Enforced Disappearances, Colonial Legacies and Political Affect in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya

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On answering my phone, I heard Deng's voice: 'Look to your right.' Standing and waving to me along the small, narrow passageway off one of Kakuma Refugee Camp's many humanitarian roads was Deng. 'Come here and meet me inside', he instructed, before ending the call. I was meeting him for the second time, and I thought it odd to be invited to such a public place as a café. I had become accustomed to visiting informants in private localities where we could talk freely and without disturbance. I had met Deng before at a church committee meeting, which was held in someone's home within a residential compound. Walking along the dusty, narrow path, I noticed a group of men by the entrance to the café with notably Nuer scarification, sitting drinking tea and coffee. Inside the café I found Deng sitting alone in a secluded room. He pulled up a plastic chair for me and encouraged me to sit.

'You know, being here is not easy', Deng explained as I sat down next to him. 'If you make yourself a known person or a politician then it is very likely they will get you.' Pausing, he offered me tea, which I politely drank despite the searing midday heat. 'Myself', he continued, 'I walk together with my friends as they look like my protection.' He indicated the men sitting out front. I asked whether he was continuing his political work in the camp, to which Deng replied, 'It doesn't continue because we are in Kenya, because the UNHCR [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees] says it is not allowed in the camp, and if the Kenyan government knows

then you might be in danger. Some of us were captured and returned back to the enemy.' Deng was referring to the enforced disappearance of Marko Lokidor Lochapio, a prominent commander in the Sudan People's Liberation Army-in-Opposition. Marko Lokidor was kidnapped in Kakuma Refugee Camp by Kenyan security personnel on 29 December 2017 before being handed over to the South Sudanese authorities. He would later be released on 25 October 2018 in accordance with the 2018 peace agreement.

Kakuma Refugee Camp was formed in 1991 by the UNHCR, following the exodus of Sudanese refugees (Verdirame and Harrell-Bond 2005: 51). Since its foundation, Kakuma has served as a base of operation for members of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) (Jansen 2018). Article 3 of the African Union's refugee convention prohibits refugees from participating in 'home' politics (OAU 1969); despite this, the camp is a key political site for SPLM actors in Kenya. In 2013, a civil war broke out in South Sudan, dividing the country primarily into two warring factions supporting either the current president Salva Kiir or the former vice president Riek Machar. Riek Machar would come to lead the breakaway Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition (SPLM-IO), of which Marko and Deng were members.

Enforced disappearances produce a powerful impact not only on individuals directly related to the disappeared, but also on the wider communities to which they belong. I build upon the concept of 'extended disappearance' (see Huttunen and Perl in this volume) to examine the affective discharge that enforced disappearances have on individual actors and their wider communities. By paying particular attention to how social life is reorganized by individuals and communities that are impacted, I demonstrate how these practices are shaped by imaginaries of and interactions with institutions associated with the disappearance. These actors mediate the threat of disappearance through adopting or utilizing spaces, practices and roles, which not only demonstrates the different survival mechanisms they employ, but also reflects the way that an enforced disappearance comes to govern whole communities. Enforced disappearances disrupt the intimacies of the lives not only of individuals but of those they socialize with. The extended disappearance here went beyond impacting those close to Marko, such as Deng, and in turn transformed the entire community. The immediate consequence of the disappearance was a reorganization of social life. Institutions, and their objects, actors and practices, can 'discharge' an affect (Navaro-Yashin 2012: 33). Uncertainty over the exact institution responsible

for the disappearance can enable a whole array of different actors, organizations and states to become associated with the affect (Stoler 2004; Bozzini 2015; Laszczkowski and Reeves 2017). To mediate the affective discharge caused by enforced disappearances, actors can turn to formulating alternative political communities (Huttunen 2016) and altering piety practices (Mahmood 2011) and identities (Schlee 2004; Gatti 2014).

To understand the prevalence of enforced disappearance, I initially turn to the colonial origin of the tactic and the institutions that facilitated its practice. Tracing and kidnapping political dissidents, and ultimately making them disappear, was one of the many tactics utilized by the British colony in Kenya to control strategic populations. Frank Kitson, a British military officer, came to prominence through his adoption of this tactic, which was facilitated and affectively amplified through the adoption of draconian policies and subsequent infrastructures, such as the extensive use of villagization. This is reflected in the current use of enforced disappearances in Kenya, which is facilitated by the contemporary application of refugee registration and encampment policies. Although the tactic of enforced disappearances has evolved over time with the multiplication of surveillance technologies and the changing of targets from colonial subjects to citizens and refugees, its potent affects are still used to control populations. The temporal dimension of extended disappearances demonstrates how the tactic of enforced disappearances extends over time and in different political regimes. Not only is it anchored in certain political contexts, but it repeatedly appears across time. Therefore, tracing the origin of the tactic and its transformations is necessary to understand how certain political contexts and social infrastructures might not only facilitate enforced disappearances in contemporary Kenya, but also amplify their affect on particular subjects.

Using the concept of extended disappearance, I explore how the act of making people disappear not only disrupts the intimate lives of individuals left behind but also affects the social organization of entire communities and populations. Extended disappearance is most vivid in the changing practices and coping strategies of those affected by the enforced disappearance. Marko Lokidor's disappearance created a powerful affect for members of the SPLM-IO, shaping their means of conducting politics and daily practices. This disappearance was associated with the Kenyan Criminal Investigation Department (CID), an undercover police agency. The CID's presence in Kakuma had a potent effect upon Deng and many other political actors,

shaping their daily practices and governing how they engaged in political activities. To mediate the threat of disappearance encoded within the presence of CID agents, SPLM-IO actors and sympathizers turned to operating within the relative safety of a church and its committee roles. In doing so, they disguised their activities as apolitical in the face of the refugee camp's governing institutions. This use of certain civic roles and spaces, such as a church, demonstrated their capacity to circumvent the affect of the disappearance. However, despite their attempts to remain undetected, public displays or bouts of politicized violence often made South Sudanese political actors targets of Kenyan state controls and of the looming threat and fear of disappearance.

In the Footsteps of Kitson: The Colonial Legacy of Extended Disappearance

The use of enforced disappearances in Kenya originated in the British colonial period (1920–63). The method used to make political dissidents disappear was one of many coercive tactics deployed by the colonial state. Containment, villagization, registration, collective punishment and enforced disappearances all featured within the colonial state's arsenal of tactics with which to control strategic populations and political dissidents. Here I trace the use of enforced disappearances in combination with some of these tactics, exploring how they were originally devised to govern colonial subjects, evolved to be applied to dissident citizens and are now utilized on refugees. This illustrates the temporal dimension of extended disappearance, as the practice of enforced disappearance stretches over time and across different political regimes and subjects.

Enforced disappearances within Kenya can be traced to the military theories developed by the British Army officer Frank Kitson. Kitson was given a district military intelligence posting in 1953 during the Mau Mau Uprising (1952–60). Within the Special Branch, a subsection of the CID, Kitson developed and practised various counter-insurgency tactics to quell political dissidents (Africa and Kwadjo 2009). He employed so-called 'counter-gangs' or 'pseudo-gangs', units made up of army counter-insurgents who were employed to create intensive intelligence networks among enemy combatants (Kitson 1960). The tactic was for these 'counter-gangs' to infiltrate guerrilla movements, gather information for military databases and then use that information to capture or kill

enemy combatants or recruit them into the 'counter-gang'. In his influential book *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peace-Keeping*, Kitson describes how the state must 'win hearts and minds' of the population while utilizing 'counter-insurgent' agents to infiltrate 'subversive' organizations (Kitson 1971: 102–29). Here the 'counter-insurgent' is to extract a vast amount of information before 'contact', or an attack, is made (ibid.: 106–8). Kitson notes that for interrogation to be useful, a central computer or registry system with all the relevant information on the suspect is necessary (ibid.: 142). In practice, Kitson's tactics were highly brutal. In Kenya, he allowed for the torture, execution and disappearance of approximately a thousand individuals for simply 'consorting with terrorists' or 'illegal possession of firearms' (Ramsey 2019). Despite these atrocities, Kitson is considered one of the foundational thinkers of counter-insurgency tactics in military studies (Kilcullen 2006; Strachan 2007; Bennett and Cormac 2013; Cline and Shemella 2015). He influenced and was actively involved in counter-insurgency operations not only in Kenya but across the British Empire, from Malaya, Cyprus and Aden to the troubles in Northern Ireland (1968–98), and was most notably involved in the Ballymurphy Massacre (1971).

During the Mau Mau Uprising, a conflict in the forested highlands of central Kenya, the colonial government utilized exceptional powers to forcefully place whole populations into government-approved villages or 'gulags' (Elkins 2005: 131). The conditions of the conflict became the testing grounds for Kitson's approach, which utilized the contained and monitored populations. The extensive use of state-sanctioned villages or camps allowed colonial officials to monitor native populations with the *kipande* system, a fingerprinted identity card that enabled the tracing of African labour across native reserves (M'Inoti 1997). Encampment and registration were the foundation for facilitating enforced disappearances. They granted Kitson the capacity to track and trace individuals directly through registers, finding out where they officially resided within the encamped villages.

Shortly after Kenya gained independence in 1963, Kitson's techniques continued during the so-called Shifta War (1963–67). This secessionist conflict saw the Kenyan state utilize tactics that mimicked those of the British colony. From the onset of the conflict, the Kenyan government introduced a state of emergency followed by a policy of forced villagization in 1966 to win over 'hearts and minds' through so-called 'development' (Whittaker 2014: 107). In addition, seconded British officers served as battalion, bridge, police

and intelligence commanders (ibid.: 109–10), among them Derek Franklin, a former Special Branch officer under Frank Kitson. In Franklin's memoirs of the conflict, he remarks on the use of 'pseudo-gangs' to infiltrate and gather information on the Northern Frontiers Districts Liberation Army (Franklin 1996).

Under the dictatorship of President Moi (1978–2002), the oppression of political opposition intensified after the failed coup of 1982. Most notable of his legacy was Nyayo[1] House, which Moi claimed was following in the footsteps of the country's first president, Kenyatta (Widner 1993). Nyayo House was designed in consultation with the Special Branch and was utilized to make political opponents disappear. Some reforms would later be introduced in 1998, after the Al-Qaeda attack on the US embassy, granting CID agents great power to arrest (Shaffer 2019).

Since 2011, Al-Shabaab has claimed responsibility for a series of attacks across Kenya (Anderson and McKnight 2015; Lind, Mutahi and Oosterom 2017; Onguny 2020).[2] In response, Kenyan security initially assassinated religious leaders sympathetic to Al-Shabaab, such as the Muslim cleric Aboud Rogo and Sheik Ibrahim Ismael. In 2014, the Kenyan government enacted Operation Usalama Watch,[3] a mass round-up in the predominately Somali district of Eastleigh. Over one thousand individuals, many of whom were refugees, were detained and held in overcrowded makeshift cells at a nearby football stadium, without food or sanitation. During the round-up, excessive violence was used by security personnel (Balakian 2016; Wairuri 2020). In the aftermath of the operation, the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights reported twenty-five extrajudicial killings and eighty-one enforced disappearances (KNCHR 2015).

Since 2014, the enforced disappearance, at the behest of neighbouring states, of refugees, asylum seekers and non-Kenyan nationals residing legally within Kenya has become an increasingly reported occurrence.[4] In January 2017, Aggrey Ezbon Idri, an SPLM-IO official, and Dong Samuel Luak, a human rights activist and registered refugee, were kidnapped in separate instances in Nairobi. Aggrey Ezbon Idri and Dong Samuel Luak were both considered missing until 2019 when, according to Human Rights Watch, sources revealed they had been executed in Juba on 30 January 2017. In December 2017, Marko Lokidor was kidnapped in Kakuma Refugee Camp (Human Rights Watch 2019). Both the Kenyan and South Sudanese authorities claim that they did not sanction these actions, while each placing responsibility on the other (ibid.). The UNHCR was asked to support human rights groups in pressuring the Kenyan and South

Sudanese governments to release those who had been kidnapped, but allegedly it did not make any official request.

Enforced disappearances within Kenya emerged out of colonial rule and its attempts to subvert political dissidents. The temporal dimension of extended disappearance spans across political landscapes and illustrates its effectiveness in maintaining coercive control of specific subjects. The transformative capacity of the tactic is demonstrated in the way it has moved on from its origins as a means to repress colonial subjects to now being used on citizens, refugees and exiled political dissidents at the behest of neighbouring states. However, certain settings appear to correlate with its use, namely encampment and registration. The use of camps and identity cards, be it forced villagization and the *kipande* system during the colonial period or the contemporary use of refugee camps and registration, illustrates how state actors' ability to track and trace political dissidents can be facilitated. This was unintentionally explained to me by a Refugee Affairs Secretariat (RAS)[5] agent at the Nairobi Field Office:

> We have high profile people who were fighting in [South] Sudan, we normally send their case and for them to be interviewed by CIDs [Criminal Investigation Department agents]. The high-profile applicants, it is CID that decides if they should be registered as refugees, those working in government, or involved in the war. If they are accepted as refugees, they are registered.

Although it is common for states to use intelligence agencies to determine whether someone is eligible for refugee status, many refugees in Kakuma attributed the disappearance of political dissidents within the camp to the CID's work within refugee registration. As John, a young South Sudanese national residing in Kakuma's reception centre, explained: 'When the Kenyans took over refugee registration … they know exactly the block they put you in. So, in the night they can just come and kidnap you without any warning.' John was referring to former residents of the reception centre whom he knew personally and either were threatened with their lives or had gone missing after being located in a residential block within the camp. For John and others, registration and the camp residential grid resonated or discharged an affect that linked their infrastructure to the enforced disappearances.

Containment and encampment did not cause enforced disappearances, nor are they necessary for them to happen, but they do have the capacity to facilitate a state agency's ability to make political

dissidents disappear by tracing their whereabouts. When discussing the influence of Frank Kitson, Sakai (2013: 36) argues: 'Intelligence-gathering doesn't quietly precede repression as its own stage of well-behaved activity, rather it itself is the product of constant intervention and repression in peoples lives.' Sakai argues that Kitson's actual tactic during the colonial period was not a simple infiltration of certain movements, but a combination of this kind of pseudo-gang and the mass incarceration of people in guarded settlements. The containment of people in vast encamped structures built the foundations for a better capacity to track and trace. The refugee camp, which Deng and other members and affiliates of the SPLM-IO were in, mirrored or mimicked the institutions and infrastructures used during the colonial and early postcolonial period. As I demonstrate below, the presence of CID agents within the refugee camp helped amplify the affective impact of Marko's disappearance, making the extended disappearance radiate through particular infrastructures.

Deng and the Disappearance

In June 2018, talks between the South Sudanese government and the SPLA-IO resulted in a ceasefire. By September 2018, Riek Machar and Salva Kiir had signed a peace agreement. On 31 October 2019, the agreement was ratified, but Riek Machar did not take up office until 22 February 2020 due to security concerns. It was within this political setting that I came to know Deng and other members of the SPLM-IO in Kakuma, between May 2018 and August 2019.

Deng is a member of the SPLM-IO Kakuma branch, a representative of the *Luk*[6] and a senior church committee member. Prior to living in the camp, he was a political advisor for the SPLM and managed a logistics company in South Sudan. He claimed that after South Sudan gained independence from Sudan in 2011 he was employed as an advisor for Riek Machar and other prominent South Sudanese political figures. When the civil war broke out in South Sudan, he fled to a UNMISS (United Nations Mission in South Sudan) camp before making his way to Kakuma, Kenya. In Kakuma, Deng claimed that he was nearly abducted alongside Marko Lokidor, and he considered the perpetrators to have been both Kenyan and South Sudanese state agents. This threat to his life shaped not only how Deng came to understand both states, but also his daily practices.

Inside the secluded room mentioned in the opening vignette, separated from the rest of the café, Deng expanded upon how he

was lucky not to have been at home at the time of Marko Lokidor's abduction:

> So, they came first to my house, and fortunately I was lucky to not be home … Then they took Marko. That is the life we have here, if you are lucky it will stay as it is, if you are not one day you may be caught by the government agents. Sometimes I don't show up in public places, very rarely I only come to this end of the camp to play chess with people I know, after that I go back to my house only for a few hours.

The impact of Marko Lokidor's disappearance came to shape Deng's life and social practices within the camp. Deng claimed that the men had come for him and his neighbour Marko Lokidor, but had found only Marko at their residential compound. Although he did not express fear openly, possibly due to his status, the impact of Marko's disappearance notably altered his daily practices and movements within the camp.

The reason I had met Deng in a marketplace café and not at his family's home was, as he described it, for 'protection'. Deng described how, due to the attempted enforced disappearance, his daily practices had changed and he now avoided public events and open public spaces such as marketplaces. While I was with him, he often referred to the way that he dressed modestly for a man of his apparent social status, noting, 'I don't make myself look expensive'. Unlike other public representatives such as religious or block leaders, he never wore anything remarkable, such as a fine shirt or jewellery. In the public spaces, such as small cafés, where we often met, Deng was remarkably cautious. In Kakuma cafés, I had become accustomed to South Sudanese men openly discussing ongoing events in their home country. Deng, in contrast, never spoke openly about politics. Despite his perceived status, he never engaged in any such activity, preferring to spend time with a select few, either playing chess or watching news broadcasts.

When I met with Deng we were never alone, as he was always accompanied by someone. He also never answered his phone in public. However, he always opted to direct me to his location via phone call. Deng never invited me to move with him through the camp, as I could have drawn unwanted attention towards him. Instead, he remarked that he used the small alleyways for protection and never took any form of public transport. 'When I walk', he reflected, 'it is with my friends, with ordinary people who are not politicians'. He often commented on how his friends looked like his 'bodyguards', a common reference among those South Sudanese

who felt threatened or vulnerable in the camp due to their political ideals. Despite their appearance as his bodyguards, Deng expressed uncertainty over his friends' capacity to keep him safe:

> If [assumed perpetrators] come during the daytime, [my bodyguards] will try to protect me, but we don't know how good it will be … Because one day they came with two motorbikes, so I left and went inside the community … I know them and they know me, so they were just trying to talk to me saying, please let me ask you a question. I would not listen to them and just went into the community, because they are afraid of going there … It is difficult here. It is difficult for so many reasons, if you make yourself a known person it is very likely one day they will get you. You should make yourself as simple as you can.

Deng limited his movement and trusted only the inhabitants of his 'community'. The community Deng was referring to was the Nuer, the ethnic group to which he belonged. Being within his community granted him a sense of immediate protection, witnesses who knew him and the threat of disappearance that he faced. Despite the security of being within his own community, he never felt truly safe. Deng never told me who the two individuals on motorbikes were, but his description of the interaction illustrated a constant sense of being watched and followed. He reacted to the interaction by immediately going into his 'community'. The threat to Deng's life also impacted the social life of his acting 'bodyguards' and his 'community'. Marko's disappearance disrupted the intimacies not only of Deng's life but of the lives of those he socialized with. The seemingly all-encompassing threat of disappearance caused Deng to adjust his movement, appearance and relations.

The state organization from which Deng was under threat of disappearance was not specified, but it came to be represented by both the South Sudanese and Kenyan states. Deng noted that the two men who took Marko spoke with his children in Arabic,[7] and their car apparently had a South Sudanese number plate. However, according to Deng, the driver 'was Kenyan, maybe CID, but I don't know'. With neither the Kenyan nor South Sudanese government claiming responsibility for the abduction and subsequent disappearance, there was a sense of uncertainty surrounding the perpetrator. Despite this, Deng was certain that Kenyan CID agents were partly involved in and responsible for Marko's disappearance. When discussing with Deng the disappearance of Aggrey Ezbon Idri and Dong Samuel Luak in Nairobi, I asked if he believed the Kenyan state to be involved in their abduction too:

> You mean the Kenyans? Of course, if you are in a different country, you know the regulations, no one can come from outside as a foreign authority to take someone from your country without your consent … Dong Samuel was captured and our secretary for humanitarian affairs, Aggrey Idri, he was also captured … These are big politicians, there is no way the foreign agents can take them without the government knowing. Meanwhile, life is not easy for politicians here, another MP [Member of Parliament], he is called [anonymized], he escaped from here and went to Uganda because of this threat we face here.

For Deng, none of this could have occurred without the Kenyan state's knowledge. Despite the enforced disappearances being linked to the ongoing conflict in South Sudan, he considered the Kenyan state to be directly involved. The conflict moved beyond the borders of South Sudan and into Kenya. Even in sites such as Nairobi, the enforced disappearances of SPLM-IO activists reinforced the universality of the threat of disappearances. The idea of an abduction occurring without Kenyan consent was impossible, and only reaffirmed Kenyan involvement. As in Deng's description of the South Sudanese car being driven by a Kenyan CID agent, the two had become interconnected. All of this maintained the confusing conglomeration of Kenyan and South Sudanese state cooperation, which masked both states' involvement.

Deng's consideration of why the Kenyan state was involved was financial, but the exact process of how they tracked, traced and ultimately kidnapped someone was convoluted for him. He commonly remarked on how difficult it was to identify a CID agent, as due to their civilian clothing they could be anyone. Deng even noted that if the CID wanted to make you disappear 'they could arrest you with any small thing'. When reflecting on the current political situation in South Sudan, he expanded upon this:

> When the peace process starts, I don't know if the Kenyan government will continue killing, but you know this is because people rely on money. Some were Kenyan, and some South Sudanese are doing this. I was very close to being captured with Marko. It was a narrow escape. They were wearing ordinary clothes, but they had their guns in their cars. These are CIDs, you cannot identify them.

The phantom-like presence of Kenyan CID agents and South Sudanese agents discharged the threat of disappearance. The CID agents, through their disguises in civilian clothing, maintained an all-encompassing presence. It was their possible involvement in the enforced disappearances in both Kakuma and Nairobi that helped

constitute both the Kenyan and South Sudanese states simultaneously. I argue that this is in part a consequence of the contemporary adaptation of Kitson's so-called 'counter-' or 'pseudo-gangs' (Kitson 1960); their tactic of secrecy through mimicking or copying the practices and appearances of those they targeted inhibited the possibility of deciphering to which state actors they belonged. The possible presence of CID agents, the enforced disappearance of Deng's comrade and the constant threat to his own life illustrate the affective potency of such a transformative colonial tactic. By targeting displaced peoples, the tactic of enforced disappearances has blurred both the boundary between states and the responsibility for conducting the disappearance, making the potency of the disappearance more lethal, not just for individuals but for entire communities.

Mediating Disappearance

The SPLM-IO organization in Kakuma was actively embedded within the church committee of which Deng was a member. Initially, I was ignorant of the church's connection to the SPLM-IO. Although Deng himself admitted his connection to the organization, the rest of the committee did not reveal their association at first. I had been introduced to the committee initially through Abraham, and I then met Mary, Mark, Mathew and finally Steven. Abraham was a pastor for the church and Mary was a member of the committee and also of the *Luk*. Mark was a block leader and Mathew a zonal community leader. Steven was later revealed to be a prominent member of the church committee because of his SPLM-IO membership. Their secrecy illustrated the extent to which Marko's disappearance had come to govern their lives and their political organization. The extended disappearance went beyond those who knew Marko personally and came to impact the political organization of the SPLM-IO within the church committee. As a result, members mediated the affective impact of the threat of disappearance by disguising their political intent.

When I first met the members of the committee, they were helping secure the land for the church. However, they lacked the funds for its construction, and when I visited for the first time only the walls were complete. Over several months, the roof frame was constructed with timber poles and was gradually filled with corrugated iron sheets. Mary explained that it was her responsibility to collect and keep safe the money for building the church, while Abraham kept a record of

the donations. The labour and building materials were paid for with 'a cup' of food rations from each household belonging to the church. Obtaining the space for the church grounds required the assistance of Mark and Mathew. The process involved applying for land from RAS, followed by an assessment by the NCCK (National Council of Churches of Kenya) to approve the church, and lastly a site inspection by a UNHCR field monitor. Mark explained: 'because of our vulnerability they accepted.' He was referring to the distance people would have to walk to find a church of the same denomination, making them vulnerable to attack or robbery. Church committee members, including elders, religious actors and zonal and block leaders who negotiated with camp managerial bodies, carried out their work under the guise of being non-political, or unaligned with the politics of their home countries, enabling them to mediate any risk of being associated with the SPLM-IO and the disappearance of Marko. Therefore, by adopting an apolitical role they could circumvent the impact of the extended disappearance upon their daily lives.

Over the months of getting to know the members of the church committee, I gradually became aware of their support for the SPLM-IO. On 25 December 2018, I agreed to attend the church's first Christmas mass. I was informed by Abraham that the night-time Christmas Eve mass had been cancelled for fear of violence, so an extended service was planned for the following morning. The next day we met near Abraham's home just after sunrise and travelled together to the church. I was given a seat at the side with some high-ranking men, including Mark, Mathew, Steve and Deng, facing the left side of the altar. Opposite us on the far side sat the elder women including Mary, and in the middle behind the altar were esteemed members of the clergy, among them Abraham and the reverend. Between the songs, speeches were conducted over a megaphone. Each speech was read by a pastor, an elder or another high-ranking man. The initial speeches by the various pastors were primarily concerned with readings from the New and Old Testaments, but later in the sermon political messages began to emerge, revealing the political function of the church.

Initially, I was unaware of the political addresses taking place in the room, until Mark went to the altar and read from his phone the Christmas message of Riek Machar, leader of the SPLM-IO. He initially read it aloud in English, as it was written, and then translated it into Nuer for the audience. Deng then took to the altar and spoke about the peace negotiations in South Sudan and the need for unity within the SPLM-IO. Abraham then spoke and called for retaliation

against those who committed atrocities upon Nuer living in Juba. Several others continued to mention the attacks against Nuer within South Sudan and the work of the SPLM-IO in the ongoing attempted peace process. Although Deng and Abraham both spoke in Nuer, a language of which I have limited understanding, Steven was able to partly translate what was being said. Despite my inability to understand the entirety of the speeches, I did recognize their political tone. They revealed that this religious space served as a political vehicle for the SPLM-IO in Kakuma, offering a sense of sanctuary.

Within the church, political actors could advocate for the SPLM-IO without fear of retaliation. The church had required a combination of seemingly apolitical actors to organize its construction, so as to enable political actors to relay information. Zonal and block leaders were able to negotiate with camp managerial bodies using the linguistic codes of the managerial elites, pointing out their vulnerability and the need for access to such a space. The use of the religious space and piety practices, and the choice of language, granted SPLM-IO activists a space apparently void of surveillance in which to enact their political messages. The affect from the threat of enforced disappearance reorganized and altered the material organization of South Sudanese political actors, shaping the ways that politics was done and where. The extended disappearance shaped not only the practices of Deng, but those of the entire SPLM-IO organization and its affiliated church committee.

Extended Disappearance and Governance

Early in my fieldwork in Kakuma, I was informed by a Jesuit Refugee Service staff member that I should stay away from a particular part of the camp because of ongoing fighting within the 'Nuer community'. According to various sources, the cause of the ongoing violence was a disagreement during a football match. The teams involved represented two different clans of the Nuer. One team was declared the winner by the referee, a member of a third Nuer clan, yet this was disputed. A small fight ensued but did not escalate. Later in the same week, the referee was attacked in the marketplace, apparently by members of the losing team. What arose was a series of escalating revenge attacks between members of the referee's clan and the clan members of the losing team. The escalating violence quickly became essentialized with the ongoing political tensions within South Sudan.

The Kenyan capacity to end the violence between the two clans relied on the cooperation of Nuer elites. Approximately two weeks after the first escalating revenge attack, the Camp Manager, a representative of the Kenyan state, ordered the rounding up of elders from the two conflicting clans. Mary, as a *Luk* member and an elder, was instructed to identify eligible clan elders to attend a reconciliation meeting. Elders from other Nuer clans in Kakuma (among them Deng and Mary) were also commanded to attend and act as arbitrators in the ongoing conflict. However, this initial attempt to end the conflict failed. As a result, all clan elders representing the conflicting groups were rounded up and arrested. Some claimed that they were targeted by the Kenyan security forces and falsely arrested because the forces had been bribed by the South Sudanese government, an accusation resembling those made by Deng against the South Sudanese government in relation to Marko's disappearance.

The second round of negotiations occurred several weeks later. Again, members from the two clans attended, accompanied by members of non-conflicting clans. Those attendees with whom I spoke all noted that the Camp Manager had stated that the Kenyan president knew of the violence, and that the Camp Manager and the Kenyan president had been discussing the situation with the government in South Sudan. The Camp Manager had then threatened the clan elders with further imprisonment if the violence did not cease. One clan elder noted that they were all rounded up and brought to the office of the Deputy County Commissioner in a police convoy. 'Maybe they expect us to fight again, but they can kill us', he reflected. When I spoke with a Kenyan official about the incident, he explained things somewhat differently:

> Because you see now our role is to ensure the sub-county is secure. Even when you are here as a foreigner, you feel free, you can move without any intimidation. That's why now even when we are dealing with the refugees, we make sure that the refugees are safe … We have even our own people who do the groundwork there, to find and give intelligence and information. We have CID for this.

The means by which the conflict was resolved mimicked colonial tactics. The Kenyan government relied on the 'groundwork' of CID agents and Nuer elites such as Mary to identify particular clan elders. The selected elders were systematically rounded up and arrested when hostilities did not cease, which in turn affectively evoked the threat of forced disappearance. The use of Mary, and others, to identify those clan elders who could be held responsible illustrates a

transformed continuity of Frank Kitson's 'pseudo-gang' tactic. Mary and other members of the *Luk* were conscripted by the state to identify those who could be made responsible for ending the conflict.

The threat of disappearance – evoked through the presence of CID agents – and of imprisonment and round-ups loomed over the participants at the meeting. This was alluded to by one elder I spoke with, who stated: 'Money talks and money kills, that is a good example, I think. We don't want to go deeply into that, you know what had happened. When you have a problem, but you have money, your problem will be solved easily.' Again, there was a reference to Kenya conducting enforced disappearances for monetary gain. Despite there being no direct threat of kidnapping and disappearance, the round-ups and convoys discharged an affect associated with the disappearances of other South Sudanese political actors. The extended disappearance associated with the enforced disappearance of Marko enabled the Kenyan state – intentionally or otherwise – to govern the Nuer elites. The enforced disappearances had an affective potency that enabled the Kenyan state to enact control and govern the camp.

Conclusion

The enforced disappearance of Marko Lokidor in Kakuma Refugee Camp on 29 December 2017 has had a profound affect upon members and affiliates of the SPLM-IO in Kakuma. The extended disappearance went beyond impacting those close to Marko, such as Deng, and in turn transformed the entire community. The immediate consequence of the disappearance was a reorganization of social life. For Deng, the threat of disappearance altered his social practices, movement, appearance and relations. The disappearance – to some extent – silenced him, forcing him to hide from public life and seek out protection. Within the wider SPLM-IO, members took to using a church and its committee roles to safeguard the organization. The use of this religious space helped mediate the threat of disappearance, allowing SPLM-IO members to continue their political practices. However, the political mobilization within such spaces could also provoke political acts beyond the secure confines of the church. The breakout of violence between the two clans brought the activities of Nuer elders to the attention of the Kenyan state. Their round-up and imprisonment discharged an affect connecting to the disappearance, which contributed to the end of hostilities. The Kenyan state, its

institutions such as the CID, its practices of registration and its infrastructure of containment became charged with the disappearance. The affective potency caused by the disappearance was a catalyst for organizational adaptation among SPLM-IO members and also acted as a means of governing their political organization.

The continued use of enforced disappearance and its affective potency, as I have argued, is indicative of Kenya's colonial legacy within the British Empire. The capacity to track and trace political dissidents is facilitated by the registration and encampment of refugees. The lineage of Kenyan CID agents can be traced back to the colonial period, but they also show the remarkable adaptability of these tactics. Although their targets and techniques have changed, the affective consequence of enforced disappearances is still a powerful tool for control and governance. The institutionalizing of the tactics under Frank Kitson formed an important framework for understanding how disappearance creates governance. Thus, the means by which actors adapt their practices towards the threat of disappearances is a consequence of such colonial institutional continuity and a demonstration of the temporal dimension of extended disappearance.

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Notes

1. *Nyayo* means footsteps in Kiswahili.
2. In October 2011, under the guise of the war against terror (Lind, Mutahi and Oosterom 2017), the Kenyan Defence Force invaded Somalia with the purpose of capturing the port city of Kismayo and defeating Al-Shabaab (Anderson and McKnight 2015).
3. *Usalama* means security in Kiswahili.
4. According to Human Rights Watch, in January 2014, Kenyan and Ethiopian security forces kidnapped Sulub Ahmed and Ali Hussein in Nairobi. Both were members of the Ogaden National Liberation Front, and one of them was registered as a refugee with the UNHCR in Kenya. Both were kidnapped in Nairobi and later held in Addis Ababa

for approximately sixteen months before being released (Human Rights Watch 2017).
5. The Refugee Affairs Secretariat (RAS) is a department under the Kenyan Ministry of Interior that manages refugee status determination, registration and camp management.
6. The *Luk* is a traditional court system for Nuer affairs that resolves internal ethnic matters such as bride price. In Kakuma, the courts serve as one of many intermediate governing bodies between camp managerial institutions, such as the UNHCR, and the Nuer refugee population.
7. Arabic is the lingua franca of South Sudan.

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