

Education under Colonial Rule: A History of Matengo Highlands Education under the Benedictine Mission Schools 1899 to 1961.

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Abstract: This paper provides an in-depth examination of the history of education in Tanzania under German and British colonial rule. It is placed in its broader social and political context. The paper focuses on one of the most unique education systems in the Matengo Highlands by then, Songea District in South Western Tanganyika. Education provided by Benedictine missionaries through their philosophy of *ora et labora* and *kusoma* Christianity which combined prayer and work managed to produce efficient and competent manpower for colonial enterprises. Using a qualitative approach, data were accessed from government archives (Tanzania National Archives), Peramiho Abbey Archives, Mwanza Zonal Archives, and Parish records. Moreover, the oral interview method explored the major factors and government policies that shaped the character of Matengo Highlands under the Benedictine missionaries and colonial education in general. The paper revealed that missionaries and colonial state cooperated in implementing these policies. It also revealed the African reactions to the educational system. Details concerning the kinds of subjects that were taught and the characteristics of the student body are also included. The findings are relevant to scholars of African history and education in Tanzania and Africa at large. This paper provides new insights into the sociopolitical dynamics surrounding colonialism and the educational system that ultimately supported it. This historical study provides a link to education for sustainable development in the current debates. The paper concludes that, as an ideology of a colonial superstructure, mission education in the Matengo Highlands carried over colonial functions knowingly or unknowingly. Recipients of missionary education in the Matengo Highlands served the colonial enterprises when cultivation of coffee was introduced in the highlands; taught in different schools; worked in health services, civil service, cooperatives, and as extension officers.

Keywords: Colonial Rule, Matengo Highlands, Colonial Education, Benedictine Mission

1. Introduction

The argument of this paper is based on the investigation on the relationship between the Christian education provided by Benedictine missionaries and socio-economic transformation of the Matengo Highlands within the colonial setting from 1899 to 1961. Specifically, the paper explored the characteristics of Benedictine missionary education as it was implemented in the Matengo Highlands. Furthermore, the role of colonial state machinery; both German colonial rule and British colonial rule was another area explored in this paper. Lastly, the paper explored the way the Benedictine missionary education transformed the Matengo Highlands economically and socially. The role of Benedictine missionary education for sustainable development of Matengo Highlands was also assessed.

Matengo Highland as a society evolved historically until 1885¹ when it became a German colonial sphere within Songea District.² Matengo Highlands is a geographical region in the South West of Tanzania.³ It is an area with people who have unique history known as Matengo. The empirical study was done in this area for its unique features. One of the unique features was that, all school going children in the Matengo Highlands were enrolled in different levels of education; bush schools, lower primary schools, upper primary schools or middle schools. Furthermore, all these schools in the Matengo Highlands were established and operated by the Benedictine missionaries. Neither the colonialists nor the Native Authority established any school in the Matengo Highlands up until 1961. When Tanzania became independent in 1961, there was no single secondary school in the Matengo Highlands serve for a Kigonsera minor seminary. It was out of this unique situation which surrounded the Matengo society; the Benedictine missionaries; and the German and British colonialists in relation to education system, which prompted this paper to investigate the dynamics of education in the Matengo Highland from 1899 to 1961.

2. The German Occupation in the Matengo Highlands

The occupation of Matengo Highlands by the Germans began by summoning Mandawa, a son of Kayuni Makita to the Germans Songea center. When Mandawa came back he hoisted a German flag he had brought from Songea. The flag signaled the initial German annexation of the Matengo Highlands.⁴ In 1889 two Germans arrived at Litembo. They divided the Matengo Highlands into two parts, Langiro area under *bambo*

Howahowa was assigned to Unyanja in Langenburg *boma*. This section was administered from a distant Manda (Wiedhafen) station. The Litembo area of Umatengo was to be administered from Songea district *boma*. Sultans were placed in charge of the subdivisions. Under them there were *jumbes* who were assisted by *nyaparas*.⁵ A sultan was responsible for maintenance of order of his subdivision, clearing roads, constructing bridges, supplying labour, reporting offences, collecting tax, arresting natives who were charged for committing offences, reporting the cases of immigrants wishing to settle in the country, reporting epidemics and generally supervising native affairs of his area.⁶

Fundamentally the early years of German rule were spent on an attempt to establish political legitimacy in the area and consolidation of colonial state power by issuing orders to the *jumbes* to recruit labour for the construction of a *boma* at Songea. In 1898 a tax was imposed to generate revenue for the colonial state.⁷ The Matengo natives were obliged to pay hut tax in foodstuffs, hoes or livestock because they did not have cash. The Matengo people were also required to carry heavy loads of lime, *vigae* (roofing materials made from baked clay) and tiles from Umatengo at Mbugu and Hiso industrial sites to Songea more than a hundred miles away. These materials were to be used in the construction of the Songea District *boma*.⁸

In 1902 the Matengo people at Litembo refused to pay tax and set on fire a school opened by Fr. Johannes in 1901.⁹ They also refused to provide labour and when the *askari* entered Litembo in March 1902 the people tore the badge off his uniform and sent him back to Songea.¹⁰ Sergeant Muller was dispatched from Songea and arrived at Litembo with fifteen *askaris*. They found about eight hundred armed Matengo with arrows, spears, clubs, axes who withdrew to the nearby hill. Three days later the German forces appeared and attacked the Matengo during what was popularly known as the *Karonga War* of 1902.¹¹ The Matengo people were able to utilize the hilly landscape and the available caves at Ngwindi fortress against the enemy. They lost forty soldiers and finally conceded defeat. The *bambo* Mandawa was deposed and deported to the coast where it is alleged he died.¹² Bambo Howahowa of Langiro sultanate was captured and deported to Tukuyu where it is said he was assassinated.¹³ It was out of this fact that the Matengo were able to withstand German might until 1904 when the Matengo were forced out of the hideouts as they faced shortage of food.¹⁵

Private investors showed little interest in testing the potentials of the Matengo Highlands. Lemann a German settler and Henry Packham attempted to establish an estate at Ugano.¹⁶ Consequently the German colonial government itself took over this work in view of future possibilities of white settlement. The government undertook to establish an experimental station for coffee growing at Lipumba which was the seat of the government. The crop failed because it was attacked by borers. Another government experimental center was established at Myangayanga. The plants died because they were planted on an open ground without irrigation.¹⁷ The problem was more compounded by lack of colonial manpower and poor transport and communication system. As such, the Matengo people were living an independent political life.

Furthermore, bambo Makita's claim to be the paramount chief of the whole Umatengo was yet another myth. This is confirmed by Morgans the British Officer at ... sometimes later:

*Makita does not govern his people, he left them alone without the Government, the Matengo would rapidly return to a state of savagery and unmanageable and unapproachable. ... It seems Matengo were partially subdued by Angoni.*¹⁸

German was seriously short of staff to man the whole district. The few they had concentrated at the district headquarters at Songea. Many of the sub-districts were manned by local authorities of the *liwali*, *jumbe* and *nyaparas*. They were assisted by the local *askaris* and other assistants. Under German colonial rule the subordinates were not controlled from the district hence they had freedom to administer excesses to the native population. The subordinates did not have the necessary expertise in running the modern administrative functions like collecting tax and conscripting labour. The problem of running the local administration was much serious in the stateless societies, Matengos being one practical example.¹⁹ That is why, as it is revealed in the preceding discussion that the Germans did not at the outset (1897) occupy the Matengo Highlands physically. This situation tallies with a conclusion that the Germans did not actually rule the entire Matengo Highlands through the chosen headmen since they were not recognized by other clans. Each clan was paying allegiance to its clan head. Even the boundaries demarcating the sub-districts were not consistent and extremely fluid.²⁰

German rule was spread most unevenly over Tanganyika. Many areas became almost entirely ungoverned as it became apparent in the annual report of the protectorate of 1901/02:

*Although German rule is everywhere acknowledged in the remote military districts of the inland especially in the mountainous areas the real influence of the authorities is still limited.*²¹

This was true to the Matengo Highlands where German rule was not strongly felt. The presence of Benedictine missionaries was therefore more felt in different spheres on Matengo lives including and not limited to provision of education.

3. The History of Christianity in the Matengo Highlands Benedictines of St. Ottilien

Discussing Christianity in the Matengo Highlands is in reality discussion on the Missionary Congregation of the Order of St. Benedict, with headquarters at St. Ottilien in Upper Bavaria. The Order was founded in 1884 in response to Carl Peters' plea for German missionaries in German colonies.²² The evangelization of the Matengo Highlands dates back to 1898 with the settlement of Benedictine Missionaries at Peramiho. From there the history of the development of the Catholic Church in area of the Matengo Highlands can be grasped.

The introduction of Christianity in the Southwestern Tanzania in general and the Matengo Highlands in particular is closely linked to the history of colonization of German of Tanzania. German East Africa was colonized by Germans from 1884 to 1918 when the British took over as a mandate territory in 1919.²³ During the German colonial era, the Benedictines of St. Ottilien from Germany introduced Christianity to the African population of Southwestern Tanzania including the Matengo Highlands. The starting point was in November, 1887 when the first contingent of 14 missionaries left Rome and arrived in Dar-es-Salaam on 28th January 1888. They established their first monastery at Pugu in February 1888.²⁴ This monastery was however destroyed by the Arab rising under Abushiri and Bwanaheri.²⁵ From Dar-es-Salaam the Benedictines evangelized southwards to the Ruvuma River where Songea is located. In 1898, the Benedictines opened station at Peramiho, a place where their abbey is still in place.

From Peramiho, another station was opened at Kigonsera on 10th October 1899 in the border area between Ungoni and Matengo Highlands.²⁶ But the major interest of Fr. Johannes was to explore the possibility of setting up a mission station in the Matengo Highlands of chief Mandawa.²⁷ With this idea in mind Kigonsera mission opened up outstations at Litembo, Liparamba and Matiri. More specifically, the main interest of Fr. Maurus Hartmann, the Prefect Apostolic was to transfer the Kigonsera mission to Litembo which was heavily populated, endowed with fertile soil and cool climate suitable for European missionaries and production of variety crops.²⁸ The people of Litembo were so furious due to 1902 German invasion amounting to the abandoning of the Litembo outstation and the mission school was set ablaze by the angry masses.²⁹ The worst scenario was in 1905 due to Majimaji uprising which left both Peramiho and Kigonsera missions in ashes. Missionaries were murdered and the remaining missionaries escaped through Lake Nyasa to save their lives.³⁰

The focus of Benedictines in post Majimaji uprising appears to be expansion into what was known as Matengo proper with its center at Litembo; a center with mission schools at Litembo/Mhagawa, Kindimba, Kipapa, Matiri, Maguu and Mikalanga controlled from Kigonsera mission.³¹ Litembo was a most populated area where Fr. Johannes had constructed the first outstation in 1901. The Catholics settled in the Matengo Highlands strategically to counteract the advance of UMCA from their stronghold along the Lake Nyasa shore.³² These efforts produced big results in 1914 when forth Benedictine mission was launched at Litembo in the heart of the Matengo Highlands. This has to bring in strong influence in the spread and expansion of Christianity in the rest of the Matengo Highlands.

From Litembo mission network of outstations at Nangombo, Tingi, and Maguu were opened. This network went together with a fleet of sixteen bush schools with a total of 2,182 pupils.³³ This expansion was however, curtailed by the outbreak of First World War in 1914. This war ravaged Litembo in September 1916 when the British troops arrived from Lake Nyasa.³⁴ Fr. Ludger the superior of Litembo mission was interned by the British authorities left back 18 schools with 4,000 pupils and 2,000 adults following instructions in Christian faith.³⁵ The British established themselves in the mission centers changing the infrastructure into uses they thought of. Litembo mission became an administrative headquarters of the British administration while Kigonsera became a British military post.³⁶

The end of First World War marked the end of German rule in German East Africa. The German missionaries sphere of influence was safeguarded by Versailles Peace Treaty of 1919 which resolved that enemy missions should be replaced by same denominations from the allied powers or neutral power.³⁷ The orphan Benedictine church in southwestern Tanzania was now entrusted to the White Fathers; mostly from France, Luxemburg, Holland, Belgium and Canada.³⁸ Fr. David Roy a Canadian White Father was a chaplain at Kigonsera military post and Fr. Camile De Chatonville a White Father stayed at Kigonsera as superior up to 1919. Between September 1917 and April 1918 Fr. Camile stayed at Litembo but was frustrated by what he purported as lack of response by the Wamatengo.³⁹

Father David Roy came back in April 1919, stayed at Kigonsera before he moved to Litembo. He removed the British administrative post from the mission buildings and his consistent hard work was able to revive the Christian Community of Litembo, which was the most badly affected mission as a result of removal

of Benedictine mission.⁴⁰ There was remarkable difference between the German Benedictines and French White Fathers. The German Benedictines did not admit converts so easily. The would-be converts were to undergo rigorous training before being admitted into the congregation by the way of baptismal. Whereas the French White Fathers were much liberal in the sense that upon a request for baptismal they did not bother much investigating the history of the would-be convert. As a consequence, many people were converted during their short period of stay in southwestern Tanzania. By 1922, the number of Christians in the four missions of Peramiho, Kigonsera, Lituhi and Litembo in the southwestern Tanzania had increased from 7,000 in 1916 to more than 13,000.⁴¹

In 1922 the British authorities agreed to the return of all ex-enemy missionaries starting with the Benedictines⁴² of the Swiss Order were allowed to work in abandoned Benedictines missions of southwestern Tanzania.⁴³ They worked hard using catechists Constantine Akitanda of Matiri outstation⁴⁴ and Petri Ndunguru at the Litembo Parish.⁴⁵ The main task was to revive the decaying schools since education was the major concern of the missionaries. “*Kusoma*” Christianity was a distinctive form of Christianity they pursued,⁴⁶ but on the other hand this enthusiasm was constrained by the regulation imposed by the British administration that there could be no opening of new schools.⁴⁷ The explanation for this regulation might be on the account that the Roman Catholic was so aggressive since education was to them synonymous to Christianity. This Benedictine attitude threatened the existence of the Anglican British missionaries in the Lake Nyasa region. This is why the Songea District Political Officer J.C. Cassian gave permission to UMCA to establish their schools in villages where German Berlin and Lutheran missions had schools.⁴⁸

In 1926, the German Benedictines of St. Ottilien were admitted to come back to Tanganyika and devoted much of their effort to rehabilitate and expand the dilapidated infrastructures and missions which were destroyed when they were interned by British authorities due to First World War. The effort produced promising results in the Matengo Highlands as new missions were opened at Liparamba in 1927, Mbinga 1936 and Matiri 1937 founded from Kigonsera mission. Mbangamao 1964 and St. Killian 1997 were founded from Mbinga mission. The other missions at Nangombo 1933, Tingi 1937, Maguu 1949, Lundumato 1959, Mkumbi 1962, Kindimba 1998, Kitula 2005, Miyau 2011, Wukiro 2013 were founded from Litembo mission. Mpapa 1957 and Mikalanga 1966 were founded from Maguu. Mpepo 2002 founded from Tingi. Mpepai 1994 founded from Mbangamao.⁴⁹ Despite of this success the British authority claimed that Wamatengo were not promising to be Christians. There were succession disputes and accusations of witchcraft hence exceedingly superstitious and ate human flesh by exhuming dead bodies. The mission at Litembo has strange stories of their behavior.⁵⁰

4. Development of Missionary Education in the Matengo Highlands

Missionary expansion in the Matengo Highlands up to the World War I was slow. Opening of schools throughout the Matengo Highlands went hand in hand with conversion into Christianity. There were bush schools which were established in the outstations where pupils were prepared for baptism. Besides, the pupils were taught other subjects such as crafts, singing and manual work. Koponen pointed the fact that Roman Catholic and Germans stressed on the importance of manual farm labour as education for work.⁵¹ However, missionary schools in the interior were for conversion and molding the pupils while still young.

Though the German government had opened craftsman schools and hinterland schools in the coastal areas and few hinterland districts,⁵² the Matengo Highlands was neglected. Germans argued that the children from South western Tanzania could not safely be taken to the government schools because of poor communication networks. There were no railroads, no good roads except those constructed by followers of Christianity. As such the Benedictines were the sole providers of education in this area of the German protectorate. Under such circumstances, the Benedictines embarked on construction of schools throughout the Matengo Highlands. The archival source presents some data on the education sector operated by the Benedictines in the Matengo Highlands.⁵³

The contents taught in these schools were religious instructions with a little bit of reading, writing and counting.⁵⁴ The pupils were divided into three groups; the first group was that of the children, second group included all Christians and the last group included those who were preparing for baptism both children and adults. Those who excelled in their studies were recruited as catechists. The other contents being taught were skills which were aimed at teaching of manual labour.⁵⁵ This syllabus was based on both the Benedictine philosophy of *ora et labora* and the German government policy of development during the governorship of von Rechenberg between 04/15/1906 - 22/04/1912. The governor put emphasis on the collaboration between state and missionaries and restricted competition between mission and state schools. Incentives in terms of funds and books⁵⁶ were given to the mission schools which taught German language and other subjects like handcraft as it was echoed in the 1908/09 Annual Report:

*As for the Benedictines ... the missions have done particularly gratifying work this year in the field of youth education work in handcraft, agriculture, horticulture and also in the sphere of medical auxiliary work.*⁵⁷

Kigonsera school was among the schools in which the German administration encouraged to adopt the German government education system by teaching of German language, Kiswahili as the medium of communication. Furthermore, mission sisters instructed girls in all kinds of work girls were supposed to do. Like in the government schools apart from learning subjects like Bible class, reading, writing, arithmetic, singing and German, pupils had to work in the fields and in the house, in the kitchen and garden for four hours. Boys learned blacksmith, joinery, bricklaying and how to sow plants.⁵⁸

When Abbot Bishop Gallus Steiger got into power in 1922 there were only two missions in the Matengo Highlands, namely Kigonsera and Litembo but when he left office to Abbot Bishop Eberhard Spiess in 1953 there were nine mission stations in the region. The British government had originally refused permission to the missions to build new schools or churches.⁵⁹ The reason for the restriction was the existing bitter ecclesiastical scramble between the Roman Catholic and the UMCA over places to open up schools and churches. It was also alleged that the missionaries were more pro-German in their sympathies because the German administration accorded the missionaries very tangible executive support.⁶⁰ The scramble was so intense along the Lake Nyasa shore. With the change in education policy by the British government, the missionaries started opening and registering schools as indicated by archival data.⁶¹ Besides, these mission stations were flanked with a fleet of bush schools, village schools and a number of middle schools at Litembo and Mbinga.⁶²

Abbot Galus a Swiss Benedictine and a superior of the diocese who stayed very long and demonstrated politeness was likely to win the Matengo people. This was contrary to the German missionaries who usually demonstrated arrogance, prejudice and segregation to the natives. German missionaries had always lamented of non-cooperation of the Matengo people because they were not well received by the Matengo people who are culturally very inquisitive to strangers' behaviours. If a stranger shows arrogance the Matengo would simply ignore him and will never at all cooperate.⁶³ It was very unfortunate to the Germans missionaries to refuse to learn the Matengo socio-philosophical underpinnings of the Matengo society.

The Swiss Order of Benedictines opened and maintained most schools in Songea district.⁶⁴ The evidence shows that there was a fleet of bush schools in the Matengo Highlands as it is reported in the Lipumba Sub-District Report of 1926 that the Swiss Order of Benedictines maintained 129 schools and 12,404 Christian pupils.⁶⁵ To put more emphasis on education at conference of all bishops and leading missionaries at Dar-es-Salaam in August 1928 the Apostolic Visitat or Bishop Hinsley gave his orders:

*Collaborate with all your power; and where it is impossible for you to carry on both the immediate task of evangelization and your educational work, neglect your churches in order to perfect your schools*⁶⁶

These bush schools were taught by African catechist-teachers who were answerable to the priests at the nearby mission station in terms of training and remuneration. According to archival source these schools were not officially registered by the British government and thus were categorized as village schools whose main objective was to train young people in spiritual instructions and some basic reading and counting.⁶⁷ The impact of these schools in the Matengo Highlands was enormous. The graduates were qualitatively transformed by adapting new system of life like changing their consumption pattern through adapting modern life of dressing, eating, housing, doing white-collar jobs and entering Christian vocations as priests or sisters.⁶⁸ The first to adapt coffee production and planting of European fruits guavas, plums, peaches, oranges, passions and trees were these graduates.⁶⁹ The schools were again used as recruitment ground for new Christians. As the young people understood the religious instructions as catechumens, they then qualified to be baptized hence increasing the numbers of Christians.

5. British Social Services in the Matengo Highlands

The Administrative Officer of Lipumba Sub-District G. Van Dam reported thus in the Annual Report of 1925:

*“There is no Government School in this Sub-District. In the early part of 1923, with the permission of the Education Department the then existing Government School at Lipumba was transferred to Manda on Lake Nyasa where it was hoped such an institution would be more useful”*⁷⁰

It is not that the Matengo Highlands children did not want to go to school, but the fact was that the Catholic missionaries had established and spread schools deep into the remote interior. Right from the beginning, the British admired the state education and vowed to adapt it.⁷¹ However, the German government did not have any school in the Matengo Highlands because it was so remote and there were limited resources to run the schools. The only option was to encourage and emphasize the coming of European missionaries who would among other things establish schools, health services and other social services on behalf of colonial government.⁷²

When the British took over, the mandate territory did not establish schools in the Matengo Highlands. The evidence available from the archival sources, show that, until 1961 at independence, there was no government school in the Matengo Highlands. The other attempt to establish Mbinga Native Administration School in the 1947 Ten Year Plan for Development of Education was once again proved futile,⁷³ because it was very close to Benedictine school at Mbinga. The Provincial Educational Officer was satisfied that no children of school going age in the area who were not attending mission schools. Consequently, the native Administration school was therefore not recommended to open.⁷⁴

Basing on the Phelps Stokes Commission Report on Education (1924), the colonial government in Tanganyika convened a conference of 1925 in Dar-es-Salaam which deliberated on how to forge cooperation between the government and missions in the field of education provision in Tanganyika.⁷⁵ The Benedictines were represented by Fr. Gallus Steigler (later Abbot-Bishop of Peramiho in 1931). The conference agreed that the colonial government will subsidize in educational materials and teachers to mission schools. The mission should appoint Educational Secretaries to liaise with Education Department in the matters pertaining to education. The government will design uniform syllabi and inspect the schools, and on the other hand the missions should abide by the government regulations. With these issues in place, the colonial government passed an Education Ordinance in 1927 which provided the legal framework on how to implement provisions agreed upon in the 1925 Educational Conference.

The implementation of the Ordinance in the Matengo Highlands included the application for registration of schools.⁷⁶ The Secretarial Confidential Circular required that only schools which were long established where land is available, where the natives desire the schools and the Native Authority have given their consent can be granted registration. In order to establish a school, missions were supposed to lodge a request for right of occupancy.⁷⁷ The work of sorting out mission schools, visiting them ascertaining the wishes of the native population regarding them, and eventually recommending where necessary, the granting to various missions of Right of Occupancy is being done.⁷⁸ British further laid down regulations to be followed when missionaries wanted to set a school.⁷⁹ At the national level there was a Central Advisory Committee assisted by Provincial and District Committees. In the Songea District the Benedictine mission was represented in the committee by its Educational Secretary.⁸⁰

As far as education in the Matengo Highlands was concerned, the Benedictine Order was the main player. The government, however, provided grants-in-aid for the registered mission schools. That is why when in 1951 the mission asked the Matengo Native Authority to extend assistance for school fees of poor pupils studying in Roman Catholic mission schools; the District Commissioners' Conference did not approve the request.⁸² The ground for the refusal was that grants-in-aid provided for the approved schools were a satisfactory contribution. Besides, the Matengo Native Treasury from its inception 1926 used to subscribe to the running of Luhira Native Administration School at Songea. The Matengo Native Treasury also used to set aside expenditure on the upkeep and school fees of pupils attending Luhira School from Umatengo.⁸³ But it is important to note here that, all pupils who were attending the government school of Luhira from the Matengo Highlands were children of Bambos and jumbes only. The children of the common people of the Matengo Highlands relied on the Benedictine Roman Catholic mission schools only. It can be concluded that, in the absence of the mission schools in the Matengo Highlands even the elementary education provided by missionaries would not have been there.

This is evidenced by the available archival data which show that, the Provincial Education Officer set aside £6000 for the construction of secondary school at Songea. The first intake of standard VII students was taken in 1951 school year. The entrance exam for the same was administered to the following schools Luhira, Mbamba Bay, Songea, Mbemba, Mbesa, Ziwani, UMCA Liuli, RC Mission Kipatimu, UMCA Ngumbo, Masasi, Benedictine Ndanda, and Mahuta middle schools.⁸⁴ The strange thing here is that the Benedictine middle schools in the Matengo Highlands which included Kigonsera, Litembo, Mbinga and Maguu were not allowed to sit for the entrance examination for secondary education.⁸⁵ The only alternative given to them was either to go to Kigonsera Minor Seminary, Peramiho Teachers' College, Peramiho Nursing School, Mgazini Catechetical College, Home Craft Centers and Peramiho Trade School. This in a way explains why during the early years of independence, the majority of the Matengo youths who had secured jobs were in the fields of the

professions mentioned above. Most of them worked as teachers, nurses, technicians, masons, carpenters, and tailors.

6. Education in the Matengo Highlands

From the onset, the missionaries in the Matengo Highlands had constantly been using education as an important component for evangelization. Up 1950s there was a chain of mission schools in the Matengo Highlands. Together with these registered schools there was another fleet of sub-grade schools which were established, owned and operated by the Roman Catholic Church in the Matengo Highlands as they are presented in the archival source.⁸⁶ Sub-grade schools were mainly offering ecclesiastical instructions to catechumens and those pupils preparing for confirmation in Christianity. These schools were also used as bush schools where children were prepared to enter the mission registered schools. Catechists did great job of teaching large numbers of pupils in these sub-grade schools with very low wages as we have argued above.⁸⁷

The concept of sub-grade schools was coined by the colonial government when it started intervening in the control and supervision of education in the Matengo Highlands in 1946.⁸⁸ Through its power to register schools, colonial government was able to prune down the Catholic schools by registering only 12 schools as supported by archival data.⁸⁹ The rest of the schools were denied registration purportedly of being sub-grade. By refusing registration to sub-grade schools, the colonial authority reserved all rights to deny the so-called sub-grade schools right to get assistance through government grants-in-aid. The missionaries had to keep on maintaining these schools since they helped the missions to train their catechumens and other religious instructions to the young people. In a way the Benedictines accused the British colonial government of indifference to the Roman Catholic despite its important role it played to provide education for the entire Matengo Highlands.⁹⁰ This negative attitude is based on the fact that Benedictines were basically of German nationals, from Germany which apparently was an arch enemy of United Kingdom. The British authority had no trust on the missionaries of German nationals since the time of World War I and World War II. This mistrust had a paralyzing effect on many missionaries of Abbey Nullius of Peramiho as Fr. Lucius puts it:

*"... the relationship between colonial officials and missionaries, though on the whole correct (good weather friends!), was not free from distrust. ... negotiations concerning school policy health policy and marking out of new mission plots were sometimes characterized by bickering and haggling, even in questions of minor importance."*⁹¹

In comparison of the two missionary groups working in Songea District, the British colonial authority did not hide their negative attitude to the Roman Catholics. The other missionary group working in Songea District was the U.M.C.A., whose Centre was in Likoma Island. Roman Catholic mission was locked into conflict with the U.M.C.A. over establishment of schools along Lake Nyasa shore. The British colonial authority did hide its partisanship to the U.M.C.A. group which was apparently made up of British nationals. The British District Officer did not hide his hatred to the German Roman Catholic missionaries by blatantly saying:

*"The Roman Priests in this district cannot be considered all cultured men, thus they are prone to condemn all non-Romans unheard. It is worth of note here that the U.M.C.A. repudiate the name of 'Protestant' as applied to them, ... it seems 'Protestant' means 'Mshenji' in this district"*⁹²

It is this negative attitude on the part of British authority in Songea District which contributed towards Benedictine missionaries in the Matengo Highlands to start contemplating on their retreat to the Peramiho monastery where they will rarely get into contact with British authority. Instead they advocated for the local church that will have to interact with the colonial authority and the independent government which was around the corner.

From the evidence above the following conclusions can be drawn. First education as a missionary strategy of evangelizing the Matengo Highlands had reached saturated condition and its agenda was somewhat accomplished. Almost all the children in the Matengo Highlands were either enrolled in the mission registered schools or in the so-called sub-grade schools. At the bottom line, the objective of spreading Christianity in the Matengo Highlands had reached a point where schooling was no longer an important component in missionary work. Furthermore, the Christian character of the schools had to undergo changes in the late fifties because of losing its intrinsic Christian character.⁹³ Teachers of mission schools were no longer accepting the position of passive employees of mission, but were ready to take up an active part in the shaping of the whole education policy. Further emancipation of teachers was the result of increasing share in the running of schools through grants-in-aid. Until 1969 when schools were nationalized in the Matengo Highlands, the government was paying

up to 90 percent of teachers' salaries. Many teachers felt much more government employees than that of missionaries.

Rising and escalating costs of running educational sector was another challenge to the Benedictine missionaries. This cost rose because the number of pupils had increased drastically in the 1950s.⁹⁴ This challenge was made more complicated due to the lack of funds from Europe and America which were now not forthcoming. At the same time the colonial government was reluctant to assist the schools financially especially the so-called sub-grade schools which formed the majority of school children. Furthermore, the government intervention in the education system disturbed the missionaries in the Matengo highlands. Policy of registration of schools was not very friendly to the Benedictines who seemed to prefer relative freedom. That is why when they found increase of colonial interference they could not want to stay in the mission stations where freedom was not forthcoming. With few exceptions many missionaries retreated to the Abbey Nullius of Peramiho. But the missionaries had succeeded through Christianity and education to bring about cultural formation and indoctrination to the western culture among the Matengo people.

Christianity had brought all the children of up to seven years old into its circles and children were no longer exposed to traditional upbringing. Instead the children passed through bush schools, catechetical centers and registered schools where they got learning skills, writing and numerals, there was also indoctrination of Euro-Christian ideologies.⁹⁵ Above all children were detached from traditionalism and local skills, were integrated into new demands, behavior and taste such as elitist attitude. The youth who were the products of missionary schools started looking for wage labour at the coastal plantations and in the South African mines in order to meet their modern demands which included cloth, sugar, salt, shoes, payment of poll and hut tax and other exotic goods.⁹⁶ There was a contradiction in this regard due to the fact that the missionary schools had produced experts who needed jobs which were not available in the Matengo Highlands. Sometimes basing on the Masters and Servants Ordinance of 1923 many recruitment agents arrived in the district to recruit labors. An agent arrived in the district in 1948 to get laborer's for Messrs Bird and Company Ltd sisal plantations; for Mikindani sisal plantation in Lindi District. However, the Matengo were not forthcoming for jobs attainable outside their locality. One of the reasons was that the Roman Catholic missionaries in the Matengo Highlands were reluctant to allow their followers to go to the coast.⁹⁷ The reasoning was that when the youth went to the coast they never returned. If it happened that they return to their homes in Umatengo they came as members of other religions, they changed their Christian religion. The other reason was that Matengo did not want to work in plantations where the wages were very low shs 14/= per month while if they cultivated coffee crop it was earning them huge money. As a result, the recruitment agencies preferred taking the Wanyasa and Wangoni.⁹⁸

7. Conclusion

The Matengo Highlands has never been carefully attended to by the German, British or Tanzania independent governments in the area of education. For instance, it was not until late 1960s did the government begin building schools (actually not building but rather nationalizing existing mission schools). In fact, the building of new schools in the Matengo Highlands came much more lately perhaps in 1980s. The evidence gathered through oral interviews discovered that in the Matengo Highlands colonial contact was strictly done when taxes needed to be collected or recruitment of labour for *boma* and road construction and military services. German administration had no effect in Umatengo for the first 10 years of German colonization, it is clear that their influence was minimal and that their presence played no role in historical memory.⁹⁹ In fact, the first direct effect of German colonization on Umatengo was the construction of the first church by German Benedictine missionaries, in Litembo in 1901. From this time until the present, the Catholic Church has had a greater influence on people's daily lives, with regard to providing opportunities for material and spiritual advancement, controlling behavior, and defining worldview – than any other institution, including the successive governments that have ruled Tanzania.¹⁰⁰ Much contact with Europeans in the Matengo Highlands was that with the Benedictine Fathers missionaries. In practical terms, the relationship between the Matengo and the Catholic Church largely defined the Matengo's experience of colonization, administrative control, and to a large degree their experience of the cosmopolitan world.¹⁰¹ At independence education system was just nationalization of mission schools and health facilities remained in the hands of the missionaries.

According to the data and evidence presented herein before, education provided by the missionaries to the Matengo Highlands was very elementary. It was based on bush schools, primary schools, middle schools, upper primary schools. The graduates ended in teachers' college, catechetical college, nursing school, home craft and trade schools. Up to independence 1961 Roman Catholic mission schools were not sending their products to secondary schools except for those who went to pursue seminary studies for the preparation into priesthood.¹⁰²

It is therefore, no wonder why Matengo Highlands had big numbers of teachers, nurses, social workers and technicians who were found across the country up to 1960s. To the contrary, it was very rear to get

secondary graduates in the Matengo Highlands at that time. This education was not liberative by not creating situation of addressing the challenges confronting the Matengo society. The deliberate effort to deny the pupils the chances to go to secular secondary level education was a calculation to make them ignorant of what is going on around the world and hence confining the Matengo people to parochial setting. The recipients of mission education were not of inquiring mind but rather submissive people.

Schools had become recruitment ground for the future Christians in the Matengo Highlands. The number of schools included bush schools, preparatory schools, catechetical schools, subgrade schools, registered schools, middle schools, secondary schools, teachers' colleges, domestic science and trade schools. These institutions were owned and managed by the Benedictine missionaries until 1969 when they were nationalized by the independent government. As it is stated above, the colonial government used to furnish the registered schools with grants-in-aid in return for supervision of the curriculum administration. The content of what was taught was based both in secular education and religious instructions.

The non-registered schools were mainly taught by the catechists who devoted much time on religious instructions. The pupil was expected to excel in religious studies which led her/him to get the necessary sacraments. At standard II the pupil who performed well in religious instructions qualified for Eucharist sacrament. At standard III the pupil qualified for Confirmation sacrament hence becoming a full equipped person in the Godly nation. It was anticipated that upon completion standard IV or VIII, this person will straight away qualify for next sacrament of marriage for a lay person or for priesthood for those who received vocation to serve in the church as clergy. Consequently, this system served as a strategy to enhance reproduction of Christianity in the society because this circle was continuously perpetuated. However, the educational situation in the Matengo Highlands during this period would have been bleak if the Benedictine Fathers did not establish schools. This paper found that the colonial governments, both German and British did not establish any school in the Matengo Highlands. The missionaries provided education capable of sustaining their demands rather than for sustainable development of the Matengo people.

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