

The History of Evangelization in Tanzania

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Introduction

The Gospel of St. Matthew tells us that Jesus Christ arrived on African soil not primarily as a missionary but as a refugee (cf. 2:13-15). He was still a baby, and Herod of Galilee sought to kill him (cf. 2:16). Africa welcomed Jesus, and so the history of Christianity had its beginnings on our continent with the noble “yes” of hospitality that echoes into eternity (cf. 25:34-35, 46).

A modern phase of the missionary movement in Africa, a movement that began at the end of the eighteenth century, continued throughout the nineteenth century, and extended into the twentieth-century led to the dramatic expansion of Christianity on the continent. In their attempt to spread the Christian faith, win converts and transform African societies, Christian missions of all denominations opened schools and disseminated education. Africans, however, were not passive recipients of new influences and cultural patterns. African choices, African needs, and erstwhile efforts to Africanize Africa’s Christian experience by securing the roots of Christianity within the African context all served to shape the parameters of cultural exchange and Africa’s manner of adopting Christianity.

It was in the 19th century that the movement to evangelize Tanzania began to gather momentum. This paper is an attempt to discuss the history of this movement. In accomplishing its task, this paper will present the leading figures who carried out the work of evangelization in Tanzania and their missionary enterprises. This presentation will include both Catholics and Protestants. This paper offers a detailed explanation concerning how the missionary movements progressed with the work of evangelization in

Tanzania and the challenges that the missionaries faced including exposure to death.

1. The Portuguese: The First Initiators of Evangelization in Tanzania

The coming of Christianity to Tanzania is associated with the early Portuguese explorers. Christianity entered Tanzania several centuries after Islam, that is, during the time of colonialism. However, it was not easy for the first missionaries to settle and do their work of evangelization because of the crises they faced, such as opposition from the Arabs who had already occupied most of the coastal areas. Moreover the coastal trading centres of Kilwa, Mafia and Zanzibar had trade links with the Arab world as early as 1000 AD.¹ Hence, when the Portuguese arrived in East Africa in the 15th century, they found themselves in a milieu of a flourishing long-distance trade which was carried out mainly through the African caravans from the coast to the interior and vice versa and which had contributed to several developments such as long-term settlements at *Engaruka* in the great Rift Valley.²

Despite these challenges, the first Christian Missionaries were able to cross these hurdles successfully. Thus – after the sojourn of Mary, St. Joseph and Jesus Himself – they became the first bearers of the Good News of Christ to Tanganyika. Christianity spread in Tanzania through groups of missionaries tied to various denominations, which represented the division of European societies and churches. The work of evangelization was not mainly directed to Muslims, but their primary aim was to reach the pagan people of the interior.³ We shall restrict the first part of our overview to the spread of the Catholic faith in Tanzania and then proceed to say something about other Christian efforts to evangelize.

¹ B. DAVIDSON, *The African Slave Trade*, rev & expanded ed., Boston: Back Bay 1980, 181.

² *Ibid*, 187.

³ E.R SANDERS, “Missionaries and Muslims in East Africa before the Great War”, paper presented at Henry Martyn Seminar, Westminster College, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, United Kingdom (Mar 2011) 2.

The first Catholic evangelizers, the Portuguese Augustinian Missionaries, arrived with Vasco da Gama in Zanzibar in 1499. In tandem with these Augustinian Missionaries, the Dominicans are said to have landed in areas of Mombasa, Faza, Pate and Zanzibar in the 1560s. Actually they did not stay long because of the Arab opposition, and therefore, their mission ended in 1698 due to the Oman-Arab conquest. From that point forward, missionary movements and the effort to evangelize entered a dark period that lasted until the 19th century.

1.1 Catholic Evangelization in Tanzania after the Napoleonic Wars

With the onset of the French Revolution in 1789 and the ensuing Napoleonic Wars that lasted until 1815, the spirit of mission seemed to have evaporated. Because the missionary spirit seemed to have collapsed, many of the religious institutes and seminaries were closed in most parts of Europe. For many years the Roman curia itself suffered disruption and, therefore, could not function well.

In the 1840s, however, the Catholic Church revived the missionary spirit. This renewal came after the *Propaganda Fide* (Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith)⁴ went through a process of reorganization to face the new challenges of evangelization. This period saw the official reconstitution of the Society of Jesus (1814) and the foundation of new congregations of a missionary nature, such as the Oblates of Mary Immaculate at Marseilles in 1816.

1.2 Pope Gregory XVI and his Missionary Zeal for Africa

Special thanks should be given to Pope Gregory XVI who in the 1840s gave new life to the mission in Africa. His missionary zeal was outstanding. He published a document to condemn the slave trade in Africa which many Catholic countries were still

⁴ Propaganda Fide was the office that organized Catholic missionary activity since 1622, taking responsibility for mission areas not covered by other papal arrangements. The same office continues its operations under the title the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.

practicing.⁵ With his personal efforts and the work of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, the seed of the Gospel was implanted fruitfully in Tanzania in the 19th century. The Holy Ghost Fathers entered in Zanzibar in 1863, the White Fathers entered Tanganyika in 1878, and the Benedictine Monks arrived at Dar es Salaam in 1887. These missionaries were successful in their work of implanting the Gospel.

1.3 The Leading Figures in the Catholic Missionary Movements in Tanzania

1.3.1 The Spiritans (Congregation of the Holy Spirit)

The 19th century missionary effort reached Tanzania in 1860. That year a number of diocesan priests and Sisters settled in Zanzibar under the authority of Msgr. A. Maupoint, Bishop of St. Denis in La Reunion. The sultan expressed his approval of the missionary work, which developed successfully.⁶ According to De Jong, “in 1862 the Apostolic Prefecture of Zanguebar was erected, stretching from Somalia to Mozambique. The French Spiritans were called on to help and the mission territory was entrusted to them.”⁷

The Spiritans, under the leadership of Fr. Antoine Horner and Fr. Etienne Baur, arrived in Zanzibar in 1863. Together with them were six Sisters of the Daughters of Mary, four of whom were Creoles, that is, natives of La Reunion who were liberated from slavery in 1848. Their names were Sr. Marie du Sacre Cœur, Sr. Marie Xavier, Sr. Marie Helene, Sr. Marie Antoinette, Sr. Marie St

⁵ E. ISICHEI, *A History of Christianity in Africa: From Antiquity to the Present*, London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1995, 34. Pope Gregory promulgated *In Supremo* in 1839; and with this document he reinforced the teaching of the Church enunciated by Pope Eugene IV in 1435 with the encyclical *Sicut Dudum*, that everyone involved in slavery or in the seizing of land from indigenous people were automatically (*ipso facto*) excommunicated, to be forgiven only on the condition that all the slaves be freed and the land returned. See J.S. PANZER, “The Popes and Slavery”, *The Catholic Answer* (Jan/Feb 1996).

⁶ A. DE JONG, *Mission and Politics in Eastern Africa*, Nairobi: Pauline Publication Africa, 2000, 119.

⁷ *Ibid.*

Louis and Sr. Marie Etienne. Their activities especially in health and education services, that is to say, their commitment to give their hands to heal and their hearts to feel with the suffering, the rejected and the downtrodden, rendered them acceptable not only to the community they served but also to the Sultan of Zanzibar.⁸ Their work cannot be forgotten. I mention these nuns because there is a tendency among the historians to overlook, ignore or neglect the presence and activity of these nuns from La Réunion in the work of evangelization in Tanzania.

The Spiritans extended the mission from Zanzibar to Bagamoyo.⁹ There in 1868 they founded the first Catholic Mission station on the mainland of East Africa. They established village centers for the slaves freed by the British from Arab slave traders. They concentrated their efforts at evangelization in the slave village centers where slave business was at its peak. The word Bagamoyo seemed to express the captives' feeling, that it was "the place to leave one's heart behind"; and therefore, the mission gave at least some of them hope.¹⁰

There were other Christian centres at Kiungani (Zanzibar), Kisarawe and Kurasini. These centres fostered the Christian civilization built upon a traditional African foundation and indeed were key points for academic, industrial or agricultural training.¹¹ Moreover, they were to become missionary centres on the mainland for Catholics, Anglicans and Lutherans. Some of the liberated slaves were trained as catechists who helped the missionaries and became the catalyst in the work of evangelization that spread to other areas such as Kilimanjaro in 1890, Morogoro and Usambara in 1907, and Ugogo (Dodoma) in 1910.¹²

⁸ B. SUNDKLER – C. STEED, *A History of the Church in Africa*, Cambridge: CUP 2000, 522.

⁹ Bagamoyo functioned also as a gateway and starting point for further missionary expansion on the mainland. In a period of eight years, the mission stations at Mhonda in 1877, Mandera in 1881, Morogoro in 1882, Tununguo in 1884 and Ilonga in 1885 were established.

¹⁰ J. BAUR, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa*, 2nd ed., Nairobi: Pauline Publication Africa 2009, 214.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

1.3.1.1 *The Erection of the Vicariate of Bagamoyo*

In 1883, the Apostolic Prefecture of Zanguebar was elevated to an Apostolic Vicariate with Msgr. R de. Courmont, CSSp, as Bishop. The missionary expansion was directed towards the Chagga, and from 1890 various new mission posts were established among them. In 1906 the German sector of the Vicariate in Tanzania was detached from the British sector, which partially encompassed Kenya and Zanzibar, and became the independent Vicariate of Bagamoyo.¹³ In 1933 the Vicariate of Bagamoyo was entrusted to the still young Dutch Province of the Spiritans as its first missionary territory, with Msgr. B. Hilhorst, CSSp, as Apostolic Vicar.¹⁴

1.3.1.2 *The Mission to the North on the Slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro*

The Spiritans extended their mission activity from the hinterland of Bagamoyo to the North on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro among the Chagga people. The Missionaries arrived at Kilema where Chief Pfumba accepted them. Implanting the Gospel in this region did not encounter great difficulty because the people there worshipped the one God known as *Ruwa*, the Creator of the universe, the Provider for the human family,¹⁵ impressively symbolized by Mount Kibo, that is, Mount Kilimanjaro. Hence, the people could choose to identify the Christian God with this ancestral God; and the people could easily observe Christian morals in a society already monogamous by nature. In 1890, Kilema became the first Catholic Mission and maintained its status as the kernel of the Moshi Diocese until 1960.¹⁶

¹³ M. KILAINI, "The Church in Africa and Tanzania in Particular", (unpublished material).

¹⁴ A. DE JONG, *Mission and Politics*, 119 - 120.

¹⁵ The father of the family would wake up early in the morning, raise his hands towards the sky, and turn his face towards Kibo, then say a prayer in a low voice to God for himself and his family. He then would spit towards the sky as a sign of offering his life to God. He would also do this before beginning the day's work (*The Catholic Church in Moshi: A centenary Memorial 1890-1990*, 24)

¹⁶ M. KILAINI, "The Church in Africa".

1.3.1.3 The Erection of the Vicariate of Kilimanjaro

Since Church authority still considered the Vicariate of Bagamoyo to be much too large, in 1910 the decision was made to split off the northeastern sector and to name this sector the Vicariate of Kilimanjaro. Kilimanjaro blossomed into a vicariate that extended from Tanga to Arusha and embraced within its confines Gare where the Marianhill monks had instituted a monastic foundation since 1897. In 1907, the monks left; but their Precious Blood Sisters remained and became the major congregation to work alongside the Spiritans in their missionary activity in East Africa.¹⁷

1.3.2 The White Fathers (The Missionaries of Africa)

The White Fathers, officially known as the Missionaries of Africa, under the pioneering leadership of Fr. Livinhac, arrived in Tanganyika in two groups in 1878 and established two stations. One group started its work of evangelization on the shore of Lake Tanganyika, and the other one on the shore of Lake Victoria. In fact, they evangelized the entire Great Lakes region and hence found their way into the neighbouring countries of Rwanda, Burundi and the eastern sector of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, formally known as Zaire.

1.3.2.1 Evangelization on the Shore of Lake Tanganyika

In 1879 the Missionaries of Africa commenced a missionary project which had as its aim a thoughtful, evangelical penetration into Baganda and Burundi. They founded stations on Lake Tanganyika: Kabanga in 1879, and Karema and Mpala in 1885. In 1881, they opened another station in Unyanyembe (Ushiroambo); and in the two years that followed, they commenced operations in Tabora and Bukumbi on Lake Victoria. After they established still more stations, in 1886, Church authority divided the Pro-Vicariate of Tanganyika into three Apostolic Vicariates: the Upper Congo, Tanganyika and Unyanyembe (later renamed Tabora). After the Arab influence in the Vicariate of Tanganyika diminished, the Church was able to begin expansion from Karema.

¹⁷ J. BAUR, *Two Thousand Years of Christianity in Africa*, 214-215.

The Missionaries of Africa founded several mission stations: among others, Kala in 1892; Mkulwe in 1899; and Kigoma in 1914. The missionaries in these three Vicariates, however, suffered grave setbacks as a consequence of the First World War; but they did not suffer total collapse. When new missionaries arrived after the war, the Church was able to plan the creation of new vicariates as offshoots of these three.

1.3.2.2 Evangelization on the Shore of Lake Victoria

The mission posts on the shore of Lake Victoria evolved into the institution of the Vicariate of South-Nyanza in 1894. Church authority entrusted the Apostolic Vicariate of Nyanza to Bishop Hirth. This vicariate was comprised of Mwanza, Bukoba, Rwanda and Burundi. Baur asserts:

The first two stations, Bukumbi and Nyegezi, near Mwanza, had flourishing communities of liberated slave children but not much more. The Wasukuma of Mwanza and the largest tribe of Tanganyika remained till modern times deeply attached to their customs and felt no need for a new religion. But the Fathers were invited by the kings of Kagunguli and Kome on the Ukerewe Island in 1895.¹⁸

Bishop Hirth arrived there in 1892 together with some 50 young Bagandas, future catechists of the Bahaya, who highly respected their Buddu neighbours. But the Kings were reluctant to open their hands and their hearts to accept these messengers of a new faith. They were themselves sacred personalities and upholders of traditional religion. Mtemi (King) Mukotani of Bugabo expressed their fear in these words: "If whites are allowed to teach everywhere what will the new religion not do? Will our sacred tree *mishambwa* escape and not be cut down like ordinary trees?"¹⁹

Ten years later, when the same King declared his willingness to pray – and gave his subjects permission to do the same – his councillors impeded him and threatened to take away from him the royal drum and give it to one of his brothers. This is yet another testimony to the fact that the people were deeply rooted in their traditional religion, for these Bahima Kings were regarded as

¹⁸ J. BAUR, *Two Thousand Years of Christianity in Africa*, 229.

¹⁹ B. SUNDKLER – C. STEED, *A History of the Church in Africa*, 540.

omnipotent by their subjects and could do what they liked, but to give up their traditional beliefs was tantamount to giving up their kingship.²⁰

With the indispensable help of the diplomacy exercised by the French missionaries, the resoluteness manifested by the Baganda catechists, and the political influence of the German administration, Bishop Hirth was able to seek permission to settle at Kashozi in 1892.²¹ Other kings gave their permission only with much hesitation. Villagers did not like to be judged as *watu wa wazungu*, people of the white men. From 1902 onwards, village schools started to spring up; and when priests committed themselves, from 1907 onward, to following the episcopal directive that they should visit people’s homes regularly, only then did adults slowly begin to open their hearts to the Good News.

1.3.2.3 The Establishment of Rubya Seminary

Since forming the local clergy was the priority in missionary work, in order to create African clergy as soon as possible, in 1903, Bishop Hirth built a full-fledged seminary in Rubya. It must be kept in mind that the early seminary established by the Spiritans had closed in 1878. In 1907, Bishop Hirth moved his residence there so that he could better supervise the formation.²²

1.3.2.4 The Ordination of the First Four Tanzanian Priests

Divine Providence showed its face on the Day of the Assumption, 1917, when the bishop gave his consent to ordain seven new priests: two from Bukoba, two from Mwanza, and three from Rwanda. The youngest of these was the late Monsignor Willibald Mupapi of Bukoba, who served the Bahaya for 62 years. The year 1992, the *Mupapi Jubili*, marked concurrently the 100th anniversary of his birth and that of the Bukoba Church.²³

²⁰ J. BAUR, *Two Thousand Years of Christianity in Africa*, 15.

²¹ The Bishop changed the name of the hill of evil spirits, *kashozi ka muzimu*, into *Kashozi ka Maria*, the Hill of Mary.

²² J. BAUR, *Two Thousand Years of Christianity in Africa*, 227-230.

²³ *Ibid*, 230.

1.3.2.5 Establishment of the Apostolic Vicariate of Bukoba

In 1929, Church authority detached the tribal area of the Haya from the Vicariate of South-Nyanza and so established the independent Apostolic Vicariate of Bukoba. The remaining portion of South-Nyanza became the Vicariate of Mwanza. From 1948 to 1965 Msgr. J. Blomjous, MAfr, served as Apostolic Vicar and later as the first Bishop of this ecclesiastical territory.

1.3.2.6 The erection of the Dioceses of Bukoba and Rulenge

In 1953, Church authority divided the Apostolic Vicariate of Bukoba into the two dioceses of Bukoba and Rutabo, which, with the redrawing of the diocesan boundaries in 1960, became the dioceses of Bukoba and Rulenge. After the Second World War, the Maryknoll Missionaries came to work in the Vicariate of Mwanza: the areas which in the 1950s became the dioceses of Shinyanga and Musoma were entrusted to them.²⁴

1.3.2.7 The Institution of the Vicariate of Mbeya

In 1932 Church authority detached the southern part of the Tanganyika Vicariate and instituted the independent mission of Tukuyu, which in 1949 was raised to the level of a Vicariate, that of Mbeya, with Bishop A. van Oorschot, MAfr, as its Apostolic Vicar.²⁵

1.3.2.8 The Erection of the Vicariate of Kigoma

Church authority divided the remaining territory of the Tanganyika Vicariate in 1946 in accordance with the tribal boundaries of the Uha and Ufipa into the Vicariates of Karema and Kigoma. Msgr. J. van Sambeek, MAfr, became the Apostolic Vicar of Kigoma and later the diocesan Bishop.²⁶

1.3.2.9 The erection of the Tabora Archdiocese

In 1943 Church authority detached the Apostolic Prefecture of Mbula from the Tabora Vicariate and entrusted it to the Irish

²⁴ A. DE JONG, *Mission and Politics*, 120.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 121.

Pallotines. Msgr. C. Bronsveld, MAfr, served as Apostolic Vicar from 1948 until 1960. Later he became Archbishop of Tabora.²⁷

1.3.3 The Benedictines

Concerning the coming of the Benedictine Missionaries, De Jong recounts:

When Tanganyika came into the German sphere of influence, there were no German missionaries there. To rectify that on the part of the Catholics, the Benedictines of St. Ottilien agreed to work in this German colony. In 1887 the southern part of the Zanguebar Vicariate was entrusted to them as the Apostolic Prefecture of South Zanguebar.²⁸

The Benedictine Missionaries of St. Ottilien were Germans and spoke the language of the colonial masters.²⁹ They arrived in Dar es Salaam in 1887 and established themselves at Pugu. From there they extended their work of evangelization southward to the Ruvuma River bordering Mozambique. In fact, their monasteries of Ndanda and Peramiho became centres of Christian development and modern civilization in the southern part of Tanzania.³⁰

1.3.3.1 *The Destruction of the Pugu Mission during the Abushiri Rebellion*

In 1888, these Benedictines founded a school among the Zaramo people at Pugu, an educational centre that came to play a great role in Tanzanian history. Sadly that mission at Pugu was destroyed during the Abushiri rebellion and as a result three missionaries were killed, two fled, and four were seized as prisoners. Msgr. Raoul de Courmont, CSSp,³¹ noted the reason for this attack: "It is because of the hatred for their nationality that they have killed them."³² In fact the people closely associated the

²⁷ A. DE JONG, *Mission and Politics*, 121.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ D.H. MBIKU, *Historia ya Jimbo Kuu la Dar es Salaam*, Peramiho: Benedictine Publications, 1985, 15-16.

³⁰ J. BAUR, *Two Thousand Years of Christianity in Africa*, 352.

³¹ Msgr. Raoul de Courmont was Vicar Apostolic of Zanguebar, who happened to be in Bagamoyo that time of the Benedictines' attack at Pugu.

³² J.A. KIERAN, *Abushiri and the Germans*, in Hadith 2, B. Ogot, Nairobi, 1970, 14.

Benedictine mission with the German East Africa Company, with which it had a commercial agreement and whose flag it flew. According to De Jong,

[Notwithstanding that discouraging setback,] the Benedictines did not give up. At the end of 1889 a mission post was founded in Dar es Salaam, followed by another in 1894 in nearby Kurasini. The Benedictines then began establishing mission stations in distant areas in order to establish a presence in the area entrusted to them: Lukuledi in 1895; Nyangao, in the southeast of Tanzania, in 1896; Tosamaganga, among the Hehe, in 1897; Peramiho, among the Ngoni, in 1898; Kwiro in Mahenge in 1902.³³

1.3.3.2 The Attack from Majimaji Rebels

In 1905 the Benedictine mission was struck by a tremendous disaster. The Majimaji rebels killed Bishop C. Spiess, two Sisters and two Brothers. In addition, the stations of Nyangao, Lukuledi, Peramiho and Kigonsera were attacked and burned down. On account of this attack, it looked as if years of missionary effort were lost.

Surprisingly, this did not discourage the missionaries. In 1906, Bishop T. Spreiter was named Apostolic Vicar of the Benedictine mission area, called from then on the Apostolic Vicariate of Dar es Salaam. He was a great organizer. Within a few years, devastated mission stations had been rebuilt and new ones opened.

1.3.3.3 Establishment of Christian Village Centres at Pugu and Kurasini

The Benedictines established two Christian village centers for liberated slaves at Pugu and Kurasini in Dar es Salaam. The formation of such village centres, however, was discouraged by some indigenous for the reason that “it was too paternalistic and did not give the people sufficient scope for self-expression.”³⁴ By 1904, the notion of the Christian village came to a standstill; but the footprint of the presence of the Benedictines in these areas has remained for many years. In 1913, Church authority separated the southern sector and named it the Apostolic Prefecture of Lindi.

³³ A. DE JONG, *Mission and Politics*, 2000, 121.

³⁴ B. SUNDKLER – C. STEED, *A History of the Church in Africa*, 529.

1.3.4 The Influx of New Missionaries after the First World War

After the First World War, the Germans were forced to leave their colony and submit it to the British Protectorate. Consequently, the Benedictines missionaries – the priests, Brothers and Sisters and finally also the bishop – had to leave their mission areas. These events encouraged other missionaries from various nationalities to come to Tanzania in order to rescue the work of evangelization that the Benedictines had begun and was on the verge of collapse.

1.3.4.1 *The Consolata Fathers and the Apostolic Prefecture of Iringa*

In 1919, the Vicariate of Dar es Salaam and the districts of Ugogo and Uhehe were entrusted to the Italian Consolata Fathers. In 1922, these two districts merged and became the Apostolic Prefecture of Iringa.³⁵

1.3.4.2 *The Capuchin Friars and the Vicariate of Dar es Salaam*

A group of Franciscan Capuchin Friars from Switzerland landed in Dar es Salaam in 1921. They received responsibility for the remainder of the Vicariate of Dar es Salaam. Msgr. Edgar Maranta, OFM Cap, became the Apostolic Vicar of this ecclesiastical territory in 1930.³⁶

1.3.4.3 *The Second Coming of the Benedictines: The Division of the Prefecture of Lindi*

In 1920, the First Swiss Benedictines obtained permission to return to Lindi Prefecture and in 1921 their German Confreres joined them. In 1931, Church authority divided the Lindi Prefecture into two: the Abbeys of Nullius of Peramiho and Ndanda. The Abbey of Nullius of Peramiho was entrusted to the Benedictines.

³⁵ A. DE JONG, *Mission and Politics*, 121.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

1.3.4.4 The Salvatorian Missionaries and the Diocese of Nachingwea

In 1955, the American Salvatorians came to work in the Abbey Nullius of Ndanda in the western area, which in 1963 was separated from the Abbey Nullius and became the Diocese of Nachingwea.³⁷

1.3.4.5 The Passionist Missionaries: The Apostolic Prefecture of Dodoma

Italian Passionist missionaries arrived in Tanzania to join other missionaries in the work of evangelization. In 1934, Church authority entrusted them with the districts of Dodoma and Kondoa-Irangi after they were joined to become the Apostolic Prefecture of Dodoma. They took care of this prefecture; later Church authority established it as the Diocese of Dodoma.

1.4 The Influx of Missionaries after the Second World War

More missionaries came after the Second World War, namely, the Maryknoll Fathers and the Roseminian Fathers, who were entrusted with the Prefecture of Tanga in 1952 after it split off from the Vicariate of Kilimanjaro. Church authority entrusted each missionary group with the care of a diocese.³⁸

1.5 Notable Achievements of the Missionaries

Due to the labor and self-sacrifice of missionaries, God has given Tanzania many male and female congregations and societies of apostolic life. Recently, in 2005, data indicated that there are approximately 39 million people in Tanzania; 9 million of them are Catholic, about a quarter of the total population. There are 34 dioceses, including 5 archdioceses, 2140 Catholic priests and about 847 parishes.³⁹ Furthermore, a study of the United States Bureau of Democracy, Human Right and Labor of 2009 suggests that 62% of the population of Tanzania are Christians, 35% are Muslim and 3%

³⁷ C.E. SAHLBERG, *From Krapf to Rugambwa, A Church History of Tanzania*, Nairobi 1978, 58.

³⁸ J. BAUR, *Two Thousand Years of Christianity in Africa*, 352.

³⁹ "Statistics by Country, by Catholic Population" available at <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/country/sc1.html>, [accessed 13 Feb 2018].

are members of other religious groups.⁴⁰ These statistics reflect notable achievements on the part of the missionaries.

2. Protestant Evangelization in Tanzania

2.1 The Leading Figures in the Protestant Missionary Movements in Tanzania

It was not only the Catholic Church that pioneered the work of evangelization in Tanzania in the 19th century. Protestants movements played an important role. There were about five missionary movements representing Protestant Christianity that tried their level best to carry out the work of evangelization in Tanzania (at that time, Tanganyika) in the 19th Century and at the beginning of the 20th century. These were as follows:

2.1.1 The Church Missionary Society (CMS)

The evangelization of Tanganyika in the 19th century was initially undertaken by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) from Kenya. The venture was unsuccessful. De Jong remarks:

In 1848 and 1849 J. Rebmann paid a visit from Rabai to the land of Chagga on the southern slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro. In 1848 J. Krapt undertook a journey to the Usambara Mountains, southwest of Tanga, where Shambala lived. Although these journeys had importance in the geographical sense, they had none from the missionary viewpoint, for they did not succeed in establishing mission posts there. The missionary enthusiasm of the CMS received a new impulse through the reports of the journalist and explorer, H.M. Stanley, concerning the openness to Christianity of King Mutesa of Buganda. With an eye to the evangelizing of Buganda, the CMS established in 1876 a post in Mpwapwa, 960 km into the interior of Tanzania on the slave trade route.⁴¹

Initially the station in Mpwapwa was chiefly intended as an intermediate station on the way to Buganda, but after 1885 the

⁴⁰ U.S. Department of State (26 Oct 2009), “International Religious Freedom Report 2009: Tanzania”, in *United States Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor*, retrieved 5 Oct 2010.

⁴¹ A. DE JONG, *Mission and Politics*, 117-118.

missionaries there extended their labors among the Gogo who lived there. The missionaries set up posts on the shore of Lake Victoria in Nassa and in Bukumbi. Meanwhile missionary work had also commenced among the Chagga in Moshi. Over the number of years the number of posts spread out in central Tanzania and around Lake Victoria. So at the end of the 1940s, there were 15 mission stations with 28 missionaries. In 1921 the first two Anglican priests were ordained, and in 1951, the first Anglican bishop.⁴²

2.1.2 Universities' Mission to Central Africa (UMCA)

John Baur in his book *2000 Years of Christianity* notes:

The reports of the explorer, D. Livingstone, about the pagan lifestyle of Africans and the cruelty of the slave trade led to the foundation of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa (UMCA). After a failed attempt to open a mission in Nyasaland, the UMCA established its missionary headquarters in 1863 in Zanzibar, from where it penetrated the mainland to north and south. Magila, in the Usambara, some kilometers distant from Tanga, was founded in 1868. Eight years later a mission post was opened in Masasi among the Yao, north of the River Ruvuma.⁴³

These two missions functioned as a kind of bridgehead from which other stations were opened in the surrounding countryside. In 1926 Masasi was raised to a separate diocese, independent from Zanzibar. Both Universities' Mission to Central Africa (UMCA) and the Church Missionary Society (CMS) were Anglican missionary enterprises. In 1960 they joined forces and became the Anglican Church of East Africa.

2.1.3 Betheler Mission

Besides Anglican missionary societies, Lutheran missionary societies also accepted responsibility for evangelization in Tanzania. Betheler Mission founded a mission post in 1887 in Dar es Salaam but soon shifted the center of gravity of their work to the North in the Usambara Mountains. They set up mission posts successively in Mlolo, Vuga, Bumbuli, Lutindi and Itete. In 1912 they open a printing press in Vuga and after the Second World War,

⁴² A. DE JONG, *Mission and Politics*, 117-118.

⁴³ J. BAUR, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa*, 216-217.

they instituted a theological college in Mlolo to train their pastors. Betheler Mission shifted this college to Makumnira, close to Arusha, in 1952. This college is now a Constituent College of the Tumaini University.⁴⁴

2.1.4 Berliner Missionsgesellschaft (Berlin Missionary Society)

From 1891 onwards the Berliner *Missionsgesellschaft* (Berlin Missionary Society) took responsibility for its mission field in the south of Tanzania among the Bena, Kinga, Hehe and Nyakusa. The mission work commenced with difficulty. Political unrest and revolts were a threat. Yet after a time, parishes began to flourish, for example, in Manow, Kidagula, and Milow. Moreover they did not forget the social action dimension of missionary work. They built schools and hospitals and opened a printing press. In 1914 this missionary society consisted of 3,654 Christians.⁴⁵

2.1.5 Leipzig Missionary Society

The Leipzig Missionary Society started its missionary work in 1893 among the Chagga at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro. The Society established its first mission post in Machame. These missionaries were quick to establish others in Mamba, Old Moshi and Shira. From these bases they expanded into nearby areas: the Meru country in the West, the Mountain areas of the Pare in the Southeast and the Irambo district in the South. The first African Lutheran pastors were ordained in 1934; and in 1940 an African became an Auxiliary Bishop.⁴⁶

3. The Effects of the Two World Wars on the German Protestant Missionaries

The two world wars proved to be a great disaster for the German Protestant missionary societies. Although missionaries of other nationalities and denominations came to help, these two wars left a disconcerting trail of collapse in the missionary work.

⁴⁴ A. DE JONG, *Mission and Politics*, 118.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 119.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

But there were also positive consequences. The young African communities became more mature and independent. The process of Africanization of these churches received a powerful stimulus. The Lutheran assemblies reached a milestone in 1963 when Lutheran churches that previously subsisted with their own independent governments and structures united with each other to form the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania.⁴⁷

Besides the Anglican and Lutheran missionary societies, there have been still other Protestant missionary institutes active in Tanzania. The most important among them have been the Hrnhutters, the African Inland Mission, the Seventh Day Adventists, and the Mennonites.⁴⁸ In addition, especially after the Second World War, another flood of small missionary societies arrived in the country.

Conclusion

In conclusion I am convinced that the missionaries of the 19th Century, Catholics, Anglicans and Lutherans, intended to ensure the evangelization of whole regions of Tanganyika, the future Tanzania, with the desire to leave to future generations the growth of the faith in depth. We are grateful that they moved from village to village, erecting schools, hospitals and churches. They instructed the catechumens and taught the three R's, Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic. It was not an easy task. They encountered a lot of challenges from the colonial governments, but they persevered. We have the Church today in Tanzania because missionaries evangelized; they sacrificed. Lord God, we thank you.

⁴⁷ A. HASTINGS, *The Church in Africa 1450-1950*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1996, 157.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 158.