywaa and the Nuer profess and concentrates on those that they both profess. The salience of the markers is arranged as ascribed and acquired identity where one is culturally or genetically determined and the other is their chosen identity.

The second section will be on how ethnic boundaries are made along the line of identity markers and their salience through the positioning of the self. When they position the self, they describe the unchangeability of the markers, reflect on their meanings, justify the maintenance as a problem of others, not them and draw pride and peculiarity from them.

The third section examines how identity is negotiated when the meaning attached to identity markers is changed and the factors contributing to the negotiation, depositioning, and repositioning of the self, such as religious reasons and cultural reasons. The depositioning and repositioning of the self are exemplified by a change of view towards who they are and how they view others. Finally, the concluding summary highlights the major findings in the chapter.

4.2. Anywaa and Nuer Identity Markers: Ascribed and Acquired

According to the analysed data, there are multiple identity markers that the Anywaa and the Nuer used to describe themselves. The identity markers are categorised as ascribed identity markers and acquired identity markers. Ascribed identity markers base the mastering of two competencies: intra-cultural competence and genetically driven competence. Taking a cue from the intercultural competency definition, I use intra-cultural competence which describe how the actors live out the expectations and roles assigned to them by their community, such as body marks, dress codes, and marital expectations. Whereas genetic-driven competencies are primarily genetically determined, such as skin colour, the way they walk, eye colour, and voice.

On the other hand, acquired identity markers or avowed identity markers are those markers that emerge from repeated interaction with other actors and self-reflection invoked by different factors, in this case, value dissonance in one's identity. According to the analyzed data, ascribed and avowed identity markers change the nature of ethnic boundaries by making them either permeable or impermeable. Permeability means having space for others in one's personal spaces, beliefs and cultures without insisting others change theirs and vice versa. It also focused on commonality rather than difference. An impermeable boundary is either trying to change others into one's own (Nuer) or refusing to accommodate others in one's space (Anywaa).

4.2.1. Ascribed Identity Markers

Ascribed identity markers are those markers that can be personal, social, or cultural identities that are placed on us by others (Martin & Nakayama, 2010). These can be culturally or genetically determined.

The Anywaa and the Nuer ascribed identities are related to one or multiple categories of the following.

4.2.1.1. Ethnic Group

Both the Anywaa and the Nuer profess their ethnic group or collective identity as a primary identity marker. They might directly say my ethnic group is my identity or they might express it in terms of Anywaaness and Nuerness.

An Anywaa respondent said, ‘When I consider my identity, for example, I am Anywaa now, my ethnic group is the most important thing in my life (IIA-248).’ After mentioning his parents are Christians, another Anywaa respondent said, ‘If you ask me about my ethnic group, I am Anywaa’ (IIA-279). Another respondent conflated other identities and tried to give his ethnic group a certain unique identity. He conflated nationality and Christianity contrasting with the same ethnic group identity in another country. In his description, Anywaaness means ethnic group, nationality (Ethiopian) and religious identity (Christianity):

When I say I am Anywaa, it shows my ethnic group and partially my nationality. Except for those who are South Sudan Anywaa, Anywaa are Christians. Even those who are living in South Sudan, you cannot find many Muslims. It also shows my religious identity (IIA-296).

Besides, they said that values are embedded in their ethnic group. The values explain the nature of the ethnic group. One of the values in their group identity is enshrined in the meaning of their ethnic identity name, Anywaa. According to them, Anywaa means ‘sharing’, the word that signifies their group cohesion. The name Anywaa implies the people who are eating together, fighting together. The name itself implies sharing, unity, togetherness (IIA-335).’ The other respondent also confirmed, ‘Anywaa means sharing together, having a relationship, living together’ (IIA-450). In their description, two values are expressed, sharing and togetherness or cohesion. The name also communicates an individual’s responsibility in living out their ethnic identity. One respondent said, ‘The name tells me that I am the one who should share especially food with others. If I have food, I must share it even with a stranger. Anywaa means sharing’ (IIA-469).

In another description, the name Anywaa communicates brevity, especially in the fight. One respondent said, ‘When people say this is a son of Anywaa means the brave one: afraid of nothing. They say, ‘Are you not the son of Anywaa? they mean, why are you afraid?’ (IIA-297).

The Anywaa people consider their collective identity a primary marker, and their collective identity is loaded with values they need to live out.

Similarly, the Nuer consider their ethnic group as their identity marker. One Nuer respondent said, ‘I was born in Nuer and will die as Nuer. I also have a clan. I am from the Eastern-Nuer sub-clan because I was born in *Lare Wereda*’ (Lare district) (IIN-221). The other Nuer respondent also said, ‘With other ethnic markers, my ethnic group signifies my identity’ (FGN-157). The other respondent also confirmed that even after becoming a Christian, his Nuerness continued but his religious identity is changed. When he describes

what signifies his identity, he said, ‘I am Nuer, before I became a Christian, I used to believe in an ethnic god called *den*. Now I am a Christian and Nuer’ (IIN-567). When he talks about his identity marker, the other respondent also remarks that his identity is ascribed but still proud of it and as unique as other ethnic groups:

I am Nuer, and because of that, it represents my identity. I didn’t create or choose it, but I feel proud when I say I am Nuer. Some people think that their culture is better, but I don’t think it is, because everyone’s culture is unique (IIN-572).

As the Anywaa, different values are embedded in the Nuer culture. Some cultural responsibilities embedded in Nuer culture are taking care of family members if they do not have an income and supporting the parents in their old age, especially men (FGN-443), contributing cattle for ransom and dowry (IIN-90), and sharing what they have among themselves (IIN-204).

In both the Nuer and the Anywaa, they describe themselves with multiple identity markers. However, individual respondents and focus group discussants give higher priority for collective identity.

4.2.1.2. Language

Both the Anywaa and the Nuer languages share the same language origin, the Western Nilotic group but are separated by dialect. According to John Mclaughlin’s (1967) account of the Anywaa and the Nuer-Dinka chronological linguistic relationship, or time of separation, the Anywaa, the Nuer and the Dinka had the same language group, and the Anywaa separated from the language group 335 B.C.E. An Anywaa respondent also confirms the similarity of their language. When he describes the similarity and differences between the two ethnic groups, he said, ‘We are partially cattle keepers and partially

farmers, but they are (Nuer) 100% cattle keepers. From Abobo onwards, they are farmers, but those who are living around the river depend highly on cattle. Even the language is related' (IIA-305). Another respondent confirmed that young people from both ethnic groups can speak both languages (IIN-389).

However, both the Anywaa and the Nuer profess that language is an important identity marker for them, and it differentiates them from others. An Anywaa respondent remembered how separation starts along the line of language in the church:

During Dergue, all the missionaries were expelled and then at that time the leadership of the Church became weak. In 1985, the Betel church was taken over by MYC. After a while, this division starts, the first division was because of doctrinal issues over the work of the Holy Spirit. So, some who choose Pentecostalism became Full Gospel Church (FGC), Kale Hiwot Church (KHC), and Meserete Kirstos Church (MKC). And we stayed together (both Nuer and Anywaa) for a while. But the disagreement arose over whose program should be conducted first or second. It was a shift basis because of the language difference. Before the conflict, we were using the Amharic language during the Sunday program, but small group programs were conducted in their own language (Nuer and Anywaa). However, the people started demanding Sunday worship in their language, which grew into separation (IIA-139).

After this historical separation, the two ethnic groups emphasise their language as an identity marker. An Anywaa respondent said, 'My language signifies my identity' (IIA-295). Similarly, another respondent how language is important for his identity and his parents told him to keep it at any cost. He said, 'In my ethnic group, language and identity have high importance. Our parents told us to keep these no matter how much developed the region will be' (IIA-350). He is reminded that development might threaten language maintenance, but they are told to keep it.

Similarly, the Nuer also recognize language as their identity marker. Nuer respondents expressed in different ways; 'our language is different from them' (IIN-343, FGN-462), 'The language, the tribe, and also the belief of that particular tribe differentiates me from others such as Anywaa' (IIN-567).

4.2.1.3. Culture

The other repeatedly mentioned an identity marker among the two ethnic groups is culture in its general terms. When both talk about culture, they mention different things associated with it. Anywaa respondents associate culture with different expected behaviours such as sharing and respecting each other based on the hierarchy in different institutions, family and community. Telling the truth and hard work (IIA-65) and hospitality (IIA-337). Others associate it with their political institution which is still practised in rural areas but not in Gambella town; and political institutions by kings (*Niyiya*) and Lords (*Kwaroo*) (IIA-75). Some relate it to their marriage forms, multiple marriage and widow inheritance (IIA-132, IIA-199). Others emphasize ethnic purity in their culture (IIA-149).

Also, different cultural obligations are mentioned in association with culture such as the dowry with special beads (*dimuy*). Beads serve the Anywaa for different purposes, because dowry as mentioned earlier, is a sign of affection (IIA-309), a royal emblem (IIA-538, Dereje, 2011), and a means of communication after a marriage proposal (IIA-421). Other things associated with culture are dress (IIA-99), dancing (IIA-99), food (IIA-38), community-level rituals such as *Chiimari* (IIA-441) and the pulling out of teeth from the lower jaw (IIA-306). Some also note that Anywaa culture is known for multiple deities (IIA-366). Therefore, when an Anywaa asked about their identity markers and said my culture, they knew that their culture defines their different aspects of life. However, they do not appreciate some of them after they came to Christianity, which will be discussed in the next Chapter.

Similarly, the view of culture in the Nuer is a multifaceted phenomenon. They say that their social setting, living together as one big family, is a cultural element (IIN-52, IIN-217). This is to support each other in any way needed (IIN-89, IIN-204). As one respondent described the social setting in comparison to the West:

The most I like in Nuer culture is how they keep their blood relationship. You may see twenty or thirty people living in a house. They should not necessarily be your father, mother, sisters, and brothers only but other relatives too. You can keep your grandfather and your grandfather's relatives as a family in your home. If you see the people in the West, they don't have such a thing; they consider family only husband, wife and children (IIN-442).

Besides, the Nuer's culture encourages having many children (IIN-199). Big families and more children are needed to secure more resources through girls, and more security through boys (IIN-109). Especially the absence of boys in the family would mean a loss of security and defence. Boys are needed for tribal conflicts (FGN-152) and other kinds of fights (IIN-74).

Other elements associated with culture are hospitality (IIN-110), widow inheritance (FGN-436), polygamy (IIN-382), face marks (FGN-462, IIN-487), food (IIN-567) dancing (IIN-551) clan responsibility in ransom (IIN-190), the higher value of cattle (FGN-442, IIN-522) in dowry (IIN-23, IIN-259), specific rituals (IIN-564) and dress (IIN-343, IIN-564). They also described that multiple deities were part of the culture (IIN-562).

The above ascribed identity markers, in both ethnic groups, communicate differences and uniqueness. People also accepted them as unchanging rather they are born into them. when they say, 'I was born in Nuer and will die as Nuer', they are communicating the fixedness of their identity.

4.2.1.4. Physical Identity Markers

Both the Anywaa and the Nuer have unique physical identity markers. The Anywaa use beads on their neck, hands and legs for aesthetic purposes and some time as a means of communication. Since they use beads as physical and cultural elements, they are called 'beads people' (Dereje, 2010). They also pull out their lower teeth to differentiate themselves from animals. Similarly, the Nuer have physical marks such as pulling out their lower teeth and a mark on their forehead called 'gar'. A painful rite of passage for the Nuer unto manhood is the six lines scar which lasts a lifetime. Nuer people draw pride and strength through it and make them look down others considering they are still boys not men (Pritchard, 1940:249, Dereje, 2010:69).

4.2.2. Acquired Identity Marker: Religious Identity

Acquired or avowed identity markers refer to internally defined identity in contrast to ascribed identity markers, which are externally imposed identity. When identity is internally defined, it shows that dialogue and negotiation are ongoing. Therefore, unlike ascribed identity, acquired identity is chosen by the individuals. Since the concept is the same, I use acquired or avowed identity as an identity that is professed by individuals as the chosen identity marker. One of the acquired/avowed identity markers of both ethnic groups is religious identity through conversion from their respective traditional religions to evangelical Christianity.

It is the traditional religion that we may consider as an ascribed identity. In a conversion, identity will be ascribed for some, especially second and third generations, but for those who are converted that will be a chosen identity. I interviewed both first and second

generations, and in most of the interviewees, Evangelical Christian identity is a chosen /acquired identity. Since both ethnic groups have chosen the conversion, their new religious identity became 'a meeting ground' though they came from divergent ethnic identifications. I have identified three ways that people of the Anywaa and the Nuer describe their religious identity and how it is professed. According to them, what entails being a Christian is described in one of the three ways or a mixture of them, namely vocational, relational, and behavioural religious identity.

4.2.2.1. Vocational

Vocational identity is an individual's self-defined occupational goals, interests, values, and roles (Skorikov & Vondracek, 2011). When the Anywaa and the Nuer asked who they are, one of the things they associated their identity with was their vocation in the Church. They say (IIN-266): I am a deacon, pastor, evangelist, Sunday school teacher, member of elders, and others (IIN-266, IIA-01). These vocations are very important for both ethnic groups because these positions are earned positions through fulfilling the condition set by the Church, which sometimes requires sacrificing what is culturally allowed. For example, if anyone wants to be a minister or a Church leader, they need to be monogamous and remain monogamous. A Nuer pastor shared how this works in the Church:

A person cannot serve as a minister in the Church if he has more than one wife. In the Church constitution, it is written that if you get married to more than one, you will still be considered as a believer, you can come to Church and pray with others, attend the church services, and pay your tithes and gifts, but you should not preach and teach the people. You cannot be a minister (IIN-175).

Those who chose to be a minister passed through tension or lived in constant tension along the way because of cultural demands from family and community members. One respondent, whose father's last will for him while he was on his deathbed was for his son to

go for a second marriage. However, this has put him in a challenging situation, and he is constantly tense. Culturally, he is expected to fulfil his father's will or else he will face the curse that his father utters. On the other hand, the Church leaders told him that his job as project director in children and youth development projects is not merely a job but an ordination or appointment which does not allow him to have an additional wife. Being a project director means being a minister, as he is told. Therefore, his religious identity related to his vocation is something that he has to earn (IIN-79).

However, some choose to fulfil this vocational identity, and others might find it difficult. For instance, an Anywaa evangelist who gets a push from community and family decided to remain monogamous and be an evangelist:

I am an evangelist, married to a Christian lady. I have four children, and I have only one wife. In our culture, assuming I have four or five sisters, they will force me to have more wives because I have things in our house. In our culture, if you have enough money, you can have more wives, but some Christians like me believe that we need to marry only one (IIA-406).

Similarly, a Nuer pastor said, 'I am a pastor in the Church. I am married and have four children: three girls and a boy. I have only one wife. My wife is a deacon in this congregation. She is serving here' (IIN-222). This pastor is among the main teachers in the Church who teach people the harmful side of polygamy.

On the other side, some chose to put aside their vocational religious identity and maintain their ordinary religious identity, just being a member, and culture side by side. In line with this, one respondent told me about a person he knows personally and how he lost his position as a Church leader:

If you are a leader in the Church, you can have only one wife. Paul said 'if you can remain alone to serve the Lord, that is fine. However, if you cannot control yourself, you can have one.'

However, this is a trouble for some. There is one person in our Church who has two wives, and he is removed from Church leadership. He served in leadership for almost twenty years, but after twenty years, he decided to have another wife and lost his job now, and now he is just a member (IIN-141).

The issue needs reflection and internal dialogue so that they can make a choice.

4.2.2.2. Relational

The other form of defining religious identity among the two ethnic groups is relational. Relational identity is a relational orientation of individuals that is described in terms of relations with others. According to Adams et al. (2014), relational orientation in identity discourse is 'the perceived importance individuals or groups attach to relationships, and it reflects the degree to which self or other descriptions deal with personal and/or relational aspects'.

One of the identity aspects that comes through the Evangelical religion is having relations with others. An Anywaa lady who described herself as a peacemaker in the community said:

I am one of the peacemakers in the community, telling the community that we should love one another. We should love our ethnic group. We should also love another ethnic group. Because all people are the same before God. I do not hate any ethnic group; I love all ethnic groups, for they are all created by God like me, so I should not hate them (IIA-02).

As a peacemaker, the lady is communicating two things: one, the message of peace is telling people to love one another; Two, as they love their ethnic group, they should love other ethnic groups because of one creator, God.

Similarly, a man who used to work in a certain peace and reconciliation initiative shared that he witnessed the preaching of relationships among the people. He is one of the Anywaa kings, *Niyiya*, but a converted king. Kings in Anywaa are responsible for the security of the

people (IIA-77), but the new religious identity helps the king to be relational even with ethnic others. According to the respondent who participated in peace talks, he shared what the king said to the community from different tribes:

Now it is up to you to bring peace among us. Pray for our land because God is the one who can protect our land, not me. you people came from different tribes, but your blood, mind and spirit still belong to God. You are the same and one. Your blood is red. You might have a different identity but the same before God (IIA-82).

The Anywaa king is making a relationship between different people and telling them that they are one. They are one at a human level and spiritual level, for they belong to God. This relational identity is looking for what unites people and emphasize it instead of looking at differences.

Similarly, a Nuer respondent notes the relationship:

We should teach them that God redeemed people from all languages and tribes. We need to teach them this. When people think that all is born from one God, they will not be trapped in such silly and small matters (He indicated the conflict among ethnic groups). When people count, the blood of Jesus is shed for all the people, such minor issues will not stop them (IIN-133).

Another Nuer respondent defines what being a Christian means in terms of the relationship with others:

According to the Bible, when you become a Christian, your enemy is now your friend. Because even if the person is your enemy when you accept Christianity, you leave all the enmity behind, and the person will be your friend. This is not to allow any devil spirit to come to you by not changing your thoughts about others. Because now, you are in the same Church under the same God (FGN-469).

This respondent is hearing how Christianity redefined his view of the relationship he had as a view and practised towards others. He said that the newly acquired identity is relational or redefines relational identity.

Though there is a difference in culture and other identities, a communal, ‘family resemblance’ comes through viewing their religious identity as relational and transcends differences.

4.2.2.3. Behavioural

The other way religious identity is expressed in terms of behavioural salience both at the intention and action levels.³⁵ Most respondents in both ethnic groups described the meaning of conversion or what being born again means in terms of some behavioral changes. An Anywaa respondent describes the salience of his religious identity in terms of changes of behaviour and changes of world view:

A born-again Christian is a Christian who does not do something that the Bible does not support—activities like stealing and killing. If you are born again, you do not want to do that again. As I told you, I was thinking of revenge on the person who killed my grandfather, but as I became a Christian and was baptised, I was born again and did not want to do those things (IIA-252).

Another Anywaa respondent also defines what being Christian mean as, ‘to say one person is a Christian, that person should follow the rules in the Bible, like the ten commandments’ (IIA-300). According to the respondent, the ten commandments is about expected behaviour in the Christian life which comes out of a relationship with God and others. If someone believes that he/ she is a Christian, it should be about how we relate to God and others in terms of action and intentions. This behavioural change is part of the newly chosen identity that the Anywaa and the Nuer acquired.

³⁵ In psychology, identity behavior theory is described by Simons (2021) as how 'enacted behavior, including intention and action, depends on the level of subscription to identity as well as on resilience and attitudes that are related to such behavior'. I used this description in behavioral religious identity for it resonates with the description of the respondents' religious identity.

Another Nuer respondent also confirmed that culturally accepted behaviour encouraged conflictual relations with others, and Christianity has created a new relational identity. For instance, revenge is culturally accepted, but in the light of the Bible, God is the avenger. Therefore, a person must change their previous behaviour accepted in the culture (IIN-269) and leave it behind, as the previous respondent noted.

Respondents tried to show what changes their actions or behaviour, where they get such a turn of view and understanding that encourages positive relations with others. One respondent shared her story of forgiving the wrongdoer as she learned from the Bible to forgive (IIN-198).

According to the respondents, behavioural actions come through reflecting on the Bible and practising the teachings, dialogue and internally chosen behaviour. The respondents realized that their reflection on the Bible allowed them to turn from their ways and culturally permitted actions and find space to accommodate others. One Anywaa respondent explained this: ‘Whenever I hear of some value or action, I go back to the Bible and consult what the Bible would say on the matter ‘(IIA-425).

The three forms of acquired identity, Evangelical Christianity identity, emphasizing on communality and reflection and dialogue are seen in both in their changing world view and actions. The implications of these ascribed and acquired identity markers on boundary making, and specifically, ethnic boundary is discussed in the next section.

4.3. Boundary Making and Negotiation around Identity Markers: Positioning, Depositioning and Repositioning of the Self

Both the Anywaa and the Nuer have ascribed and acquired identity markers that play a role in boundary-making. I will focus on five ascribed identities commonly mentioned by both ethnic group respondents, which are commonly mentioned by both, but the meaning attached to them is opposite as Wittgenstein's family resemblance (1983)'; the same category but with a different meaning: just like different games. I will also describe how acquired identity, religious identity, plays a role in boundary making.

These identity markers are food, bodily features, rituals, hospitality and an individual's cultural naming.

4.3.1. Food

Claude Fischler's (1988) article on food, self, and identity summarised a relationship between food and identity. He claimed that food is central to our sense of identity and asserts our 'diversity, hierarchy, organization and at the same time oneness and otherness'. Both the Anywaa and the Nuer believed that their food is unique and considered it an identity marker differentiating them from ethnic others. They both use thick porridge made from two similar bowls of cereal (Anywaa use sorghum and millet, whereas the Nuer use sorghum and maize) with different sauces. Though the type of food they eat is quite similar, the view towards their food draws a line of difference, oneness and otherness. According to Anywaa respondents, the food they eat is particular to them, and their view towards their food, preparation, and taste was found to be a sense of pride, an integral part of the cultural competency indicator, and a derogatory element that can prevent intermarriage.

According to an Anywaa respondent:

If you see, many Nuer men married to Anywaa, but Many Anywaa men do not marry Nuer or other ethnic groups. One reason they say is that the lady other than Anywaa does not make the food they want because she does not have that skill (IIA-26).

The other Anywaa respondent also commented on what he likes most in his culture and said, 'I love our fellowship and sharing culture. We have good food (IIA-05).' Similarly, another Anywaa respondent said, 'Nuer people love to live with Anywaa', and when I asked why he said, 'I do not know. Some people say when they are in the hotel owned by Anywaa, they will get good food (IIA-124).' He says the Nuer people want to be with the Anywaa for their good food.

Besides, they also believed that food is a crucial element in interpreting their cultural meaning. As many Anywaa claim, the name Anywaa is associated with sharing; the literal meaning is interpreted as 'sharing'. It is expressed in terms of sharing food for those in need, and this can include any stranger (IIA-103). However, according to another respondent, the sharing is somewhat locked in the ingroup. When asked if this sharing includes others, he said, 'no, it is among the ethnic group' (IIA-72). This cultural competency attached to their ethnic group name and expressed in their daily life is what they think they are different from other ethnic groups in the region.

Similarly, food is one of the identity markers for the Nuer. When a Nuer respondent asked what the three crucial identity markers for him to be, he said, 'the three identity markers I am considering are my ethnic group, the Nuer, language, and the food that I eat. We use millet to make *genfo* (Amharic word for thick porridge), and it is special' (IIN-272). Though the Anywaa uses *genfo*, he feels his ethnic group *genfo* is special. Food and sharing it with others is seen as a Nuer identity marker and a way of life.

Though the Anywaa are proud and mention it as their peculiarity, the Nuer people disagree with what the Anywaa people claim about their food sharing. The Anywaa perspectives on their food-sharing are seen as exclusionist by their counter-ethnic group, the Nuer. In one of his comments, a Nuer respondent said: ‘in Anywaa, not previously, even now, the wife should not share a property with her husband. If the husband is employed, he can use his money by himself. They cook the food together, but they will have their own stew.’ He tried to show that their exclusionist view is the reflection of their values among themselves within the ingroup. He additionally said, ‘in Nuer, I share everything with my wife (IIN-190).’

As per this respondent, sharing is interpreted in Nuer as everything belonging to the community, not how one shares something with others. For the Nuer, what belongs to you belongs to others too. Nevertheless, in Anywaa, what one owns is something one should share with others to live out the cultural identity and expectations. Sharing is a principle for the Anywaa and a way of life for the Nuer. It is not only the food type that the two ethnic groups reflected on but also a line between otherness and behavioural superiority.

The other issue they raise regarding food is the palatability and cleanliness of one's food. Regarding the Anywaa's food, some things were found to be culturally unpalatable for the Nuer. When asked about intercultural competence, which has been challenging for a missionary like him, a Nuer missionary in South Sudan who lives in Gambella said:

In my missionary life, there are cultural behaviours that challenged me. For instance, those who are Anywaa or Dinka have different habits. The eating habit is different. For example, in Nuer culture, people do not eat some fish species. This is not easy. Nuer people do not eat what Anywaa can eat, such as raw meat and insects (IIN-210).

Similarly, the Anywaa does not appreciate the food of the Nuer, saying it is not good food like ours.

Besides its material aspect, food is an element of boundary-making and a tool for derogatory views of ethnic others. According to Pollock (2009 mentioning Brillat-Savarin,1970), in modern gastronomy, six key features will show a particular people's foodscape:

Foodstuffs in material form, their origins and diversity, food ideology that is manifest in how foods are used in eating situations, and the values on which food use is based specific food-associated events, such as preparation, cooking, preservation, eating, and feasts, social relationships in which food events are embedded and myths and legends associated with particular foods and food event (P.104).

Therefore, food is beyond its material reality. According to the above features, it can be part of identity and how we view and express ourselves. The view of the two ethnic groups towards each other's food and how they use their food emboldens their ethnic boundary (boundary making) to the extent that they do not want to go for intermarriage, as described above.

However, the same boundary-making identity served as a way of connection between the two ethnic groups. When the ethnic boundary is permeable, what is to be for separation, will be for inclusion and appreciation.

A Nuer respondent who happened to meet an Anywaa man in a certain situation described how they use food to celebrate their friendship by inviting each other to try their cultural food:

We met at the bus station the first time, and next time, I called him to come here to 'Newland', and I showed him around, and he said it is a good place. Then after he called me, we met at the hotel take some food, and he said 'you should come to my place and eat my

cultural food.' I went there and ate with them, and our relationship strengthened. That is why I say he is my brother. Even his family knows me now (IIN-257).

Instead of making it one of the elements in a discourse of 'we' and 'them', the two men used it to celebrate friendship and learn about each other's culture. The meaning assigned to ethnic markers leads to boundary work, either making it or negotiating. This depends on societal norms assigned to the markers and the individual's interpretation or choice of how to see it when a higher value like friendship comes in. In this case, friendship takes over the meaning given to the food and the separation turns into coming together.

In his classic seminal text *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, Fredrik Barth (1969) described that what the boundary contains matters more than the boundary itself. Besides, here it is seen that the boundary gets salience if a strong meaning of difference is attached to it and can be made or negotiated accordingly.

4.3.2. Bodily Marks and Cultural Symbols or Emblems

4.3.2.1. Bodily Marks

Previously, the Anywaa and the Nuer made body marks and cultural emblems to distinguish themselves from the rest of the ethnic groups in the region. Only the Nuer have face marks both male and female, and the Anywaa are known for their cultural beads and pulling out their lower teeth (the Nuer also used to pull out lower teeth). Dereje (2011) states that the Anywaa and the Nuer's body marks and emblems are related to their self-view and cosmology. The bodily marks for both the Anywaa and the Nuer communicate difference and visible boundary. When Anywaa respondents asked how they are different from the Nuer, he mentioned the body mark and cultural emblem, and the beads the Anywaa wear. He said, 'Most of the time, you cannot differentiate us from them, for we

both are black skinned unless there are marks on their forehead or beads on our necks.’
(IIA-309).

Similarly, a Nuer respondent said:

Nuer have six marks. This mark shows the maturity which is performed at the age of 15 or 16. It shows that the boy is no longer a child but a man who can take responsibilities such as fishing, hunting, and even he can get married. Though Anywaa pull out lower teeth like us, they do not have face marks. That differentiates us (IIN-387).

The body marks and emblems communicate different things for the in-groups and the out-groups. The face mark on the Nuer tells the out-group that they are from a different ethnic group, but for the in-group, it is a sign of brevity, ‘true manness.’ A Nuer reverend described how their young people perceive the face mark and what the Nuer community perceives about a man without a mark:

If someone does the face mark these days, he will pay a fine of 5000 birr and will be arrested. People are afraid of this law, but you know, when people see this mark, they would say this is a man! If a man does not have this, he will be considered as a woman. Even the younger boys are eager to get this mark (IIN-250).

Similarly, beads for the Anywaa communicate beauty, love, cultural excellence, royalty, and marriage acceptance for the in-group and uniqueness of the ethnic group for the outgroup. Consequently, the body marks and emblems made boundaries for these ethnic groups. Even for the Nuer, the body mark is demanded from other ethnic groups for them to be included fully in the ethnic group.

A Nuer's face mark has more than a transitional role from boyhood to adulthood. They also use it as cultural competence that needs to be done by ethnic others if they need to be fully included in the group. It is part of the ethnic conversion process for those ethnic groups who joined the Nuer ethnic group through marriage and other ways. It is a requirement for other ethnic groups to be part of the in-group. This has given rise to

contempt from the Anywaa. It is also an actor for the Anywaa to stress ethnic purity because they see it as a subtle and intentional strategy of the Nuer to take their land (Dereje, 2010, p.77 IIA-242). They sometimes see it as a crime against the identity and psychological well-being of other ethnic groups (IIA-519).

As proof of how the Nuer's action has a psychological effect, on the converts, one Anywaa respondent shared about his friend at the workplace who is from another ethnic group (*Tigrinan*³⁶) but was abducted (as he believed) by the Nuer a long time ago and given the mark, so he is now considered as part of the Nuer ethnic group. He uses the Nuer name by dropping his previous name. He also noted how this person looks so unhappy, confused and sometimes lonely even though he does not talk about it. With all the different views and perceptions, the Nuer and the Anywaa tried to communicate the difference and otherness through the marks.

According to Garve et al. (2017), people communicate non-verbally through the modification of outer physical appearance and send messages that have meanings for insiders and outsiders. Besides, for different ethnic groups, scarification and tattooing can be "cultural imprints and autographs of an individual", which Turner (1980) called 'social skin'. As Garvel and Turner noted, body marks are boundary contents that communicate difference and otherness. How much the abandonment of these marks of difference blurred the boundary needs to be studied. However, for the Anywaa and the Nuer, their marks were

³⁶ One of the ethiosemitic language speakers in Northern Ethiopia. Based on linguistic typology, as part of Semitic language which were or are spoken in the Levan, Mesopotamia, Arabia, and across the Red Sea in Ethiopia and Eritrea, Ethiosemitic languages are variants, and they are spoken in Ethiopia and present day of Eritrea. Amharic, Tigrigna are among the major Ethiosemitic languages, in terms of the number of speakers. However, there are also other ethnic groups that their language is classified under Ethiosemitic languages (Tekabe, 2021, *The Handbook of Linguistic Typology*, Cambridge University Press, 2017).

signposts of their security and threat as they live in conflict with ethnic others. Since they have a similar skin colour and physique, they might not differentiate their members from the others, for example, at night. Therefore, they still look for bodily structures and marks that may still serve as differentiation. This might be invoked for different reasons.

One Nuer respondent reflected on this and asserts:

Now, the new generation of Anywaa and Nuer have the same skin colour with no identifiable marks. Besides, as the children interact at school and in different places, they start to speak each other's language. It is challenging for outsiders to tell who Anywaa is and who Nuer is, especially the children and youth, because there is no bodily mark (IIN-235).

Though this is a fact, both ethnic groups want to emphasise the bodily features that still can tell who is who, and it looks like the insiders' code rather than a cultural identifier. One Anywaa who was asked about similarities between the two ethnic groups responded, 'we have the same colour and character, but how we walk is different. Their left leg goes ahead of right leg when they walk, and our right leg goes first, unlike them. You can recognise this even at night' (IIA-08).

Similarly, the Nuer man describes their similarities and points out the bodily features that differentiate them:

You may not differentiate the people because of their physical appearance, but still, there are slight differences in physical appearance, even without face marks. When you see Anywaa, they have a small dot on their face and red eyes. Their voice is also deep. Otherwise, it is hard to differentiate because the traditional marks are minimised (IIN-216).

Young respondents gave similar reflections, and when they were asked how they knew, they said that their parents told them (IIA-279). It is a microscopic look, but they are well socialised on the difference so that their counter-ethnic groups will not deceive them.

Therefore, ethnic markers are not always what ethnic groups choose to be identified with, but others also ascribe some marks that define who they are, which is part of the ethnic boundaries. Why the two ethnic groups are trying to find alternative bodily features as fault lines has multiple reasons. According to the respondents, one is related to the security issue in the area, which forces people to have precautionary signs, especially for children and youth and those who may happen on the road at night (IIA-08). Second, some bodily marks, such as face marks in Nuer culture, were significant in boosting their self-view and their differences. Losing them may affect their unique feeling; the meaning attached to the marks are also crucial for their self-view and creates a dilemma towards the abandoned marks. For example, as one respondent described it, a face mark is a sign of brevity and manhood. Having no such marks will make the person be considered a woman in society, a sign of weakness and inadequacy to take up responsibility. However, the face marks are no more; people, especially young people, still long for them because they want to be considered brave and strong in their community (IIN-182).

On the other hand, those who already have face marks have multiple feelings based on the situation in the town. When there is conflict in the town, it will be a source of insecurity, for they can be spotted easily because only the Nuer has a face mark. In times of peace, it is a source of pride among themselves, for a man with the mark is considered a brave and strong person who endured pain and is acceptable in the community (FGN-249). It shows other ethnic groups how true men are, unlike them.

As Lowe (1986) argued, individuals may perceive their body beyond biology as a manifestation of social and historical relations with others, and they embody these cultural and historical experiences. In the same way, Butler (1993) contends that social relations

and other cultural elements can affect the body, and meaning is worked out and exhibited through the production of marks on the body. Frost also observed that 'doing looks' is part of the repertoire of actions that create meaning and offer possibilities for recognition (Frost, 2003). However, cultural and historical experience, social relations, and recognition are not the only reasons for ethnic groups to view their body beyond biology. It can also serve as an ethnic boundary element where inclusion and exclusion, the ingroup and the outgroup, can be drawn among ethnic groups.

Conversely, the Anywaa has no face mark, but based on their cosmology, they orient themselves in contradicting relation with *Jowak* (spiritual being) and animals (Dereje, 2014), which is expressed through their rituals and 'social skin'. To *Jowak*, they do rituals to prevent his encroachment into their territory, which will be discussed below. In relation to animals, they pull out the lower four incisors at the age of ten to differentiate themselves from animals. This is a sense of purity, different from animals and spiritual beings, according to Dereje's argument. Besides this, they are known for their beads and are called 'beads people' (Evans-Pritchard, 1940, p. 20). As one Anywaa explains the situation, he notes:

Most of the time, you cannot differentiate us from them, for we both are black-skinned unless there are marks on their face or beads on our necks like this. As you see, I have a white necklace made of beads, but Nuer do not put on a necklace (IIA-58).

Beads are identity markers for the Anywaa, used in their different aspects of life; dowry, kingship and lordship, a way of signaling acceptance or rejection between a boy and a girl after a boy asks a girl for marriage.

4.3.2.2. Cultural Symbols or Emblems

A cultural symbol or emblem is defined by different scholars differently. This is because different scholars consider different things as cultural symbols or emblems. For example, Charles W. Morris (1927) defined cultural symbol as 'a substitute stimulus that leads to the original stimulus, an observable form for the ingroup'. Carl G. Jung (1964) defined it as something beyond the literal meaning of the object but attached to a broader meaning of the cultural group. Drawing on this, Turner (1967) defined a symbol as 'something that connects the unknown with the known'.

In all the above three definitions, an ethnic symbol or emblem serves to objectify the abstract, not to draw a line of difference or ethnic boundary. However, based on the data drawn from respondents in the Anywaa and the Nuer, ethnic symbols serve as boundary-making 'tools' to communicate otherness.

One of the prominent markers that the Anywaa people use is *demui*. *Demui* is a necklace made of blue glass beads. Unlike the Nuer, who used cattle, they used it as bride wealth. According to their oral tradition, the ancestors brought the beads and are considered the Anywaa's 'scarce good par excellence' (Dereje, 2014).



Figure 4-2 Photo (March 2021 taken by the researcher): Anywaa elderly lady wearing demui, which belongs to her daughter.

As the Nuer prefers cattle as bridal wealth and cultural symbol, the Anywaa prefers these cultural beads for it makes them distinct and a people with higher value, a sense of purity and uniqueness. In his comment about why an Anywaa does not want to marry a Nuer, the Anywaa man said, 'when Anywaa man gets married to Nuer or Habesha, he will be considered someone who trades his culture with no culture (IIA-126).' He mentioned the uniqueness and unmixed cultural values attached to ethnic symbols.

For the Anywaa and the Nuer, the embodiment and expression of cultural and historical experience through body marks served as boundary enforcers and continued to be a frame of viewing self and others.

On the other hand, the Nuer cultural symbol that runs every aspect of life is their cattle. They use cattle for a dowry (IIN-24, IIN-135), ransom (FGN-167, IIN-546), political or administrative superiority among themselves (IIN-399), a license to have more wives (FGN-198) and sacrifice as an act of worship (IIN-206).

4.3.3. Rituals

One of the ways ethnic groups establish ethnic membership and strengthen boundaries is through observing everyday identity-related performances and communal activities such as rituals, rites of passage, and holiday celebrations (Woźniak-Bobińska, M. 2018). Philipsen (1987) defines ritual as 'a structured sequence of actions the correct performance of which pays homage to sacred object'. It can help the people in the ethnic group get coherence and solidarity by continuing some traditions (Kochuyt, 2012).

4.3.3.1. Anywaa Rituals

Both the Nuer and the Anywaa have distinct rituals that differentiate them. The Anywaa widely known ritual is *Chiimari*, which, according to the respondents and scholars, will be done to chase out the evil spirit that they think is creating problems and bringing calamity in the community. It is the way of drawing a line between them and the spiritual being's territory. A disaster or disease outbreak is believed to happen because of the encroachment of spiritual beings in their territory. It is done occasionally and as a routine of the ethnic group when they go out to do different work. As part of the routine, its purpose is to prevent people from any potential harm. When one respondent asked about the ceremony, he replied:

Previously, when people went fishing or hunting in a group, they would go to the landlord of that area first, and he will be asked to pray. He prays that no one gets harmed by crocodiles in the river or wild animals in the jungle. He prays to his ancestors (IIA-21).

Speaking of the process of the ritual he also adds:

In earlier times, he used his spear, and he would say, 'I will throw this and bring out fish.' He will throw and brings out fish. Then he will take the fish and eat it. He would say, 'Go in the morning, and nothing will happen to you', and nothing will happen as he said, such as a crocodile attack (IIA-26).

My informants also note that, it is no longer done in Gambella town, for most dwellers are Christians (IIA-28).

On the other hand, another Anywaa respondent emphasises the meaning of ritual rather than the spiritual aspect of the ceremony:

It is not practised here in Gambella but countryside. Nothing is being done at Baro River, for the ritual used to be done at the riverbanks. Anyone can fish now, but the crocodile may attack the person. Nevertheless, previously nothing will happen to the person" (IIA-27).

This respondent is trying to show how spiritual protection is lifted from the people because they stopped doing what their forefathers used to do. He emphasises what this ritual is attached to without emphasising its spiritual implication. He does not like the way people violate the honour of the landlords (the higher officials in the Anywaa political institution) and, in turn, disrespect the cultural ritual that belongs to the ethnic group. When he is further asked if the Evangelical Christians need to attend this ritual, he says:

Yes, they are supposed to attend. Evangelicals can do communal prayer in the way they know, and traditional believers do in the way they know. For example, when the landlord calls the community before fishing, I will go but pray my way and let him pray his way. This is also respecting the right of the people (IIA-39).

This person advocates for the ethnic marker that keeps the people's cohesion irrespective of what is in it. He is focusing on the boundary-making element rather than what it contains.

Some rituals, even though the spiritual aspects are not accepted, people may want them

practised for they tell them their distinctiveness and help them to continue with the pride they draw from it. According to Galieve's (2019) article on ethnocultural identity construction in Japan, he showed the paramount role of customs and rituals in constructing ethnic identity. This is because customs and rituals constitute a sense of membership in an ethnic group, and it is through these customs and rituals that individuals face their ethnic identity, some of them for the first time, especially rites of passage and others during ethnic ceremonies. Besides, they are archiving tools for the maintenance and continuity of cultural values and ethnic boundaries (ibid.).

This is seen by some Anywaa respondents advocating ritual continuity irrespective of spiritual implications. As the above respondent, some people want to substitute the spiritual content with their new spiritual elements drawn from Evangelical Christianity. This is also evidenced by a recently performed ritual (April 2022) in response to the COVID pandemic. Some informants testified that Evangelical Christians also participated in the ritual but used their religious ways of chasing out demons. One respondent described the event as follows:

During COVID-19 season, *Chiimari* was done here in Gambella in April 2022 at the bank of the Baro River. I was in Addis by then. I heard that all went out, including Christians, and they were singing their song and were saying 'leave in Jesus' name' (IIA-25).

There might be different reasons why Christians also go out. Though they know it is a spiritual practice, they show ethnic solidarity by altering the content and using their way of chasing out demons.

However, some respondents focused on the boundary element, the ritual, and the boundary's content:

According to the Bible, worshipping the devil's spirit is unnecessary. When the community wants to do *Chiimari*, I want to avoid following them. Because I have already considered

myself someone who belongs to God, this *Chiimari* is a traditional practice that may involve another spirit, another form of evil spirit. When the community faces sickness and disease, they do this. However, I believe that my God has power over sickness and disease. I go before my God and pray, and then He heals my children. So, I do not practice this (IIA-05).

Instead of seeing the ritual as one identity marker, this respondent reflected on what is involved with it. This is departing him at this juncture from his ethnic group and unites him with those who have the same faith, irrespective of which ethnic group they are coming from. In this regard, his boundary that bases ethnic ritual is made somehow permeable, allowing him to include even ethnic others who believe what he believes in.

On the other hand, the other respondent's retrospective reflection of the ritual is embedded in the belief in God. So, doing *Chiimari* is a sign of showing that they believe in God:

I know the Anywaa people brought so many foreign gods from different tribes. Previously they used to believe in God, and whenever there was a problem, they did *Chiimari*. When there is a disease like a pandemic or when the environment is hostile, they do *Chiimari*. Because they believe in God, they go to riverbanks and pray to say, 'God, please take this disease away'. Nevertheless, they did not have other gods like other ethnic groups (IIA-8).

In her reflection, unlike the belief in the ethnic group about god (*Jwok*), she framed it in the current understanding of God. Besides, she fused religious practice with her ethnic identity. Stroup (2016) noted that overlapping is one of the individual's strategies in allowing religion to influence ethnicity. Overlapping allows the religious identity to overlap with ethnic identity, considering the new identity's importance to the existing identity. This strengthens the ethnic boundary by claiming and accepting that there is no difference between the new and old, as the above respondent claimed, and there are always others to contrast oneself with.

What we can see from the different respondents of the Anywaa ethnic group is the importance of ethnic rituals as an identity marker in drawing lines of difference from ethnic

others and as a glue that sticks the ethnic group together. It plays a significant role in drawing ethnic boundaries and strengthening them. However, when a spiritual element is carried in the ritual, people may respond differently according to their internal dialogue and stand.

4.3.3.2. Nuer Rituals: Spear Masters and Rituals

In the Nuer case, the majority used to practice two essential rituals before conversion, according to the respondents. One is performed by 'clan masters', or 'spear masters', for they hold the long spear, the positional emblem in the Nuer ethnic group (Evans-Pritchard, 1953, p.3, IIN-233). The master spear does the ritual for the community members when they face difficulties such as barrenness, sickness, and other problems. The other typical Nuer practice that involves multiple actions and rituals is ethnic conversion.

The clan masters, called by the people, 'spear masters', are both community leaders and spiritual figures. The respondents have witnessed how these spear masters are powerful and shoulder the great responsibility of the community. Two respondents described spear masters, how the community perceives them and what they are capable of. One said, 'the spear masters are very much respected. The people may fear the Nuer prophets because he may kill them if they do something wrong against him. However, the spear masters are respected by the whole community, including the prophets' (IIN-177).

One story that I heard from a pastor whose father is a spear master and what they can do regarding spiritual leadership:

I know one person who was sick and was the only one in the family, and he died. At night the person called the spear master and prayed for god, the creator, and the ancestors who founded

this family. At 4 Am, he slaughters the cattle as sacrifices. At noon the dead man is raised, carried on his staff, and went home (IIN-199).

Another Nuer lady also shared with me a story of her own family:

My father's first wife had no children, and he called the spear master and asked him to pray. He called all elders and said, "Let us solve this problem together. The woman prepared traditional wine. When they prayed, they said, 'We need this lady to get a baby, and we want this baby to be a boy', and she got pregnant and gave birth to a boy, and they gave him the name *Tomboy*, meaning son of the community (IIN-200).

The spear masters in Nuer do miraculous works and are respected by the community. This is a stumbling block for them to come to Christianity. They believe that they are destined to be spear masters, as a pastor's comment whose father is a spear master. The spear master allowed his child to be a Christian, but when his son, who is the pastor now, told him about Jesus, he said, 'It is difficult for me to come to Christianity because of the responsibility I shoulder' (IIN-205).

Those who used to go to spear masters find it less difficult to change their old ways. When I asked a woman who told me about her father and his wife. She informed me:

My father was not a Christian at that time when he called a spear master for his wife, but now, he is a Christian, and when a family member is sick, he prays to God/ Jesus. No spear master is needed now (IIN-200).

When I asked her if she faces some life challenges and whether she would go to spear master or not, she said, 'if one of my kids is sick, I will take him to a clinic and call the church elders to pray. I will not go to spear master' (ibid.).

This ritual involves spiritual beings and the dead, what they call the ancestors' spirit, and many Nuer respondents who are believers now do not support fellowship with spear masters. Nuer people have spear masters and prophets who do different rituals, making them perceived by the Anywaa as magicians or magic believers. In addition to their view of

themselves as a pure race, this made them think about the Nuer, a people without value, believing in magic, again making the boundary between the two more profound.

4.3.3.3. Assimilation Process: the Nuer

The other ethnic identity marker of Nuer, which they are proud of, is the assimilation process that they use to include and convert ethnic others. However, it is a point of contention with the Anywaa. The Nuer believed that the process of ethnic socialisation that they made to include other ethnic groups is a good value because it makes them more inclusive of others and hospitable. Many Nuer respondents asked what they liked the most in their culture; they mentioned that how they received strangers made them feel proud.

However, as the Anywaa respondents see it, they consider it as the strategy the Nuer people use to take their land. Ethnic socialisation includes scarification (*gar*) on the forehead, changing the stranger's name and giving a Nuer name, and training the stranger until the mastery of cultural competence. Now *gar* is abandoned both because the government interferes, for it is painful and harmful for the lives of the children. However, other ethnic socialisations continued through marriage, and economic persuasions, which made the boundary between the Nuer and the Anywaa salient.

The Nuer respondents described what the conversion process would look like and why they are doing it:

For example, if an Anywaa has no resources and is not married and lives alone, I may call him, and if I have a daughter, I can give him to marry her, and I take him as my son. So, he may lose his identity, and the children will be Nuer. He may not go back (IIN-190).

The other respondent also confirms:

I believe that Nuer are good people in terms of relating with others. Even some hate Nuer because they are relational. When you are together with Nuer, they can make you Nuer; some people fear that. For example, if you have a son and he gets married to a Nuer girl, your children will have a Nuer name and become Nuer. Your son will be Nuer (IIN-275).

As one Nuer respondent explained, the motive behind the conversion process and rituals related to it, such as marriage, are the strategies to expand the size of the clans, for there is competition among the ingroups for position and power:

Nuer converts different ethnic groups to Nuer because there is a need to have more people in each clan. The clan with a bigger size will rule other Nuer clans with a smaller size. So, when we see an opportunity to convert other ethnic groups, we do it. For example, if a certain Anywaa man is poor, he would go to a Nuer village, and they will provide him with food and everything he needs. Before he thinks of returning, they will find a girl and give him to marry her. After he gets married, he will remain there (IIN-148).

After *gar* is abandoned, the strategy to convert other ethnic groups to the Nuer is done by availing economic benefits for impoverished people and tying them by marriage. This is both offensive for the Anywaa and a source of conflict. Because of this, the Anywaa discourages intermarriage, specifically with the Nuer.

Both the Nuer and the Anywaa respondents agree on why the Anywaa's boundary is so closed for intermarriage because of fear of loss of identity. An Anywaa respondent comments on the closed boundary of the Anywaa:

The reality in Anywaa is that they do not want to mix; they want to keep their identity. When you try to keep your identity, others will not be happy. They would say it is because you do not want us. They say this is tribalism, but there is a fear of losing identity from the Anywaa side (IIA-23).

Besides, as the Nuer increased in number through ethnic conversion and giving birth to many children, there was a fear of political dominance following their number in the region. Some Nuer respondents also do not appreciate how the Nuer are expanding through this strategy and acknowledge the fear in the Anywaa. They also recognise that it can be a

source of conflict and boundary emboldening. Reflecting on the cause of conflict between these two ethnic groups, a Nuer respondent notes:

Apart from other problems, the Anywaa people fear ethnic extinction because most Anywaa is married to Nuer. Nuer have the resource, and if Anywaa goes to a Nuer place, they will change him and will no more be Anywaa. In 1993, a researcher disclosed this issue. If an Anywaa man marries a Nuer woman, his kids will be Nuer. This creates fear in Anywaa (IIN-148).

The other Nuer respondent also informs that, ‘the problem is that the Nuer are expanding their territory, increasing the population. This makes Anywaa's fear legitimate. Because if they are pushed, they will be few and be denied many economic and political benefits’ (IIN-131).

In different ways, such as having many wives and giving birth to many children, adopting other ethnic groups, and converting them into the Nuer, the Nuer population is increasing. As one Nuer reports, this made the Anywaa people more conscious of boundary strengthening and taking fierce action, including killing children born of mixed marriages (IIN-149). This implies that one's ethnic group identity marker can be paramount in making the boundary and creating hostility.

4.3.4. Ethnic Names

The other repeatedly mentioned identity marker by both ethnic groups is their names. The Anywaa and the Nuer can be identified by hearing their names because they follow different naming strategies. The Anywaa associated naming their children after the situation during childbirth or the child’s position in the family (Bacon, 1922, See also, Cerenini 2018, p. 23). On the other hand, the Nuer give names after their prophets or ethnic god or ancestral spirit (IIN-180). A Nuer respondent said:

By the way, I have a second name, I am called David Dung. When I became a Christian, I got this name. I am now called David because Dung is the name of the prophet. I am given a new name when I am born again. On my identification card you will get Dung, but people call me David (IIN-248).

The other respondent also said different names are given for gods and prophets in the Nuer. For example, *wiw* in Nuer is a god of war (IIN-565). How their names, following the meaning given to gods and prophets, play a role in communicating differences and making boundaries in both ethnic groups need to be studied. However, what is seen in this study is that because they follow a peculiar naming system, they know which ethnic group the person belongs to by hearing the name. This has given them a chance to discriminate among themselves in public services when they hold office. One Anywaa explains how this is happening in the region:

Most Nuer are employed because the previous president was Nuer. However, the real citizens of Gambella are not getting the opportunity even though they are applying for a job. My guess may be that the Human resource officer of those offices is a Nuer. When he reads names like Ojulu, Obang, Motu, Opiew, they will immediately discard them because they know they are Anywaa. We can know who is from which ethnic group by hearing the names (IIA-47)

As per the respondent above, their ethnic names and naming systems communicate otherness and make boundaries.

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter presented the major identity markers the Anywaa and the Nuer profess. There are ascribed and acquired identity markers, where the first comprises genetic markers like skin colour and cultural competencies. The latter is the internal identity work the person chose.

Ascribed identity markers unlike acquired identity markers, communicate different things for the in-groups and for the out-groups and mostly serve as boundary making elements.

For each other, they are boundary elements where Nuerness and Anywaness are being represented, but for the ingroups, beauty, brevity, royalty and power are communicated by different markers. Accordingly, the Anywaa and the Nuer profess collective identity or ethnic group, language, and culture as primary ascribed markers (positioning of self). When they say my culture is my identity, the culture comprises several elements, including cultural expectations, behaviour and values, marital forms, rituals, and deities.

With a close look at some of the ascribed identities, such as food, cultural emblems and body marks, rituals and ethnic names, most of them communicate differences and are elements to make boundaries between them. Because they communicate differences, they symbolise more than what they actually are. However, few can serve as boundary making or negotiating elements (depositioning and repositioning of the self) based on the meaning assigned to them by the adherents, such as food.

Apart from the government and Christianity, their conflictual relationship has complicated the ascribed identities. First, they ascribe them to each other such as eye colour, the way they walk and facial marks; second, the abandonment of the ascribed markers, such as body marks, blurred their boundary and wanted to replace them with others so that their children should not mix them up that, in turn, emphasise otherness.

On the other hand, their acquired identity marker is their new religious identity through conversion from traditional religion to Evangelical Christianity. When they describe this identity, they use three forms, vocational (in terms of what they do at the Church), relational (describing the new religion as a new relation with God and others) and behavioral (in terms of what they leave behind that they used to practice). This communicates more oneness and similarity, which makes the boundary more negotiated.

The next chapter investigates the intersectionality of culture and Evangelical Christianity, when cultural elements are continued and discontinued after they are converted to Christianity, and what it means for their ethnic relations.

Chapter Five Continuity and Discontinuity of Socio-Cultural and Traditional Religious Values after Conversion

5.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to give a thick description of people's conversion experience and what it comprises when the new religion interacts with culture and the previous deity and how they negotiate different strategies. The meaning or interpretation given to the elements continued or discontinued helps to understand better the change in their ethnic identity attached to the previous religion and culture. Moreover, the interaction between the two identity sources, religion and culture, reveals how value dissonance can trigger dialogue in the self and leads to negotiation. According to the data analysed, different strategies can be employed to culminate the dissonance with negotiation what is called a third position in DST.

The chapter sets out, first, the cultural and religious elements that are continued and discontinued after the Anywaa and the Nuer are converted to Evangelical Christianity. The major elements are identified by analysing what the respondents and adherents repeatedly mentioned as continued and discontinued beliefs and practices among Evangelicals from the culture and previous traditional religion. The discontinuity that leads to negotiating identity has come through different strategies employed by different people. These different negotiation strategies when value dissonance occurs between religious identity and ethnic identity is explored in the second section. This will be followed by the enabling or hampering factors for ethnic identity negotiation. Finally, a brief conclusion follows, highlighting the major findings.

5.2. Socio-Cultural and Religious Identity Elements Continued after Conversion

In this part, I shed some light on how some socio-cultural values of both the Anywaa and the Nuer are continued to be guiding schemata both in their self-view and others even after they are converted to Evangelical Christianity. Through the thematic data analysis process, five socio-cultural elements are repeatedly identified, informed, and observed as continuing in the Anywaa's and the Nuer's current Evangelical context. However, due to the nature of the study, a micro-level study, the elements can be seen as continued in some and discontinued in others.

5.2.1. Socio-cultural Identity Elements Continued

5.2.1.1. Polygamy

According to the respondents both the Anywaa and the Nuer were polygamous³⁷ and continued to be after Christianity. An Anywaa respondent said:

One thing that does not go along with Biblical values is type of marriage. In our culture, polygamy is allowed. One person can marry three or four wives according to his ability (financial capability). It is common in those who are not Christians, but even Christians are married to three or four wives (IIA-304).

A Nuer respondent also confirmed that polygamy is still practised among Evangelical Nuer:

It is true that Nuer do get married to more than one wife based on their resources. However, I do not think this is right in the light of the Bible. God created Adam and gave Eve. Eve is one. So, one man should marry a woman because how can one fall in love with two? He prefers one over the other (IIN-37).

³⁷ The etymology of the word Polygamy is derived from the Greek word *polygamia*, describing the state of marriage to many spouses (Douglas, 2016, p.53). It is the practice of marrying multiple spouses. When a man is married to more than one wife at a time as co-wives, sociologists call this polygyny (ibid).

The two respondents realised that there is a value dissonance in their culture and religion and evaluated the practice with Biblical teachings and through the lens of love. However, they also confirmed that polygamy is still practised after conversion.

As Douglas J (2016) noted, missionaries have been struggling with African marriage³⁸ practices because they think that African marriage is duty oriented rather than romance-oriented and a dowry related to marriage feels to them as selling girls and the Bible does not support polygamy. However, polygamy is entangled in a different social, familial, and spiritual web that needs to be understood; such as prestige in the community (IIN-264, IIA-08, IIA-76), a push from family members (IIN-195, IIN-153), social obligation in taking care of the widow through marriage (IIN-221, 266, 267), inter-ethnic marriage that may result a fear of losing the other ethnic group and relying on one's own ethnic group(IIN-188), bareness, and the need to expand one's family (IIN-200, IIA-14).

However, as the interviewees responded, polygamy is now discouraged mainly due to economic pressure and the prevalence of disease (IIA-19, IIA-20). For instance, the Anywaa people are highly dependent on cultivation, and now the land to plough is decreasing in size due to government investment policy (IIA-106), another ethnic group invasion (Dereje, 2010) and recurrent conflict in the region (IIA-46) force the Anywaa to

³⁸ As some scholars argue, polygamy is considered an 'African marriage' because it is recognised, accepted, and practised in contemporary African culture (MacIntyre, 1998). Based on the damage that causes, such as the low saving rate or asset accumulation, the prevalence of HIV and other STDs, and low attention given to children and women's depression, theologians and missionaries have tried to change it and advocate for monogamy. On the other hand, other scholars accuse the attempt of missionaries to uproot Africans from their past, which is part of their identity and fail to incorporate African traditional values into Christianity instead of vice versa. According to their argument, the benefit of polygamy outweighs the damage; reducing the number of unmarried women reduces immorality and narrowing the economic gap between rich and poor as a natural equaliser (Bisong & Orji, 2020).

displace from their village. They say these have brought a substantial economic impact on the family and a second wife is becoming unaffordable. Though there are challenges, Christians still go for multiple marriages.

This research does not aim to investigate the benefits and challenges polygamy can pose to society. However, since DST is the lens to examine value dissonance in culture and religion, polygamy is a good indicator of the dialogue, positioning, de-positioning and repositioning of self.

5.2.1.2. Dowry

As a bride price, a dowry is highly important to the Anywaa³⁹ and the Nuer. Unfulfilled dowries in both ethnic groups cause violence against the man, which may cost him his assets, children, and he may face a beating. Some respondents told me that because of unfulfilled promises on dowry, some families facilitate divorce even though children are born (IIA-536). While indicating how stressful this is on him, one respondent told me that he secretly wishes the government would ban the requirement of a dowry as he bans some cultural practices, considering that they are harmful (IIA-538). Because of the high expectations set by the girl's family, young men are afraid to get married, and even those who are married are afraid of losing it.

³⁹ In Anywaa, there is a flexible contract between the man's family and his in-laws. He can pay the first portion of the dowry as a guarantee of the remaining, which is called *Uje* (IIA-535). The remaining is expected when she gives birth to the first child. When the first child is born, it is a happy moment for the husband but also stressful because if he cannot pay at least one *dimui*, there is a chance of being beaten by his in-laws, and even his child might be taken away.

The dowry they give is a unique necklace made of blue beads called *dimui*. The man should give five pairs of *dimui* or its equivalent amount of money as a dowry (IIA-64).⁴⁰ The number of *dimui* they would give depends on the girl's status, age, education level and social status, such as the daughter of *Nyiaa* or *Kwaroo* (IIA-⁴¹)

The dowry affects not only the man but also the woman because the deal is between the husband and his in-laws; the wife might not know how much they have received, and nothing will come to her as a gift. Unless her family supports her, she might get into an empty house and be in a difficult situation. One respondent told me that the man would go door to door begging for money to pay his dowry (IIA-540). During such a difficult time, the woman will be obliged to return to her family until a better time comes. On top of dowry, a wedding party is a must for the woman to start living with the man. Even if they have a child out of wedlock, they would not be allowed to live together. One respondent told me that he started living with his wife under one roof after his son reached the age of four when he could afford to throw a wedding party (IIA-12).

The issue of a dowry is a cause of divorce and stress and creates a chain of poverty, as the respondents indicate. However, they also admit that it is a way of saying thank you to the woman's parents and the way the man gets prestige in the community. One respondent shared his story regarding dowry, how he worked hard before getting married, paid the dowry on time, and avoided a beating. He testifies that this helped him to live in the community, holding his head high (IIA-77). When they reflect on their new religious identity, some say love is enough to start a family, and how the dowry is handled culturally

⁴⁰ One *demui* necklace is nearly 185 USD which is 10,000 birr.

⁴¹ The younger the girl, the requested dowry will be higher; and the higher the education level or social status of the girl, the higher the dowry will be.

is incorrect. Even though the husband and wife are in love, an unpaid dowry causes the husband to suffer a physical attack. Instead, they recommend that Christians pursue understanding and forgiveness (IIA-120).

Similarly, Nuer men are supposed to pay many cattle for a dowry, but in the Nuer culture, those many cattle come through the contribution of the family members (IIN-24). This is the practice for only the first marriage. If the man wants to go for a second marriage, which is highly encouraged, the issue of a dowry will be handled by him, and he must work for it, or he must have cattle that he gets through many ways (FGN-430). Like the Anywaa, he can pay part of the number of cattle he promised and should pay the remaining within the promised time (IIN-525). However, this negotiation will be between the man's family and the girl's relatives, excluding the father of the bride. The negotiated dowry benefits the negotiators more than the girl's family and the girl because the negotiators get their share, and maybe one or two cattle remain for the father out of a minimum of twenty-five cattle (IIN-575).

5.2.1.3. Revenge and Ransom

Revenge and ransom are the other cultural values that continue in the current context. For the Anywaa, revenge has been given a high value to prove that they are of equal power with the offender and consider it as a way of gaining respect in the community. It is mostly practised in inter-ethnic conflicts. The Anywaa has a way of dealing with the situation when there is a killing. It is called *Gurr tong*⁴², and through prayer and doing some rituals, the issue will be resolved by sacrificing an animal. This is especially common before the

⁴² The word Gurr tong in Anywaa language is constructed from two words Gurr meaning grinding and Tong means spears. Symbolically the break the spears as a sign of truce and reconciliation.

new year is celebrated. There is a ceremony conducted at the riverbank at night called *Chimarri*. During such a ceremony, all the disagreements and misdeeds will be ceremonially dealt with, and those rivals, due to the killing will do *Gurr tong* (IIA-52).

On the other hand, if the conflict is with another ethnic group, the response will be retaliation. As one respondent said, a careful study of the offender's family will be done before acting when a certain family member kills someone. They will look for the equivalent person in the offender's family. If the person who died has an educational degree, they will look for a person who has a degree. They even only receive ransom if equivalent action is taken. Now such an action is declining, and they receive a ransom instead of revenge (IIA-14).

For the Nuer, the killing will be mediated by clan masters, and the ransom will be sought from the offender's family. In the case of killing among the different clans, the offender's clan will be responsible for taking care of the ransom. The minimum number expected for the killed person's family is about 70 cattle, according to the respondents (IIN-268). Such a significant number is collected from the clan members of the offender, and some think that such an action cannot be improved if another push factor is not put in place. As one of the respondents suggested, 'it would have been difficult to do it if the person who killed would be responsible for paying such a huge ransom (IIN-144).'

5.2.1.4. Hospitality

Both ethnic groups are proud of their hospitable culture, but it has a conflicting meaning when it is acted upon, and their hospitality is despised by each other and polarized in their acted meanings. For the Anywaa, unless people trespass the expected process to stay on

their land, such as coming through the permission of landlords or legally settled by the government (on which they do not have control and resent it), they will receive a guest (*Welo*) with open arms. But to remain a guest, he/she is expected to leave the land one day. No matter how many years the person has lived with the Anywaa, he/she will not be part of the community. This includes people who came in because of an inter-ethnic marriage. Even children born in mixed marriages are not considered as part of the Anywaa but as a guest, and they may face discrimination (IIA-09,71,72,124). This is partly because of their view towards 'cultural purity' and special attachment to a specific territory belonging to ancestral spirits and ancestors. Their 'territoriality' is depicted in how they categorise people as *Jebour* (people of the settlement) and *Welo* (guests) (Dereje, 2011, p.39-40). My respondents are also using words such as host community (IIA-83), citizens of the land (IIA-69) and indigenous people (IIA-125) when they tell who they are and refer others, especially the Nuer as refugees (IIA-126), guests (IIA-71), and newcomers (IIA-22).

Concerning hospitality, the other term they use to describe themselves is 'a people who share' as Anywaa means sharing. However, for most respondents, sharing is restricted to food, money, and other items but not land (IIA-94). It also shows that the sharing goes within the ethnic group only, not outside. Because of this, the Nuer view the Anywaa people as exclusionists, people who want to live alone and want a place without others (IIN-261). This has affected the Nuer's trust in the Anywaa people when they take the leadership position in the region; they say that they are ethnocentric and fear that they will not be treated fairly (IIN-135).

On the other hand, the Nuer's hospitality goes up to converting the person to the Nuer (ethnic conversion). The Nuer are assimilationists. Some scholars argue that the

assimilation process is cultural competence, both for biological descent and ethnic others (Dereje, 2010). It includes *gar* (a painful process of making a face mark), changing the name to Nuer names, encouraging to marry Nuer women and other cultural competencies (IIN-190). As Dereje Feyissa argued, this assimilation culture is part of their view towards themselves as 'distinct people' and 'the real person' and viewing others as opposite. The underlying value of assimilating or converting others is the need to be big as a clan so that they can subdue other clans.

Among the other behaviour of the Nuer, the Anywaa people are disgusted by this. Because they have relatively closed boundaries, and the Nuer are taking in ethnic others through marriage and adoption. This frightens the Anywaa that they may be 'swallowed', and their territory will be invaded. The respondents repeatedly mentioned that the Nuer have a secret mission to drive or convert the rest of the ethnic groups and take the land for themselves (IIA-259). This behaviour is a threat to the Anywaa. On the one hand, the Anywaa tries to keep ethnic purity through endogamy only and avoid children who are born in intermarriage (IIA-45, IIN-46). On the other hand, the Nuer are taking in and marrying ethnic others, especially the Anywaa. The two ethnic groups call their actions hospitality, but the actions have opposite meanings, and sometimes it is a point of contention.

5.2.1.5. Beating

Beating is still exercised in both ethnic groups, and mostly, they are male boys and men who are subject to beating for different purposes. Male boy beating is exercised by the Nuer, and it is related to bringing out the manhood of the young boy and testing him whether he endures pain or not (IIN-254). In the Anywaa's context, beating is the way of

disciplining men in the community or the way of serving justice among them. Failed promises regarding dowry, mistreatment of wives, laziness, adultery, and other issues are being dealt with by beating (IIA-14, IIA-34, IIA-77, IIA-104, IIA-122).

Unlike India⁴³, the man will be beaten by the Anywaa. There are different reasons, but one is dowry. Suppose a man promised to give the expected amount of dowry as his in-laws set it at an appointed time but failed to do so. His father-in-law and brothers-in-law will call him; other family members may join, and he will be severely beaten. They use cultural beating sticks for this purpose, and the man will not react but accept the beating. Because of the incremental punishment, men greatly respect and fear beating. The disciplinary action in this regard might take away the children their daughter bore for him and separate the husband and wife (IIA-536).

Another reason for beating is adultery, which they differentiate from polygamy. Adultery is an unofficial marriage, but polygamy is an official and permanent marriage that is encouraged highly (IIN-402). If the in-laws feel that their daughter is treated unfairly, they will call the man to ask about the situation, and the beating will follow (IIA-14). Beating, apart from the physical pain, is a disgrace for men, and they try to keep it silent if they are beaten (IIA-548). Evangelical churches also have disciplinary measures when there is a problem between husband and wife. However, one respondent indicates that people prefer the cultural way because it is fast and practical (ibid.).

⁴³ In India, women are beaten to death in relation to bride price or dowry. It has been advocated as a violation of women's rights, and different scholars have exposed its cruelty but has continued to prevail (Jejeebhoy, 1998; Menon, 2020, p.102).

5.2.2. Discontinued Socio-cultural elements

According to the respondent the following socio-cultural elements are discontinued among some Anywaa and Nuer Evangelical believers.

5.2.2.1. Polygamy

In the above text, it is described that polygamy is continued among Evangelical believers. However, there is none among my respondents who have more than one wife in both ethnic groups. I met a few female respondents who are a first or second wife or their husband has lost one of the two wives, or he has got another wife. The reason why some of the respondents are not polygamous is because of their dialogical self as mediated by biblical ideals. The biblical ideals help the self to deposition from previous religious and cultural values and reposition in the way that is compatible with the new conviction.

An Anywaa respondent who came to the Church attracted by the drum, found the word of God and surrendered his life to Jesus. He even decided to take a theology course and got a degree in Theology. He said he is no longer ruled by cultural values that do not agree with the word of God and will not practice traditional religious rituals. For example, he does not accept the cultural provision and push to marry more than one woman:

In our culture, if a man has four or five sisters, he will be encouraged and even pushed to have more wives to have more children for his side of the family. because the women will be part of another family when they get married, The other push factor might be the resource the man has. In our culture, if you have enough money, you can have more wives, but some Christians, like me, believe that we must be married to only one woman because the Bible teaches this. Besides, if I have more wives, my spiritual life will also be destroyed (IIA-406).

The man decides to follow the word of God instead of the cultural provisions and expectations. The religious identity influences the ethnic identity of the person to be negotiated by leaving some of the elements that used to be part of the ethnic identity.

Similarly, several respondents, who had a similar cultural provision to marry many wives, are not only resisting by being married to one wife but also teaching other fellow ethnic members and justifying it through the Bible. A Nuer respondent argued:

I am a theologian and reverend; my duty is to teach others. One of the things I teach others is to define what blessed by children means. I tell them that it is not because they have many wives that they will get many children. God can give a person many children, even from one wife. Because if you have three children, those three children will have wives, and you continue having more. Some may mention David, Solomon and others in the Bible who had many wives. However, it is not God's culture but human culture that they are referring to. Some try to justify by saying they are also Men of God. However, all the faults in the Bible cannot be taken for us to repeat them but to learn from them. God made clear himself when it comes to marriage, his original idea is one man to have one woman, and he showed this by creating Adam and Eve only (IIN-255).

He even called what David and Solomon have practised in this regard as '*human culture*' and explained that being a Christian means leaving a human culture and joining '*God's culture*'.

An Anywaa evangelist described how marriage should be:

I am married to a Christian lady and have four children, and I have only one wife. In our culture, if you have enough money, you can have more wives, but some Christians, like me, believe that we need to marry only one as the Bible commands (IIA-76).

I heard a similar comment from a Nuer respondent, saying 'I do not like those cultural values because I have got a new life in God. For example, I do not get married to another woman besides my wife' (IIN-252).

5.2.2.2. Face Mark and Pulling out of Teeth

In the previous chapter, it is noted that one of the identity markers, a sign of brevity and manhood, a rite of passage for boys in Nuer, was a mark on the forehead. The face mark are six lines drawn straight or funnel shaped based on the clan they came from. One respondent explained the difference:

The difference on the marks is to differentiate the two clans in Nuer. Eastern Nuer and Western Nuer. Western Nuer are from South Sudan and Eastern Nuer are Ethiopians. Even the dialect we use are different and even though we use the same language, we may not understand each other because of the dialect difference (IIN-251).

According to the respondents, face marking (by the Nuer) and pulling out of teeth from the lower jaw (by the Anywaa and the Nuer) is no longer practised because the government banned it and has put a fine if it is done. A Nuer respondent, who has a face mark, describes the situation:

The government has banned harmful traditional practices such as face marks. Previously, when the face mark was made, the boy may die because of the bleeding. Besides, they share one knife, which is not good for health. I hate this now. There was a practice of removing the teeth from the lower jaw. Now, we do not practice these too. A local law says 'if someone does this, he will be charged 5000 birr and will be jailed' (IIN-249).

Though he has a face mark, the respondent reflected and thought what could happen to those children who pass through scarification. He reflected from a health perspective. The other respondent who has no face mark has given another additional perspective on why he is happy with face mark and the pulling out of teeth is abandoned:

Face mark is very dangerous. It causes problems because when they do the painful operation, they might cut some nerves that can bring damage to your brain. The other painful practice in our community was pulling out teeth from the lower jaw. I do not know how those who did it feel, but it is inappropriate for me. Because it is given to you by God, pulling them out is not right. We, the youth, do not want it (IIN-524).

This respondent saw the action through the lens of religion. Similarly, an Anywaa respondent comments that the pulling out of lower teeth is one of the cultural practices that he wants to see banned completely (IIA-41).

The above response confirms the discontinuity of doing face marks and pulling out of teeth because of government law enforcement; however, Evangelical Christianity strengthened it or gave it additional perspective, such as considering our body as a gift of God.

5.2.2.3. Lordship and Kingship Discontinued: The Anywaa

Dereje Feyissa, has given an in-depth account of the Anywaa identity formation, including their emergence, social organisation, ideology of identity purity and political organisation. He noted that there were two kinds of political communities in traditional Anywaa society led by *ji-niyiye* (people of the nobles) and the *ji-kwaari* (people of the headmen). These authorities, *Niyiye* and *Kwaari*⁴⁴ are attached to specific villages responsible for providing social behaviour and the bearers of purity ideology (2011, p. 42-44)

However, this political administration is diminishing, especially the belief in the administration in Gambella town became contentious among Evangelicals. Some respondents regret that this political administration is abandoned. Because it brought social order to the community such as hard work, women's rights, behavioral issues (IIA-488), and cohesion (IIA-247).

On the other hand, there were respondents who do not know much about this administration, and some argued that Christians should not be involved in *Niyiya* and *Kwaaro* administration because it involves spirits. One respondent shared the case of a person he knows who is ordained as *Kwaaro* and serves in one of the Churches (IIA-81). This produced multiple effects from respondents. One respondent believed it cannot go along with Evangelical Christianity and said he argued with the person:

⁴⁴ The kingship and Lordship in Anywaa are lineage-based and passed to blood relatives (IIA-116).

This reverend whom I know personally had uncle who was *Kwarro*, and he died. The next in line was a disabled person who could not talk, so they tried to look for another person who could replace the *Kwarro*. Unfortunately, they could not find. Then, they came to this Reverend because he was next in the line and said you are not the one who is going to do the job, but you will be his spokesperson. Then he accepted; when I came from Addis Ababa, I rebuked him, saying you are wrong; you already accepted Jesus Christ, and why are you thinking of returning back? Some people, including him, were saying he was right (IIA-159).

When I asked why he is thinking it does not go along with Evangelical Christianity, he replied:

There is no explicit act, but for example, there are beads that the ordained *Kwaroo* would receive from forefathers and mothers, and we do not know what kind of evil spirit that involves. During the ordination ceremony, animal blood will be sprinkled on him; he will clothe himself with tiger skin and sit on tiger skin. There will be dancing for him. This is implicit, but we know that it is there. However, they do not talk about it (IIA-160).

The person connected me with the Reverend who was ordained as *kwaroo* but he does not want to talk about himself. When he is asked what he thinks of being a *Kwaroo* and Reverend, he said, ‘Both are leadership positions and aim at doing good. So, a person can be *Kwaroo* and minister in the Church because both roles are to protect people from bad things’ (IIA-121).

Kingship and Lordship might be practised in rural areas of Gambella, as some noted (IIA-201). However, in Gambella town, their administrative role is replaced by the government and their spiritual authority is disputable. Apart from the nobles’ and headmen’s families, the rest of the Evangelical believers confirmed that it is no more a cultural practice.

5.2.2.4. Revenge and Ransom

In the previous chapter, it is noted that revenge and ransom are enshrined in the Anywaa and Nuer cultural schemata that are highly encouraged. However, some respondents have shared their and other stories to show that this has been changing in their community. An Anywaa respondent who has been waiting the right time to kill the person who killed his

grandfather has changed his mind because of the conviction he got through hearing the word of God:

It was my grandfather who brought me up to the age of 15. Someone killed my grandfather, and I remained with my mom and my grandma. Since then, my mom has been taking care of me. When I realised that someone from another ethnic group killed my grandfather, I feel like I am going to revenge when I grow up and be a strong man. However, one day there was a conference in the place where I am now and, in that conference, the preacher was preaching about something very important to my life, like 'if you kill a person, that is sin; so, do not revenge, leave everything in the hands of God and then God will take the revenge'. At that time, I felt like crying knowing that God sees. Then I felt like I should follow Jesus and will not do what I planned to do (IIA-219).

A Nuer lady also shared the story of her uncle and her family's response:

One of my uncles was killed by someone and my family did nothing because they are Christians; no revenge, no ransom, nothing. They said, 'We give this thing to God, for it is God who created our brother. It is our brother's blood who will accuse the killer'(IIN-545).

According to the respondents, revenge and ransom is getting a new perspective and being replaced by other values, forgiveness and leaving revenge to God.

5.2.3. Continued Traditional Religious Values after Conversion.

Besides cultural values the Anywaa and the Nuer have also kept some of the traditional religion values after conversion. The continued religious values and practices are discussed below.

5.2.3.1. Rituals

Anywaa people have some spiritually and culturally significant (in their view) rituals, such as praying before fishing at a certain river or lake before fishing, and yearly *Chiimari*⁴⁵ as a community (IIA-26).

⁴⁵ According to Lienhardt (1957), Anywaa recognises a transcendent Divinity associated with the sky', and other various powers or spirits. Generally, there are two kinds of gods: the good one and the bad one. Unlike Nuer and Dinka, they have many ceremonies at the courts of headmen and nobles but few religious rituals and

Besides, the respondents in this research confirmed that there are so many spiritual rituals that have been done at the family level and few at the community level, which are strongly held as religious markers of the ethnic group. These are rituals to protect children from evil at the end of the year (IIA-75), hanging the first fruit as a sacrifice to spirits on the rooftop (IIA-), and the ritual dance and celebration during the ordination of kings and *Kwaroos*⁴⁶ (IIA-07).

Likewise, the Nuer people have also practised different spiritual rituals such as a blessing ceremony with prophecy during weddings (IIN-273).

The other ritual is hanging on the roof of the house or throwing the first fruit into the river when the harvest is ripe (FGN-454). It is a sacrifice for the ancestral spirits. The hanged cereal will not be touched or consumed because they think that it causes a curse. This is also practised in the same way among the Anywaa (IIA-403).

5.2.3.2. View of God: the Anywaa

In their traditional religion, the Anywaa and the Nuer have different views of divinity. The Anywaa generally see god manifested in a dual personality as a good and a bad god. This

sacrifices (Dereje, 2011). Various powers or spirits are associated with particular rocks, trees, stretches of rivers and other things. My respondents told me that a big ceremony on the riverside is held annually in September (a day before the New Year celebration) (IIA-281, IIA-415). The main objective of the celebration is to chase the bad god out. The people will hold torches and sing Chiimari, meaning 'go away'. According to the respondents, before the year ends or when there is an outbreak in the community, they will do the ritual because they believe that the bad god is the one who brings the calamity, and they will chase him away with all the sicknesses and problems he brought. Lienhardt (ibid), in his analysis of Anywaa's perspective, zooming in on the situation of death, asserted that in comparison to Nuer and Dinka, the divinity concept is otiose. This might be because they do not practice many spiritual rituals like Nuer and other ethnic groups in the region.

⁴⁶ The *Kwaroo* oversees both the political and religious affairs of the village. For example, if one person wants to go fishing, the *Kwaroo* will be asked, and either he or another designated person will do a praying ritual so that the willingness of the spirit of that river will be sought. These *Kwaroo* also take disciplinary action if there is a farmer who is not working hard or a person who beats his wife (IIA-104).

good and bad god demarcation has faded, but some still believe they are worshipping the same god they have been worshipping previously (IIA-91).

The Anywaa pastor who regrets the change in the political institution of the Anywaa, believed that the conversion to Christianity is not a major shift from traditional religion. He believed and condemned that the government system has brought so much alteration to the people's already good and established political institutions. He explains his understanding of God: 'Anywaa has been worshipping one good god, the creator of heaven and earth, so the new religion did not alter anything but the government' (IIA-107).

For him, there is no change in who God is but only a structural change as they transition from traditional religion to Christianity. He holds the same view and figure of God who was in traditional religion.

5.2.3.3. View of God: the Nuer

The Nuer are known by their prophets and spear masters⁴⁷ (Burton, 1975; Evans-Pritchard, 1953; Douglas J, 1974). Both played a role as spiritual and political figures in the Nuer's administration. John W. Burton argued the Nuer prophets played a political role that is not clearly indicated in Evans-Pritchard's ethnography (1975).

⁴⁷ Evans-Pritchard has elaborated on what the spear symbolises in Nuer, its specific function, and what types of spears are found in Nuer that show the different functionalities. (Evans-Pritchard, 1953. Nuer Spear Symbolism, Anthropological Quarterly/Vol. 26, No. 1). Santschi (2016) has described in what way Prophets in both Dinka and Nuer are different from spear masters. According to him, spear masters are mediators between divine power and human beings. They do rituals of praying, invoking, and sacrificing. On the other hand, Prophets foresee the future, and their sphere of influence is broader than spear masters. Burton also has a similar assertion by analysing Pritchard's, saying, 'God speaks to man through prophets, while a man speaks to God through the *ji twac* or leopard-skin chiefs (1975, p. 102); that the people call them spear masters'. According to the mentioned scholars, the prophets play a role in raiding other ethnic groups; meaning determines what kind of relationship they should have with other ethnic groups.

The role of the prophets and spear masters or leopard-skin chiefs made the cosmology of the Nuer. More Nuer respondents claim that the Nuer prophets are no longer respected or listened to because most Nuer are converted to Christianity (IIN-207). Nevertheless, some respondents view the source of power for spear masters and the Nuer prophets is God. One respondent whose father is a spear master said:

Both spear masters and prophets pray for the peace of the community, and both call upon the creator God. However, the prophets do things secretly, and the spear masters do things openly. They do not hide things. He prays to only God, the creator, not to other spirits (IIN-240).

Similarly, the other respondent whose family members go to the prophets said he does not want to go to the prophets, and when he tells the reason, he said, ‘I believe that I am born again. I believe in only God, the creator. Even those prophets are created by God and do not have their own power; they get power from the creator’ (IIN-411).

The above two responses show that some Nuer Evangelicals still believe that the source of power bestowed to the Nuer prophets comes from the creator God. The view towards the creator God is similar to the God in Evangelical Christianity.

Besides, the power of the prophets might be stronger to take the people out of the Church. One respondent said, ‘I know my brother’s son who used to come to church. His friends influenced him, and he stopped coming to the church and went to prophets’ (IIN-304).

5.2.3.4. Cursing

The curse or the fear of a curse is mentioned and repeatedly reflected among both respondents, which has been practised in traditional religion by both ethnic groups. They see things such as conflict because of a curse. Retribution for the Anywaa is through cursing (Lienhardt, 1962) and they are afraid of that because it is believed that when they

curse, the curse will happen to the person and his descendants. A Nuer reverend (IIN-580) told me about the recently conducted peace conference among the two ethnic groups when I asked him whether they were discussing issues in the light of the Bible or not and how the conference ended:

When we discuss the issue, they only relate it to the culture. Before Christianity, in Anywaa, when someone made a mistake, such as killing or wrongdoing, they cursed the person and his descendants. So, they are afraid of such things. This is the case in Nuer too. The elders will gather and curse. When we concluded the meeting, we agreed not to curse, but I am not sure about the practicality (IIN-284).

The two ethnic groups are using the 'weapon' they have been using when they used to worship tribal gods, and they hesitate to give it up.

When I asked what the cause of conflict between the two Christian people would be, an Anywaa woman (IIA-100) said, 'I think there is a curse on this land. Maybe both of us are cursed because though we are praying, the situation is not improving'. The Anywaa evangelist also holds the same reason why the region is conflict-ridden, when he said, 'this conflict is a curse, and to lift this up, we need to pray' (IIA-88).

After their peace talk, they agreed not to curse each other. The question is, in whose name are they cursing each other? In the previous Nuer cosmology ignoring the spear masters' results in punishment from spiritual powers that may cause sickness or death (Santschi, 2016). An Anywaa respondent also confirms:

People in the past believed they should not do bad things because they would be cursed. They believe the god that they believe is strong can bring a blessing and a curse. For example, stealing and killing are prohibited. If you have something against a certain person, you will be cursed; the curse will come upon your descendants (IIA-106).

Both have been exercising cursing in the previous religion, which creates mistrust between the two ethnic groups now. How it still continues, what the curse holds, and how it plays a role in boundary work need to be studied.

5.2.4. Discontinued or Changed Traditional Religious Identity Elements after Conversion

5.2.5. Rupture from the Past

Anywaa and Nuer respondents have shown their rupture from their cultural allegiance of the past. Some denounced polygamy by justifying it through the Bible; some even did not give a dowry because they said marriage should stand on love and knowing Christ, not cultural expectations. Similarly, they also rupture from their traditional religion through changing their view of God and explained how the two deities in the previous religion and the new are different. This results changes in beliefs, practices and behaviour. Moreover, it has changed the priority of their identity, cultural values, view of self and others. Below are some of the indicators of rupture from the past religious beliefs due to conversion and its results.

5.2.5.1. Denouncing the Spiritual Authority of the Previous Spiritual Figures

Many of the respondents, from the Anywaa and the Nuer, have left one or more cultural elements that do not align with religious values. An Anywaa respondent commented on landlords' expectations when they are approached by people when they have cases and the belief regarding crocodile attacks:

The majority here are Christians, and what the *Kwarro* demands is against what we believe in Christianity—sacrificing lamb, goat, and chicken. The prayer along the riverbank is to protect people from crocodiles, but if a crocodile attacks someone, Christians say it just happened because it attacks people. They do not associate with landlords (IIA-53).

Similarly, I heard a story of a *Niyiya* who passed away in 2022 after serving as a reverend for many years. One of his sermons was Jesus is the king:

Reverend Akuay is a different person, by the way; people say he is a little Jesus. First, he is from the line of Kingship but left it for Christ. All would listen to him if he were in another place, like the countryside because he is the king. After he is converted, he says the practice as a king is demonic and encourages everyone to listen to Jesus, not other authorities (IIA-157).

The protection people used to believe comes from has changed now, and the power of *Kwaroo* and *Niyiya* is denounced.

Similarly, the Nuer prophets had high regard among the communities. There are Nuer who equate *Ngundeng* (a Nuer prophet) with Jesus and believe that Jesus came for white people, but the Nuer's god is *Ngundeng*. Now, prophets have no significant place among Nuer Evangelicals; they are considered as false prophets (IIN-203) and devil-driven, and they call them the devil's prophets (FGN-246). There are also some converted prophets. A story of one converted prophet, as shared by one of the respondents, shows how the Nuer prophets' authority among Evangelicals is denounced.

Some converts were Nuer prophets in Nuer traditional religion and became ministers in the Church, leaving behind their previous role in the culture and denouncing the deity involved in the previous role. This is different from Horton's appropriation of the previous in the new narrative but a total abandonment of the previous communication with spirits and ancestors and denouncing their authority. The testimony of a previous prophetess in the previous traditional religion but now a deacon in the Church showed the rupture from the past. I could not get a chance to meet her because she is living far from Gambella town. However, a reverend and another deacon told me her story as follows:

There is a prophetess who came to Christ a few years ago, and she is now living in Lare *Woreda* (18 km from Gambella town). She is a deacon now in this Church (West Gambella Mekane Yesus). She came to Christ because of repeated crises that happened to her. Her younger son was hit by another person and died, and the eldest son hit another person and went to jail and died there. So, she said to herself, 'this god is not serving me well, and I do not want to follow him (IIN-209, FGDN-179).

She then abandoned everything and became a Christian. Now people are taking her as a Christian, not as a prophet because she is serving the people as a deacon. She also tells people about her experience:

Traditional god is not real. It is Jesus who is the real God and merciful, but the traditional god is jealous and hateful. He kills people. He forces people to bring him gifts and cows before he solves their problems. However, when you come to Jesus, you can come empty-handed (ibid).

Similarly, as his friends informed me, a Nuer prophet passed away months ago. This person came to Christ, learned the word of God, became an evangelist, and started telling the word of God to others.

5.2.5.2. Change of View towards God, Self, and Others.

In the previous text we have seen that some of the respondents still hold their view of God in the previous religion as the current one. Contrary to this, some believed that the God they are serving now is different from the previous and that he is all mighty and good. An Anywaa old lady describes this:

According to the Bible, worshipping the devil's spirit is unnecessary. When the community want to do *Chiimari*, I do not want to follow them. Because I have already considered that I belong to God, this *Chiimari* is a traditional practice which may involve another spirit, another form of evil spirit. When the community faces sickness and disease, I believe that my God has power over sickness and disease too. I go before my God and pray, and then He heals my children. So, I do not practice this (IIA-05).

For this lady, this God is different from the previous god. Because of this view, she starts a new vocation of reconciling the different ethnic groups as a peacemaker:

We should love our ethnic group. We should also love another ethnic group. So, all people are the same before God. I don't hate any ethnic group; I love all ethnic groups, for they are all created by God like me, so I shouldn't hate them (ibid).

Her change of view towards who God is and how universal he is, helped her to see equality and a shared identity in God which opens the ethnic boundary to others and be inclusive.

One of the Nuer respondents (IIN-151) described his newness after conversion by de-emphasizing the previous social tie and acknowledging his new family in this religion, saying, 'I do not like those cultural values because I have got a new life in God, and God is my father, mother, brother, my family. That is why I leave these things behind' (IIN-488).

The other respondent reflected on how he is changed the way he views himself and how his practice changed after conversion:

After I came to Christ and studied the word of God intensely, I saw that I was changed holistically. My work ethics is changed. And through hard work, I paid the dowry in full during my wedding without facing beating or being despised. I was also behaviorally aggressive, but now I am emotionally stable. I am also dependent on the word of God; if I hear something, I will return to my Bible and check what the Bible is saying about that thing (IIA-88).

This person talks about his change compared with the previous state. He puts a demarcation between the past self and the present bridged by conversion.

5.2.5.3. Shifting the Centre of Identity: from Ethnic Identity to Religious Identity

Many of the respondents from the Anywaa and the Nuer pointed out that ethnic identity is one of the primary identities among the three identity markers they profess (language, culture and behaviour are repeatedly mentioned in both). Some have explained that their ethnic identity is not something they can trade-off, for they are born into it. However, ethnic traits, rituals, and expectations have changed since Christianity, and the spiritual life is emphasised much more than ethnic identity. Whenever they look at a certain action, 'I cannot do it because I am born again' or 'I am Christian' are the words they use to justify why they do or do not do certain things. A shift at the centre of identity is mainly depicted in the form of an intra-ethnic friendship.

Since the study looks at identity negotiations through value dialogue in a certain social structure, the conversion explains not only the positioning of self because of dialogue but also the creation of new relationships or bonds or a social transformation or their combination. So, it will be analysed in terms of these outcomes, such as the view on intra-ethnic friendship, intra-ethnic conflict, and exogamous marriage.

One of the challenges for intra-ethnic friendship in places like Gambella is that ethnic boundaries are historically and politically created. Unlike the challenges, Christianity is known as a multicultural religion that holds friendship as a core value (Robert, 2011). Since the definition of a friend or to be a friend is based on love and sacrifices, as Jesus said, "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). Friendship is a good marker of conversion in terms of values. In this regard, I found respondents from the Anywaa and the Nuer, who are friends in their counter-ethnic groups. Adolescent respondents mainly have been referring to Bible verses to explain the teachings about friendship.

A Nuer girl who has an Anywaa friend told me that she is not allowed to have a friend from an ethnic other, especially an Anywaa but refused to listen and continued her friendship (IIN-589). An Anywaa boy who also said he has a Nuer friend, explained why the Anywaa and the Nuer need to be friends: 'Anywaa and Nuer should be friends, for both are Christians, and Christian means having the same father that is Jesus Christ (FGA-563).'

The adult respondents also confirmed that they have friends from ethnic others. A Nuer evangelist called his Anywaa friend, my brother, and testified to the bond between them:

I have a friend in Anywaa. He is my best friend in Christ. We spend time together. When something happens, he will call me and say 'something is happening, and please advise your tribe.' I know a person in my circle and tell him that there is a problem (IIN-257).

These two friends play the reconciliatory role through their friendship.

The other good marker of a shift from cultural identity to religious identity as a priority is the view and practice of exogamous marriage. The Anywaa people think that marriage with another ethnic group is like tinting the purity of the lineage. I found an Anywaa woman married to a Nuer man among the respondents. She explains her love towards her Nuer husband, saying, ‘people may think that I am defiling my ethnic group, but I am afraid I have to disagree with that. I married him because I love him, and he loves me. I believe in love, not ethnicity (FGA-564).’

Similarly, an Anywaa man who married a Nuer lady shows how he does not consider ethnicity when it comes to marriage, when he says, ‘I did not follow the culture of Habesha, Nuer, or my ethnic group when I married her. We love each other and come to oneness. We did nothing special for our marriage. We are both Christians’ (IIA-36).

In other interviewees also, I have learned that there are many Nuer who married Anywaa women. As one respondent puts it, the new generation is speaking the languages of both ethnic groups. This might open a door for reconciliation between the two ethnic groups.

Regarding killing each other, a Nuer missionary notes:

We are Christians, so we are family by God. We are living on the same land, God blessed our land, and we are living together. We can only live together because we live on the same land until the end of the world. So, we must preach that we are one, living in the same region, Christians, created in God's image, and born again. So, it is not Biblical to kill each other (IIN-191).

Anywaa respondents associate the killing among Christians in different ethnic groups with spiritual immaturity. He argues that ‘these believers though they believe in God, they are not spiritually mature. When we mature spiritually, we do not practice what the community practices, such as conflict’ (IIA-87).

As the person's reflect, when people deepen their spiritual identity, their oneness increases, their boundary becomes permeable to accommodate others and that serves as a reconciliatory tool for the two ethnic groups to live peacefully together.

5.2.5.4. Change of Allegiance from the Cultural values to God

Culture or cultural identity has great value among the Anywaa and the Nuer. However, reflecting on what is enshrined in it the allegiance is changed among individual believers.

A Nuer respondent shares what he thinks of his culture and how it should not be practised as it is; instead, some elements need perspective and are not in practice:

Culture is not created by God but by the native people of that tribe. As I said, we do not want anything to lose in the culture. Nevertheless, even though the culture says to do it, we do not do it all because we are born-again Christians (IIN-241).

Similarly, an Anywaa respondent's perspective on cultural values in general is:

From the beginning, the cultural values do not align with Biblical principles. The ancient people created the culture, and there is cultural dance. The clothes are different for both men and women. However, in Christianity, we do not wear those clothes. The previous culture is left behind, and now our guide is the Bible. We focus on salvation and preaching the Bible so that they get salvation and leave the culture behind (IIA-257).

In both ethnic groups, we see cultural alienation through leaving some cultural obligations and practices as a sign of a rupture from the past. They are also challenging the cultural practices through the values from the new religion.

Another Anywaa respondent explained how he came to Christ after miraculously coming to life⁴⁸ after he was believed to be dead even before he knew who God was. After that

⁴⁸ He faced a deadly situation in a certain desert while he was on duty as a soldier. After a long walk in the desert without food and water, he had to take medicine for his liver problem, but it affected him so much and fainted to death. Both he and his friends believed that he was dead. His friend left him covered with cloth as they do for other dead men. After they went, he saw the light coming to him, entering his body, and he got instant strength to continue his journey.

encounter, he went to Church and received Jesus as his personal saviour. When he refers to himself, he says, 'I am Lazarus'⁴⁹ (IIA-32).

According to him, his conversion was facilitated by the divine encounter; he believed in Christ, repented for his previous life, and a new allegiance to God came because of this encounter. He mentioned some of the changes that came into his life. One is a new identity perception towards himself and others. The person's rupture from the past⁵⁰ is expressed in the changing allegiance from ethnicity to Christ, whom he called our new ethnicity. Besides, his view towards himself and others changed from 'being from this world' to 'God's world', different in language and ethnicity but called to be one.

In this narrative, the person's change showed a rupture from the past⁵¹, not at the desire level but his extraordinary encounter is followed by repentance, a change in self-view and others, and spiritual allegiances.

5.2.5.6. Women's Position in the Culture and in the Church

Among the social groups of the Anywaa and the Nuer, women were given lower position in the culture. Since the church functions in an existing culture, a similar treatment was given to women. For example, when a man wants to go for second or third marriage, she does not have a say in the decision of dowry negotiation. Women are seen as a means of getting

⁴⁹ He mentioned the dead man, Lazarus, in the Bible in John 11, who later rose from the dead after Jesus called him from the grave.

⁵⁰ Robin Horton (1971) argued that African conversion to Christianity and Islam is the development of traditional cosmology, not a break from the past, like 'the new wine in the old wineskin'. However, Jason Bruner and Hurlbut (2020) argued that Horton's thesis could be modified, and special encounters can be considered as the converts' desire to break from the past. They considered the divine encounter the converts mentioned could be the desire to rupture from the past.

⁵¹ In Brigit Mayer's (1998a) essay, "Make a complete break with the Past," a discontinuity in Ghanaian Pentecostal discourse, she argued that in terms of identity, breaking with the past is depicted by not emphasising the social ties and finding roots in the past in order to move forward in the future.

wealth and are silent when a man takes what they have and gives it as a dowry for another family to bring the additional wife. When a Nuer respondent asked whether men consult their wives when they want to bring additional wives, he said, 'Men do not discuss such issues with their wife. Culturally, they do not consult such things with a woman. If he brings a new wife, she keeps quiet' (IIN-215).

As a Nuer reverend commented, regarding women's position in the community and church, both the Anywaa and the Nuer have a similar culture in giving a lower place to women and children. For the Anywaa, women must respect their husbands and show that they respect their husbands. She will show that by kneeling down and going on her knees while providing him with food from the kitchen to where he is sitting (IIA-56).

For the Nuer, women are not counted in their conversation as if someone meets two women and one man on the road, and if someone asked him if he met someone on the road, he would say I met a man. He does not mention he met women, for they are not considered (IIN-179). In both ethnic groups, women do not partake in inheritance. However, in the midst of all this, Churches have improved the position they give to women. Now women participate in Church leadership, participate in meetings, give their opinions and can refuse forced marriages and other societal pressures (IIN-180). It is also noted that a lot has to be done to unmute and empower women in every sphere of life. As the dialogue continued in the self, different negotiations result. In the next section these different negotiation strategies are explored.

5.3. Ethnic Identity Negotiation Strategies for the Anywaa and the Nuer

When there is value dissonance in the self, the self takes different strategies to bring negotiation among the dissonant values and it is called the third position in DST. These third positions or strategies that the Anywaa and the Nuer employ to negotiate the values in their culture and Evangelical Christianity are discussed below.

When there are contradicting values in the self, there will be dialogue and the I positions, depositions, and repositions itself, according to Hermans and Gieser (2010). The dialogue among contradictory values will be settled through the third position. The third position that self creatively creates is not solely a reconciliatory position of the two opposing stands that agree with opposing values, as Hermans and Gieser argue. This research showed that there are third positions different in kind based on the interpreting capacity of the person (what Ammerman, 1998, called the resource frame in identity change of members in congregations), and they may have a positive or negative influence on the creation of a new set of interactions.

Based on the analysed data, four kinds of third positions are identified that the Anywaa and Nuer people employed because of contradictory I positions. The contradictions are because of value dissonance between their ethnic identity and Evangelical Christianity.

Based on the contingencies of enabling and hampering factors, the Anywaa and the Nuer maintain or negotiate their ethnic identities through different strategies.

5.3.1. Reinterpretation⁵²

As I interviewed both Anywaa and Nuer informants, I discovered that they reinterpret who they are (self-identity), their cultural rituals and/or held beliefs or actions (cultural expectations), their ethnic relation with ethnic others and their group identity (ethnic others). They reinterpret by changing the cultural significance of the old forms through the new values. They use the Bible as a framework for reinterpretation and draw the values from the Bible, the new religious identity's sacred book.

5.3.1.1. Reinterpreted Self-view (Self-identity)

I have noted that the Anywaa and the Nuer have unique self-identity views⁵³ and want to emphasise their uniqueness. When I interviewed a teenage girl about how she feels toward her identity, she informed me:

I am happy that we are recognised as different from them. Since we are all dark-skinned, everybody has considered us as one. We are different from Anywaa; of course, our fathers told us that both Anywaa and Nuer are Sons of one father, but they separated and went their own way. We are happy that we are recognised as different (FGN-589).

⁵² Reinterpretation is a concept developed by Mel-ville Herskovits to show people's mental process to connect the past with the present or vice versa. As he defined it, it is "the process by which old meanings are ascribed to new elements or by which new values change the cultural significance of old forms. It operates internally, from generation to generation, no less than in integrating a borrowed element into a receiving culture. But it is in the latter process that the phenomenon is most easily to be studied" (Herskovits, 1948, p. 553).

⁵³ According to Bailey JA (2003), Self-identity is different from self-image and self-concept, which focus on a subjective mental picture of one's identity that comprises beliefs and feelings towards self. This concept has similarities with the postmodern self, free of the community. Self-identity is a complex multidimensional concept with several components, including a multiplicity of self. It has been defined as: 'Who am I?' 'An integrated image of himself or herself as a unique person, which often includes ethnic identity' and 'what one is' as distinguished from other persons, what one knows and believes, what one holds dear and reveres, and what meaning one's existence has (P.383-84).' It emphasises both self and others, and uniqueness is understood in reference to the others.

This girl recognised that her identity was contrasted and was happy about that. She also recognised that these two people share the same family, but since they have departed from each other, they need to be recognised separately. She wants to embolden her Nuerness, as the ethnic federalism materialised it in Ethiopia. This uniqueness with marked ethnic boundaries is negotiated through Evangelical Christianity such as the ethnic group name and what value entails: Anywaaness and bravery (IIA-54).

The new values, such as having patience, not revenge, and doing good to others, are Evangelical Christian values considered not to serve the cultural significance of bravery in the Anywaa. This creates unhappiness in some of Anywaa's people. The older and unbeliever Anywaa people regretfully see the new religious identity as changing the culture and discrediting the significance of the old community values. An Anywaa respondent said, “some older people who are not believers say, ‘this Christianity has made our children, our generation, weak. The God they serve has made them weak’ (IIA-43).

Another Anywaa respondent, when asked about the recurrent conflict between the two ethnic groups, said, 'what I know is we (Anywaa) have a good relationship with Christians (Nuer), but the conflict is between non-Christians' (IIA-95). The respondent claims that there is a factor that glues or allows a relationship between the two ethnic groups, Christianity, instead of emphasising ethnic identity, reinterpreting who they are.

The other Nuer respondent reinterprets the self-identity in terms of brothers living in contradiction:

I know very little about why Anywaa and Nuer are in conflict, but idea and perception differences might be the reason. See Abel and Cain; they were brothers but were living in conflict. We have tried to discuss this and to know the root cause of the conflict, but it is not still known (IIN-278).

The respondent brought the two brothers of one father in the Bible to symbolise the Anywaa and the Nuer. He is saying that we are brothers just like Abel and Cain, but we might have things that are not implicit as causes of conflict. This person is also giving religious identity as the primary identity of the two ethnic groups, and when that is emphasised, the reason for conflict will be untraceable, for this draws both to unity rather than difference.

5.3.1.2. Reinterpreting Cultural Expectations

One of the cultural expectations is polygamy, as mentioned in the previous chapters. When the Anywaa and the Nuer asked about this, those who support monogamy refer to the Bible and Christianity. Marriage is reinterpreted in how it should be and what elements should comprise. An Anywaa respondent said:

In the beginning, God created Adam and Eve and put them in the Garden of Eden to be husband and wife. There was one Adam and one Eve. So, God's original plan for marriage is to be between one man and one woman (IIN-194).

The other Anywaa respondent replied:

Those who refer to David or Solomon as a standard to confirm that polygamy is God's idea, are false teachers. They know God plans to have one man and woman in marriage, but they may refer to these people to confirm their lust. However, God's idea is one Adam and one Eve, not many wives (IIA-07).

The other Nuer respondent also said that 'God started the marriage between Adam and Eve. How come one person loves two women equally? It is not possible. So, marriage should be between a man and a woman (IIA-132).'

Some respondents are challenging the cultural expectations by reinterpreting through the Bible. They refer to the first marriage in Eden, the impossibility of loving many women

equally, but marriage is all about love. They also challenge the misconception of having many children from many wives by believing that God is the source of children and extending one's family can come in different forms, not by having many wives.

5.3.1.3. View of Ethnic Others: Collective Identity Reinterpreted

When asked about their group identity, most respondents refer to their ethnic group, but this group identity is also reinterpreted through the Bible. Their ethnic identity puts them in so much hostility and confrontation with ethnic others, and they call each other enemies. The young respondents shared with me that their parents do not allow them to have friends from ethnic others. They also said that if young people are involved in a conflict, they are considered brave, and if he dies, the parents would not be sad, for they believe that he died as he is protecting his own. I came across the new definition of a friend in Christianity. A Nuer respondent said:

According to the Bible, even if the person is your enemy, when you accept Christianity, you leave all the enmity behind, and the person will be your friend. If you continue in enmity, that is allowing the devil's spirit to come to you. Now you are in the same church with your previous enemy, now a friend, under the same God (IIN-250).

This person argues that the two ethnic groups who used to live in enmity now share the same space and God. By recognising this, he reinterprets the previous family/enemy, the in-group/ the out-group concept. Their new relationship in one religious identity makes them one with no difference that amounts to enmity.

As a sign of living out this new friendship concept in Christianity, these evangelical believers communicate to keep each other from danger in times of conflict. An Anywaa reverend told me what communication looks like when conflict erupts in the region.

When problems happen between the Nuer and the Anywaa, we communicate over the phone. For example, yesterday, a person killed two people. A driver and an officer, one of them was Nuer from Itang Wereda. Then a Nuer pastor called me and said, 'Yesterday a Nuer guy was killed, so be careful when you go out. ' He called me so that I could be careful. As far as my knowledge is concerned, unmanageable problems would have been happening in this region if not for Christianity (IIA-110).

These two pastors are supposed to be part of the conflict but chose to reinterpret their relationship in the light of their religious identity. They are 'their brother's keeper', which their ethnic identity did not give them.

Similarly, a Nuer evangelist shared a similar story:

I have a friend in Anywaa. He is my best friend in Christ. When something happens, he will call me and say, please, something is happening this side, and please advise your tribe. Then I will go to my tribe and warn them and also advise them not to be involved. Because the thing is, we have God's love. There was shooting and killing, but God says love your enemy. I know this, and my friend also knows this (IIN-255).

These two friends from rival ethnic groups have crossed their boundaries and reinterpreted their ethnic identity in terms of another identity and found common ground; love, knowing, and obeying what God says. By doing so, they could break their previous group identity that favours only the in-group.

The other respondent also commented on what kind of group identity is needed in the region. He also refers to the Biblical principle of group identity. She said:

Only we accept that we are in Christ; that is the most important thing. This understanding creates relationships between different ethnic groups. For example, we may be different people, but our belief is in one God. This makes us one (IIA-81).

The respondent is saying there is unity though we are diverse. Focusing on what makes us one is much more important than focusing on our differences.

In conclusion, the Anywaa and the Nuer people reinterpret their view of their self-identity, some cultural expectations that have contradicted values with their religious identity, and their collective identity and how their identity is related to ethnic others. They are co-creating identity using their common religious identity as a lens and reinterpreting their ethnic relation and group identity. This shows that through DST people are de-positioning and re-positioning the self based on the value constraints and provisions in different identity sources.

5.3.2. Framing

The other strategy the Anywaa and the Nuer employ in negotiating their ethnic and religious identity is what McAdam, Mccarthy and Zald called framing.⁵⁴

Among the respondents in both ethnic groups, nearly half of them frame the values and practices in their ethnic groups into the new religion, Evangelical Christianity. An Anywaa respondent frames the riverside ritual before fishing or hunting by consciously framing it in the values of Evangelical Christianity; unity, solidarity and respecting the right of others.

He gave me three reasons why the traditional practice should continue to be framed in Christianity; first, since it is a community ritual, it contributes to the cohesion of the community; second, when he goes, he prays on his terms, and it should not be changed, but

⁵⁴ McAdam, Mccarthy and Zald (1996, p 6), drawing on David Snow's original conception and definition of framing, defined framing as 'the conscious strategic efforts by a group of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action.'

the previous prayer can be done in a different and new form. It also allows him to give others a chance to pray in the way they know it; by doing so this, he believes that he is respecting the rights of the people. He explains that the riverside prayer can be framed in a Christian way of prayer without violating the values.

In the same way, A Nuer lady commented on the polygamy experience among Nuer men as a different kind of polygamy because they are Evangelicals. She tried to show how other men, other than Evangelicals, did it irresponsibly without having enough resources to support their homes and wives. She says, 'polygamy among Evangelicals is not like others; unless they have enough resources, they do not do it. If they have enough resources, it is ok. Because so much disagreement comes into the house because of finance' (FGN-590).

For the lady, the major factor in having many wives is finance, not other values. If a person marries many women without having enough resources, it is irresponsible and unChristian. A responsible Christian should ensure that he has enough resources and can administer to his wives without causing any conflict.

A Nuer reverend also showed me how he shifts the blessing and prophesying ceremony conducted for girls during their wedding day before he became a Christian; by framing the ceremony into biblical acts such as replacing the words used during the marriage ceremony as a prophecy with biblical words (IIN-273).

A Nuer man whose wife is nagging him to have another wife is also referring to the Bible and tries to frame her argument according to the Bible:

She mentions the story of David, how many wives he married, and still, God was listening to him, and she challenged me that I am not greater than them. That is why I told her not to read the Old Testament (IIN-146).

Another respondent tried to frame the act of polygamy as the command of God:

Having many children is the command of God, but one wife cannot give birth to many children but three or more wives. Unless we do this way, we can only have a few children. God said, 'increase in number' (Genesis 1:28 Be fruitful and multiply); but one wife can give birth to only 2, 3, or a maximum of 10, and that will not be enough. One woman cannot give 20, 30, or 50 children; only three or four wives can (IIN-195).

Another framing strategy is seen in providing the first fruit to God. When a respondent shows the framing of this practice in today's Christianity, he said:

When we grow crops such as maize, our first fruit will be given to God. This was practised before. However, previously, they take the first fruit and keep it in the house, and no one would touch it or be cursed. Alternatively, they take it, throw it in the river, and say I gave this to god. But now we will bring to the church, and the pastors and the church members will bless us (IIN-243).

For the Anywaa and the Nuer, cursing is practised and feared by both before and after conversion. When I ask why cursing is still practised, A Nuer respondent replied, 'it is also practised in the Bible, which is why it is continued (IIN-589).'

The points mentioned above from respondents are examples of what Winchester and Guichun (2019) call normative framing, a generally accepted way of correctness in doing something. We do not see a deeper dialogue on each; rather, contested values and practices are understood normatively and are easily subjected to framing.

5.3.3. Dichotomization /Separation

Though there are push factors in the dichotomised view of life in today's Anywaa and Nuer society, in the face of value contradictions, there is one creative third position for self to lessen the tension.

Dichotomising or separating the two values apart and treating them as an independent part of life and living them out accordingly is one of the propensities seen in my respondents.

As I discussed the political institution of the Anywaa people, the Anywaa pastor, who is so sad because of the current changes in the region regarding land usage, cultural oppression, and other youth behavioural issues, showed me that culture and religion can proceed concurrently (IIA-117).

Another Anywaa respondent criticised this strategy, as on some issues, such as marriage, people need to follow the biblical principle rather than culture.

Keeping the two identities in parallel is strongly suggested by another Anywaa respondent: 'Evangelicals should keep both traditional beliefs and biblical beliefs side by side; for the two are different things' (IIA-45).

A Nuer reverend observing the Anywaa on this issue, by holding their religious identity in complete separation from their culture said, 'as we sit together to solve conflicts considering the Bible, they only see things from a cultural perspective; they do not want to see it from a biblical perspective' (IIN-280).

Some of the Nuer respondents also use dichotomisation during value dissonance. In his reflection on widow inheritance, a Nuer respondent said:

There is a difference between Christianity and culture. The Bible does not allow multiple marriages, but for example, if you are three in the family and two of them have passed away, you are obliged to marry the wives. Even though we are Christians, we want to continue the culture. It is important to leave the culture as it is. Because through the children they are going to be born, we may raise the name of the deceased (IIN-241).

When there is value dissonance, the respondent wants to keep the two at a distance and leave them out accordingly.

In another conversation, with a Nuer man, his late father said to him that, 'I will give you both the wife and the Bible. So do not retreat from the Bible and this commandment (IIN-

141).’ The father wanted his son to be a devoted Christian like him and to do what was culturally allowed. So, he ordered him to hold both the culture and the Bible in different hands. With this strategy, the dialogical self settles the contradictions among contradictory I positions.

5.3.4. Adaptation

The other way of dealing with value contradictions among the Nuer and the Anywaa is adaptation. Jennifer Todd (2005) has designed the six identity change directions when the socio-political environment changes. In her typology, though most of the identity change directions work best in the immigrant situation or nations merging, some of them, like adaptation, which she defined as to 'conform to the practice required in the new order without changing the core elements of the preceding identity,' can explain value negotiations between identity categories such as religion and ethnicity among the Anywaa and the Nuer.

In my semi-structured interviews, some Anywaa and Nuer respondents have shown adaptation when we talk about religious conversion and what would be the major changes seen in their lives and lives of others because of conversion. An Anywaa young man adapted to the new religion without changing the core assumption about God in the traditional religion said, ‘previously the ritual was done for the bad God only, to chase him away we do nothing for the good god, but now we do celebrations and thanksgiving for the good god’ (IIA-98).

He now participates in conferences and thanksgiving meetings, which is a new practice in the new religious order, but what he knows about God in the new religion is the previous 'good god'.

A Nuer reverend also said that the Nuer had societal rules similar to Christianity:

They are worshippers, and harming other people is condemned. When they came to Christ, they heard about the Ten Commandments practiced before as societal rule. Nine of them were practiced except for the command about sabbath day observance (IIN-218).

According to this reflection, the previous and the new religions are mostly the same. The nine commandments among the ten were practised previously, and one is added now. This shows there is little difference between the old and the new.

Polygamy is not considered as a wrong practice. It continues to be practised by adapting its different meanings in the community and by fulfilling the requirement set by the Church. The evangelical Churches in the area have put some restrictions on polygamy. If a person wants to be a minister and serve in the church as a church leader, he is not allowed to have more than one wife. The people hold onto this, and some church leaders quit their leadership position (IIN-141) and get married to more than one wife when they lose ground to keep the rules set by the Church.

Adaptation is one strategy of responding to the demands of the time in a certain space, and both the Anywaa and the Nuer are practising it.

5.4. Factors Enabling and Hampering Ethnic Identity Negotiation through the Dialogical Self

Ethnic identity negotiation results from changes in the elements of the cultural elements. All cultural elements do not pose a threat or are favourable conditions for ethnic interaction, but people may maintain or dilute cultural elements due to different reasons. According to the primary data analysed, the Anywaa and the Nuer ethnic groups have ethnic elements that they have maintained or want to maintain, that they have changed or cancelled, and some to be negotiated, through a third position.

5.4.1. Enabling Factors

5.4.1.1. Retrospective Reflection on Cultural Consequences-Dialogue

One of the factors that enable the Anywaa and the Nuer to maintain, change, or negotiate cultural/ ethnic elements is reflecting on the consequences they brought in individual life and communal life. According to the respondents, though most Nuer and Anywaa love their cultural elements and obligations, some are undesirable when affecting individuals and society. Some of the community expectations, such as a dowry, polygamous marriage, supporting family members who are not working, are considered disempowering. Because they have negative consequences both on the person and on the community, this may lead to a societal crisis as per their reflection.

A Nuer respondent who is working at Gambella University shared with me one communal obligation that created a heavy burden on him.:

One of the cultural expectations is to share what you have with others; for example, I am living with my parents and brothers with their families, and if they do not have, I should share. I should

take care of them. It is a cultural obligation. Because my brothers have no income, I should support them until they get one. But this is very difficult for a person. It is difficult for one person currently. I am giving them advice, but it is still difficult because they are too proud to do any available job that they can work. In such a way, I may not be able to support my own family, let alone others (IIN-164).

According to the respondent's reflection, this cultural expectation makes him poor and the other brothers 'lazy.' Meanwhile, the respondent is so worried that he cannot be out of this cultural expectation, though he wants to see it changed. We can see how powerful the community is in collective culture for individuals to live according to their convictions.

This cultural obligation put upon the shoulder of older children who are working and make them responsible for looking after and meeting the needs of the rest of their families is because the Nuer choose between jobs and makes them dependent; there are some honorable jobs, and some are not, according to their definition (FGN-161).

Such a culture, even though it looks good as they are seen supporting each other, may also encourage laziness and dependency, which ultimately leads the community to poverty. Now it is not only individuals who feel the pressure; institutions such as churches are encouraging and teaching people to work and build their livelihoods because the economic pressure is increasing (IIN-248).

Similarly, another cultural expectation criticised by a Nuer respondent is ransom. The respondents indicated two ways of dealing with this, one is making the issue personal rather than communal.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ For example, it is common for the Nuer to pay ransom for the affected family during the conflict. One Nuer might be expected to pay 70-100 cattle if he kills someone. But this ransom will be the clan's responsibility, of which the killer is a member. As the respondent commented on this, The ransom payment is very hard in Nuer culture. It is the clan's responsibility to pay for the victim. If the person who inflicted others urged to pay

Retrospective reflection on cultural expectations might be a factor for the adherents to maintain it or change it. Whatever good or bad the cultural element has brought to individuals and society has been used by the Anywaa and the Nuer.

5.4.1.2. Mirroring the Action with Evangelical Ideals: Depositioning and Repositioning of the Self

The other enabling factor for the Anywaa and the Nuer to maintain or change the cultural elements is seeing them in the light of their Evangelical beliefs. For example, for both the Anywaa and the Nuer, revenge, otherwise ransom, should be done to serve justice. However, the respondents informed that Evangelical Christianity had brought another way of dealing with the victim-assailant situation: forgiveness and giving revenge to God (IIN-169, IIN-270).

Taking revenge with their own hands for both the Anywaa and the Nuer is a sign of bravery, and it is designed in detail. As one Anywaa respondent shared with me, if someone is killed, all his details will be studied, whether he is educated, at which level, did he have a job, and so on. So, the avenger will look for a person with similar qualifications and job levels in the killer's family, and they will kill that person (IIA-83). After conversion, this has been seen differently; some say God's way is better than ours. Forgiveness will break the intergenerational hatred that can be created by following cultural revenge and ransom.

The Nuer and the Anywaa have put the values and expectations from the culture and Evangelical Christianity on a weighing scale and negotiated some of the ethnic identity

ransom for his own deeds, that would have been a lesson for others; otherwise, it creates carelessness in some people (IIN-144).

values. Whenever they negotiate, they take into account societal cohesion, spiritual life, and comparative advantage for the person and the society.

In a conversation between I and external positions, which are interior, the I position would sometimes be communal, meaning influenced by the community or exercise agency. What plays a great role is power asymmetry, as DST indicated. However, as the dialogue progresses among I positions due to other socialisations such as religious socialisation and giving the positions different perspectives, it helps the I to deposition. As indicated in the above paragraphs, this results in a different self at the thinking and action levels.

Pelz (1981) wrote in his essay *The Communal Self, analyses understanding self and others*, "I recognise myself in all other selves. I recognise other selves in myself. The self, ... says and must say: 'Nothing human is alien to me' (p. 33)." This is very familiar in a collective culture, but there is also dialogue, and when there is a contradiction, the I position, deposition and reposition self, challenge the status quo of the community.

5.4.2. Hampering Factors

There are reasons why the Anywaa and the Nuer are struggling to negotiate some of their cultural values though they know the values dissonate with their religious values, meaning there are conflicting I positions. Most respondents mentioned three reasons that hamper the negotiation: societal pressure (ingroup), spiritual immaturity, and external pressure that demands solidarity (out-group).

5.4.2.1. Societal Pressure: In-group

For the Anywaa, the man is not allowed to take his wife if he cannot throw a wedding party and pay the full price of the dowry.⁵⁶ Another Anywaa respondent told me that he sends his wife every day to her parent's home with their two-year-old daughter because he is saving money to pay the full price of the dowry and could not take additional responsibility. So, he and his wife share breakfast in the morning and go to their parent's home for lunch and dinner (IIA-541).

It is not easy to go on with one's values, for there is a higher societal and cultural influence on individuals' actions.

For the Nuer also, there is a stronger societal influence for one to go for multiple marriages, go for a fight, pay a dowry, and take revenge. For the Nuer, multiple marriages signify wealth, care for society, and administrative capacity. Similarly, a dowry is a sign of wealth, and sometimes it gives them a sense of pride. They look down on other ethnic groups because they think other women are cheaper than their women because of a dowry. The meaning the ingroup assign to the action challenges individuals to stay in the norm and expectations.

5.4.2.2. Spiritual Immaturity

The other hampering factor, according to the respondents, is spiritual immaturity. The Nuer and the Anywaa think that some of the actions continued in the Evangelical circle because they are not mature enough in their Christian life. An Anywaa respondent said:

⁵⁶ One man explains that he started living with his wife after four years after he was able to throw a wedding party. She stayed with her parents with their four-year child (IIA-60).

These believers, though they believe in God, they are not spiritually mature. When we mature spiritually, we do not practice what the community practices, such as conflict. Conflicts may arise because of different reasons, such as job opportunities, and political issues, such as the process of assimilation of one ethnic group into the other. When we are spiritually immature, we might be involved in what the community believes and acts. We may be pastors and even go to different schools, such as Bible schools. However, it is our responsibility to practice what we have learned so that we may mature in Christian life and resist unwanted societal expectations (IIA-423).

According to him, it is not about our name or title, such as the title of pastor. If people are not mature enough through learning and practising the word of God, they may easily be caught up in community pressure.

A Nuer respondent gives the same reflection on how people's view of themselves can change their actions such as participating in conflict (IIN-133).⁵⁷

Both respondents noticed that if people do not deeply reflect on the Word of God and live accordingly, it will be difficult to negotiate their cultural identity and expectations.

5.4.2.3. External Push

Another hampering factor noticed in ethnic identity negotiation is the external push that calls for ethnic solidarity and reinitiates the old practice of strengthening ethnic bonds. The Anywaa feel that the Nuer are pushing their territories and following intended strategies to eradicate them by changing their identities. On the other hand, the Nuer feel that the Anywaa are territorial and do not want any other ethnic group, which is not fair, and they should fight against it.

⁵⁷ We should teach the people that God redeemed people from all languages and tribes. We need to teach them this. When people think that all is born from one God, they will not be trapped in such silly and small issues. When people count Jesus shed His blood for all the people, such minor, '*yasafar waré* (translated as trivial issues)' will not overtake them

To keep the solidarity among the ingroup and strengthen their identity, they want to embolden their ethnic identities and rituals and even go the brutal way of keeping ethnic purity, like killing children born through intermarriage (IIN-157).

Another Nuer respondent reflected on the legitimacy of Anywaa's fear towards their ethnic extinction:

The problem between the two people is, as they say, 'Nuer are pushing our territory'. Moreover, when you see, the Nuer population is high, and Anywaa's fear is legitimate. Because if they are pushed, they will be few, and they are right (IIN-131).

On the other side, the Nuer believe that the land belongs to everyone, and the Anywaa should stop being ethnocentric because Gambella belongs to everyone, as Addis Ababa is for everyone. The interest in getting married to the Anywaa and other ethnic groups from the Nuer side should be investigated whether it is a strategy to make everyone Nuer and change the identities of other ethnic groups or because there is a cultural demand to be a large family to protect themselves from being subdued by their ethnic groups but different clan. For the Nuer it has a positive meaning, for they think it is the highest form of including others (melting pot).

5.5. Conclusion

This chapter investigated what socio-cultural and religious elements are continued or discontinued after the two ethnic groups are converted to Evangelical Christianity. It also explored indications of conversion and the role continuity and discontinuity of socio-cultural and traditional religious elements in their ethnic relations.

According to the data findings five socio-cultural elements are continued in both ethnic groups. One is polygamy with its own push factors and consequences, the other is the dowry with its peculiar choice of bride wealth, a violence associated with it when it is not fulfilled and what social and familial consequences it brought in the life of the respondents. The other element is revenge which is sometimes resolved through ransom; how it is associated with self-pride, community level respect and how sometimes it is framed in Christianity. Their polarized hospitality concept is also explored which implicates their closed boundary in living it out. The other continued socio-cultural element is beating which is a cultural disciplining method for the Anywaa and way of testing the strength of the boy in enduring pain for the Nuer.

In addition to socio-cultural elements, traditional religious values and practices that are continued are also explored. These are different rituals which have a spiritual meaning and significance, the previous view of god, and cursing as a spiritual weapon in frightening and attacking others.

In contrast, for some of the Anywaa and Nuer Evangelicals, polygamy is discontinued, the view of God and others is changed, lordship and kingship among the Anywaa Evangelicals is denounced, and the previous practice of making marks on the skin (social skin) is abandoned. For both the Anywaa and the Nuer, there were spiritual figures that facilitate the interaction between the people and spiritual beings. However, after conversion, the spiritual authority of these spiritual figures is denounced. In addition, religious conversion, as a rupture from the past, resulted in some changes and a new family concept in the form of a shift of the centre of identity, a change of allegiance, abandonment, or a reinvention of rituals with Evangelical elements and a change in how they view themselves and others.

In the second section of this chapter, the Anywaa's and the Nuer's ethnic identity negotiation strategies through the dialogical self is explored. Moreover, factors that promote and hamper ethnic identity negotiation are also discussed.

When dissonance of values is in the self, there will be movement of I, and as a result, the reconciliatory position, the third position, is created. This research has shown that there are different types of third positions. Four types of third positions or negotiation strategies are identified among the Anywaa and the Nuer: Reinterpretation, Framing, Dichotomization and Adaptation.

Through the dialogical self, the Anywaa and the Nuer have reinterpreted their self-view, their cultural norms and expectations, and their group identity and group identity of ethnic others. The interpretation framework is drawn from Evangelical Christianity. In framing, the Anywaa and the Nuer tried to see their cultural norms through the lens of Evangelical Christianity and count the cultural norms as Evangelical values. Similarly, in adaptation, they appropriate their ethnic values to Evangelical Christianity. Dichotomisation highlights the way the self avoids a dialogue between ethnic identity and religious identity. The different negotiation strategies among the Anywaa and the Nuer indicates the availability of the factors that may hinder or promote ethnic identity negotiation.

Two factors as promoters of ethnic identity negotiation are identified: dialogue in the form of evaluative reflection and mirroring different identities such as religious and cultural identities. Similarly, three factors are identified as hindering ethnic identity negotiation: in-group pressure, spiritual immaturity (shallowness in religious identity), and out-group push. In the next chapter the result of ethnic identity negotiation will be widely discussed.

Chapter Six Boundary Permeability: Towards a Theory of Ethnic Identity Negotiation

6.1. Introduction

The Anywaa and the Nuer are living in open hostility that puts their relation at odds. Though they have divergent ethnic identification and competitions over resources and power, they have also ‘family resemblance’ through their religious identity, Evangelical Christianity. This research aims at investigating how they are negotiating values in their ethnic and religious identities when they are conflicting through the dialogical self. Particularly, how much their religious values are helping them to negotiate their ethnic identity.

As the ways leading to the aim, the research also explored the identity markers they profess and their role in ethnic boundary making (Chapter four), the cultural and religious elements and values continue or discontinue after Evangelical Christianity, and the different strategies or third positions the Anywaa and the Nuer employ as a result of the dialogical self when there is dissonance of values in their religious and ethnic identities (Chapter five).

According to the findings, the Anywaa and the Nuer have different ascribed identity markers that tell who they are as collectives, what they value, what meanings the markers embody, how they play in boundary making, and how Evangelical Christianity, their acquired identity marker, helps them redefine the meanings of the markers and resulting

abandoning or recreating them by changing the contents. Their identity marker explains how their boundaries are closed and Evangelical Christianity made the boundaries permeable. The research indicates boundary permeability is creating a space for others without losing identity and pushing others to lose theirs, in both ethnic groups.

The other findings of this research show that the religious conversion of the Anywaa and the Nuer comprises both continuity and discontinuity of cultural and traditional religious values. The Anywaa and the Nuer conversion transcends the debate over conversion on the radical continuity and discontinuity of culture. Rather, the findings show that the Anywaa and the Nuer maintain some of the cultural values, recreate the previous religious and cultural values, and abandon some of the cultural and religious values with its deities. This indicates that the Anywaa's and the Nuer's conversions are in the continuum of continuity and discontinuity.

The other findings in the research indicate that the Anywaa and the Nuer employ different strategies or third positions other than hybrid identity in DST to negotiate the dissonance of values in their ethnic identity and religious identity. Because of their highly collective culture, their dialogical self is communal and there are promoting and hindering factors in the ethnic identity negotiation work because of the collective culture and communal self.

Overall, these two ethnic groups in Ethiopia have impermeable ethnic boundaries formed by their ascribed identity markers but began to open their boundaries as they acquired a new religious identity, Evangelical Christianity, through conversion. This acquired identity marker created a permeable space through repositioning themselves in ethnic identity negotiation based on value-based dialogue in the self that eventually improves their ethnic relations and contributes to peacebuilding in the area.

In this chapter, I engage the findings with the existing literature and interpret them. First, I discuss conversion and identity in the two ethnic groups and what results. Then how the Anywaa's and the Nuer's dialogical self involve both the social agent and the social environment and make value-based identity negotiations to show the role of power in identity negotiation. In the third section I discuss the practical application of ethnic identity negotiation in reconciliation and conflict transformation followed by a brief conclusion.

6.2. DST in Identity after Conversion

The Anywaa and the Nuer have divergent ethnic identifications, which contribute to their conflictual relation in addition to the competition over power and resources, a failed resettlement programme, and ineffective incorporation with the Ethiopian government (Dereje, 2011, Pankhurst, et al. 1992, Dereje, 2005, Kong, 2006, Hailemariam, 2013). Their divergent ethnic identification looks unreconcilable, and they use it as an instrument to demonize each other. However, after converting to Evangelical Christianity, their way of thinking towards values in their ethnicity is negotiated through a new perspective that they draw from their new religious identity that redefined the values.

6.2.1. DST and Identity Markers after Conversion

The primary identity marker for the Nuer and the Anywaa is Nuerness and Anywaness, respectively, or ethnic identity. Nuerness and Anywaness represent their ethnic identities, how they view themselves and how they want to be viewed by others as distinct identities. Their Anywaness and Nuerness are the boundary-making elements, distinctions from the others. They emphasize differences. The Nuer teenage girl explained their difference from the Anywaa:

I am glad others now realize that we are two different people. People used to consider us as one, but thanks to the new nations and nationalities day, we are now seen as distinct ethnic groups who have different languages and cultures unlike our skin color (IING-589).

Otherness has a more remarkable place in everyday life and is salient in the town of Gambella through demarcated territories, and an insecurity to go to hotels and places found in the territories of ethnic others, especially at night. They have public places they share, such as markets, hospitals, and children in high school, but they should be in their territory before it gets dark, or they would be in danger. Research and different reports show active and latent conflict between the Anywaa and the Nuer. The primary reason is their divergent ethnic identification and other factors indicated in the previous chapters (Tadesse M, 2002, Gizachew T, 2020, Dereje F, 2009).

Based on ethnicity analysis, the Anywaa and the Nuer are represented as primordial and constructivists respectively as they fulfill the indicators by Clifford Geertz (1963) and Fredric Barth (1969). In his anthropological work, Dereje Feyissa (2011) took primordialism and constructivism not as analytical tools through an emic view rather than an etic,⁵⁸ to investigate their ethnicity. He took the ideologies as their way of ethnic identification. Therefore, the people are themselves primordial and constructivist.

In my analysis, I also used the emic view because this emic view (insiders' view about their own culture), whether it is ascribed (by others in a group or outside the group) or acquired (self-claimed), is still how the ethnic group members think about themselves and their

⁵⁸ Kenneth Pike, an anthropologist, introduced the idea. Marvin Harris elaborated and altered his idea, saying, 'Emic statement refers to logico-empirical systems whose phenomenal distinction or things are built up out of contrasts and discriminations significant, meaningful, real accurate, or in some other fashion regarded as appropriate by the actors themselves. ...Etic statements depend upon phenomenal distinction judged appropriately by the community of scientific observers. Etic statements cannot be falsified if they do not conform to the actor's notion of what is significant, authentic, meaningful, or appropriate.

groups that matter most in their interactions with others (Eriksen, 1991). Dereje has explained well how the Anywaa cannot fit the description of Barth about ethnicity but is working for the Nuer. In contrast, Geertz's description⁵⁹ fits the Anywaa but not the Nuer. Therefore, it would be safe to think through their own views. It has been seen that their emic view is a way of constructing boundaries and distinctions.

This research shows that their ethnic identity is both ascribed and acquired. The ascribed identity comprises intra-cultural competency (such as *gar*, face mark, in the Nuer) and genetically driven markers (size, eye colour, lip size, born from a specific ethnic group in the case of the Anywaa). In both ethnic groups, irrespective of their ethnic identification, they have ascribed and acquired ethnic markers, which serve three different tasks in their relations. One, some of the ascribed identity markers embolden ethnic boundaries if the adherents do not see them with another lens such as religion; they always communicate difference. Two, some have no visible role in their ethnic relation and instead help them to keep their uniqueness. Three, the acquired ethnic marker, their religious identity, makes the boundary permeable and creates space for ethnic others. By changing the meanings attached to ascribed identities in the light of religious values, some ascribed markers contributed to boundary permeability.

Ascribed identity markers are those markers that can be personal, social, or cultural identities that others placed on us (Martin & Nakayama, 2010). These can be culturally or genetically determined. The four ascribed identities which have significant values in both

⁵⁹ Fredric Barth's view of ethnicity sharply contrasts with Clifford Geertz's in that the first based social functions as an explanation of ethnicity, and the latter based on cultural givens or assumed givens to explain ethnicity. Barth is considered an Instrumental form of constructivism, and Geertz is a primordialist (Dereje, 2010)

ethnic groups analyzed in the previous chapter are food, bodily marks (face mark for the Nuer and pulling out lower teeth for the Anywaa), emblems (dimly for the Anywaa and spears and cattle for the Nuer) and names which are unique to their ethnic group. These identity markers not only highlight their difference but also play a role in emboldening ethnic boundaries between the two because they take power, psychological dominance, and resource advantages through them. However, these markers may lose their emboldening if their meaning is changed.

Food, bodily marks, and emblems show the cultural superiority and psychological dominance of the two ethnic groups. The Anywaa are proud of their food and emblem (*dimuy* as culturally pre-eminent), and they draw cultural dominance through it; by considering themselves as people with culture and others cultureless (IIA-561). Similarly, the Nuer are proud of their skin mark and cattle, being a true man, wealthy and undermining others (Dereje, 2011). The specific way of naming their children discriminates them in accessing resources such as job opportunities according to which ethnic group is in charge of decision making (IIA-267) and this becomes a reason for conflict.

However, these same ascribed identity markers are a source of appreciation and enjoyment of each other's differences when Evangelicalism Christianity is considered because people shift the focus from their ethnic difference to what makes them similar through their religious identity, 'from a given culture with its gods to the God of all cultures' (Volf, 1996). A Nuer man invited to his Christian Anywaa fellow's house appreciated the food and planned to invite his friend (a brother in Christ, as he called him) to his house so that he could try his cultural food. Due to the shift of viewing others from enemy to brother in Christ, what was meant to be difference became the source of enjoying diversity. Having a

different look at what they have and what others have may make the boundary permeable and embrace others in one's uniqueness without melting them into each other's identity.

In another case, bodily marks, face marks and the pulling out of teeth for the Nuer and the Anywaa are 'social skins' (Turner, 2012), symbols of communicating difference, used to rigidly attach to both ethnic groups' mythology and cosmology. Besides, though the government enforced it to stop them, some respondents said that the young generation is asking for it because it is attached to something prestigious (IIN-250). This shows that the law might stop the action but not the intention and desire. What is changing the attitude towards these skin marks among the Anywaa and Nuer respondents is a reflection from a biblical point of view. Some say our body is a gift from God, and altering it is wrong, not honouring the creator (IIN-524). Others say we are coming from a human culture to God's culture (IIN-250), which shows the shift of allegiance from culture to religion. In addition, new or secondary socialization through Evangelical Christianity, such as this one, brings new understanding, narratives and hope to the region.

The two ethnic groups have a similar skin colour and bodily features, and without the mark, it will be challenging for outsiders to differentiate them. This creates hope in some respondents for the new generation without the mark, who will see more similarities than differences, and intercultural competence will be high through knowing each other's language (IIN-390). The change in the meaning of the cultural elements and other identity markers shows the role of Evangelical Christianity in the continuity and discontinuity of cultural and religious elements.

6.3. DST in Continuity and Discontinuity of Culture after Conversion

Reflections on conversion particularly to Evangelical Christianity has multiple implications regarding the fate of the culture after conversion. Neusner (1996) accused the insistence of monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam on the triviality of culture and ethnicity and encouraged adherents to have a trans-national, trans-ethnic, and transcendental view of each other because they have the same status before God. However, Miroslav Volf (1996), advocates for Evangelicals, to have both belonging and distancing to and from their culture. He tried to show how believers need to position themselves with culture, to have internal difference but still remain in the culture; encouraging retaining cultural specificities, in agreement with William S. Campbell's argument (1991), saying, "Christians need not lose their cultural identity as Jew or gentiles and become one new humanity which is neither." Volf also said Christian's departure from the culture is holding one leg in the culture and the other out (p. 32, 35, 195). His reflection on this is more exclusionist of others by not seeing culture from the contents and values perspective. In the above arguments, which cultural specificities should continue and with what parameters are not indicated. Besides, what role maintaining cultural or ethnic identity plays in the relation among ethnic groups is not well stated, and the dialogue in the self when there is value dissonance among the identity sources is taken for granted.

Conversion in Anywaa and Nuer evangelical believers transcends the notion of radical discontinuity and continuity of cultural elements, in a debate by African theologians. As the introduction chapter notes, the Anywaa and the Nuer are converts from traditional religion through missionary work. As Horton (1975) described what conversion looks like, in the African context, he noted conversion results from a change in choosing a new deity

different from the previous one and morality is provided through the new religion. What Horton does not note is the cultural aspect of conversion, how deities can shape the culture and identity of the people, and when a conversion occurs, what will happen to the culture and the values embedded in the culture. However, African theologians argued over whether conversion results in radical discontinuity of the cultural aspect or whether the culture appropriated the new cosmology. The Anywaa's and Nuer's conversions are in the continuum of continuity and discontinuity regarding cultural aspects.

Conversion literature classifies conversion in different forms, emphasizing either on inter-religious or intra-religious conversion; the former is about change religious tradition, religious mobility and the other is about gaining depth in one's religion (Paloutzian, 1996, Malony d S., 1992, Barro & Hwang, 2007). The latter is well set out by Humphrey J. Fisher (1973) who disagrees with Robin Horton's claim of African religious instant adaptability. Fisher tried to show the processual nature of conversion. Similar to Fisher's claim, the research revealed that the Anywaa's and Nuer's conversions are gradual or processual. Unlike Fisher's stage model, processual conversion in this study is a back-and-forth conversation between culture and religion in the two ethnic groups' case. It means there is a continual dialogue between cultural values and religious values e.g. one denounces polygamy in a certain time and may come as an obligation in another time; therefore, the dialogue continues. In doing so, what should be the relationship of a Christian with culture is a point of debate.

Volf's middle ground emphasizes the 'shifting allegiance of a particular culture to allegiance of God of all culture'. He strongly argued that Christians need not leave their culture to some extent, as he said, 'one foot in and one out'. In addition, he articulated the

departure that is taking place in the cultural space that one inhabits, internal departure. Along with this Volf believed that all cultures have their tribal deities, and ethnicities tend to be sacralized which he recommends being otherwise. His view avoids the content of the culture and the values imbedded in them when he said, 'do not leave the culture' He only emphasizes the move from particularity to universality.

However, conversion is a package which has various aspects. For instance, one should not see conversion only from the perspective of the changing of deities but one needs to reflect on the role of those deities in identity formation, cultural values, and meanings. Besides, there are cultural elements which do not have religious significance or are not related to deities such as sharing in the Anywaa's and the Nuer's cultural dress. Furthermore, as Kimberle (1998) suggested, seeing culture as one element with different compartments might not help to see some social phenomena clearly rather than seeing the interaction of the elements that help to understand why some are continued and some discontinued.

Continuity and discontinuity of culture or cultural elements after conversion have also been a bone of contention among African theologians. Bolaji Idowu (cited by Bediako, 1998) and Byang Kato (1987) are the two theologians that sat at the opposite of the extremes: radical continuity and radical discontinuity, respectively. The radical discontinuity that Kato believed⁶⁰ in is both from traditional religion and culture (Palmer, T., 2004). Palmer explained that there were several attempts to contextualize or Africanize the Gospel in the African context, and some of the efforts were syncretistic.⁶¹ When many advocated for the

⁶⁰ Some say that Kato is misunderstood by theologians (Timothy Palmer, Kuwame Bediako)

⁶¹ Though sometimes denotes a positive meaning, in Catholic and protestant tradition has a negative meaning as Hendrik Kreamer described it as 'the illegitimate mingling of different religious elements', borrowing and blending of beliefs and practices of different religious traditions (Pandian J, 2006, p.229)

continuity of African culture after conversion, Bediako asked a question; 'if everything is continuity, where lies the newness of the Christian gospel?' (1993: 61-62). The argument behind continuity is keeping the identity or not losing the authenticity. However, the findings show that when the Anywaa and the Nuer decide to discontinue some of the values, they see it from a relationship with God and others, whether it disrupts the community at different levels or not. However, as a Nuer respondent said, 'I was born in Nuer and die as Nuer.' The Anywaa and the Nuer tend to keep their peculiarity and cohesion as long as it does not affect relations. Missionaries have also played a role in helping the Anywaa and the Nuer keep some of their cultural particularities.

In the Anywaa's and the Nuer's conversions, missionaries did not insist on a change in some of the cultural elements and values. According to Stefano Cenerini (2018), the missionary among the Anywaa people, some things are attached to their identity, such as using drums and getting married to more than one wife. Instead of changing the music with the culture of the missionaries, they let it continue, which is significant for their identity. Such cultural continuity contributed to some people having a sense of consistency in their identity. One Anywaa respondent testified that he came to Christianity by hearing the voice of a drum played so well in a conference. Since he admired the beauty of the beat, he got attracted to go to the Church to learn how to play. However, instead, he hears God's word, which changes his life to the extent that he wants to know more about the word of God, join a theological college, and become an evangelist. He is an Evangelist since 2003 (IIA-397). His cultural element connects him to the new religion.

According to the findings of this research, conversion is a reflective path in the continuum between continuity and discontinuity. There will be a reflective journey or dialogue

between the contradicting values between the new and the old. There might be moral exhortations in the new that challenges the old. For instance, for the Anywaa and the Nuer, who live in constant hostility, the definition of a friend or a foe is challenged, the culturally allowed marital status is confronted with biblical order, deities are compared, and the boundary-making elements are redefined, and the boundary becomes permeable. However, there are also cultural elements maintained to ensure collective cohesion and maintain peculiarities. Besides, the dialogue between the new religious identity and culture including traditional religious identity is dependent upon the level the adherents reach in their reflective journey.

For an Anywaa respondent, the maturity (IIA-423) and the depth of their religious conversion determine their position in the continuum. As an example, one question I asked all the respondents in the interview was, 'If you both are Christians and believe in the Bible, why do you get into conflict? How does this reconcile with what you believe in Christianity?' Some respondents say, it is the curse that covered the people's minds, which is not yet removed (IIA-433); others say, 'people are not spiritually matured; it is the result of immaturity (IIA-423),' and others also say 'we are not reflecting on what is going on through the Bible and take a stand; we just accept what it is (IIA-315). ' Sometimes they blame each other and say, I think they do not have many Christians in their ethnic group, or they do not know the word of God (IIN-61). ' In all these reflections, we can see that conversion is not instant, though it starts with conviction, but needs to mature in reflection and increase by a commitment to spiritual disciplines. The issue of immaturity and how it is related to envy, division, and conflict is also explained in the Bible in 1Corinthians 3:3, 'for

ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?’

I have found that respondents from both ethnic groups evaluate themselves and others in terms of their behaviour, abidance in the word of God, and maturity in the faith. According to Alexeeva E., ‘a vital characteristic of religious conversion is a radical change of worldview, which entails the transformation of identity, expressed both at the verbal level and at the level of social action’ (2019). Those participating in the conflict are seen as immature or do not fully believe in God (being only superficial but not truthful). Such views play a role in their ethnic relations with others. The primary role played by this continuity and discontinuity of ethnic values and cultural elements is that the continuity of some values divergent from Christianity contributes to negative ethnic relations. In contrast, the discontinuity of values that do not have biblical support promotes positive relations, such as polygamy. Polygamy not only creates family instability in economics and relationships but also the fear the Anywaa have towards ethnic conversion by the Nuer through multiple marriages that would minimize if stopped.

Being in the continuum of continuity and discontinuity, shows that the Anywaa’s and the Nuer’s conversions are processual or gradual when they are inter-dialogical with culture at the value level. The change in the meaning of cultural elements that results in the continuity or discontinuity of cultural and religious elements plays a role in changing the nature of ethnic boundaries. What Evangelical Christianity has done is to change the impermeable boundaries into the permeable.

6.4. DST in Boundary Permeability after Conversion

Dereje explained that the Anywaa have a closed boundary that is the basis of their ethnic purity and their cosmology (2011, p.). Because of this, they are more endogamous and rarely exogamous (IIA-147). Due to their view towards others as guests, which is a permanent status in whatever way others have come into the ethnic group, they do not mix with other ethnic groups, whereas the Nuer's ethnic boundary is considered permeable due to their assimilationist view towards others. However, I would argue that both boundaries are impermeable because both ethnic groups have high levels of identification with their group that hinder the permeability of ethnic boundaries (Ellemers et al., 1988; Ellemers et al., 1990; but see Jackson, Sullivan, Harnish, & Hodge, 1996). In the Nuer case, first, the assimilation bases the view they have for themselves, 'the true man', and others otherwise. Therefore, they do convert the person to the Nuer through different processes and economic benefits including a face mark (*gar*) (IIN-389, IIA-515). Second, even though they are exogamous, they still emphasize marrying their own. As one respondent said, the Nuer people are pushed to go for a second or third marriage if they do not have a wife from the Nuer. Their people would say, 'Go for another marriage, for you did not take one from your own' (IIN-260).

Therefore, the research findings indicates that both the Anywaa and the Nuer have impermeable ethnic boundaries in terms of one being closed and the other insisting on melting into theirs. However, Christianity has made the boundary permeable, which shifts the attitude towards ethnic others from seeing each other in ethnic terms to communal identity. This means other ethnic group members can be brothers/sisters in Christ without requiring them to give up their identity.

The Anywaa and the Nuer are converts from polytheism to Evangelical Christianity, and religion is the primary acquired identity in both ethnic groups. The Nuer and the Anywaa have changed their cultural deities (*Jwok* in Anywaa and *Kuoth* in Nuer) to the Christian God. The previous deities have their role in making ethnic identities, as indicated in the previous chapters. To what extent their conversion from polytheism to monotheism helped them to improve their relationship is one area that should be investigated. Nevertheless, this is outside the scope of this research. However, this research indicates how the previous religious identity plays a negative role in emboldening boundaries, and their conversion is improving their relationship through creating space for each other.

Previously, the Anywaa and the Nuer had different rituals in dealing with spiritual beings, sometimes demanding from each other and becoming a point of contention. The Anywaa demand *Chiimari* when *welo* (strangers) wants to do anything in the Anywaa land. Moreover, the Nuer have a ritual performed by spear-masters which sometimes the Anywaa people seek help with but it is not a demand. However, when they seek help from the Nuer spear-masters, they require them to bring animal sacrifices. Moreover, this religious practice by the Nuer makes them look like magicians to the Anywaa, superstition without proper culture like their political institutions.

The Anywaa *Chiimari* is a way of defending the spiritual being from encroachment on human territory. Sometimes they view the Nuer as *Jowk* that they need to be chase them out. As Dereje explained:

The Anywaa associate the Nuer with *Jwok*. That is, the Anywaa view of God is a metaphor for their relationship with the more powerful Nuer, who have seemingly placed them under siege. *Jwok* and the Nuer are resisted for their incessant encroachment upon Anywaa territories (p 213).

This shows that their previous religion has shown them how to view ethnic others. The Anywaa do not want a forceful and unpermitted entrance to the territory. Therefore, they want people to ask permission through their *Kwaaro* (landlord) of that area, and the landlord will do *Chiimari* to make the place convenient for the person. This is, for them, a sign of respect that they demand from others. However, the Nuer people do not want to respect that, for their thinking has no such framework about land and territory. They say the land belongs to God and is enough for everyone (IIN-261). In the Anywaa's thinking, the land is sacred and belongs to the ancestor and the ancestor's spirit. The land is part of the Anywaa's identity, and losing it violates their identity. Therefore, they consider the Nuer's expansion with their grazing cattle without asking the *kwarro* permission as encroachment and a source of conflict. The previous *Kwaroo* administration is no more in Gambella town, and some have regrets about this, but they still want to be friends with the Nuer because the defining factor is changing.

For example, the idea of 'sacred land' and practising 'spear master's prayer' is diluted in the the Anywaa and the Nuer, respectively. An Anywaa respondent tried to justify why he thinks that the alteration of the land made by the government in the Gambella region is proper. He said, 'If we continue to like the previous, we will not develop as the rest of the regions and the world' (IIA-362). 'There must be development and better infrastructure, which might destroy the old. Previously land belonged to the landlords, but now it belongs to the government, and I think this is right.' Such an attitude tones down the strong belief the Anywaa have towards land, which used to be the point of contention with the Nuer. In addition, counting the Nuer as a malevolent *Jwok* is no more because both came to the same and one God.

Similarly, Nuer people conduct prayer rituals for their ancestors and gods. Because of this, they are considered witches and magicians by the Anywaa. Now both are evangelical believers, and such rituals are not practised among the believers. However, sometimes such cultural and ethnic practices are Christianized (Christianized culture). For instance, during the ritual of *Chiimari*, rebuking Satan in the name of Jesus and singing evangelical songs were observed. John S. Mbiti (1970) has argued against Christianizing culture, mainly African Traditional Religion (ATR); instead, he advocates culturizing Christianity. Mbiti's point is well taken in keeping peculiarity and cohesion, however, it is also noted that the values embedded in the culture and the new religion might be different and sometimes divergent. The conversion process changes some of the values in the culture, making it Christianized. This creates common ground among the ethnic groups.

For the Anywaa and the Nuer, the change of deity has brought a space in both for each other; religious conversion became a common ground where differences can be met, especially those that prevent relations between each other making the boundary permeable. The change is seen symbolically below.

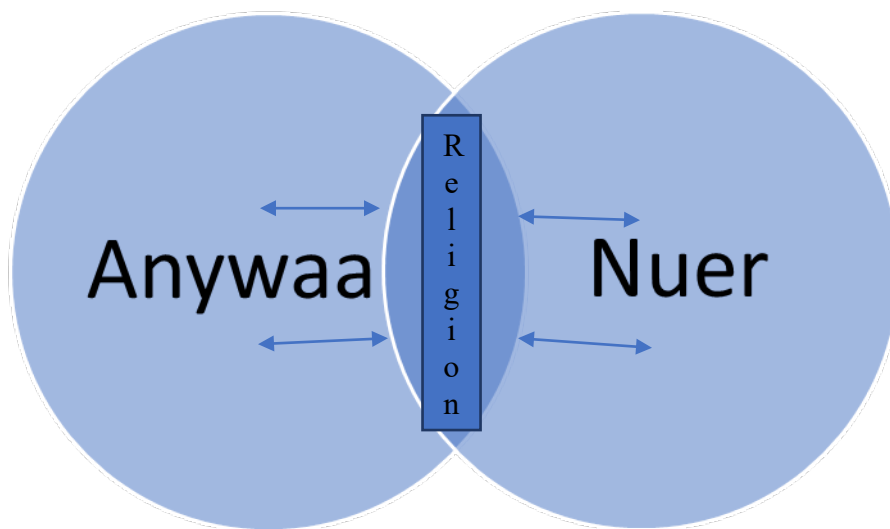


Figure 6-3 Contact Zone is created between the Anywaa and the Nuer through Religion

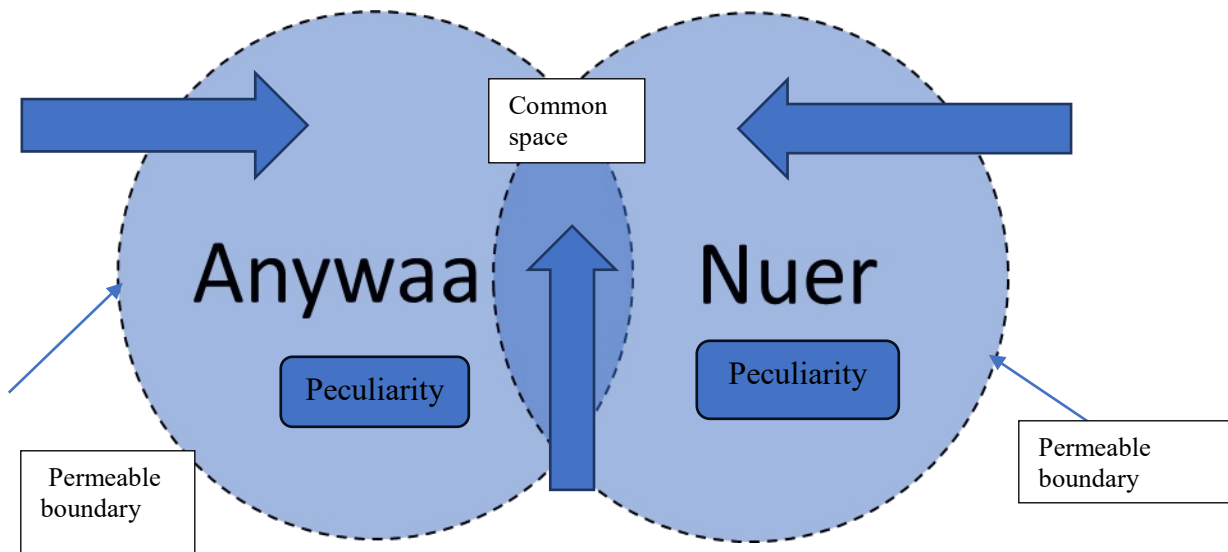


Figure 6-4 The Religion created Boundary Permeability

Both the Nuer and the Anywaa converted from traditional and polytheistic beliefs. Some argue that the identity will be ascribed to children born into a family of a particular religion. Religious identity can be ascribed to second and third generation Anywaa and Nuer, which grows into an acquired identity through strengthening spirituality. Even though it is ascribed, the adherents mention their 'awareness of the turning point in life associated with faith,' which is a decisive factor in conversion discourse (Rambo, 1993, p. 88). Besides, it is acquired because they chose the belief for varied reasons, such as access to different material benefits, personal conviction, comparing the two gods, the previous and the present, personal crisis in the previous life, and getting comfort in the new religion. This shows that the conversion path and pace differ for different individuals, and conversion is gradual.

Their acquired religious identity is described in vocational, behavioural, and relational terms, which give them a different and 'higher' view of self. These give them 1)

universality, 'I am a servant of God and called to serve people (IIN-34, IIA-195),' 2) value change, 'I was angry and fighting all the time but not anymore; because I know what God loves now and what is right before him (IIN-490, IIA-428)' and 3) relatability with all, 'We are one in Christ, we are brothers and sister in Christ (IIN-265, IIA-82).' This universality, positive value change, and relatability give them space for trans-ethnic friendships, transcendental identity, and inclusive identity, which allow the boundary to be permeable and have space for each other.⁶² This has been possible through the dialogue in the self between religion and culture.

6.5. Dialogical Self and Other Identity Negotiation Strategies

Ethnic identity negotiation through the dialogical self differs from other identity negotiation strategies. Both macro-level sociologists and micro-level perspectives recognize that the self and society have a reciprocal relationship (Stryker, 1980). Among the micro-sociology perspective symbolic interactionism suggests that identity of the self is shaped by social interaction, how others perceive us, as a 'looking glass' (Cooley, 1902; W.I. Thomas, 1966). This influences the self to understand oneself through a group perspective or to construct identity daily through the interaction with others. Therefore, the identity sources are community and everyday situations, which continually change identity. This, in turn, makes identity unreliable, for it is frequently changing and sometimes a source of conflict among ethnic groups. People negotiate their identity to agree with the community's beliefs.

⁶² Volf symbolize this in a very remarkable way referring to 1 Corinthians 10:17. He said "on the surface the singleness of the bread seems to ground the unity of the body. And yet the one bread stands for the crucified body of Jesus Christ, the body that has refused to remain a self-enclosed singularity, but has opened itself up so that others can freely partake of it" (p.30)

However, identity negotiation through the dialogical self differs from other negotiation strategies in multiple ways. One common point in the negotiation strategies is the self interacting with the community (extended self in DST). However, the self is both dialogical and has agency in the case of DST. Therefore, there is a multiplicity and consistency in the self. This means, as seen from the empirical data, the conversation with the community does not necessarily end up in 'conformation' but can go against the expectation of the community, even in collective cultures like the Anywaa's and the Nuer. Refusing to get married to many wives (IIA-406, IIN-37) and refusing to participate in conflict or group fighting (IIA-17, IIA-86, IIN-398, IIN-490) show this in the Anywaa and the Nuer. This is possible through the dialogical self.

To negotiate one's identity, to have a space for others, and to relate with society, there must be a dialogue within oneself, recognizing that the sources of identities are airing different, sometimes contradicting values. According to Volf (1996), there are so many contradictions in this world that may lead people into conflict and to reconcile the contradictions among us, he recommends following 'God's reception model' for this hostile humanity through four stages: repentance, forgiveness, making space in oneself for the other, and healing the memory. It would be simplistic if we think these four grand stages pointed out by Volf can be achieved overnight. It would take several dialogues and negotiations within oneself. Besides, God's reception of humanity is unconditional and divine, which is challenging to be materialized in human relations. As Volf acknowledges, 'the knowledge of sin is impotent before sin' (p. 69). Meaning knowing what is good cannot make us good. It takes time and reflection. The way to master knowledge is a continual

self-dialogue (John S. & Kenneth J. G., 2016) that results in a gradual identity negotiation, which is closer to human nature.

This research has shown that religion can shape how people view themselves and others, which can play a role in ethnic identity negotiation through the dialogical self. The self, as part of the society and dialogical, means all negotiations are not carried out in terms of the societal expectations, roles, and perceptions as most of the theories implicate. Instead, the self is both dialogical, multivoiced and has volition. Goffman's dramaturgical identity negotiation theory (1959) analyses people's everyday behaviour in different contexts. According to his argument, every social life is a stage, and people are the actors. It shows the constant influence of the environment on the self to work on face-saving behaviour. However, the findings in this research suggest the theory needs to include the role of the agentic power of the self in refuting the situation's demand.

Similarly, Blumer's symbolic interactionism (1969) emphasized the subjective creation of reality in the self and living accordingly. This focuses on perceived reality; it seals the self within; instead of seeing the self in actual or imaginary interaction with the environment and how the different self positions dominate each other. The other influential identity negotiation theory is Ting Tommy's communicative identity negotiation theory (2005), which bases empathetic communication through reflection and leaves behind preconceived ideas (emptying oneself) to have space for others in communication. This theory also does not recognize the multiplicity of the self and dialogue in the self, considering the extended self without or with actual communication.

However, Hermans and Hermans (2010) argued that the self responds to time and space. The social space reflects the institutionally and historically bounded collective self that can

promote or limit their dialogical relationships. This argument does not point out what spurs dialogue explicitly, except in their analysis of the third position, individuals may occupy a position that satisfies the contradictory positions. In Herman's third position, the contradictory positions will get representation so that they can live together reconciled. This makes the third position only one form, a hybrid third position.

However, in the case of the Anywaa and the Nuer, the third positions can be of different types and reflect human creativity. The role of a social agent and social arrangement play a great role in identity negotiation through the dialogical self, and power asymmetry play a key role in ethnic identity negotiation among contradictory values.

6.6. Creative Third Positions

In the Anywaa's and the Nuer's identity negotiation, two negotiation trajectories are seen; one is promoting the dialogue among the values in culture and religion, and the other is avoiding dialogue between them. Those that allowed dialogue resulted in value-based ethnic identity negotiation, and the others kept both either letting confront each other or creatively engaging them without losing both. When there is no interaction between ethnic and religious identity, ethnic identity negotiation cannot be achieved, meaning the ethnic boundary remains callous.

Through the engagement of the two, culture and religion, three value-based ethnic identity negotiations resulted: the reinterpretation of self-view and view of others, the change in elements of culture and the shifting of the centre of identity. These three strategies result in the permeability of the boundary of ethnic identity under one theme, reinterpretation. These can be considered as creative third positions rather than hybrid third positions in DST,

which are not necessarily hybrid for the two contradicting positions, instead changing the element of ethnic identity and creating a negotiated identity which is different from both.

Both the Anywaa and the Nuer respondents have used different strategies to reconcile the value dissonance they see in their culture and Evangelical Christianity. They still emphasize Nuerness and Anywaanness in their self-view, but how they view themselves, their ethnic others, and their culture is changed through the following three ways when they reinterpreted their self view, others and cultural elements, which create boundary permeability. This is different from the previous Anywaanness and Nuerness that Dereje showed. It is a different kind of Anywaanness and Nuerness where conversion positions it in the radical continuity and discontinuity continuum.

6.6.1. Transcendental View of Self

There were respondents from both ethnic groups that see themselves as 'Christians' in the sense that this identity can cross borders beyond their ethnic differences. Some believed the conflict was because of the difference between brothers like Abel and Cain in the Bible. They did not say who Abel is and who Cain is, but they wanted to emphasize their family resemblance under one father, God. When they reflect on the conflict, some argue that the conflict is among non-believers, not believers. Such people are convinced that the two ethnic groups are already family members, but there are people from both ethnic groups that did not join this family and are living in conflict. Volf (1996) put what it is like to be transcendental, which is partly true:

Like Jews and Muslims, Christians can never be Asians, Americans, Croatians, Russians, or Tutsis, and then Christians. At the very core of Christian identity lies an all-encompassing change of loyalty from a given culture with its gods to the God of all cultures (p 24).

In the above description, Christian identity is depicted as a core identity that overrides the other loyalties to other identity sources such as culture. The primary assumption in Volf's description is that culture has its deity and cannot be seen separately. Therefore, when you leave the deity, you should leave the culture too. It is like 'throwing the baby out with the bath water, ' because culture has not only deity but other essential identity elements. In the case of the Anywaa and the Nuer, some left the deity completely; others framed the deity in the new religion. Some have stopped practising cultural expectations by looking at the elements through the lens of religious identity; others redefine their life now through religious identity; they change the centrality of previous ethnic identity with religious identity. They recognize that being a Christian makes the boundary permeable and creates space for others. However, this does not mean they leave the culture behind totally and deny their elements of peculiarities.

In addition to continuing and discontinuing traditional religion and cultural elements, their view towards themselves, Christian Anywaa or Christian Nuer, has given them a 'will to embrace' because they recognize that they have commonality through God.

6.6.2. Transcendental View of Others

The other area subject to reinterpretation is the view of others. Ethnic identification, historical hatred, and ongoing competition for power and resources have made them consider each other as an enemy. However, even the enemy is redefined in Christianity as a friend. One of the respondents took the reconciliatory role of Christianity, which brings enemies and makes them friends. As the Bible teaches, we were enemies, and through the death of Jesus Christ, we were reconciled to God and became members of God's family

(Col., 1:21-22; Rom., 5:10 NIV). According to Moussaïd *et al.* (2013), people change their views towards others due to the interaction they have with them. The reverse of this is also true for the Anywaa and the Nuer. According to the respondent, the view of seeing others is changed to a brother in Christ. This helped him to be his friend and co-labourer in the work of the Gospel. Trans-ethnic friendship became possible between the two groups. In addition, they start to consider themselves as 'their brother's keeper,' especially in a conflict situation. Another reinterpretation is done by finding common ground, such as Christianity, binding the two differences together.

6.6.3. Shifting the Centre of Identity

In another negotiation strategy, some respondents shift their centre of identity from culture to religion. They would say, 'I am a Christian,' 'I am a believer and servant of the Lord,' and 'I want others to recognize me with this identity'. Such an attitude prioritizes their religious identity over their cultural identity and redefines who is a member of the 'in-group' and who is 'the out-group. ' Such Christians do not partake in any cultural expectations and are sometimes outcasted by their ethnic groups knowing that they would not be agreeable. Shifting the centre of identity is shifting the driving force in one's attitudes and actions.

Besides, this shifting centre of identity serves the two ethnic groups to have a shared space to interact and understand each other. Their divergent ethnic identity draws a line of difference, and the convergent religious identity is more about similarities and brotherhood.

However, there are other third positions created by the Anywaa and the Nuer when religion and culture interact: framing, adapting, and dichotomizing. These three third positions

negotiate the forms but not the values. Such kinds of third positions because the values are not changed, the ethnic boundary remains impermeable.

In framing, both are trying to legitimize their cultural views and actions through the new religious identity such as taking the biblical order to be multiplied and fruitful and in order to fulfil this order, bringing the strategy from culture, polygamy. By bringing polygamy as an instrument to fulfil the will of God, they frame or contextualize Christianity. This resonates with continuity of culture after conversion advocated by African theologians like John Mibiti and Bolaji Idowu. However, as some of the respondents reflect, it is a strategy of legitimizing one's action at the cost of the value negotiation and does not allow creating space to accommodate others.

Adapting, on the other hand, is practically living in the previous world view. Though the religion is changed, the deity remains the same, the rules are changed but the new rules are considered the same as the previous ones. This reminds me of the metaphor of wine and wine skin on Luke 5:37-39. When the new wine is put into an old wine skin, the wine skin cannot hold the new wine so it will burst open and perish and the wine spilled out. This can be a good metaphor of framing, if we can think the other way round, putting old wine into the new wine skin, there will be no change, no growth so it remains the same, the form is changed but the content is the same. Such third positions limit the identity negotiation. If there is no identity negotiation, the boundaries remain the same, impermeable.

The other form of third position is dichotomization, viewing the two separately and preventing interaction between the two, instead the self plays different persona in the face of these identities. As the findings indicate, some Anywaa and Nuer go to Church and worship but when it comes to marriage related issues they go culturally (IIA-532). The

different third positions indicate the context and social arrangements where negotiation takes place and how the context helps the social agent to negotiate identities and vice versa.

6.7. Enabling Factors in Ethnic Identity Negotiation

6.7.1. Role of the Social Agent and Social Arrangement in Ethnic Identity

There is a debate over how we should approach the problems associated with identity and otherness and the conflict over them. Some suggest working on social arrangements with three options: the Universalist view, the Communitarian view, and the Postmodern view.⁶³

Miroslav Volf's leading critic emphasizes the need for working on the social agent rather than social arrangement. He further argued that the self is situated, and the social arrangements could not answer how situated selves should think of themselves, relate with others, and make peace. He boldly argues that 'social arrangements will take care of themselves if we have the right kind of social agent'. Through his model of reconciliation, he advocates embracing others. His argument resonates with the saying, 'We cannot legislate love even though we can legislate justice'.

However, social arrangements can be a promotor or obstacle for love to flourish among ethnic groups. The saying by Maya Angelo depicts this argument well:

⁶³ Universalist Option: We should control the unchecked proliferation of differences and support the spread of universal values—religious values or Enlightenment values—which alone can guarantee the peaceful coexistence of people; affirmation of differences without common values will lead to chaos and war rather than to rich and fruitful diversity. (2) Communitarian Option: We should celebrate communal distinctive and promote heterogeneity, placing ourselves on the side of the smaller armies of indigenous cultures; the spread of universal values will lead to oppression and boredom rather than peace and prosperity. (3) Postmodern Option: We should flee both universal values and particular identities and seek refuge from oppression in the radical autonomy of individuals; we should create spaces in which persons can keep creating 'larger and freer selves' by acquiring new and losing old identities—wayward and erratic vagabonds, ambivalent and fragmented, always on the move and never doing much more than making moves (Volf, 1996 p 10-11).

Strictly speaking, one cannot legislate love, but one can legislate fairness and justice. If the legislation does not prohibit our living side by side, sooner or later, your child will fall on the pavement, and I will be the one to pick her up. Or one of my children will not be able to get into the house, and you will have to say, "Stop here until your mom comes here". Legislation affords us the chance to see if we might love each other (American Poet, 1928-2014).

In her saying, Maya tried to show the importance of social arrangement as a public space where differences can interact and give a chance to social agents to exercise their beliefs and negotiate. Love can get a chance to be exercised in a social environment that allows interaction. According to the emic view of the social arrangement in Gambella town, some respondents feel denied interaction from ethnic others. According to a Nuer teenage boy:

We used to live together, and I used to speak my Anywaa friends' language, and they used to speak mine. Now we are no more living together. I think the government should allow us to live together. In that way, we may understand each other (IINM-590).

Another Nuer girl who has Anywaa's friend said:

I have a very good friend from Anywaa. When my mother found out I had Anywaa's friend, she told me to quit the friendship because she said she might hurt me. I meet her in school now and do not want to listen to my mom. She is also Christian, and I know she loves me. I believe we are one under God (IING-69).

Similarly, an Anywaa girl informs that she has a friend from the Nuer, and she meets her at school and on the road, but they could not pay visits to each other because her friend is not allowed to come to her village, and she is not allowed to go to her friend's village.

The research findings show that such social arrangements might be an obstacle though there are social agents who see others beyond their ethnic boundaries. This indicates that a social agent needs a proper social arrangement for the social agent to bring change.

Social arrangements are where socialization occurs and socialization occurs through interaction. Social agents might serve as a bridge to connect communities positively through trans-ethnic friendships in a social arrangement that can promote interaction without violation. Though the social arrangement does not allow them to meet frequently,

some respondents embrace ethnic others and protect them from their own people's aggression.

For instance, there is a young man whose uncle is a pastor with a strong stance against polygamy. He married a year ago, and his new bride was one of the respondents. In her view about polygamy, she said she does not want her husband to have another wife, for she loves him (IIN-283). Fortunately, his uncle, who has spiritual authority over him, is his coach, and this person might not be tempted to have another wife for his surrounded by people whose values resonate with him. This shows that where the self is situated has influenced the thriving of people to live by their decisions.

The Anywaa's and the Nuer's reflection and abandonment of some contradictory values, such as polygamy, do not rely solely on religion, but the government reinforces it. In such a case social agents have less pressure to live out their convictions.

For example, as part of protecting women's rights, polygamy, female genital mutilation, early marriage, and wife inheritance prohibition are stated in the country's National Reproductive Health Strategy (2006-2015). The prohibition of polygamy is emphasized in Article 11 of the revised family code of Ethiopia (No213/2000). A Department of Women and Children's Affairs office in every region teaches and encourages people to appeal if their rights are violated. Polygamy in Ethiopia is considered as an offence punishable by law. According to the EFDRE criminal code, Article 650 (1) states:

Whoever, being tied by the bond of a valid marriage, intentionally contracts another marriage before the first union has been dissolved or annulled is punishable with simple imprisonment or, in severe cases, especially where the criminal has knowingly misled his partner in the second union as to his actual state, with rigorous imprisonment not exceeding five years.

Such legal and policy provisions give autonomy to the regional states to settle family issues. Such a context helps the social agent to negotiate contentious issues like polygamy without collective pressure.

6.7.2. Centrality and Asymmetric Power Relations in Identity Negotiation

Ethnic identity negotiation for the Anywaa and the Nuer had a similar trajectory when evangelical Christianity entered the equation. Both the Anywaa and the Nuer use religious values backed by biblical teachings or verses, which helped them to promote cohabitation, brotherhood, oneness, and friendship. The values they picked now differ from those embedded in their ethnic identity that used to contribute to their conflictual relation. Most respondents, when they asked where they got the understanding of ethnic others, mentioned biblical verses such as Eccl 4:9, Gal 3:28, Mat 5:44-45 or Luke 6:27. In DST, one of the factors that play a role in the dialogue is power. According to Linell (1988), this power comes in one of four ways, where the nature of the topic (topic dominance) comes from interactants. Mentioning the verses is to give one position more evidence and power. Their reflections on biblical verses helped them to stop doing some of the ethnic beliefs and practices (discontinuity), which used to embolden ethnic boundaries and capitalize on otherness. Those discontinued values either negatively affect their relationship with others (such as revenge) or have spiritual significance in their relationship with God (such as polygamy).

However, in the case of the Anywaa and the Nuer, the third position can be broadly classified into two ways, value-based negotiations, where values get centrality as elements to negotiate and asymmetrical power relations between both values and value sources. The

second one represents identity-based negotiations, with symmetrical power relations between identity sources. This symmetrical and asymmetrical power relation is repeatedly used in human interactions. Symmetrical power relations show the equality and capability of the two positions in interaction. In comparison, asymmetrical power relations represent the inequality of power between the conversants (See Benhabib, 1991). The value-based identity negotiation is discussed above, and identity-based negotiations with different forms of the third position are framing, separation, and adaptation. These are creative and result in either holding the two identities separately or subsuming one in another and marrying the two identities. This might be because of the power of societal pressure on individuals or to keep the consistency of the self in the face of changes. As it is noted in the previous chapters, ethnic identity negotiation facilitates ethnic boundary permeability. How the findings can be of use in promoting positive relations is described below in the research findings' practical implications.

6.8. Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed major findings of the research under four main themes: identity, dialogicality, different third positions and the two major factors in the Anywaa's and the Nuer's ethnic identity negotiation in conversation with the existing literature on the subject. The second section discussed the practical applications of the research findings in peace studies and conflict transformation.

Since the Anywaa and the Nuer are converts from their respective traditional religion to Evangelical Christianity, I investigated the current ethnic identity and religious identity in conversion discourse. Their conversion has played a defining role in their identity markers,

where some of the cultural elements are discontinued because of dialogue in the self between their evangelical identity and culture, and because some of their identity markers are redefined, and their ethnic boundary becomes permeable and have space for each other. This shows that there is dialogue in the self among Anywaa and Nuer evangelicals.

Since they have a highly collective culture, their dialogue in the self shows that the self is communal, and this resonates with micro- and macro- sociological studies of interaction of the self with society. Though they have common ground between DST and other identity negotiation theories such as Symbolic Interactionism, Dramaturgical and Identity Negotiation Theory, DST shows that the self is dialogical, coherent and has volition, meaning, the interactions between the self and society does not necessarily end up in conformation. Besides, the study has shown that dialogical self has provided a tool for the Anywaa and the Nuer to redefine their self view, their view of others and to scrutinize the community values that in turn make their boundary permeable to each other. The dialogical self is spurred by value dissonance between evangelical Christianity and their culture.

The value dissonance that initiates the dialogue in the self, is culminated by creative third positions which are not always hybrid of the two dissonated values as stated in DST. The Anywaa and the Nuer created four third positions, namely reinterpretation, framing, dichotomizing, and adapting. Among the four, reinterpretation helps their relation positively for there is a value change through redefining their self view, their view of others and changing their centre of identity from ethnic identity to religion, Evangelical Christianity. However, there are different factors that promote or hinder ethnic identity negotiations and among many the two are very prominent.

The synchronized work between the social agent and social environment, determines the effectiveness of ethnic identity in the Anywaa's and the Nuer's ethnic identity negotiation. Without social agent dialogicality and internal negotiation, the social environment cannot create social agents and without a proper social environment and the social agent negotiation, internal position cannot thrive. The other ethnic identity negotiation factor is the centrality and asymmetry of power relations between the contradictory element's negotiation. The moral and ethical underpinning creates a differential power relation which promotes or hinders ethnic identity negotiation.

In the second section of this discussion chapter, two practical applications are pointed out. The trans-ethnic friendship, marriage and brotherhood created through ethnic boundary permeability, helps to instill peace among the two ethnic groups in the long run. The other practical application is in conflict transformation. When people see their ethnic identity through a different lens, that gives them an alternative narration about themselves and others, then conflict transformation is possible, the inside-out or bottom-up approach which starts with an individual's self dialogue.

Chapter Seven Conclusion

7.1. Introduction

This research aimed to investigate the extent Nuer and Anywaa evangelical believers are negotiating their ethnic identity through the dialogical self with their Evangelical Christian values. The study's objectives were to analyse the emic view of the Anywaa and the Nuer to their identity markers to understand how their identity markers have played a role in their boundary-making and their relations to each other. The other objective was to explore the continuity and discontinuity of religious and cultural values after conversion to see the role of Evangelical Christianity in changing the nature of their ethnic boundaries and its contribution towards their relations. The third objective was to discover the different strategies the Anywaa, and the Nuer employ when they face value dissonance in their ethnic identity and religious identity. This is to learn what strategies they employ as third positions, understand the hampering and promoting factors of identity negotiation in their context and to analyse which strategies are helping them in their relationship and their role in conflict resolution positively and which contribute to their impermeable ethnic boundary.

The chapter will conclude the study by summarizing the key research findings in relation to the research aims, research questions and objectives. I set out the values and contribution of the research for academic knowledge. It also reviews the limitations and makes proposals for future research.

7.2. Main Findings of the Research

According to the previous research on Gambella, the two major ethnic groups, the Anywaa and the Nuer, are in constant ethnic conflict for many reasons. Some of the reasons mentioned repeatedly are unreconciled ethnic identification (Dereje, 2011), the competition over resources and power (Dereje, 2011, Adeto, 2014), an ineffective resettlement (Pankhurst, 2002), and an ineffective incorporation into the Ethiopian government (Adeto, 2014, Dereje, 2011). However, though different scholars record their conversion from traditional religion to Evangelical Christianity (Dereje, 2011, Adeto, 2014), how their new religious identity has given them a mirror for their ethnic beliefs and practices and how they negotiate their ethnic identity are areas not explored.

As some argued (Erikson, 1959, p. 118), identity negotiation is an everyday phenomenon in individuals. This is because there is an interaction of the self with the environment. The recent development of the interaction of the self, made the interior exterior and the exterior interior by showing that the environment is part of the self, the extended self (Hermans, 2001). The self is within the environment, and the environment is within the self. This has resulted in a multivoiced self where dialogue is taking place. This development has helped to see not only how individuals behave in society but also how society behaves in the self and what process and negotiation is taking place in the self. Particular to some contexts, conflicts show how individuals negotiate their identities where one identity supports closed boundaries and the other keeps boundaries open. This is happening in Gambella town among the two ethnic groups, the Anywaa and the Nuer. The research investigates how they negotiate their religious identity and ethnic identity. This thesis demonstrated four findings.

First, the new evangelical Christianity of the converted Anywaa and Nuer redefined their self-view and their view of ethnic others and changed their allegiance to religious identity from ethnic identity. This has made the previous closed and unreconciled ethnic boundary permeable. This does not mean that one melts into the other; instead, each ethnic group gives space for their rival ethnic others without being forced to change who they are or demand others to be like them. The previous Anywaness and Nuerness are not changed, but Christianity came into the equation and informed how they should treat themselves and others. As proof of their new Anywaaness and Nuerness, by seeing themselves through the lens of Christianity, they stopped doing some of the culturally allowed practices which were contentious for their relation, redefined the definition of a friend and foe, started practising forgiveness by leaving their previous revenge culture, started having friends from ethnic others and became their 'brother's keeper' in a difficult situation, for example, when conflict erupts in the town.

Second, the Anywaa's and Nuer's conversion differs from how African theologians debated radical continuity and discontinuity from the culture following conversion. Instead, they discontinued some cultural practices when they became convinced by reflecting on what is written in the Bible. They kept some cultural elements because they drew peculiarity and solidarity of the in-group. They judge the moral value of the elements in terms of how they can influence their relationship with God and others. Therefore, the Anywaa's and the Nuer's conversions are processual and between the continuum of radical continuity and discontinuity. There is a dialogue between the two selves, informed by religious values and cultural values. Conversion, whether it happened after instant enlightenment or gradually is shown to be something that they grow into, not a completed process.

Third, in a collective culture where society has a more significant influence on an individual's dialogue or self-dialogue, the self is more of a communal self (Mbiti, 1969) which considers the opinions and perceptions of the community. The Anywaa and the Nuer are people with a highly collective culture. They both practice sharing resources within the group, living together, and shouldering individuals' responsibility as a community, where the community decides even an individual's private life. In such a culture, the self is communal, which consults with an actual or imaginary community, while dialogue occurs in the self. Such practice sometimes reverses what individuals decided to stop doing because it is a moral imperative. For example, a Nuer church leader who has served the Church for twenty years by being monogamous has left his leadership position so that he can have a second wife. An Anywaa reverend has received a *kwaroo* position involving previous Anywaa deities and ceremonies. Because he knows the deities are different in his culture to Evangelical Christianity, he preferred to hide from and deny the issue to his fellow Evangelical believers and remained both *kwaroo* and reverend (syncretism).

Though the community greatly influences an individual's dialogue and negotiation, this does not mean there are no exceptions, or the self has no volition. Some respondents have chosen to be despised, alienated, and disrespected because they choose to live by their conviction and become a non-communal self. Being a non-communal self has a cost because there may be a rejection from the in-groups. Nevertheless, some respondents have survived the rejection, and some have given in. As Raggat (2012, p. 34) argued, 'people construct and narrate their own lives in ongoing 'micro-dialogues' that have moral and ethical underpinnings.' This informs that the self has volition to go against the community expectations. Besides, the struggle in some to conform and others to reject shows that DST

must consider the promoting and hampering factors for dialogue and negotiation. The study also highlights the relationship between micro-level dialogicality in identity negotiation and macro-level societal pressure. Individual Christians within both groups have diligently negotiated their ethnic identities following conversion experiences, leading to enhanced intergroup relations and increased permeability. This contributes significantly to peacebuilding efforts at the individual level. However, societal pressures persist, urging participation in communal events. As a result, observable changes in cultural practices occur primarily at the personal level, such as discontinuation of dowry or domestic violence. Yet, at the macro level, cultural participation remains, such as engagement in communal prayers for fishing. This nuanced finding underscores the extent of identity negotiation's impact on community peacebuilding. There is a pressing mission for churches to play a more proactive role in facilitating changes at the macro level, empowering individuals who continually negotiate their ethnic identity to reflect on values in their religious identity which can contribute to changing the conflict situation at the macro level eventually.

Fourth, according to DST, there is a dialogue in a multivoiced self, and power plays a significant role in negotiation and how moral and ethical underpinnings play in increasing the power in the negotiating positions. To reconcile the contradictory values in the different identities, the third position takes elements of the two positions and reconciles the needs of the two, meaning the third position is a hybrid identity (Hermans & Gieser, 2012, P. 15). This research has shown the third position is not necessarily a hybrid of the two, and there must not be a third position to reconcile the contradictions; instead, the self can take different strategies to negotiate the value dissonance between contested values in religion

and culture. This is based on the symmetrical and asymmetrical power played in the negotiation. When people place symmetrical power on the values, they use strategies to keep the two values side by side. For example, to keep cultural and religious values, they either dichotomize, frame the two or adapt the old to the new. When they put an asymmetrical power relation between the two, they reinterpret, give new meaning, and leave the previously held belief in the culture. According to the research, four strategies are identified that the Anywaa and the Nuer employ when there is value dissonance between their religious and cultural values: reinterpretation, framing, dichotomizing or separation and adapting.

7.3. Contribution to the Existing Body of Knowledge

7.3.1 Research Outputs

7.3.1.1. Evangelical Christianity and Boundary Permeability

This research generated several outputs in relation to the research aims, research questions and objectives. The primary output is Evangelical Christianity, the acquired identity marker of the Anywaa and the Nuer, is playing a role in opening the closed ethnic boundaries of the two ethnic groups for each other in Gambella town. As confirmed by different scholars their ethnic identifications are divergent which make the boundary impermeable. The meaning attached to identity markers and cultural expectations start to change through the dialogue in the self of the two ethnic groups which results in ethnic boundary permeability in terms of a change of view towards the self, others, and their own community.

There is a vast body of research on ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia, particularly the Anywaa and the Nuer conflict and instability in Gambella (Ana Elisa Cascao, in Ramos et al., 2013, Medhane T, 2007, Alehene M, 2002, Samuel Z.H, 2021, Jon Harald S.L & Axel B, 2012, Adeto, 2014, Dereje 2011, Abraham, 2003). Their conflict is analysed based on their divergent ethnic identification, resources, and power competition, the lack of a well-intended resettlement plan and execution by the government, and a dysfunctional incorporation of the two ethnic groups. Some have looked at the different traditional reconciliation instruments employed among the in-groups in both ethnic groups (Dereje, in Pankhrust &Assefa, 2008, IIA-283-*Guur tong* in the Anywaa). However, little is done on their conversion to Christianity from traditional religion and how that impacts their long-standing conflictual relation and in what way. The self-dialogical way of identity negotiation through employing Evangelical Christianity ideals, which results in value-based ethnic identity negotiation reported in this thesis, addresses that knowledge gap.

In identity and otherness studies, boundaries have great significance for through them difference and peculiarity are communicated. The emphasis on difference emboldens boundaries therefore what makes boundaries permeable need to be considered in managing otherness. In this research, Evangelical Christianity has given the two ethnic groups an alternative lens that produces an alternative narration which in turn makes their boundaries permeable. This output is an additional perspective in identity and otherness studies.

Besides, the study contributes to identity studies by including religion as a lens to understand how individuals use religion to reinterpret and negotiate their ethnic identity.

This research will assist other regional states of Ethiopia with similar situations to investigate cultural and theological tools to promote coexistence among different ethnic groups. The findings can be also applied to similar situations but in different contexts.

7.3.1.2. Anywaa and Nuer Conversion and Conversion Studies

As it is noted in the previous chapters, religious conversion has debatable issues and one of them is the distance from and belonging to the culture after conversion (Volf, 1996) or radical continuity and discontinuity of the culture after conversion. The research output showed the Anywa's and Nuer's conversions from traditional religion to Evangelical Christianity are found between continuity and discontinuity. Some cultural elements continued because they draw an ingroup cohesion and peculiarity. Besides, the members' functionality and self-worth are drawn from them. On the other hand, some are discontinued because the moral and ethical issues in Evangelical Christianity outweighed the cultural values. Therefore, continuity and discontinuity discourse in conversion studies can investigate the underlying factors beneath the continuity and discontinuity elements instead of reflecting on the broad Africanness and Westernness lenses.

Some of the cultural elements such as revenge in the Anywaa and the Nuer are taken as bravery, and a way of defending their own. However, the moral factor on revenge is considered weak and despised by the ethnic groups, so they chose to forgive rather than retaliate.

7.3.1.3. Collective Culture and Dialogical Self Theory

The Anywaa and the Nuer have a collective culture and communal self which have also volition according to this research. This shows the dialogical self takes place in the context and the context has an influence on the dialogicality of the self. However, this does not mean the self loses volition in collective culture. Based on the power asymmetry between the negotiating elements, the self can disown the societal expectation. Besides, the negotiation does not always result in a hybrid third position rather it can be a strategy to keep them apart or subsume one into the other or syncretize both or use one element to redefine the other. In DST, the third positions are hybrid and though exterior is part of the interior in the self, how the exterior is influencing the interior needs to be investigated which is lacking in DST. This shows Dialogical Self Theory needs to consider the role of context in the dialogical self and the varied factors that result in different third positions besides a hybrid third position.

7.3.1.4. Social Agent and Social Environment in Peace Studies

Miroslav Volf's reconciliation model (1996) emphasises a social agent in shaping social environment to be more peaceful so people can live together. This is also supported by Jennifer Todd who argued that social structural changes are less transformative without changing people's identity (2005). On the other hand, in the concept of habitus, the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, argued there are systems of durable and transposable dispositions through which we perceive, judge and act meaning our social environment is more powerful and beyond the capacity of the individuals which determines our perceptions and actions. One focuses on the micro-level change and the other on the macro-

level. However, this research shows that both social agents and the social environment need to work intricately so that changes can be seen. A person with noble convictions cannot thrive in a social environment where hostility is the language and the norm. In a thriving environment, individuals need to choose to reflect and negotiate themselves so that the environment can support their efforts.

Therefore peace-building strategies should consider the collaborative role that both the social agent and the social environment can play in growing and nurturing peace among the ethnic groups. Besides, instead of strategizing peace, acknowledging an individual's role in creating trans-ethnic bridges and averting conflicts in conflict-ridden areas will encourage individuals to view themselves differently in the way that they can be change agents in environmentally and ethnically closed boundaries.

7.3.1.5. Bottom-up/Inside-out Approach in Conflict Transformations

When conflict transformation is designed there are two approaches: top-down and bottom-up and the former is criticized for it does not take the local knowledge and expertise in averting conflict and sticks to scientific methods only. On the other hand, the bottom-up approach considers community level engagements with their own tools and strategies.

However, still in the bottom-up approach, the role of an individual's dialogue in oneself is neglected. For instance, in the Anywaa and the Nuer case, there are Evangelical believers who view ethnic others as brothers and sisters in Christ; there are also Evangelical believers who view ethnic others as enemies. If those individuals with different views sit together to transform the conflict, there will be division and disagreement and sometimes hostility for those who consider ethnic others as brothers and sisters. Therefore, the community needs to

be inspired to reflect on personal values from distinct perspectives so that they can get an alternative narration about the self and others. This calls for bottom-up approaches to start with or consider micro-level changes or an inside-out approach.

7.4. Practical Implications of the Findings

7.4.1. Implications for Peace and Conflict Studies

Identity and otherness have to be a source of differentiation, intimacy, solidarity, and interdependence instead of being a source of difference and conflict (Cooley, 1990). However, the issue of identity and otherness is a threat for peaceful coexistence and cooperation (Volf, 1996); as it is noted in the introductory part as the number one threat for the effort being made towards ensuring human rights. This was the case noted in this research among the two ethnic groups the Anywaa and the Nuer. However, the slow instilling of peace among individuals which in turn influence the community at large can be achieved by changing how one views the self, others, and the larger community through challenging the cultural lens with another lens.

When the view of the self formed through socio-cultural and historical development of a particular group changed, others can get a space in the self. When the Anywaa and the Nuer where ethnic identity is the primary identity marker, got another lens, Evangelical Christianity, that gave them the idea of brotherhood under one father, God. This helped them start to see the oneness and equality before God which made them see individual ethnic others beyond their ethnic group and create trans-ethnic friendship, their brother's keeper. This shows how their identity boundary is becoming permeable.

Boundary permeability as noted in the findings is not changing what makes a person unique or the things that gives a sense of identity; rather having a space for others and recognizing the need of interdependence among humans. According to the quote by Mother Teresa, "If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other." The sense of belongingness unto each other is what brings peace among the ethnic groups.

The other finding regarding a redefinition of identity is the view they have towards ethnic others. As Wittgenstein's (1983) different games, the Anywaa and the Nuer have similar identity markers with contrasting meanings such as hospitality, sharing and the value of a certain land. These are properties of group formation as Eriksen's argument that ethnic identity is not only an aspect of interaction but also a property of social formation (1991). However, the aspect of interaction is possible through imagining and redefining who others are and reexamining the values in our communality. Boundary permeability through redefining who others are bridges both aspects of interaction and social formation. Communality fails without acknowledging authenticity. Acknowledging communality and authenticity is possible through fostering dialogue in oneself and among the community. One Anywaa respondent puts the solution for the situation in Gambella town among the two ethnic groups,

When there is peace, they hold conferences, but they do not reflect on why their conference is being interrupted. What will happen if they organize peace conferences instead of always focusing on preaching, praying, and singing? They must reflect on the problems of the town and think about the solutions together. When the youth see this, they might adopt it and make it a culture. When problems occur, it was only the issue of individuals, not the tribe. There are generalizations. So, the church must design how to go about peace talks. If they do that the problem will be reduced (IIA-315).

Another Nuer respondent claims what brings peace in the region is through acknowledging the identity they received through the new religious identity, 'we are Christians, God's

image, born again that we are created to do good not kill each other.’ He also adds how precious peace is for their existence and thriving in all aspects of life. He also indicates the impact the current situation has on the children and next generation and advises all the ethnic groups to reflect and open themselves for dialogue and the attitudes we have for each other (IIN-265).

When the view of themselves and others change, things will change. Individual and group reflective dialogue, choosing the higher moral value, fostering dialogue in individual’s self brings lasting peace.

7.4.2. Implication for Conflict Transformation

As studies show, conflict is inevitable and sometimes taken as a necessary stage of development (Lederach, 2003) but we can choose what we can do about it; to deal with it in the way that does not create more fissures among the conflicting groups (Ginty & Firchow, 2016). The two major conflict transformation approaches are top-down and bottom-up approaches where the first is criticized for its disregard for local knowledge and expertise in dealing with conflicts in the area. However, the bottom-up approach is about engaging with the local people to create ownership of both the problem and solution; also trust (Reed & Ceno, 2012). However, Reed and Ceno also pointed out that even in the bottom-up approach, the individuals represented in the dialogue may lead to more conflict than resolution.

Seeing the holistic nature of conflict in Gambella, different NGOs have tried different conflict resolution strategies to avert the long-standing conflict between the two ethnic groups. The intricacy of the problem with economic disparity, a power struggle, failed

border issues, the refugee situation, and historical narration, asks whether the respondent dares to count on the Church in changing narratives and socializations to individuals. Most bottom-up approaches consider the group and community but not the individual's dialogue.

However, groups and community are a result or an image of individuals. If there is no system that fosters dialogue in individuals, group dialogue cannot bear much fruit. Bottom-up approaches should promote alternative narratives that will foster an individual's self dialogue which results in a new way of socialization. For instance, because of Evangelical Christianity's redefinition of who they are, how should they view themselves as changed, when the narration about enmity is changed. Such a change of view will be reflected in a group activity. The person who said, 'in Christianity, your enemy will be your friend' (FGN-469), has participated in averting group level conflict with his Anywaa friend. These two individuals, because they have an alternative narration, a new identity in Christianity, their view is changed, and they are bridging the gap between the two ethnic groups.

7.5. Scope and Limitations of the Study

7.5.1. Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the extent the Anywaa and the Nuer are negotiating their ethnic identity through the lens of their Evangelical Christianity. All respondents live in Gambella town and were selected for research from all walks of life, different age groups, and genders. It also includes how the negotiation strategies affect their ethnic relations and in what way. The study does not include another part of the region or investigate the causes of conflict and conflict-averting strategies.

7.5.2. Limitations of the Study

Though this research achieved its objectives and answered the questions raised, there is no doubt that it needs to tackle some issues more adequately. Therefore, further research will be required. From the data collection perspective, I collected the data with language assistants because I do not speak or listen to their languages. Besides, I have time and space limitations, and I may only collect some data in the town. Moreover, the security level allowed me to confine myself in hotels or Churches so that the respondents might receive maximum security. This does not mean I did not collect the data until it was saturated. Since the area is far from where I live, it is difficult to go to the place frequently, and the limitation allowed me to plan to stay longer once I am there and have an intensive interaction with the respondents, sometimes up to 9 pm. Therefore, the amount of data collected does not significantly impact the research outcome.

Although the Anywaa and the Nuer live in all parts of the Gambella region and South Sudan, I intentionally limited myself to Gambella town, for there are always security issues with travelling to other towns. The other reason is that though they are scattered all over the region, most Nuer and Anywaa live in Gambella town, and the place itself has an issue of contention which is a good resource for the study. The other reason is that, among the twelve regional states in Ethiopia, the highest number of Evangelical Christians reside in Gambella (CSA, 2007). However, this limits me to only accessing certain people, seeing certain places, and accessing only a few data. Those responses not gathered from other parts of the region might have contributed to the current study, which I recommend for subsequent studies on the issue.

I am also aware of methodological limitations. I have employed a qualitative study, specifically a case study, which has limitations related to validity and reliability. Scientific documents argue that it is hard to make causal inferences from case studies, for it will be hard to rule out other explanations. This is because case studies involve the behaviour of a person or group that may not apply to others. However, we can limit the investigation to particular factors to minimize the limitations. In this case, the role of religion in ethnic identity negotiation is apparent, and other factors are kept constant. In this way, we can use the specific findings to suggest similar situations, which can contribute to further research. Since this research is a case study, I acknowledge that the findings will be those of the specific area, Gambella town.

The research focused on only two ethnic groups, which calls for further research in different parts of the country and contexts to expand this work. Besides, the research is limited to one country, region, and city, and I am interested in following subsequent research in other regions of the country, in other countries and contexts.

I recognize that I may have biases while collecting the data. As an Evangelical Christian, some of the respondents' answers may be inconvenient. I may also have a preconceived idea of what Evangelical Christians should think and act. However, whenever I come from the field, I listen to the records and share them with my husband and close friends, who constantly remind me to be neutral and allow myself to be educated by the research. They always ask me if I am sure to accept the outcome of this research. This is an ethical question for the researcher and helped me consider myself a learner and willing to be educated by the informants.

There might be a bias from the respondent's side too. Their previous conflictual history with the Highlanders might make them identify me with them because I am also a Highlander, according to their understanding. Besides, as a person who came from the centre of the country, the seat of the government, and asking about their conflict, makes me a suspect who works for the government; the other bias may come from the organization I work with, which is a funding organization for their child development projects. These all might contribute to withholding information or giving an answer they think is appropriate for my position in my organization. I have minimized these biases through group interactions accompanied by tea and coffee, so they feel comfortable communicating over what looks informal and relaxed. This is followed by individual interviews both from the group and outside. Besides, among the 69 respondents only six of them work in a compassion assisted project and the rest are from different organizations that do not relate to my position in my organization.

These limitations call for further research through collaborative or action research where self-dialogue and negotiation can be reflected through a diary method so that the participants record their reflections on their everyday lives.

7.6. Suggestions for Future Research

The findings of the current study point out several important aspects for future research with the Anywaa's and the Nuer's dialogue in the self between their Evangelical Christianity and culture. First, there is a lack of knowledge in general regarding their conversions to Evangelical Christianity and its contribution to their relations. Few studies

remark about their conversions and some conflict averting strategies of Evangelical Churches but lack the role of their conversions in their relations.

The current study sought to bring particular attention to the role of Evangelical Christianity ideals in negotiating ethnic identity, and as such was the first on the topic. Additional research into identity negotiation to boundary permeability of the two ethnic groups is important. For example, Evangelical Christianity is one identity marker that provides an alternative narration, similarly other avenues can be sought that can give them other alternative narrations that can initiate dialogue in the self. This could address the gap between the macro-level and the micro-level strategies in working on their conflictual relation.

Secondly, the findings highlighted the considerable role that individuals' dialogue in the self plays in creating trans-ethnic friendship, changing the view towards self and others and challenging the cultural expectations. Further studies of the role of individuals' dialogue in the self to community level influence and how to foster dialogue in collective culture are needed to be addressed. This will enhance our understanding and in designing conflict transformation efforts in the area. A related avenue for future research would be to study ethnic identity negotiation as a sphere in fostering positive cohabitation and coexistence. All of this would improve policy and intervention directed at the Anywaa's and the Nuer's ethnic relations in particular and positive ethnic relations in general among different ethnic groups in Ethiopia.

A third avenue for future research relates to understanding the different third positions people create in dealing with value dissonance in the self. This will help for further reflection on those strategies that promote positive ethnic relations and those that promote

negative relations. In addition to this thesis, only limited studies specifically address third positions such as Raggatt's ambiguous third position in things which we consider part of us and at the same time not part of us (2012, p. 36), Hermans & Hermans-Konopka (2010), Sorgan & Abbey (p.154) as in the hybrid third position in a conflictual intercultural context. Further research focusing specifically on dialogical self and third position in the identity negotiation and multiculturalism is highly needed. Such research would give individuals and groups an alternative narration as a different lens to look at themselves, others and their community that can create a space for each other.

7.7. Conclusion

In this conclusion chapter, four major things are briefly summarized: the key findings, the contribution of the research to the body of knowledge, the limitations of the study, and suggestions for further research.

The four major findings of the research are that the Evangelical Christianity of the Anywaa and the Nuer has changed their self view, their view of others and challenged community values which makes their ethnic boundary permeable. The second finding is that the Anywaa's and the Nuer's conversions differ from how African theologians debated the outcome of conversions, not the radical continuity or discontinuity from the culture, but instead, in the spectrum of the two extremes. The third finding is the dialogical self in the collective culture of the Anywaa and the Nuer is the communal self has its own volition. The fourth finding is the role and power of dialogical self in bringing growth of peace in the community and the four different third positions in the Anywaa and the Nuer when there is value dissonance in different identity sources.

The major contributions of the research will be to the literature regarding the Anywaa and the Nuer relations, to conversion studies, Dialogical Self Theory, to peace studies and conflict transformation. The chapter also recognized the limitations of the research from different perspectives and the different avenues open for future research.

Bibliography

Abbink, Jon. "Ethnic-Based Federalism and Ethnicity in Ethiopia: Reassessing the Experiment after 20 Years." *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 5, no. 4 (November 2011): 596–618. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17531055.2011.642516>.

———. "Religion and Politics in Africa: The Future of 'The Secular', in: *Africa Spectrum*." 49, no. 3 (2014): 83–106.

———. "Religious Freedom and the Political Order: The Ethiopian 'Secular State' and the Containment of Muslim Identity Politics." *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 8, no. 3 (July 3, 2014): 346–65. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17531055.2014.917855>.

Abbink, Jon, and Tobias Hagmann, eds. *Reconfiguring Ethiopia: The Politics of Authoritarian Reform*. London: Routledge, 2013.

———, eds. *Reconfiguring Ethiopia: The Politics of Authoritarian Reform*. London: Routledge, 2013.

Abebe, Zekarias Beshah. "Developmental State and Ethnic Federalism in Ethiopia: Is Leadership the Missing Link?" *Leadership and Developing Societies* 3, no. 1 (December 9, 2019): 95–127. <https://doi.org/10.47697/lds.3436103>.

Abimbola, Wande. "Religion, World Order, and Peace: An Indigenous African Perspective: Religion, World Order, and Peace." *CrossCurrents* 60, no. 3 (September 9, 2010): 307–9. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1939-3881.2010.00129.x>.

Adams, Byron G., Fons J. R. Van de Vijver, Gideon P. de Bruin, and Cynthia Bueno Torres. "Identity in Descriptions of Others Across Ethnic Groups in South Africa." *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 45, no. 9 (October 2014): 1411–33.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022114542466>.

Ademe, Solomon Molla, and Mohammed Seid Ali. "Foreign Intervention and Legacies in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church." *Heliyon* 9, no. 3 (March 2023): e13790.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e13790>.

Adeto, Yonas Adaye. "Conflict Complexity in Ethiopia: Case Study of Gambella Regional State." PhD, University of Bradford, 2014. <http://hdl.handle.net/10454/8860>.

Alem, Habtu. "Ethnic F Ethnic Federalism in Ethiopia: Back Alism in Ethiopia: Background, Pr Ound, Present Conditions Esent Conditions and Future Prospects." Western Michigan University, 2003. https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/africancenter_icad_archive/57

Alemante G., Silassie. "Ethnic Federalism: Its Promises and Pitfalls for Africa." Faculty Publication, *Yale Journal of International Law*, 2003, 51–107.

Alexeeva, Ekaterina. "Religious Conversion as a Way to Overcome Loneliness." In *Proceedings of the International Conference Communicative Strategies of Information*

Society (CSIS 2018). Saint-Petersburg, Russia: Atlantis Press, 2019.

<https://doi.org/10.2991/csis-18.2019.68>.

A. Galiev, K. Batkalova, al-Farabi Kazakh national university, M. Yugay, and al-Farabi Kazakh National University. “Traditional Mechanisms of Ethno-Cultural Identity Construction in Japan: Life Cycle Customs and Rituals.” *Journal of History* 92, no. 1 (2019): 48–54. <https://doi.org/10.26577/JH-2019-1-410>.

Alula, Pankhurst. “Revisiting Resettlement under Two Regimes in Ethiopia.” In *Moving People in Ethiopia Development Displacement and the State*, In A. Pankhurst & F. Piguet (Eds.), 138–79. Boydell & Brewer, 2009.

Antony, Mary Grace. “Exploring Diversity through Dialogue: Avowed and Ascribed Identities.” *Communication Teacher* 30, no. 3 (July 2, 2016): 125–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17404622.2016.1192663>.

Arén, Gustav. *Evangelical Pioneers in Ethiopia: Origins of the Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus*. *Studia Missionalia Upsaliensia* 32. Stockholm: Addis Abeba: EFS-förl.; Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, 1978.

Aristide R. Zolberg, and Long Litt Woon. “Why Islam Is Like Spanish: Cultural Incorporation in Europe and the United States.” 1999 Sage Publications, *Politics and Society*, 27 (1999): 5–38.

Assefa, Fisseha. "Theory versus Practice in the Implementation of Ethiopia's Ethnic Federalism." In *Ethnic Federalism: The Ethiopian Experience in Comparative Perspective*, Turton David ed., 131–64. Oxford: James Currey, 2006.

Banks, Marcus. *Ethnicity: Anthropological Constructions*. London ; New York: Routledge, 1996.

Banton, Michael P. *Ethnic and Racial Consciousness*. London: Longman, 2002.

Barth, Fredrik. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland, 1998.

Bassey, Michael. *Case Study Research in Educational Settings. Doing Qualitative Research in Educational Settings*. Buckingham; Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press, 1999.

Baye, T.G. "Power, Church and the Gult System in Gojjam, Ethiopia" 25 (January 1, 2016): 51–73.

Bekalu, Atnafu Taye. "Ethnic Cleansing in Ethiopia," *Canadian Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies*, 50, no. 1 (2018): 77–104.

Berhanu, Kassahun. "Ethiopia Elects a Constituent Assembly." *Review of African Political Economy* 22, no. 63 (March 1995): 129–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056249508704110>.

Binns, John. *The Orthodox Church of Ethiopia: A History*. London New York, NY: I.B. Tauris, 2018.

Blumer, Herbert. *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009.

Bombardieri, Luca, Anacleto D'Agostino, Guido Guarducci, Valentina Orsi, and Stefano Valentini, eds. *SOMA 2012: Identity and Connectivity: Proceedings of the 16th Symposium on Mediterranean Archaeology, Florence, Italy, 1-3 March 2012*. BAR International Series 2581. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2013.

Boyer, Pascal. "Informal Religious Activity Outside Hegemonic Religions: Wild Traditions and Their Relevance to Evolutionary Models." *Religion, Brain & Behavior* 10, no. 4 (October 1, 2020): 459–72. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2153599X.2019.1678518>.

Bruner, Jason, and David Dmitri Hurlbut. "New Approaches to 'Converts' and 'Conversion' in Africa: An Introduction to the Special Issue." *Religions* 11, no. 8 (July 29, 2020): 389. <https://doi.org/10.3390/re111080389>.

Bulcha, M. "The Politics of Linguistic Homogenization in Ethiopia and the Conflict over the Status of AfannOromoo." *African Affairs* 96, no. 384 (July 1, 1997): 325–52. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.afraf.a007852>.

Burton, John W. "A Note on Nuer Prophets" 56 (1975): 95–107.

Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge Classics. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Cenerini, Stefano. *First Evangelization of the Anyuak*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Addis Ababa University Printing House, 2018.

Chaderjian, Paul. “Nearly One Million Displace in Ethiopia Ethnic Violence.” *Aljazeera*, August 25, 2018. <https://www.aljazeera.com/videos/2018/8/25/nearly-one-million-displaced-in-ethiopia-ethnic-violence>.

Chalachew, Tadesse. “Referendum in Ethiopia’s Southern Region.” In *Briefing Paper*, 2023.

Claydon, Tony, and Ian McBride, eds. *Protestantism and National Identity: Britain and Ireland, c.1650–c.1850*. Cambridge University Press, 1998.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511560439>.

Coakley, John. “The Religious Roots of Irish Nationalism.” *Social Compass* 58, no. 1 (March 2011): 95–114. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0037768610392726>.

Cohen, Abner, and Association of Social Anthropologists of the Commonwealth, eds. *Urban Ethnicity*. A.S.A. Monographs 12. London, New York: Tavistock Publications, 1974.

Cohen, Anthony P. "Introduction: Discriminating Relations – Identity, Boundary and Authenticity." In *Sigifying Identities*. London: Routledge, 2000.

Cohen, Julie A., and Anusha Kassan. "Being In-between: A Model of Cultural Identity Negotiation for Emerging Adult Immigrants." *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 65, no. 2 (March 2018): 133–54. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cou0000265>.

Cooley, Paula M. "Emptiness, Otherness, and Identity: A Feminist Perspective." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 6, no. 2 (1990): 7–23.

Crummey, Donald. *Priests and Politicians: Protestant and Catholic Missions in Orthodox Ethiopia, 1830-1868*. Oxford Studies in African Affairs. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.

Cullen, Fin, and Simon Bradford. *Research and Research Methods for Youth Practitioners*, 2011.

Davies, D. J., N. E. Richardson, D. A. Norton, and B. J. Meakin. "Proceedings: The Antimicrobial Efficiencies of Contact Lens Solutions." *Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology* 27 Suppl? -2 (December 1975): 24P.

De Lame, Danielle. "The Political Role of Churches and the Rwandan Genocide - Christianity and Genocide in Rwanda. By Timothy Longman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Pp. Xii+350. £55, Hardback (ISBN 978-0-521-19139-5)." *Journal of African History* 51, no. 2 (July 2010): 264–65. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S002185371000037X>.

Debele, Serawit Bekele. "Religion and Politics in Post-1991 Ethiopia: Making Sense of Bryan S. Turner's 'Managing Religions.'" *Religion, State and Society* 46, no. 1 (January 2, 2018): 26–42. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09637494.2017.1348016>.

Decke, Gerd. "Gudina Tumsa and Dietrich Bonhoeffer." *Global South Theological Journal* 1, no. 1 (November 6, 2022). <https://doi.org/10.57003/gstj.v1i1.5>.

Dent, Christopher M. "Brexit, Trump and Trade: Back to a Late 19th Century Future?" *Competition & Change* 24, no. 3–4 (July 2020): 338–57. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1024529420921481>.

Dereje, Feyissa. "Decentralisation as Ethnic Closure, with Special Reference to a Declining Negotiated Access to Natural Resources in Western Ethiopia," *Africa Development*, XXXI, no. 2 (2006): 243–60.

———. "Land and the Politics of Identity The Case of Anywaa-Nuer Relations in the Gambella Region." In *Competing Jurisdictions*, edited by Sandra Evers, Marja Spierenburg, and Harry Wels, 203–22. BRILL, 2005. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789047416449_012.

Dereje Feyissa. *Playing Different Games: The Paradox of Anywaa and Nuer Identification Strategies in the Gambella Region, Ethiopia*. 1. publ. *Integration and Conflict Studies*, v. 4. New York: Berghahn Books, 2011.

Dereje, Feyissa. "Power and Its Discontents: Anywaa's Reactions to the Expansion of the Ethiopian State, 1950-1991," *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 48, no. 1 (2015): 31–49.

Deutsch, Karl W. "The Growth of Nations: Some Recurrent Patterns of Political and Social Integration." *World Politics* 5, no. 2 (January 1953): 168–95.

<https://doi.org/10.2307/2008980>.

Donham, Donald L. *Marxist Modern: An Ethnographic History of the Ethiopian Revolution*. University of California Press, 1999.

Downey, Geraldine, Jacquelynne S. Eccles, and Celina M. Chatman. *Navigating the Future: Social Identity, Coping, and Life Tasks*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2005.

DuiBe, Negesso Jima. "Oromo's Religious Conversion in Ethiopia: Historical Perspective." *Antropoloji*, no. 41 (June 28, 2021): 66–77.

<https://doi.org/10.33613/antropolojidergisi.798859>.

Duressa, Gebeyehu Temesgen, and Gemechu Kenea Geleta. "A History of Modern Ethiopia: Review." Edited by Richard Meissner. *Cogent Social Sciences* 7, no. 1 (January 1, 2021): 1964194. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2021.1964194>.

Durkheim, Émile. *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals*. Routledge Classics. Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY: Routledge, 2019.

Elias-Varotsis, Sophie. "Festivals and Events — (Re)Interpreting Cultural Identity." *Tourism Review* 61, no. 2 (February 1, 2006): 24–29. <https://doi.org/10.1108/eb058472>.

Epstein, A. L. *Ethos and Identity: Three Studies in Ethnicity*. London: Chicago, IL: Tavistock Publications; Aldine, 1978.

Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. *Ethnicity and Nationalism*. 2nd ed. Anthropology, Culture, and Society. London; Sterling, VA: Pluto Press, 2002.

———. "Ethnicity versus Nationalism." *Journal of Peace Research* 28, no. 3 (August 1991): 263–78. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343391028003004>.

———. "The Cultural Context of Ethnic Differences." *Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 26, no. 1 (1991): 127–44. <https://doi.org/http://doi.org/10.2307/2803478>.

Eshete, Tibebe. "Evangelical Christians and Indirect Resistance to Religious Persecution in Ethiopia." *Review of Faith & International Affairs* 8, no. 1 (January 2010): 13–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15570271003707614>.

Esler, Philip Francis. *Ethiopian Christianity: History, Theology, Practice*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2019.

Evans-Pritchard, E. E. "Nuer Spear Symbolism." *Anthropological Quarterly* 26, no. 1 (January 1953): 1. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3317047>.

Evans-Pritchard, Edward. *The Nuer: A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People*. New York Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969.

Evans-Pritchard, Edward E. *The Political System of the Anuak of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan*. Reprinted. *Monographs on Social Anthropology* 4. Oxford: Berg, 2006.

Falage, Christiane. "The Cultural Resilience in Nuer Conversion and a 'Capitalist Missionary.'" In *Changing Identification and Alliance in North-East Africa: Sudan, Uganda and Ethiopia-Sudan Borderlands*, NED-New edition, 1., II:205–18. Berghahn Books, n.d. www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt9qckrs.14.

Falen, Douglas J. "Polygyny and Christian Marriage in Africa: The Case of Benin." Cambridge University Press, *African Studies Review*, 51, no. No.2 (September 2008): 51–74.

Fantini, Emanuele. "Go Pente! The Charismatic Renewal of the Evangelical Movement in Ethiopia." In *Understanding Contemporary Ethiopia: Monarchy, Revolution and the Legacy of Meles Zenawi*, Ficquet E., Pruner G. Eds., 2015.

Fischler, Claude. "Food, Self and Identity." *Social Science Information* 27, no. 2 (June 1988): 275–92. <https://doi.org/10.1177/053901888027002005>.

Fiseha, A. “Constitutional Adjudication in Ethiopia: Exploring the Experience of the House of Federation (HoF).” *Mizan Law Review* 1, no. 1 (June 14, 2010): 1–32.

<https://doi.org/10.4314/mlr.v1i1.55611>.

Fox, Jonathan. *An Introduction to Religion and Politics: Theory and Practice*. 2nd ed. Routledge Studies in Religion and Politics. London New York: Routledge, 2018.

Fukui, Katsuyoshi, and John Markakis, eds. *Ethnicity & Conflict in the Horn of Africa*. Eastern African Studies. London: Currey [u.a.], 1994.

Fukuyama, Francis. *Identity: Contemporary Identity Politics and the Struggle for Recognition*. London: Profile Books, 2019.

Gans, Herbert J. *More Equality*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1973.

Garve, Roland, Miriam Garve, Jens C. Türp, Julius N. Fobil, and Christian G. Meyer. “Scarification in Sub-Saharan Africa: Social Skin, Remedy and Medical Import.” *Tropical Medicine & International Health* 22, no. 6 (June 2017): 708–15.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/tmi.12878>.

Gellner, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994.

Gidron, Yotam. “The Nuer Messianic Jewish Movement: Authority and Authenticity in Ethiopia’s Western Frontierlands.” Durham University, 2020.

Gifford, Paul. *African Christianity: Its Public Role*. 2nd, impr.corr ed. London: Hurst, 2001.

Ginty, Roger Mac, and Pamina Firchow. "Top-down and Bottom-up Narratives of Peace and Conflict." *Politics* 36, no. 3 (August 2016): 308–23.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0263395715622967>.

Girke, Felix, ed. *Ethiopian Images of Self and Other*. Schriften Des Zentrums Für Interdisziplinäre Regionalstudien 2. Halle an der Saale: Univ.-Verl. Halle-Wittenberg, 2014.

Girma, Mohammed. "Religion, Politics and the Dilemma of Modernising Ethiopia." *HTS Theologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 74, no. 1 (April 30, 2018).

<https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v74i1.4878>.

———. "Whose Meaning? The Wax and Gold Tradition as a Philosophical Foundation for an Ethiopian Hermeneutic." *Sophia* 50, no. 1 (April 2011): 175–87.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11841-010-0201-9>.

Goffman, Erving. "The Interaction Order: American Sociological Association, 1982 Presidential Address." *American Sociological Review* 48, no. 1 (February 1983): 1.

<https://doi.org/10.2307/2095141>.

———. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. 1. rev. ed. New York: Anchor Books, 1990.

Gordon, Milton M. *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion, and National Origins*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1988.

Grenstedt, Staffan. *Ambaricho and Shonkolla: From Local Independent Church to the Evangelical Mainstream in Ethiopia; the Origins of the Mekane Yesus Church in Kambata Hadiya*. *Studia Missionalia Svecana* 82. Uppsala: Swedish Institute of Missionary Research, 2000.

Gube, Jan. "Sociocultural Trail within the Dialogical Self: I-Positions, Institutions, and Cultural Armory." *Culture & Psychology* 23, no. 1 (March 2017): 3–18.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1354067X16650812>.

Gudykunst, William B., ed. *Theorizing about Intercultural Communication*. Repr. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007.

GuiChun, Jun. "A Holistic Model of Conflicts in a Multicultural Urban Congregation in Britain: Towards a Comprehensive and Systematic Approach." Ph.D thesis, Middlesex University, 2016.

Hailegiorgis, Samson Estifanos. "Unity among Evangelical Churches in Ethiopia: A Practical Theological Investigation." University of Manchester, 2010.

<https://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?uin=uk.bl.ethos.525909>.

Hamilton, W.D. "The Genetical Evolution of Social Behaviour. I." *Journal of Theoretical Biology* 7, no. 1 (July 1964): 1–16. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-5193\(64\)90038-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-5193(64)90038-4).

Harré, Rom. *The Singular Self: An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*. London ; Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998.

Harwati, Lusiana Neti. "Ethnographic and Case Study Approaches: Philosophical and Methodological Analysis." *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies* 7, no. 2 (April 30, 2019): 150. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijels.v.7n.2p.150>.

Haselbarth, Hans. *Christian Ethics in the African Context*. Ibadan: Daystar Press, 1976.

Hashim, Tewfik. "Transition to Federalism: The Ethiopian Experience," no. *Forum of federations* (2010): 1–31.

Haustein, Jorg. "Charismatic Renewal, Denominational Tradition and the Transformation of Ethiopian Society." In *Evangelisches Missionswerk Deutschland* (Hrsg.): *Encounter Beyond Routine. Cultural Roots, Cultural Transition, Understanding of Faith and Cooperation in Development*. Hamburg: EMW, 2011.

———. “Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity in Ethiopia: A Historical Introduction to a Largely Unexplored.” In *Multidisciplinary Views on the Horn of Africa*, 109–27. Hatem Elliesie (ed.), 2014.

Haustein, Jörg, and Emanuele Fantini. “Introduction: The Ethiopian Pentecostal Movement – History, Identity and Current Socio-Political Dynamics.” *PentecoStudies: An Interdisciplinary Journal for Research on the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* 12, no. 2 (May 3, 2013): 150–61. <https://doi.org/10.1558/ptcs.v12i2.150>.

Haustein, Jörg, and Terje Østebø. “EPRDF’s Revolutionary Democracy and Religious Plurality: Islam and Christianity in Post- Derg Ethiopia.” *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 5, no. 4 (November 2011): 755–72. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17531055.2011.642539>.

Heft, James. “Religion, World Order, and Peace: Christianity, War, and Peacemaking: Christianity, WAR AND PEACEMAKING.” *CrossCurrents* 60, no. 3 (September 9, 2010): 328–31. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1939-3881.2010.00133.x>.

Helleland, Botolv. “Place Names and Identities.” *Oslo Studies in Language* 4, no. 2 (July 21, 2012). <https://doi.org/10.5617/osla.313>.

Hendrickx, Benjamin. “The Kebra Nagast : An Israelite–Christian Dynastic and National Epic?” In *A Companion to World Literature*, edited by Ken Seigneurie, 1–11. Wiley, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118635193.ctw10106>.

Hermans, Hubert J. M. “How to Perform Research on the Basis of Dialogical Self Theory? Introduction to the Special Issue.” *Journal of Constructivist Psychology* 21, no. 3 (June 3, 2008): 185–99. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10720530802070684>.

Hermans, Hubert J. M., and Thorsten Gieser, eds. *Handbook of Dialogical Self Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Hermans, Hubert J. M., and Agnieszka Konopka. *Dialogical Self Theory: Positioning and Counter-Positioning in a Globalizing Society*. Cambridge: New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Hermans, Hubert J.M. “The Dialogical Self: Toward a Theory of Personal and Cultural Positioning.” *Culture & Psychology* 7, no. 3 (September 2001): 243–81. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354067X0173001>.

Hogg, Michael A., Dominic Abrams, Sabine Otten, and Steve Hinkle. “The Social Identity Perspective: Intergroup Relations, Self-Conception, and Small Groups.” *Small Group Research* 35, no. 3 (June 2004): 246–76. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1046496404263424>.

Horton, Robin. “On the Rationality of Conversion (Part I).” *Africa* 45, no. 3 (July 1975): 219–35. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1159632>.

———. “On the Rationality of Conversion (Part II).” *Africa* 45, no. 4 (October 1975): 373–99. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1159452>.

Hubert J.M., Hermans. "The Dialogical Self as a Society of Mind." Sage Publications, *Theory and Psychology*, 12, no. 2 (n.d.): 147–60.

Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011.

Hutchinson, Sharon E., and Naomi R. Pendle. "Violence, Legitimacy, and Prophecy: Nuer Struggles with Uncertainty in South Sudan." *American Ethnologist* 42, no. 3 (August 2015): 415–30. <https://doi.org/10.1111/amet.12138>.

Idang, Gabriel E. "AFRICAN CULTURE AND VALUES." *Phronimon* 16, no. 2 (January 29, 2018): 97–111. <https://doi.org/10.25159/2413-3086/3820>.

Igwara, Obi. "Holy Nigerian Nationalisms and Apocalyptic Visions of the Nation." *Nations and Nationalism* 1, no. 3 (November 1995): 327–55. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1354-5078.1995.00327.x>.

Isaacs, Matthew. "Sacred Violence or Strategic Faith? Disentangling the Relationship between Religion and Violence in Armed Conflict." *Journal of Peace Research* 53, no. 2 (March 2016): 211–25. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343315626771>.

Ishiyama, John. "Does Ethnic Federalism Lead to Greater Ethnic Identity? The Case of Ethiopia." *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, July 7, 2022, [pjac023](https://doi.org/10.1093/publius/pjac023).
<https://doi.org/10.1093/publius/pjac023>.

———. “Is Ethnonationalism Growing in Ethiopia and Will It Lead to the Dissolution of the Country? Evidence from the World Value Survey 2007–2020.” *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 56, no. 5 (August 2021): 1024–35.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/00219096211007650>.

Jackson, Ronald, and Michael Hogg. *Encyclopedia of Identity*. 2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks California 91320 United States: Sage Publications, 2010.
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412979306>.

Jackson, Ronald L., and Branden Elmore. “Cultural Contracts Theory.” In *The International Encyclopedia of Intercultural Communication*, edited by Young Y. Kim, 1–5. Wiley, 2017.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118783665.ieicc0208>.

Jenkins, Richard. *Social Identity*. 4th Ed. Key Ideas. New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2014.

Johnson, Douglas H. *Nuer Prophets: A History of Prophecy from the Upper Nile in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Oxford Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology. Oxford : New York: Clarendon Press ; Oxford University Press, 1994.

Julius K., Muthengi. “Polygamy and the Church in Africa: Biblical, Historical, and Practical Perspectives,” *African Journal of Evangelical Theology*, 14.2 (1995): 55–79.

Jung, C. G., ed. *Man and His Symbols*. A Windfall Book. Garden City: Doubleday, 1964.

Kah, Henry Kam, and Bea Lundt, eds. *Polygamous Ways of Life Past and Present in Africa and Europe: = Polygame Lebensweisen in Vergangenheit Und Gegenwart in Afrika Und Europa. Narrating (Hi)Stories, Band 6.* Wien Zürich: LIT, 2020.

Bylye Gody, “Kalmyks of Southern Ural in the XVIII – Early XX Century: Problems of Assimilation, Acculturation and Preservation of Ethnic Identity.” 46, no. 4 (September 1, 2017). <https://doi.org/10.13187/bg.2017.4.1194>.

Kaplan, Robert D. *The Ends of the Earth: From Togo to Turkmenistan, from Iran to Cambodia ; a Journey to the Frontiers of Anarchy.* New York, NY: Random House, 1997.

Kaplan, Steven. “Themes and Methods in the Study of Conversion in Ethiopia: A Review Essay.” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 34, no. Fasc.3 (August 2004): 373–92.

Kebede, Messay. *Survival and Modernization: Ethiopia’s Enigmatic Present.* Red Sea Press, 1999.

Khairulyadi, Khairulyadi, and Khairun Nisa. “The Effects of Assimilation on Ethnic Identity among Malays of Acehnese Descendent in Malaysia.” In *Proceedings of the 1st Aceh Global Conference (AGC 2018).* Banda Aceh, Indonesia: Atlantis Press, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.2991/agc-18.2019.39>.

Kiely, Richard, Frank Bechhofer, Robert Stewart, and David McCrone. “The Markers and Rules of Scottish National Identity.” *Sociological Review* 49, no. 1 (February 2001): 33–55. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-954X.00243>.

Kim, Rebecca Y. "Religion and Ethnicity: Theoretical Connections." *Religions* 2, no. 3 (July 26, 2011): 312–29. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel2030312>.

Kim, Yung Suk. *Monotheism, Biblical Traditions, and Race Relations. Elements in Religion and Monotheism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022.

Kling, David W. *A History of Christian Conversion*. 1st ed. Oxford University Press, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780195320923.001.0001>.

Kong J., Toang. "No Tribal Debate between Nuers and Anuaks." *Sudan Tribune* (blog). Accessed July 13, 2023. <https://sudantribune.com/article15422/>.

Kurimoto, Eisei. "Natives and Outsiders: The Historical Experience of the Anywaa of Western Ethiopia." *Asian and African Studies*, 1992, 1–43.

Lacy, Creighton. "Book Review: Third-Eye Theology. Theology in Formation in Asian Settings." *Missiology: An International Review* 9, no. 2 (April 1981): 244–45. <https://doi.org/10.1177/009182968100900214>.

Lancaster, Ross. "Federalism and Civil Conflict: The Missing Link?" MA, University of North Texas, 2012.

Langlois, Laëtitia. "Trump, Brexit and the Transatlantic Relationship: The New Paradigms of the Trump Era." *Revue LISA / LISA e-Journal*, no. vol. XVI-n°2 (September 10, 2018). <https://doi.org/10.4000/lisa.10235>.

Lee, Helen, and Steve Tupai Francis, eds. *Migration and Transnationalism: Pacific Perspectives*. Canberra, A.C.T: ANU E Press, 2009.

Lee, Stacey J. "Perceptions of Panethnicity among Asian American High School Students." *Amerasia Journal* 22, no. 2 (January 1996): 109–26. <https://doi.org/10.17953/amer.22.2.e52u1t67248u600q>.

Li, Chenchen, Ling Eleanor Zhang, and Anne-Wil Harzing. "Expatriate Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategies: A Dynamic Framework." In *Intercultural Management in Practice*, edited by Meena Chavan and Lucy Taksa, 131–40. Emerald Publishing Limited, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-83982-826-320211013>.

Lie, Jon Harald Sande, and Axel Borchgrevink. "Layer upon Layer: Understanding the Gambella Conflict Formation." *International Journal of Ethiopian Studies* 6, no. 1/2 (2012): 135–59.

Lienhardt, Godfrey. "Aniak Village Headmen: II," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 28, no. 1 (1958): 23–36.

———. "The Situation of Death: An Aspect of Anuvak Philosophy," *Anthropological Quarterly*, 35, no. 2 (1962): 74–85.

Lincoln, Yvonna S., and Egon G. Guba. *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1985.

Linell, Per, Lennart Gustavsson, and Päivi Juvonen. "Interactional Dominance in Dyadic Communication: A Presentation of Initiative-Response Analysis." *Linguistics* 26, no. 3 (1988). <https://doi.org/10.1515/ling.1988.26.3.415>.

Longman, Timothy. "Church Politics and the Genocide in Rwanda." *Journal of Religion in Africa* 31, no. 2 (2001): 163–86. <https://doi.org/10.1163/157006601X00112>.

Markakis, John. *Ethiopia: The Last Two Frontiers*. Eastern Africa Series. Woodbridge, Suffolk; Rochester, NY: James Currey, 2011.

Marsh, Christopher. "The Religious Dimension of Post-Communist 'Ethnic' Conflict." *Nationalities Papers* 35, no. 5 (November 2007): 811–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00905990701651802>.

Matyas, Melinda. "Opportunities and Barriers to Multimodal Cities: Lessons Learned from in-Depth Interviews about Attitudes towards Mobility as a Service." *European Transport Research Review* 12, no. 1 (December 2020): 7. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12544-020-0395-z>.

McCAULEY, John F. “The Political Mobilization of Ethnic and Religious Identities in Africa.” *American Political Science Review* 108, no. 4 (November 2014): 801–16.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055414000410>.

McKay, James. “An Exploratory Synthesis of Primordial and Mobilizationist Approaches to Ethnic Phenomena.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 5, no. 4 (October 1982): 395–420.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.1982.9993387>.

Mehretu, Assefa. “Ethnic Federalism and Its Potential to Dismember the Ethiopian State.” *Progress in Development Studies* 12, no. 2–3 (July 2012): 113–33.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/146499341101200303>.

Mengie, Legesse Tigabu. “Ethnic Federalism and Conflict in Ethiopia: What Lessons Can Other Jurisdictions Draw?” *African Journal of International and Comparative Law* 23, no. 3 (October 2015): 462–75. <https://doi.org/10.3366/ajicl.2015.0131>.

Menon, Seetha. “The Effect of Marital Endowments on Domestic Violence in India.” *Journal of Development Economics* 143 (March 2020): 102389.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2019.102389>.

Meyer, Brigit. ‘Make a Complete Break with the Past.’ *Memory and Post-Colonial Modernity in Ghanaian Pentecostalist Discourse.*,” *Religion Africa*, 21, no. 3 (1998a): 316–49.

Miller, Dale T., and Deborah A. Prentice. "Collective Errors and Errors about the Collective." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 20, no. 5 (October 1994): 541–50. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167294205011>.

Moussaïd, Mehdi, Juliane E. Kämmer, Pantelis P. Analytis, and Hansjörg Neth. "Social Influence and the Collective Dynamics of Opinion Formation." Edited by Attila Szolnoki. *PLoS ONE* 8, no. 11 (November 5, 2013): e78433. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0078433>.

———. "Social Influence and the Collective Dynamics of Opinion Formation." Edited by Attila Szolnoki. *PLoS ONE* 8, no. 11 (November 5, 2013): e78433. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0078433>.

Naderifar, Mahin, Hamideh Goli, and Fereshteh Ghaljaie. "Snowball Sampling: A Purposeful Method of Sampling in Qualitative Research." *Strides in Development of Medical Education* 14, no. 3 (September 30, 2017). <https://doi.org/10.5812/sdme.67670>.

Neumann, Cecilie Basberg, and Iver B Neumann. *Power, Culture and Situated Research Methodology: Autobiography, Field, Text*, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-59217-6>.

Neumann, Cecilie Basberg, and Iver B. Neumann. "Uses of the Self: Two Ways of Thinking about Scholarly Situatedness and Method." *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 43, no. 3 (June 2015): 798–819. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305829815576818>.

Ngwoke, Peace N., and Ezichi A. Ituma. "Ethno-Religious Conflict and Sustainable Development in Nigeria." *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 76, no. 4 (October 13, 2020). <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v76i4.6090>.

Njoku, Emeka Thaddues, and Joshua Akintayo. "Religious Extremism." In *Encyclopedia of Psychology and Religion*, edited by David A. Leeming, 1–3. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2018. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-27771-9_200132-2.

Nwanaju, Isidore U. "The Rise of Nationalism and Religious Politics in Nigeria" 3, no. 2 (2016): 79–87.

Østebø, Terje. "Religion, Ethnicity, and Charges of Extrimism: THE Dynamics of Inter-Communal Violence in Ethiopia." *European Institute of Peace*, 2021.

———. "Religious Dynamics and Conflicts in Contemporary Ethiopia: Expansion, Protection, and Reclaiming Space." *African Studies Review*, April 11, 2023, 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2023.11>.

Padgett, Deborah K. *Qualitative Methods in Social Work Research*. Vol. 36, n.d.

Pandian, Jacob. "Syncretism in Religion." *Anthropos* 101, no. 1 (2006): 229–33.

Panikkar, K. N. "Religious Symbols and Political Mobilization: The Agitation for a Mandir at Ayodhya." *Social Scientist* 21, no. 7/8 (July 1993): 63. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3520346>.

Pankhurst, Alula, and Getachew Assefa, eds. *Grass-Roots Justice in Ethiopia: The Contribution of Customary Dispute Resolution*. Centre français des études éthiopiennes, 2008. <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.cfee.471>.

Partee, Charles. *Adventure in Africa: The Story of Don McClure: From Khartoum to Addis Ababa in Five Decades*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000.

Peires, J. B. “Nuer Prophets and Prophecy - Nuer Prophets: A History of Prophecy from the Upper Nile in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. By Douglas H. Johnson. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994. Pp. Xx + 407. £40 (ISBN 0-19-827907-8).” *Journal of African History* 36, no. 3 (November 1995): 514–16. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021853700034642>.

Pelkmans, Mathijs, ed. *Conversion after Socialism: Disruptions, Modernisms and Technologies of Faith in the Former Soviet Union*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2009.

Pelz, Werner. “The Communal Self,” *A Journal for the New Europe*, 15 (1981): 33–37.

Perner, Conradin. *Living on Earth in the Sky: The Anyuak: An Analytic Account of the History and the Culture of a Nilotic People*. Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1994.

Petros B., Ogbazghi. “Ethiopia and the Running Sores of Ethnic Federalism: The Antithetical Forces of Statehood and Nationhood,” *African Studies Quarterly*, 21, no. 2 (August 2022). <https://asq.africa.ufl.edu/files/V21i2a3.pdf>.

Phinney, Jean S. "Ethnic Identity and Acculturation." In *Acculturation: Advances in Theory, Measurement, and Applied Research.*, edited by Kevin M. Chun, Pamela Balls Organista, and Gerardo Marín, 63–81. Washington: American Psychological Association, 2003.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/10472-006>.

Pires, Guilherme D., and John L. Stanton. *Ethnic Marketing: Theory, Practice and Entrepreneurship*. Routledge Studies in Marketing. New York; London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2019.

Pollock, Nancy. "Food and Transnationalism: Reassertions of Pacific Identity." In *Migration and Transnationalism: Pacific Perspectives*, edited by Helen Lee and Steve Tupai Francis, ANU Press, 2009. <https://doi.org/10.22459/MT.08.2009.06>.

Precious, Wapukha Joan, and Georgine Onyango. "Masculine Justification of Polygamy Among the Bukusu of Bungoma County Kenya." *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 10, no. 6 (June 29, 2020): Pages 804-812.
<https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v10-i6/7375>.

Pritchard, E.E.Evans. "The Sacrificial Role of Cattel among the Nuer." Cambridge University Press on Behalf of the International African Institute, *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, July 1953, 181–98.

Radford, David. "Contesting and Negotiating Religion and Ethnic Identity in Post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan." *Central Asian Survey* 33, no. 1 (January 2, 2014): 15–28.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/02634937.2013.871831>.

Raggat, Peter T.F. "Positioning in the Dialogical Self:Recent Advances in Theory Construction." In *Handbook of Dialogical Self Theory*, 29–45. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Ramos, Manuel João, Aleksí Ylönen, Alexandra Magnólia Dias, Ricardo Real P. de Sousa, Elsa González Aimé, Alexandra Magnólia Dias, and Centro de Estudos Africanos, eds. *State and Societal Challenges in the Horn of Africa: Conflict and Processes of State Information, Reconfiguration and Disintegration*. Lisbon, 2013.

Reed, Mark S., and Julian Sidoli Del Ceno. "Mediation and Conservation Conflicts: From Top-down to Bottom-Up." In *Conflicts in Conservation*, edited by Stephen M. Redpath, Ralph J. Gutiérrez, Kevin A. Wood, and Juliette C. Young, 226–39. Cambridge University Press, 2015. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139084574.017>.

Rock, June. "Ethiopia Elects a New Parliament." *Review of African Political Economy* 23, no. 67 (March 1996): 92–102. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056249608704182>.

Rosenau, Pauline Vaillancourt. *Post-Modernism and the Social Sciences: Insights, Inroads, and Intrusions*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1992.

Ruane, Joseph, and Jennifer Todd. "Ethnicity and Religion: Redefining the Research Agenda." *Ethnopolitics* 9, no. 1 (March 2010): 1–8.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/17449050903557377>.

Saldaña, Johnny. *Fundamentals of Qualitative Research. Understanding Qualitative Research*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Sandelowski, Margarete. "Rigor or Rigor Mortis: The Problem of Rigor in Qualitative Research Revisited." *Advances in Nursing Science* 16, no. 2 (December 1993): 1–8.

<https://doi.org/10.1097/00012272-199312000-00002>.

Schliesser, Christine. "From 'a Theology of Genocide' to a 'Theology of Reconciliation'? On the Role of Christian Churches in the Nexus of Religion and Genocide in Rwanda."

Religions 9, no. 2 (January 23, 2018): 34. <https://doi.org/10.3390/re19020034>.

Schwartz, Seth J., Koen Luyckx, and Vivian L. Vignoles, eds. *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research*. New York: Springer Science+Business Media, 2011.

———. *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research*. New York: Springer, 2011.

Scott, Susie. *Negotiating Identity: Symbolic Interactionist Approaches to Social Identity*. Cambridge: Polity, 2015.

Semir, Yusuf. "What Is Driving Ethiopia Ethnic Conflicts?" *East Africa Report*, 2019.

Seul, Jeffrey R. “‘Ours Is the Way of God’: Religion, Identity, And Intergroup Conflict.”
Journal of Peace Research 36, no. 5 (September 1999): 553–69.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343399036005004>.

Shotter, John, and Kenneth J. Gergen. “Social Construction: Knowledge, Self, Others, and Continuing the Conversation.” *Annals of the International Communication Association* 17, no. 1 (January 1994): 3–33. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23808985.1994.11678873>.

Sibilu, Temesgen, and Lawrie Barnes. “Conflict and Controversy in the Development of the Oromo Language.” *Language Matters* 46, no. 3 (September 2, 2015): 418–35.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10228195.2015.1114011>.

Simmons, Erica S., and Nicholas Rush Smith. “The Case for Comparative Ethnography.” *Comparative Politics* 51, no. 3 (April 1, 2019): 341–59.

<https://doi.org/10.5129/001041519X15647434969920>.

Smith, Anthony D. *Ethno-Symbolism and Nationalism*. Routledge, 2009.

<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203876558>.

Smith, Karl. “From Dividual and Individual Selves to Porous Subjects: From Dividual and Individual Selves to Porous Subjects.” *Australian Journal of Anthropology* 23, no. 1 (April 2012): 50–64. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1757-6547.2012.00167.x>.

Spijker, Gerard van't. "The Churches and the Genocide in Rwanda." *Exchange* 26, no. 3 (1997): 233–55. <https://doi.org/10.1163/157254397X00421>.

Spradley, James P. *Participant Observation*. Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press, 2016.

Steffen, Patrick, and Ray Merrill. "The Association between Religion and Acculturation in Utah Mexican Immigrants." *Mental Health, Religion & Culture* 14, no. 6 (July 2011): 561–73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13674676.2010.495747>.

Stets, Jan E., and Peter J. Burke. "Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (September 2000): 224. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2695870>.

Strathern, Marilyn. *The Gender of the Gift: Problems with Women and Problems with Society in Melanesia*. *Studies in Melanesian Anthropology* 6. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001.

Stroup, David R. "Boundaries of Belief: Religious Practices and the Construction of Ethnic Identity in Hui Muslim Communities." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, no. 6 (May 3, 2017): 988–1006. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2016.1193211>.

Sundkler, Bengt, and Christopher Steed. *A History of the Church in Africa*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Surgan, Seth, and Emily Abbey. "Identity Construction among Transnational Migrants: A Dialogical Analysis of the Interplay between Personal, Social and Societal Level." In

Handbook of Dialogical Self Theory, By Hubert J.M Hermans and Thorsten Gieser., 151–68, 2012.

Suryani, Anne. “Comparing Case Study and Ethnography as Qualitative Research Approaches,” *Journal of Communication Studies/Jurnal ILMU KOMUNIKASI*, 5, no. 1 (June 2008): 116–27.

Svensson, Mattias. “Ethnic Federalism and Political Transition A Study of Private Media Opinions on Ethnic Politics, Human Rights and Democracy in a Changing Ethiopia.” Uppsala Universitate, 2019.

Tadesse, Debay. “Gambella The Impact of Local Conflict On Regional Security,” 2007. <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:59328376>.

Tajfel, Henri. “Social Identity and Intergroup Behaviour.” *Social Science Information* 13, no. 2 (April 1974): 65–93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/053901847401300204>.

Taylor, Charles, and Amy Gutmann, eds. *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1994.

Taylor, Steven J., and Robert Bogdan. *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods: The Search for Meanings*. 2nd ed. New York: Wiley, 1984.

Tessema, T. Documents for Wallaga history (1880s to 1920s Ethiopian calendar [1888 – 1928]). Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Printing Press, 2010.

Theodros, Teklu. “Religious Pluralism and Cohabitation in Ethiopia: Some Critical Notes.” In *Religious Pluralism, Heritage and Social Development*, M. Christian Green, Rosalind I.J. Hackett, Len Hansen, and Francois Venter, Eds. Stellenbosch: SUN MeDIA, 2017.
<http://www.africansunmedia.co.za/Sun-e-Shop/tabid/78/ProductId/372/Default.aspx>.

Tibebe, Eshete. *The Evangelical Movement in Ethiopia: Resistance and Resilience (Studies in World Christianity)*, n.d.

Timol, Riyaz. “Born-Again Muslims? Intra-Religious Conversion and the Tablighi Jama’at.” *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations* 33, no. 3 (July 3, 2022): 281–306.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09596410.2022.2049110>.

Todd, Jennifer. *Identity Change after Conflict: Ethnicity, Boundaries and Belonging in the Two Irelands*. 1st ed. 2018. *Palgrave Studies in Compromise after Conflict*. Cham: Springer International Publishing: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

Türkmen, Gülay. “Negotiating Symbolic Boundaries in Conflict Resolution: Religion and Ethnicity in Turkey’s Kurdish Conflict.” *Qualitative Sociology* 41, no. 4 (December 2018): 569–91. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-018-9400-4>.

Vaismoradi, Mojtaba, Hannele Turunen, and Terese Bondas. “Content Analysis and Thematic Analysis: Implications for Conducting a Qualitative Descriptive Study:

Qualitative Descriptive Study.” *Nursing & Health Sciences* 15, no. 3 (September 2013): 398–405. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nhs.12048>.

Vaughan, Sarah. “Ethnicity and Power in Ethiopia.” University of Edinburgh, 2003.

Vignoles, Vivian L., Seth J. Schwartz, and Koen Luyckx. “Introduction: Toward an Integrative View of Identity.” In *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research*, edited by Seth J. Schwartz, Koen Luyckx, and Vivian L. Vignoles, 1–27. New York, NY: Springer New York, 2011. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-7988-9_1.

Volf, Miroslav. *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Revised and Updated. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2019.

Wan, Enoch, and Mark Vanderwerf. “A Review of the Literature on Ethnicity, National Identity and Related Missiological Studies,” no. Featured article (2009). <http://www.globalmissiology.org/>.

Wells, Anna Redhair. “Hagiography as Source: Gender and Conversion Narratives in The Book of the Saints of the Ethiopian Church.” *Religions* 11, no. 6 (June 23, 2020): 307. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11060307>.

Wimmer, Andreas. “The Making and Unmaking of Ethnic Boundaries: A Multilevel Process Theory.” *American Journal of Sociology* 113, no. 4 (January 2008): 970–1022. <https://doi.org/10.1086/522803>.

Woźniak-Bobińska, Marta. "Big Fat Assyrian/Syriac Weddings: Rituals and Marriage Traditions among Middle Eastern Christians in Sweden." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44, no. 16 (December 10, 2018): 2684–2700.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1389036>.

Wsevolod W., Isajiw. "Ethnic Identity Retention in Four Ethnic Groups: Does it matter?," *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 21, no. 3 (Fall 1990): 289–304.

Yerekesheva, Laura G. "Functions of Religion and Dynamics of Nation-Building in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan." *Muslim World* 110, no. 1 (January 2020): 64–88.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/muwo.12319>.

Yimenu, Bizuneh Getachew. "The Politics of Ethnonational Accommodation Under a Dominant Party Regime: Ethiopia's Three Decades' Experience." *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, May 12, 2022, 002190962210976.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/00219096221097663>.

Yohannes, Adigeh. "The Oromo Language Use in Wellega Dioceses: Opportunities and Challenges," *Journal of Ethiopian Church Studies*, 3, no. 3 (2013).

Young, M. Crawford. "Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Class in Africa: A Retrospective," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 26, no. 103 (1986): 421–95.

Yuki, Kazuhiro. "Modernization, Social Identity, and Ethnic Conflict." *European Economic Review* 140 (November 2021): 103919. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euroecorev.2021.103919>.

Zeni, Jane. "A Guide to Ethical Issues and Action Research [1]." *Educational Action Research* 6, no. 1 (March 1998): 9–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09650799800200053>.

Appendices

Appendix I: Participant Consent Form

Title of the research: Ethnic Identity Negotiation through Dialogical Self: The Case of the Anywaa and Nuer Evangelicals in Gambella, Ethiopia.

Name of the Researcher: Selamawit Cherinet Kebede

(Please tick on the space provided if you agree)

I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

_____ I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.

_____ I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

_____ I understand that participation involves interviews, groups discussions, audio recordings and taking notes by the researcher.

_____ I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

_____ I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.

_____ I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.

_____ I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.

_____ I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in dissertations, conference presentations, published papers and books.

_____ I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm, they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.

_____ I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in a secured location with security arrangement done by a researcher, and it will be the researcher only who access the data until the board confirms the result of her dissertation.

Signature of research participant

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of researcher

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study.

Signature of researcher

Date

Appendix II: Semi-structured Individual Interview Probing Questions- For Adults

1. Tell me how and when you came to know Christ as your personal saviour.
2. How was life before that and what do you count as a change in your life after you came to Christ?
3. Tell me about your family's religious background.
4. Have you seen, observed or participate in any family religious rituals before you came to Christ? How is it like?
5. Do you know about the former religious belief of Nuer? Tell me more...do you think evangelical believers in your ethnic group still believe with.... how does this go with biblical teachings of relations?
6. What do you say about your identity? What are the three most signifiers of your identity?
7. What is the belief regarding identity in your ethnic group? How does this go with your religious beliefs?
8. What are the verses, sayings, items in your religious belief that increased your understanding of identity?
9. What are the major items, sayings, in your ethnic group that increased your understanding of identity?
10. What does being Nuer mean to you? What do you think shapes this attitude?
11. In your opinion, does what is believed regarding identity in your ethnic group go with what is written in the Bible or heard through preaching.
12. How do you describe your relationship with ethnic others? How do you see this in light of the Bible?

13. In your opinion, what are the causes of conflict between Anywaa and Nuer?
14. As both ethnic groups are evangelical believers, what do you think the role of their evangelical belief in their ethnic identity understanding? How about yours?

Appendix III: Focus Group Discussion: Some Probing Questions for Adult

Participants

1. What does identity mean to you?
2. What religious belief you know about your ethnic group other than evangelical tradition? Do you think they have influenced your understanding of identity? Why/ in what way?
3. What biblical verses come to your mind when you think of identity? What are the central teachings of those verses?
4. Where is the place of other identity signifiers such as ethnicity in light of our biblical understandings? Please justify your answer.
5. When you see the teachings and understandings of identity in your ethnic group and teachings and understanding of identity in your Bible, do you think they go along or opposite? Please explain.
6. I have seen that your neighborhood, schools, boundaries and others are very demarcated except for few; what is your feeling about this? Why do you feel that way?
7. What do you think the role of the government, Church, and you as an individual towards peaceful relations between yours and ethnic others?
8. What do you think of God's idea on our ethnic identity? Why do you think like this?
9. Do you think we should teach about ethnic identity in the Church? Why and in what way?

10. If you take both your ethnic identity and the identity you get through your religious belief, how do you describe yourself?

Appendix IV: Focus Group Discussions Probing Questions for Adolescent Group

Focus Group Discussion Questions: Introduction

1. Introducing myself.
2. How are you all?
3. Introduce ourselves to each other.

Discussion Questions

1. I know you have been in Sunday school this weekend; what have you learned? what does that mean to you for everyday life (To understand how they interpreted in terms of their everyday life)
2. Do you know a Bible story or a verse that talks about friendship? Who are they? what were their differences and how did they manage their friendship? (or I show them a video of David and Jonathan and ask them to reflect).
3. I know you have a very rich culture and fantastic celebrations, what does being Nuer mean to you? (to know how much they know about their ethnic group and their feelings towards it).
4. Tell me some words that can describe the Nuer.
5. What are the holidays, the celebration you like most in your ethnic group? What are the meanings of the celebration? Do you have any unique cultural celebration? Tell me more.
6. Do you know some heroes in your ethnic group? What did they do? Do you admire them? Why? /Why not? - do you know any hero from Gambella?
7. I know a number of other ethnic groups in Gambella, who are they? What do you know about those ethnic groups? How are those different from you? (This will

enable me to hear what they consider to be the good and bad things they have in mind about others).

8. I heard the situation in Gambella on the news about the conflict. Since you have been here when the situation happened, do you think you can tell me about the situation more? How was the situation and what do you feel about it?
9. What do you think are the root causes of the conflict?
10. Do you think the root cause of the conflict is worth fighting for? Why/ why not? (based on the question there will be follow-up questions to know how much they feel about their ethnic relations) some people say the conflict is worth fighting for and what do you think?
11. Which age group participated more in the conflict? What about others? / Are you aware of being a teenager who participated in the conflict?
12. How do you think their parents feel?
13. If you had a chance to change one thing in Gambella, what would that be?
14. You know Ethiopia is a home for different ethnic groups, what should be the way the different ethnic groups live together?

Appendix V: Semi-Structured Interview Probing Question for Adolescent

Participants

1. Tell me about yourself. Your name, which grade are you? What are your favourite subjects? What do you want to be in the future?
2. Do you serve in the Church? In what way? What does participating and serving in the church mean to you?
3. Where do you have friends? In the church, school or neighborhood or all?
4. Who are your friends? Tell me more about your friends (what do they like, which ethnic group are they?)
5. Who is your best friend? What is his/her ethnic group? How long have you known him/her? How did you meet? What do you do most of the time together?)
6. Are there children in your school and neighbourhood that do not get along with other children? What was the cause? What do you think of that?
7. Have you violated/bullied what was the reason? What do you think about that?
8. Tell me about your understanding of friendship? What does good and bad friendship look like?
9. What do you feel about your ethnic group? What do you think is good about your ethnic group? What do you not like about your ethnic group?
10. What do you say about having friends from another ethnic group? Is there a challenge about having a friend from another ethnic group? What is challenging here having a friend from another ethnic group?
11. If you are asked to describe Gambella and the different ethnic groups living here, how do you describe them? Let's come to specific ethnic groups, how do you

describe Nuer ethnic group? What about the Anywaa? (or I will show them two pictures and ask them to describe all about the picture: feelings, describing words)

12. How would you like the relationship between the Nuer and the Anywaa to be?

Why?

13. Have you seen adolescent children participate in the conflict? What do you think about that?

14. What do you think it takes for the peaceful and loving co-existence among these two ethnic groups?

Appendix VI: Additional Questions for Adolescent Children who have Friends from the Other Ethnic Groups

1. How do you describe friendship? What is good about it? What are the challenges of friendship?
2. Tell me about your friendship? How did you meet? What do you like most about your friend? Have you ever had trouble having this friend in the community? If there was, what was that? How did you overcome challenges? Do you think the society will put pressure on you two because of your friendship? What would that be?
3. Have you met your friend after the conflict? If yes, did you talk about it? What did you say? If no, do you think the current conflict will change your friendship?
4. When people start friendship with other people, do you think there must be some criteria? Why? Why not? If yes what are those criteria?
5. Additional questions for children who have participated in the conflict. What was the conflict about?
6. How did it start? And what was it like?
7. Like you said you participated in the conflict? How did you join the group? What were you saying and doing when you got into conflict?
8. In what ways are you different from an ethnic other? How do you know about those differences?
9. Who/what is responsible for the differences you have now? How?
10. Do you think you need peaceful and loving co-existence? If yes, what do you suggest could make it so; if no, why?

Appendix VII: Interview Samples

Anywaa

Introducing myself and asking her consent through the translator because she does not read or write.

Participant no 1.

Please tell me a little bit about yourself, your ministry, your family.

My name is Tirunesh (name changed), I have three children. I am a deacon in the church and a member in evangelism work.

Do you go out to evangelize people?

Yes, I do evangelize the community. I am one of the peacemakers in the community telling them that we should love one another. We should love our ethnic group. We should also love another ethnic group. Because all people are the same before God. I don't hate any ethnic group; I love all ethnic groups for they are all created by God like me so I shouldn't hate.

What status do you have in the community?

There is no status before God; It is only God (Jowk) who has status and I serve him.

What do you like the most in Anywaa culture?

What I like in my culture (I think she is describing what she wanted to do or what she likes to do) is one how we do our land, agriculture and the other is to serving God. I want all to be Christians and follow Jesus Christ.

What are the things in Anywaa culture that don't go along with the teaching of the Bible?

What I don't like in Anywaa culture is that some young people fight in the community.

Some take alcohol, some smoke. This disrupts the community. This is what I don't like and if God willing the majority will be Christians in the future.

Do you read the Bible?

Now I don't read for I have eye problems. My eyes don't see clearly. Last time we are given the training on how to read the Bible but I don't read now. Sometimes we read the Bible through our dreams. Some verses may come to your mind in a dream, and you remember. You remember some of the stories and this is how I learn.

What do you think of the Bible?

I always want to be as the Bible says. I want to be a true Christian according to the word of God. Even now I have the Bible with me and want to serve God.

What are these beads on your neck?

It is a cultural bead we use for beauty.

Does the blue and white colors have any meaning?

This is what we call dimuy we use at a time of marriage. 10-12 in number.

How much did you pay for this?

8000 birr for one necklace. And you have to give 5 necklace like this as a dowry.

Is this the necklace you received when you get married?

No, it belongs to my daughter.

Tell me about your three children.

Two sons and one daughter and all are married.

Do you have grand children?

I have two grandsons.

I have also three sons and a daughter. Is that a good thing or a bad thing in Anywaa culture? Having many boys and few girls?

People may think that you are few. 3 boys and a girl, you are very few.

How many children is a woman expected to have in the culture?

It is common for Anywaa woman to have 8-10 children and it is expected more girls than boys.

In Anywaa culture are there many girls needed than boys?

Both are important but boys are needed more because in the culture long time ago woman were needed more than men. But now men are needed because they can learn, and they can protect the community. If you have only girls, you can be attacked by someone even by the family members. They can come and attack you. But if you have more men, people will fear them, and they don't come and fight with you for they know that you have sons. If you have sons, your house will be built, you will get food for they go out and bring food.

You said you are a peace-maker in the community, what role do you play when there is a fight between your ethnic group and the other ethnic group?

Nowadays since my daughter and sons are Christians, I don't want any of them to be involved in any kind of fight and also, I convince my community not to fight any ethnic group. Because if they fight, I will also be involved so I tell them not to fight. Fighting is not something good for me and it damages the community. Even when I go for prayer before God, God may not answer me. Because fighting is not accepted in the light of the Bible. So, I tell my sons and daughter not to fight any ethnic group.

Last time there was a ceremony to chase corona virus out of the region, *Chiimari*.

What do you think of that?

According to the Bible, there is no need to a worship devil spirit. When the community want to do *chiimari*, I don't want to follow them. Because I have already considered myself that I am belong to God. But this *chiimari* is a traditional practice which may involve another spirit, another form of devil spirit. When there is sickness and disease in the community, they do *Chiimari*; but I believe that my God has power over sickness and disease too. I go before my God and pray and then He heals my children. So, I don't practice this.

How old are you?

I don't remember when I was born. I think I reach one hundred.

You are very young.

May be my body is strong, but I lived many years.

Thank you so much God bless you.

When you hand over the 5 necklaces as dowry, there are around 6 people who sit and count the beads. Each bead needs to be 205 in number and they count it again and again.

Is there any meaning behind the blue beads? Why is blue special? Why 205?

The full number is 200 but five will be added in case if one is lost, it will be replaced.

Why 200?

It is according to the agreement made by our ancestors.

Why 200?

It is culture.

Why blue? What Is the meaning of blue in Anywaa?

Just it is beautiful.

Participant no. 2

My name is Lemi (name changed) and I am serving at East Gambella MYC as an evangelist. I am also a staff member at the synod and a teacher at Bible school.

Did you take courses in theology and where?

Yes, at Hossana in Diploma.

What course are you giving now?

I am giving a course on Christian education. For diploma students.

What is your responsibility in the church as evangelist?

I preach and also pray for people.

When do you read the Bible?

Every time as I need to; morning, afternoon, at night. Sometimes when I need to be prepared to preach, I read.

Do you have family, children, married?

I have my father and sisters. I was married but my husband passed away and I have one girl.

When?

Five years ago?

How old is your child?

11 years.

Do you think to get married again?

I am praying if God's will and since I am evangelist, I want God to give me a good Christian and am praying for that.

How old are you?

I am 27 years old.

What do you like most in Anywaa culture?

I love their fellowship and sharing culture. They have good food.

What is the cultural food.

It is Genfo but it is different kind and special. We grind corn after they immerse it in a water for two days then drain it with water and spread it under the sun to dry it. Then they will take it to grinding mill and then put it in a bucket and whenever they want to use it, they use it.

What do they eat for breakfast, lunch and dinner?

They eat Genfo with different sauces. Gomen, fish, or meat. They use sweet potato and godere too.

What cultural elements in Anywaa need to be improved or left?

Pulling out teeth.

What about polygamy? What do you think of that?

Previously they used to marry many wives but the good thing in it is that even if he gets married to 5 or 10 women, he treats them equally. Providing food but the problem is disease, and the environment is a challenge.

How do you see this in the light of the Bible?

The Bible doesn't allow one man to have many wives, but the culture precedes the religion, people are exercising that but now it is decreasing.

How do you know polygamy is not allowed?

It is written in the Bible.

What does it say?

Smile..in the beginning God created Adam and Eve and the two become one body. That shows one man is allowed one woman.

But some people referring to the Bible say that Abraham has two wives so does David.

What do you say about this?

It is still not good. One man for one woman. About Abraham and Solomon are in the Old Testament but in the New Testament one man is for one woman. In our church MYC, a person cannot be a leader if he has more than one wife. This is one criterion. Since those people were kings, they used to have many wives. In our culture also kings get married to many wives. Whether you like it or not when there is a dance in a community for the king, the king will be there, and his servant will pick anyone of the girls to give to the king in marriage. But God said one man for woman. If people say since David and Solomon had many wives and so they can, I think these are false teachers. They are not good Christians.

What do you know about the kings, Kwaroo and landlords?

I don't know much but I heard that the king can take any girl he wished to have and cannot say. But now it is not like this. I don't know much about kwaroo. But I know Anywaa people brought so many foreign gods from different tribes. Previously they used to believe in God and whenever there is a problem they do Chemeri. When there is a disease like a pandemic or the environment is hostile, they do chemeri. Because they believe in God, they do go to river banks and pray saying God please take this disease away. But they didn't have gods.

Chimeri was done for Corona. Did you go to the place?

No, I was not in Gambela. I was in Abobo but I heard about it.

If you were in Gambella, what would you do when they go out to do Chemeri?

I wouldn't go because when I pray my God listens. Before corona comes, we were praying and God was speaking to us that such hard problem would come and it happened. I am still praying.

What holidays do you celebrate?

Christmas, Easter and New Year. Before the New Year comes five days we will pray. We also prepare special food.

What makes you and Nuer similar and different?

We have the same colour, character and the way we walk. How are you different when you walk?

They use their left leg first and we use our right leg. Their males have face marks and the females. They also pull their teeth.

Using the left leg is that a good thing or a bad thing?

It is just nature no special meaning.

What are the reasons of the conflict?

Many things. First the people who start living in Gambella town are Anywaa, Komo and Mejang and a few Nuer. They were eating 'atela' and pumpkin. They were going naked. We use to beg them to give. When more refugees come from South Sudan and the few in here got position. The behaviour of Anywaa is to receive people, love people. They are very hospitable. If they were not, no one will live here. They give a place for guests and love them and are peaceful. After the Nuer came here, they try to subdue us. They want to say we belong here, this is our land. But this land belongs to our ancestors and we can't go nowhere. This ferments conflict. Anywaa people are patient and give chances for others but after they say enough and got angry, their mind doesn't change easily. But these people are creating problems everytime.

What is the solution?

All need to be Christians nothing else.

What does converted mean?

When they are Christians they love people and don't do bad and love others like others.

Participant no. 3

I am Daniel, born in Gambella and a member of MYC even from my childhood. From my childhood, it is the church that raised me and taught me up to this level. My educational background is I have a diploma in leadership management and communication, graduated in 2004 from Mekane Yesus Seminary. And then in 2012, leadership and development study got a degree in Seminary and then I studied theology and graduated in 2014 (part-time night shift) Before that also, I graduated from Yardstick International Institute, I graduated in disaster management and sustainable development BS in 2010. I have three degrees.

In 2015/16 I started a Masters class with Zelalem (my brother) but couldn't finish. I had to finish in 2016 but it was interrupted. Now I am working in a government office at the Regional Agriculture Office. I am an officer coordinating the ethics department in the office. I oversee the bidding and issues related to corruption.

In the Church, recently there was a problem and I and Okelo were elected to serve in different positions in the synod for one year. Now I am treasurer and will start the work next week.

A month ago, I throw a wedding party and I have two kids. My wedding was in January.

Which January?

First, I married in the year 1999 and divorced as she refused to live with me and married another person. I stayed for 14 years. I have a daughter with her who graduated in accounting this year from the seminary. And I married again in 2017 and I have a four-year-old son with her. And the wedding seminary was this January.

Does this mean you can throw the party after you get married?

Yes, it depends on your agreement. For example, a man asked a woman for marriage and if she agrees, they can start living together. If they get one child and if the person has resources he can bring the child and his bride home after constructing one. Or we can agree to do the wedding before having children depending on resource.

It is different in the Church; in the church you shouldn't have a child before making public your marriage through a wedding. But sometime this happens and they will do the wedding outside the church.

Why did you have a wedding?

Because if she comes to my home without wedding her parents will be mad. Before the wedding, she got pregnant and that is considered a mistake and now if I bring her home without a wedding, it will be too much. That is why we had the wedding this January.

What did you give as dowry?

Money. Previously it was demui and it is very expensive. One necklace costs 10,000 birr.

Can't you take her home without a wedding?

Possibly it is based on your agreement. They do this to make it formal and known.

What cultural values do you love in Anywaa culture?

There are many core values. One is sharing; even the name is attached to this meaning. Second, respect for each other. There is hierarchy in the culture and all levels need to respect each other. Telling the truth is another core value. It is unacceptable to lie in Anywaa culture even if you did wrong. Even in the government, if the person wants to comment, it should be the truth or his idea will be rejected. And a long time ago not now, Anywaa like to work very hard, cultivating, fishing, hunting to get food. Both male and female contributed. Nowadays it is not the case because of the refugees. The refugees came and occupied the areas of Anywaa and cultivation, rearing cattle and fishing becomes

difficult. There is a security problem. People are being displaced from local areas to urban areas. Urbanization creates many problems including compromising their values because they learn lots of things. This affects the good attitude and values of Anywaa. They have also their own dancing.

What are the things in Anywaa that you want to be improved?

I am telling the good values of the Anywaa and there are also bad values. Nowadays the young people are fighting and involved in harmful behaviours like drinking alcohol, chewing chat, smoking hashish. They brought this behaviour from other people. They don't have them before. What we know before people smoke before Olech and drink local Tella, Borde not alcoholic. When people start to come from rural/local to urban areas because things are visible and become free to go in and buy and try. Drinking may lead to sexual involvement. That is why people are dying of different epidemic/ disease at a young age. Previously most people die at an old age and it was ok. Now it is not like that. So, what we need to do is to make a balance by saying which culture might improve the life of the people? Church leaders, evangelists and other ministers are giving different training saying please do this and that. And let everyone be involved in business because there are businesses that can improve the life of the people like consultation, cooperatives, agriculture. The most important thing is everyone should learn the word of God it is free in the church. One can change his life through it and change the lives of others also. If people join a group to study the Bible, everyone can change psychologically, physically mentally and emotionally.

Second no man should involve himself in politics. Politics is a free choice. What do you want in politics? You don't have to be in politics to govern. You can govern yourself and that might be reflected on your family and even the entire community. But now people are

mixing it. Politics and church cannot go together. Politics is unique and the church is also unique. Many of my people in my tribe Anywaa are trying to be involved in politics. The politics they are involved in is not mature for them and to equip them. If you are in politics, you should fight for the security of the people, both food and safety. They are responsible for security, the environment and social and cultural aspects. This is their call but there is money in between that can destroy the lives of people. If you don't sacrifice for the betterment of the people, it is difficult.

Does this mean you don't want people in the church to be involved in politics?

Yes, because those things are different. You can be a politician or a church person. It is a free choice but you should choose one. I can be a Christian and work for the government but not a politician.

What do you mean by a politician?

Politics is the way to govern the people. To make sure the security, protect the human rights, secure the economy for the good economy of the people. Social and cultural values need to be protected and fight for the environment. Good governors depend on the rule of law, the quality of administration, human rights and also a secure democracy. But sometimes it won't be good for a Christian to be a politician because people might want to attack someone through you. It is not good to be a politician in my perspective. In Christianity there is no discrimination, none in the church. In politics, there is discrimination. In politics I can discriminate against you because you are not my relative or you are not from my tribe; but in the Church everything belongs to everyone. There might be a different perspective but, in my mind, these two things don't go together.

Tell me more about other cultural values such as polygamy, beating a man if he didn't fulfil what he promised to fulfil.

You know people are very serious about this. For example, I am going to give my daughter and I know how I raised her. I did all the things I need to do to lead her in a good way. If something happened and she became pregnant, I would ask her by whom is she pregnant. After knowing that I may ask the man who slept with her, if he denies, I may be furious and hit him.

Second, if I beat my wife her father or relatives might be angry and take revenge. A long time ago, beating was normal for example a boy was beaten to see whether he cried or not. Now it is considered as harmful traditional practice, and we abandoned it. Now it is very rare.

Tell me about Anywaa's previous political administration.

There is a king (Niyaa), quaroo (landlord). The king is all powerful and ordain Quaroo.

Are they relatives?

Most of the time they are relatives. In the Anywaa kingdom, kingship is along the line of blood relation. You may find different Niyaa in different areas, but the powerful will lead them all. Small Niyaa and Big Niyaa. King Agara Aquai for example is the big king in Anywaa. When he passed away his son replaced him; Ado. And Ado passed away and now we have the current Niyaa along this line. When we come to administration, there is hierarchy which is like a chamber of Niyaa. The council of Niyaa similar to current cabinet Nikero, nibur, ni...he named them four out of 7. They are like minster of this, minister of that... Nikelo is minister of agriculture. Niatel, minster of information and communication, Under Quaroo also there is chamber. They have their own chamber. There is no written agreement but specific assignments to them.

What is the major responsibility of *Kwaroo*?

There is a thing called wuchok (crown); it looks like big beads and decorates the crown.

Only *Nyiya* has that not *Kwaroo*. *kwaroo* has community and *Nyiya* has a nation. His major responsibility is to protect the community and encourage the community to work hard and keep them from immorality.

Do they have a spiritual vocation?

Some of them can have spiritual authority; can be considered a small god, idol. Most of them are not like this but some of them. Some might not worship god but protect those who are worshipping.

What do they worship?

Some of them worship a lake, some worship hand-made gods, images. Just like Indians.

Some are made of mud, or wood and have a special place at home.

Now the Anywaa are converted to Christianity; Do you know Kwaroo (Lord) or Nyiya (king) that is converted to Christianity?

Yes there are.

What will happen to their status as Lord or king?

There is one young *Kwaroo* who is ordained recently but he is Christian. He serves in the church (Baptist) and also, he is a *kwaroo* in that community. There is also a Christian *Nyiya*. He calls the whole community and says “Now it is up to you. Pray for our land. Because God is the one, he can protect our God not me”.

What if there is conflict with another ethnic group?

He may call the whole church members and ask the pastors to pray for the meeting. I participated in one meeting where there was peace talk among the tribes and the *Nyiya* asked one of the pastors to pray for the meeting. He said you people came from different tribes but your blood, mind and spirit still belong to God. You are the same and one. Your

blood is red. You might have a different identity but the same before God. I as a king, can do nothing without the collaboration of all you people. If you are united, my government will be strong or else weak. He said, “You Christians can preach the gospel freely”.

What if there is a problem or conflict between Anywaa and Nuer? What will be the responsibility of the kwaroo?

You know when I was in High School, there was a stone war among ourselves every week. At such moment the government will step in. Sometimes elders, leaders of the church discuss the issue and try to resolve it. The issue might be chronic.

What do you think is the solution?

All church leaders need to be involved to work hard on peace. There is a project designed by the president of MYC. There was a project called joy project that both Anywaa and Nuer were involved. But the solution I think is to make them true Christians they need to be taught the Bible deeply; both of the ethnic groups. The issue seems like the issue of authorities not the people. For the sake of their place, they bribe the people and make them fight. But those who are dying are the innocent people, children and women. So, we need to keep on having a dialogue on peace to expand the Gospel.

What would be the role of the Gospel?

The challenge will be minimized, hatred will be lessened. Love each other is the word of God. If I live this out, this might impact others. The Gospel has a great impact I think.

What will be your role? And how much of the Gospel impacted you?

I don't like fighting. I hate speaking bad things to others as I grew up in the Church from childhood. Even when there is a problem between the Anywaa and the Nuer, I will go to the church without fear crossing the places that people don't cross in such times and people say why do you do this? You might be hurt or stabbed they would say. And I will say If I

die, I am going to the Lord and will tell him what is happening down here. They know who I am. The young people in the town call me Anur Anur Anur..Anur means my uncle. I don't like bad things and if people fight, I will be in the middle. Sometimes I go to the president's office and will tell them why do you do this and don't do that? Don't make discrimination among this nation I would tell them.

Are they Christians?

Yes, both are Christians, the president and deputy. The deputy was a choir member in the Church. The president is in MYC and worships at any Church. They are my friends. Umed and Tanquai are free people.

Group Interview Sample-Nuer

Type of Participants

1. Male, head of youth ministry.
2. Female, member of youth ministry. Has a diploma and teaches at school.
3. Female: serves in youth, has a diploma in plant science, works in Gambella University.
4. Female, serves in the choir, married and grade 10 student.
5. Female, serves in a choir.
6. Female, serves in children's ministry.
7. Male: married, has a degree, and serves in a choir.
8. Male: children and youth minister
9. Male: development worker.

The interview started by telling the family situation of the researcher, how boys and girls are being viewed in the culture. This is to start from something they are familiar with.

You said it is good to have more boys than girls. Why is that?

When we see this in the eyes of God, both are good and gifts from God. But in the culture boys are given high value because the girls will go to their husband's family. Only the boys will remain among the tribe. For tribal conflict also it is the boys who are preferred.

Does she share in inheritance?

No, she doesn't. Even if the family have only girls, when they get married, and if the first born is a boy, the father will take him to his home, raise him and when he gets married and gives birth to a boy, that boy will inherit and the father can return to his place.

Three things that you can consider as identity markers.

1. Male: my name describes me, where I am living, the Church where I worship, the tribe I am a member of also describes me.

2. Male: my name, my deeds (behaviour),
3. Male: my name, my deeds, the way I am living, my area, my nationality.
4. Male: my name, my deeds (behaviour), the place where I am living, my ethnic group, my specific kebele because Nuer are living in a specific kebeles. My gender and when I get married because of the ceremony, people may know me. When I die, people who didn't know me will know also.
5. Male: My ethnic group, my behaviour, my deeds.
6. Female: I am described by my father's name; people would ask whose daughter is she? Both good and bad things are referred to whose son/daughter that person is.
7. Female: my name, place of birth, my deeds, my ministry in the church.
8. Female: my name, my deeds.
9. Female: my name, my deeds for example I am described as an introvert.

What are the two things that you love in Nuer culture and one that you don't love and why?

Male: The Nuer love a good name that doesn't despise the clan, they also love getting married to more than two women. They allow this. What I don't like is marrying many women because it is economically tough. In addition, they are dependent. They live together and may depend on one person. They choose between jobs for example they consider some jobs are degrading such as a daily labourer.

Do you love these two things?

Yes

Let me hear from the rest of the group on what you love in your culture and that you think it should be improved.

Male: good name, hospitality. What I don't like is in this generation, they don't receive advice from this generation.

Male: hospitality and helping those who are in trouble. What I don't like is their extended patience.

Male: they don't allow the Nuer to be in trouble and they share, they assimilate others so that they can be many. What I don't like is their warrior behavior; even they fight each other.

Female respondent: hospitality and change the guest to Nuer even give responsibility for that, they don't envy, and they share what they have. The dowry is cattle. For ransom they pay cattle.

Female: their kindness to assimilate others, they don't fight with others or start fighting. But if they are offended by others, they will take revenge. What I don't like is their adaptation to bad things which was not in their nature.

Female: they love people, they share. What I don't like is multi-marriages.

Female: all is said. What I don't like is their revenge.

How frequently do you read Bible?

F-3 times per week.

F- twice.

F- once in a day

F- once in a week.

M- every day during our evening devotion.

M- three times a day.

M-daily.

M-Twice.

M- daily-three times a day.

What do you call a friend in Nuer language?

Maath (Määth)

What about an enemy?

Guanter (Guñtër)

Who is a friend and who is an enemy?

F- Who is listening to my advice and the reverse is my enemy.

F-Who is listening to my advice and the reverse is my enemy.

F-Who is listening to my advice, silent like me the one that doesn't do bad talk. The person that makes division among people is my enemy. She also mentions Anywaa. She said I see people as one.

F- My enemy is a person who does bad talk but the one who has *yilugnta* is my friend because such a person will be ashamed of doing bad things. Someone who doesn't do something shameful is my friend.

M-the one who supports each other through advice is my friend and my enemy is the one who advises bad things and who advises the thing that he doesn't do but advises others to do.

M- The one with whom we understand each other is my friend. It can be my wife too. The one who doesn't listen to my advice is my enemy.

M- My enemy is the one that doesn't have a stand and my friend is the one who advises me.

If someone doesn't listen to your advice, can you call him Guanter?

Yes (with one voice).

What are the things that create enmity?

M-For example, there is a conflict between the Nuer and the Murle (another ethnic group in South Sudan). Murle will come and try to ride cattle.

Do you consider Murle as Agunter?

Yes.

M-Intra-ethnic conflict arises because of dowry. If they don't pay the promised dowry, that will be the cause of intra-ethnic conflict. Another is rape.

F-The conflict arises between the Nuer and the Anywaa is because they do not speak the truth. When somebody is killed and asked who that did, Anywaa said it is Nuer. But Nuer are truthful. Intra-ethnic group conflict might arise due to competition for leadership.

Economic inequality also creates problems because those who have less might go and try to rob.

Inter-ethnic conflict arises because of leadership competition. Inter-ethnic conflict might arise because of grazing land.

How do you see multiple marriages and revenge in Nuer culture?

Male group

Multiple marriages are not right in the light of the Bible. Conflict might arise. Revenge is not allowed by the Bible because it is God who can take revenge.

Why are they not applying these principles then?

We are not applying because we don't listen attentively to the word of God. We need to learn first, not only hear the word of God.

If a family has one boy and many girls the culture will push to have more wives because they are few.

Female group

It is not good to have multiple marriages because he cannot love both equally. The Bible doesn't allow us....

Interview sample- Nuer

Participant no. 1

Tell me your name.

My name is Daniel (name changed).

How old are you?

18.

Why is this name given to you?

It is the name of the day I was born.

Do you have siblings and how many?

Yes, I have one sister and three brothers. We are five.

Tell me about your father and mother are they from same ethnic group?

Yes, they both are Nuer.

Are they living here?

My father is working at one of refugee camps and he is living there and my mom is a nurse and works at one of the health centres.

Which grade are you?

Grade 11 natural science student.

What do want to study when you get to the University?

Engineering.

In this region people get married so early.

Yes, it is the culture.

So, when do you get married?

Smile...No I don't follow the culture. I want to finish my education and will slow down the rush.

Which position do you have among your siblings?

I am first-born.

Don't you have any pressure from you mom and dad?

There is a pressure on the first born who has different responsibilities for your siblings and you should model the way.

Are both parents Christians?

Mother is a Christian, but father does not go to Church.

So, because he doesn't go to Church, he is not a Christian?

No.

Does he have another religion?

No, he has none.

Did he put any pressure on you and your siblings not to go to the Church?

No, he does not.

What is your mother's responsibility in the Church?

She doesn't serve in the Church. She is a member in West Gambella MYC.

What about you?

I serve in the church by serving in the choir, teaching children, playing keyboard, preaching the word of God.

How did you end up in this Church?

I started to come when I was a little boy.

Who brought you?

By myself.

In the church you are attending now you find highlanders/Habesha. Are there other

Nuer coming to this church?

There are two who are coming once in a while. So, we are three.

Where are your friends?

Her in this church (MKC) we worship together.

Didn't you mom tell to attend the church where she is attending?

No, she didn't force me. She lets me do whatever I want to do.

When do you read the Bible?

Every night before I sleep.

What do you like most in Nuer culture?

Instead of like, I am astonished by the dowry system. How our forefathers established that system and plan there will be cattle exchange.

What do you think of it? Is that good, challenging, or easy?

It is challenging for some and for some it is easy. Of course, they have cattle in many of the households even though the number differs. During dowry, if you have enough you will pay otherwise your uncles and grandfather will assist you.

When you think of marriage have thought about from which ethnic group are you going to get married?

I didn't think like that. As we know marriage was started by God. He created Adam and Eve and got them married. He is the one who created. So, I don't say this tribe that tribe if God says so, I have no problem.

Are you ready for a dowry?

Smile...since I am under my parents care, I am not thinking about it now.

What are the things that you think are wrong in Nuer?

Revenge.

Do you know about Nuer prophets?

I know some people believe in them and the one in whom people believe in is Deng. He is considered as Nuer's god. He has many followers. Even more than Christians.

Is there a church for that?

Yes, even in Gambella, there is but when you go to the rural area you may find the majority.

Do you know Christians who are going to Deng's church?

They are not going for prophecy. First, they think of Jesus and think of his skin colour, what would that be they would say. Since he is white, they say, how can he be our god? They said He came for the whites and Deng is for the Nuer. But this is wrong. The Bible says he came to his own, but they rejected him but for those who believe in him. So first he should start from his own and call the rest of the nations. Because when you want to correct something you should start from yourself not from others. He was a Jew, and he has to go first there and then to the rest of the world. They have a wrong perspective.

Does this mean Deng has as equal status as Jesus?

Absolutely! They are equal for them.

Do they say he died for us?

Not died but he is sent.

The Nuer and the Anywaa are in constant conflict. What do you think is the reason?

Don't you have a friend from the Anywaa?

I don't have Anywaa friends for we are living far apart. The problem is as they say the Nuer are pushing our territory. And when you see the Nuer population is high and I think their fear is legitimate. Because if they are pushed, they will be few and they are right. The other is economic disparity; the resources are not shared justly.

If you are asked about your identity, how do you describe yourself?

If it is about behaviour, it not fair to talk about yourself; I wish my friends can talk about me. I describe myself as a minister. A servant to God.

What story or verse changed your life?

Jhon 3:16 I read this when I was kid, and it touched my heart. I saw the Love of God for me, and the price paid for me.

What is your vision both for yourself and for Gambella?

I want to achieve academically and serve as per the training I got. Second, when God lets me to be in this world, he has an agenda, a goal and I want to achieve that. For the generation both for the kids and youth, I want to teach these groups of the community, to prepare a generation and build them well.

What do you think of polygamy in the Nuer?

It is true they get married to more than one wife based on their resources. But I don't think this is right in the light of the Bible. God created Adam and gave Eve. Eve is one. So, one man should marry to a woman because how one can fall in love with two. He prefers one over the other.

What is the role of the individual and the church so that people can live peacefully and love one another?

We should teach them that God redeems people from all languages and tribes. We need to teach them this. When people think that all is born from one God, they will not be trapped in such silly and small issues. When people count the blood of Jesus is shed for all the people, such minor '*yesefer were*' will not resist him.

Thank you so much.

Participant no. 2

I am Rahel I have three kids all are female. I am a staff in compassion assisted project as a health worker. I am a deacon in church.

What is the name of the traditional god in Nuer?

Gok.

Are your family members Christians? When do learn about Jesus?

I heard about Jesus when I was a kid both my mother and father are Christians, and they pray. My dad is an evangelist, and my mom is a deacon.

Tell me about your kids.

I have 18 years, 12 years and 8 years old kids.

When do you think your kids get married?

I don't know. It depends on their interest. If they want to get married first, they can.

At what age do you want them to marry?

After they finish their education, they can get married.

Which grade is she your first born.

Grade 7.

What is your vision for your kids?

What I want is, nowadays the living costs is very high and if they do not get an education, life will be tough for them, so I want them to finish their education before they get married.

And if people are praying, that will be of great help.

Don't you get any push from the community so that your girls can get married?

No, they do not.

In Nuer it is common to have more than one wife. What do you think of this?

Previously it was common, and they get married to 15 to 25 wives. There were very rich people. But as my understanding it is not to marry many wives but only one.

Why do you say that?

Because now living costs is very high. Even previously they gave birth to many children but now it is not like that for life is challenging. No food, no clothes, no good house and problems will be created, and a husband and wife are separated.

Are you the only wife for your husband?

No, I am not. He had a wife before me but now she passed away. And I am the second.

Is your husband a Christian?

Yes, but he does not come to the church regularly.

What do you like most in Nuer culture?

I like the previous social setting; living together as one big family. If I do not have food, I can bring it from a friend or other person. After we come to the city, there is such a thing but if it was as before I would be happy. Everybody carries on his own.

What things should be improved and changed in Nuer culture?

Everybody is not the same and the way we are living is not good now. There is no problem, and some people are working hard.

What do you know about a traditional god?

I know nothing.

Have you heard about Nuer prophets?

Yes, but many of them are dead. Many people turned to Jesus.

Do you know anyone who is converted from being a prophet to a Christian?

I do not know.

Two years ago, there was a conflict what do you think is the problem?

There are a number of problems. For example, if the president is a Nuer, the Anywaa will not accept it and if a Anywaa is a president, the Nuer people don't accept it.

Why don't they accept it?

The two people are different. We have ethnic differences.

Why are they unhappy when their president is from another ethnic group?

The Anywaa are not living together, some live in Fugnido and some live in Gambella. If there is a problem in Fugnido, that will come to Gambella and vice versa.

Will you be happy when a Nuer is a president? Why?

Yes. When a Nuer is a president, he loves everyone. But if it is an Anywaa, he does not love the Nuer, but only their own.

Both the Nuer and the Anywaa are Christians, right?

There are some Christians in the Anywaa, and the majority of the Nuer are Christians.

What do you think of the solution?

I do not know.

What would you do?

Two years ago there was a problem and now it is peaceful. We always pray in our conference so that peace prevails. God is helping us and now we are living in peace, and I am so happy.

What do you wish for Gambella?

I am praying for peace in the region. when there is peace, we can live together. If there is peace, it will be comfortable. If there are no problem people might spend the night on the road. But if there is a problem, you cannot even stay at your home. The Anywaa will come and set your house on fire. Now we have some rest, and I am so happy about that.

Have you faced any problem in your family during the conflict?

Yes, my sister was living near to an Anywaa neighbourhood, and her house was burned. But she was safe and all her family. She lost all her belongings.

What did you feel?

It was not pleasant. It is not good. Killing is not good. Even when Anywaa is killed I will not be happy because all are equal.

When do you read the Bible?

Whenever I want.

Which story or verse changed your life?

What did you understand when you read the Bible.

Everything is written in the Bible through the Holy Spirit. About relationships with your kids and family. Everything is written in the Bible.

What is written about relationships?

I had an Anywaa friend from the workplace, Babedi. She loves me very much. If we live together, we can do many things but, if there is no peace you cannot meet your friend even.

Don't you try to reach her by phone?

I tried to call her but couldn't get her number in my phone. I don't know how I lost it.

Is there anything that helped you in the Bible to have a friend from another ethnic group?

What do you know about friendship and love in the Bible.

When you have a friend, you will get good advice and you need it.

Where did you learn this?

I learnt from the Bible for I am reading the Bible.

Thank you.

Thank you so much.

Participant no. 3

Demeke (name changed)- sharing his father's last will for him to marry second wife.

How long has it been since your father passed away?

Five years but I didn't accomplish his last wish.

Why did he say that? You are taking care of many kids including yours.

In our culture he is alone. He has only two sisters. He had one brother, but he passed away.

In our culture, if you don't have a brother, it will be hard. When you fight, no one will defend him.

He wants me to have many kids. But I told him the situation. I said to him I am a Christian.

He said don't be worried. I didn't succeed with the first marriage; I got divorced after I received Christianity. We didn't even have a child he said.

Is he a Christian?

Yes, he received Christianity from missionaries in 1952 and he got married again and had a child. And then his wife was sick, and the missionary wanted to take her abroad for medical treatment, but he refused. His uncle's wife passed away by that time and it was his wife who prepared food for the kids and his uncle. And she refused to go afraid that no one will prepare food for the deceased family. He told me this story when I said no. He said I am also a Christian. Even he got married after my mother passed away. When he was advised to get married while she was alive saying that if I have two wives, it will not be good. He refused saying he wanted to serve the Lord. I can't marry two for my faith doesn't allow. It is after six years my mom passed, he was advised by Church ministers, and they were saying many ministers are staying at your home and you cannot host them without getting married. He had many cattle, and no one is attending them. We especially need to attend the cattle in wintertime rainy season because they may enter into someone's field.

I didn't want to get married, but he said you need to get married. I will give you both the wife and the Bible. So don't retreat from the Bible and this commandment. And I asked how do these two things go together? The Bible and getting married to two wives?

No, he said. If you get married someone who never gets married, it is ok. If you get married to someone who is divorced, the Bible will not allow you. The challenge will be in how you manage your marriage. You should be a modest man and you can manage them through the word of God. If you are worried about the resources, I am with you and God will hold your hands, protect you and give you what you need. Whatever good you wish, you will find them. But, if you only love resources, you will never get them. You may get them, but you will lose them on the road. You may see them looking plenty but when you try to use them, they will not be yours. Laughing...

So how did you spend these five years? As you told me you have to struggle in your heart?

When I see what he said, it is like a curse. Others might not accept this, but I want to serve the Lord. I also like what I am doing now, serving in children's ministry. Because what you get from children is pure love. Even on I faced nothing as a challenge to my children and my whole family. When I wanted to move to other place to work the Dasse director challenged me saying just compare the service you are giving for others and the benefit you will get for yourself. Which one is greater? Nothing will challenge you in this work he said. Previously I was working with military personnel. And if you were sent to a certain place, you will get a large amount of money. And anytime you may be called. They don't give you much time even you may be called in the middle of the service. And I was disappointed by that. One time we went to a certain place, and we hold bandits and one of them was killed; another time we hold bandits but one of our friends was killed. Then I resigned

because what is being done was unpleasant. But they didn't give me clearance and I got no job for three months. And I came to this place and sometimes I fear that the church leaders might change their mind because I don't have clearance from my previous job.

How do the church leaders perceive you?

They have very good intentions for me but I am afraid if I get married to the second wife, they might change their perspective towards me. The Dasse director said anyone appointed in the church shouldn't marry two wives.

What is your fear when you think of your father's will?

Number one he said if you are planning to make a fortune for your kids, you will never get it.

Does this mean you don't get any inheritance from your father?

No, my father's inheritance goes to my older brother *as the culture allows*. The land here in the town is given to me. But the land in the countryside is given to my older brother. The land in this town is even designed by him. He said this side belongs to your current wife and kids; this other side is for the second wife. And when you get married you can make a fence. But your plan will not succeed if you make something without getting married.

Is there any thing that made you think this has happened because I didn't obey what my father told me to do?

It might be or not but there is one thing I can mention. In our village there is a shortage of water and I bought roto which can hold 10,000 litres that costs 40,000 birr but burst open after I used it only twice.

What did you feel when this happened?

I felt nothing but my wife said it would have been great if we could build small rooms instead of buying this water tanker, but we lost it. Are you wishing my kids not to grow in

peace? Because the curse might take my kids away. Are you wishing for me not to have any offspring? She keeps nagging me. She says God knows more than you know.

When you see the situation, you are in now in the light of the Bible what would that create in you? Did you get anything that makes you keep going without being wrong?

When I read in the Bible, I have decided to do what is right in the eyes of the Lord. Even when something happens, my wife will be disturbed but I will comfort her saying this is nothing.

When you marry her how many cattle did you pay?

26.

Is that the same here in the town?

Yes.

Where did they put them? Is there a space to hold these many cattle?

No, they will settle or receive the gifts in the countryside. They will put them at their relatives' place.

My father said even 'don't get married to the one who is not a member of MYC because training the second wife will be hard. If you get married for the first time, you can shape her, but it will be hard on the second wife.

Is there any other issue in the culture that you think is good?

They do things in coordination. They support each other. They help those who are poor and unable to till their land during the winter season.

What about the things that should be improved?

The payment for ransom is very hard in Nuer culture. It is the clan's responsibility to pay for the victim. If the person who inflicted others insisted on paying ransom for his own

deeds that would have been a lesson for others otherwise it creates carelessness in some of the people.

What are you doing about the things that are bothering you?

I don't think about it very often but when people ask me about it, that will remind me. Even my older brother asked me saying 'when will you get married?' And the first thing that comes to my mind is the curse and that will disturb me and hold me back to do anything. I am trying my best to raise my kids, through education. And his voice comes to as he saying 'your life's graph is from top to down'. My growth graph might go down is my fear.

I have three brothers. One graduated and passed away. It is because of the curse of my father he is dead. The other one is living in US and when he called me he would ask me when will be the wedding.

How did they know?

My father told them. He said I gave you my blessings but gave more to him especially if he does what I told him to do. He has been taking care of me and he told them to consult me before they do anything, and they are doing that.

Do you have people to counsel you on this?

Yes, but not Nuer people because their opinion on this is like trying to extinguish fire with oil. I consult my wife's brother and uncle anticipating that they would say don't do it because they may think their sister would be pressured. But even her relatives are saying get married.

Do you have a family programme at your home? What is your wife's role in the church?

She serves the youth, and she is a health extension worker at Woreda.

Have you ever discussed this with your wife in the light of the Bible?

Yes, I tell her many things. Even I tell her not to read the Old Testament. She says he gave us this order with the Bible and since he gave us this with the Bible, he will be accountable for this. Because he is a Christian, has been serving and he knows what is right. So, he is accountable. He passed away at the age of 95. He used to sing and read the Bible all day long. He takes only a brief time for a break.

She mentions the story of David how many wives he married and still God was listening to them. That is why I told her not to read the Old Testament. I told her also Jesus said destroy this temple and I will raise it in three days. And I told her the old is renewed and will not continue like the previous.

Why are two ethnic groups fighting?

Nuer grow maize and don't use vegetable and fruits but the Anywaa cultivate fruits and also depend on fishing. As Nuer cattle go to the field to find grazing land they tramp on the vegetables. This is the first and major problem. Even during the Dergue regime, they were fighting but it was at village level. All ethnic groups did not get involved. But now they didn't ask but they are being victims by being the members of an ethnic group.

The other problem is that they are afraid of ethnic extinction because most Anywaa are married to the Nuer. Nuer have resources and if Anywaa goes to a Nuer place they will change him and he will no more be Anywaa. In 1993, a researcher disclosed this issue. If an Anywaa man married a Nuer woman, his kids will be Nuer. This creates fear in the Anywaa.

If children are called by their fathers and why do the Nuer do that if the father is Anywaa?

Because for the Nuer there is a need of having more people in each clan. When an Anywaa man is poor, he would go to a Nuer village, and they will provide him with food and things

he needs. Before he thinks to return, they will find a girl and make him marry. After he gets married, he will remain there.

What is the solution for the conflict?

Children who are born in a mixed family got killed by the Anywaa fearing that the children will be Nuer. If this didn't happen, they were about to settle the situation. But this created a serious conflict. Intermarriage might have been a solution for coexistence but failed because of the misdeeds by the Anywaa. Another solution is to help both engage in work for it will make everybody busy.

Thank you very much.

Appendix VIII Primary Sources

Individual interviews

	Name of church	Ethnicity (Nuer/Any waa)	Adult (male)	Data no	Adult (Female)	Data no	Adolescent (Male)	Data no	Adolescent (Female)	Data no
1	Gambella Presbyterian Sobat Congregation	Nuer	Four Male	IIN-19, IIN-20, IIN30, IIN-32)	Five Female	IIN-17, IIN-31 IIN-57, IIN-58, IIN-59,	Two Male	IINA-M7, IINA-M15	One Female	IINA-F2
2	East Gambella Presbyterian Congregation	Anywaa	Seven Male	IIA-2, IIA-8, IIA-9, IIA-10, IIA-11, IIA-12, IIA-14	Eight Female	IIA-1, IIA-13, IIA-65, IIA-66, IIA-67, IIA-31A, IIA-31B, IIA31C	Five Male	IIAA-M4. IIAA-M5, IIAA-M16, IIAA-M22, IIAA-M23	Five Female	IIAA-F1, IIAA-F3, IIAA-F8, IIAA-F20, IAA-F21
3	East Gambella Bethel <i>Mekane Yesus</i> Congregation	Anywaa	Four Male	IIA-3, IIA-5, IIA-6, IIA-7	Three Female	IIA-4, IIA-60, IIA-68,	Two Male	IIAA-M25, IIAA-M26,	Two Female	IIAA-F6, IIAA-F12
4	West Gambella Bethel New Land Congregation	Nuer	Seven Male	IIN-16, IIN-18, IIN-23, IIN-27, IIN-28, IIN-33,	Three Female	IIN-24, IIN-25, IIN-26	Five Male	IINA-M9, IINA-M13, IINA-M14, IINA-M18, IINA-M19	Six Female	IINA-F10, IINA-F11, IINA-F17, IINA-F24, IINA-F27, IINA-F28,

			IIN-34					
--	--	--	--------	--	--	--	--	--

Group interviews.

FGD no	Name of church	Ethnicity (Nuer/Anywaa)	No of male participants	No of female participants	Data no	Adolescent Male participants	Adolescent Female participants	Data no
1	Gambella Presbyterian Sobat Congregation	Nuer	Four	Three	FGDN-02	-	-	NA
2	East Gambella Presbyterian Congregation	Anywaa	Eight	Five	FGDA-03	Five	Five	FGDN-A05
3	East Gambella Bethel Mekane Yesus Congregation	Anywaa	Seven	Four	FGDA-04	-	-	NA
4	West Gambella Bethel New Land Congregation	Nuer	Five	Four	FGDN-01	Nine	Seven	FGDN-A06