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The Decolonization of Christianity in Colonial Kenya

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The Decolonization of Christianity in Colonial Kenya

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in History

by

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Abstract

Kenya was an unusual case within the larger narrative of decolonization in the British Empire. The presence of white settlers, the relative newness of the colony, and the particular way in which the British pursued the civilizing mission all combined to make the end of empire particularly violent for all parties involved. Independence in Kenya was precipitated by a bloody civil war, known as Mau Mau, and the imposition of martial law by the government for almost a decade. In the midst of this chaos, the Church of England's missionary body, the Church Missionary Society worked to protect their converts while also proving to colonial authorities that they were a necessary part of the civilizing mission. This dissertation analyzes the methods and motivations of the CMS in the midst of civil war and rehabilitation efforts in Kenya, but it also seeks to place mission activities within a larger context of twentieth century empire. Mission activities did not emerge from the ether in 1952 after the declaration of Emergency in Kenya. Rather their work began with the declaration of war in 1914, as Europe fell into the Great War. As such, CMS activities in Kenya must be examined through the long lens of empire, from 1914 to 1963. Missionary reaction to colonial policies throughout the time period are examined in hopes of better understanding the long history of decolonization. The CMS was chosen for this project because they provide special insight into the ways in which empire was formed and destroyed in the twentieth century. This is in due in part to ways in which they created their identity as the state missional body of the British Empire. If the Church of England was the official church of the English state, then so too was the CMS the official religious organization of empire. By examining how the self-identified state missional body of empire handled, or rather mishandled decolonization, we can begin to open new paths of analysis into the larger patterns and pictures for the end of empire.

Acknowledgements

The typical image of a graduate student in popular culture is one of a solo figure, typing away on their laptop, late into the night with only a cup of tea for solace. And indeed graduate student life involves many cups of tea and many late nights spent alone researching and writing. But the reality is that it takes a village to properly raise a child or write a dissertation. My village has been populated with the finest scholars, teachers, friends, family, and archivists that a researcher could hope for. It would take pages upon pages to acknowledge everyone that made this dissertation possible, but it is my honor and privilege to name a few here in the opening pages of my final product.

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Additional thanks must also be paid to the various archives I visited during my research journeys. The National Archives at Kew, Lambeth Palace Library Archives in London, the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh, and most particularly the Cadbury Research Library in Birmingham, England. Sifting through thousands of documents is an often tedious, sometimes exhilarating experience and the archivists turned a painstaking process into a joyful one. Aiding in that process were friends and family members who traveled along on some of my archival journeys. My mother, Jennifer Sauceman, and Anna Kapoor made my last to the UK for research my favorite trip of all. I must again thank Sanket Desai at this juncture for introducing me to the joy that is Nandos.

At this juncture, my acknowledgements threaten to run longer than the actual dissertation, but before I close, I must thank those closest to me. Without them I could not have completed even a page of this work. Jennifer Sauceman has been a best friend and mentor since childhood. We are living the dream! Saxton Wyeth inspired every page of this dissertation and he is indeed my favorite. Finally, this dissertation is dedicated to my parents. Words cannot express how important their support has been to me in life and academia.

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A Divine History of Decolonization

“Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God.”

“Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.”¹

Introduction

“I address you as my friends; whether you are my friends or not, only God can tell.”² The Archbishop of Canterbury, Geoffrey Fisher, spoke these words in 1955 to five thousand Kikuyu who had gathered in Fort Hall, Kenya to hear the senior bishop of the Church of England memorialize Kikuyu Loyalists who had died in the country’s recent civil war, known as the Mau Mau conflict. At the end of his short speech, Fisher blessed the foundational stone of the forthcoming Anglican Church and memorial hall. Labor for these projects was to be provided by inmates in the nearby British run detention camp as penance and rehabilitation for their dastardly deeds against good Christian men and women. Despite the seeming import of this moment—no less a figure than the head of the Anglican Church participating in forced labor schemes in the midst of a civil war—the ceremony has only been documented twice in the larger historical record. Its first appearance was as a small snippet in the larger documentary series *The British Empire in Colour* which focuses on the larger narratives and impacts of British decolonization throughout the empire. The incident also makes a brief appearance in the conclusion of Daniel Branch’s work *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya* as one example of the use of detainee labor.³

¹ Matthew 5:9; 5:11 KJV.

² *The British Empire in Colour* (Silver Spring, MD: Acorn Media, 2002).

³ Daniel Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya: Counterinsurgency, Civil War, and Decolonization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 210. Branch is less interested in the ways in which Fisher’s visit spoke to the larger questions of decolonization, and more concerned with the ways in which Kenya’s collective memory has remembered, and forgotten, the horrors of war.

This story, and its relative lack of publicity, highlight many of the complications connected to the narratives of Anglicans in Kenya during the fading years of the British Empire. Historians have yet to fully grapple with the ways in which decolonization touched on every aspect of life in the British Empire, particularly in regards to the shrinking cords of power that bound the parts of the map colored pink to British led organizations. At its height the liberalizing bent of empire was a force to be reckoned with.⁴ Missionaries and reformers desired to lift up the downtrodden people of the world, those who Kipling called, “our new-caught, sullen peoples/ Half devil and half child.”⁵ In order to purify Asians and Africans—and sometimes even their own working class—of their childlike and pagan ways missionaries were needed to bring the

⁴ This liberalizing force was first felt in India in the early 19th century, and although the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny quietened the rhetoric of improvement and Anglicization, it still continued. For a deeper investigation of these impulses see: Phillipa Levine, *Prostitution, Race, and Politics: Policing Venereal Disease in the British Empire* (New York: Routledge, 2003); Antoinette Burton, *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865—1915* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Harald Fischer-Tine and Michael Mann, eds., *Colonialism as Civilizing Missions: Cultural Ideology in British India* (London: Anthem Press, 2004); Janice Boddy, *Civilizing Women: British Crusades in Colonial Sudan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

⁵ Rudyard Kipling, “The White Man’s Burden,” in Chris Brooks and Peter Faulkner, eds., *The White Man’s Burdens: An Anthology of British Poetry of the Empire* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1996), 307—8. The literature dealing with the importance of the idea White Man’s Burden is immense in scope and subject. The title has been used to discuss multiple empires across continents and centuries. Several of the most important works include: William Easterly, *The White Man’s Burden: Why the West’s Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006), Gretchen Murphy, *Shadowing the White Man’s Burden: U.S. Imperialism and the Problems of the Color Line* (New York: New York University Press, 2010); David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993). There is an important counterpoints to the scholarly attention given to the White Man’s Burden, namely the idea of the Black Man’s Burden first publicized by H.T Johnson two months after Kipling’s poem was published in the United States. Johnson’s rejoinder also focused on American imperial efforts, but the phrase has been used widely since to denote British and American imperial actions. For more see: Michele Mitchell, ““The Black Man’s Burden”: African Americans, Imperialism, and Notions of Racial Manhood 1890—1910,” in Eileen Boris and Angelique Janssens, eds., *Complicating Categories: Gender, Class, Race, and Ethnicity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 97—8.

light Christianity.⁶ CMS missionaries, as the official arm of the Church of England, were more than happy to do their part for God and King but as the twentieth century progressed liberal empire became more difficult to define and thus more difficult to achieve. What had seemed simple in the nineteenth century, the provision of basic tenets of Christian theology within a British patriarchal framework, became increasingly ill-defined as the state's vision of modernity changed. In the post Great War period, the state increasingly demanded technical, industrial, and agricultural skills from their purveyors of liberal empire, but missionaries were ill-equipped to provide such training. In the face of apathy on the home front, increasing independence from their converts, and decreasing funds from the state, the church struggled to find a way forward. Only when the white man's burden became too heavy to carry did missionaries begin making true progress towards the creation of an independent Anglican church, one that could stand the test of time in independent Kenya.

This transition brings us back to the Archbishop of Canterbury on that fateful spring day in Fort Hall, Kenya. On the one hand, Fisher's presence and participation in the activities at Fort Hall during the height of the Mau Mau conflict strengthens those who see church and state as united in culpability for crimes and atrocities committed during the years of martial law.⁷ Fisher knew that the local population was largely pro Mau Mau, and that they were certainly not

⁶ The idea of the White Man's Burden and race in the British Empire is an important field of historical study, but several scholars argue that in fact class was the deciding factor in the empire, not race. For more see: David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) and Alison Twells, *The Civilizing Mission and the English Middle Class, 1792—1850: The 'Heathen' at Home and Overseas* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

⁷ Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2005), 94. The majority of narratives about the end of empire in Kenya spend very little time discussing CMS activities. These absences will be discussed in more depth in this introduction.

uniform in their desire for this new church. After his speech Fisher estimated that of those five thousand, ten percent were loyal to the British, twenty percent were more friendly to the British than Mau Mau, fifty percent were more loyal to Mau Mau and ten to twenty percent were “Mau Mau at heart.”⁸ This pessimistic notion contradicts the story presented in *The Times* as one of joyous rapture at the Archbishop’s presence.⁹ But this story can also be read a different way. Its very absence from every major narrative about the end of empire in Kenya would seem to signal the inconsequential nature of Church activities during these massive upheavals. Between these two extremes—conflation with the state or shuffled off to the dustbin of history there lies a third path—one which takes into account the long history of Anglican missionary work in Kenya and the CMS’ desperate attempts to maintain their relevance to the colonial state during the period of decolonization.

This third path provides a launching point for this dissertation. The CMS was not a superfluous player in the grand drama of British decolonization, nor were they the lackeys of the British state. I argue that they were a group trying desperately to cling to an increasingly narrow middle path; one which allowed them to maintain legitimacy with their African converts while also ensuring a continued supply of material and financial support from the colonial state. They wanted to be peacemakers and reconcilers, but their fiscal needs and heavy handed leadership left them with few options by 1955. Ironically by the time the Archbishop made the trip to Kenya to make a grand stand for the Church of England, its missional arm was already a post-colonial organization in all but name. The Bishop of Mombasa had been forced by lack of British personnel to appoint Africans as leaders in the church, and any dreams of glory via the state’s

⁸ *British Empire in Colour*.

⁹ “Kenya Martyrs Memorial,” *The Times* 19 May 1955. The article describes the 4,000 Kikuyu present breaking into Christian song as a sort of praise for the Archbishop’s visit.

rehabilitation schemes had already melted away. Despite these losses, failure bred success for CMS missionaries by allowing for the creation of the Anglican Church of Kenya. Today the ACK is the largest Protestant church in the country with a vibrant and strong tradition of African leadership.¹⁰ The only way for the ACK to succeed in a post-British Empire world was to incorporate Africans into the leadership structure more fully. This dissertation contends that Anglican missionaries were both imperial actors and imperial subjects. During the Mau Mau conflict they tried desperately to balance both of these roles, but increasingly failed. The balance between subject and actor was lost, which revealed deep cracks between missionary society personnel in Britain and in Kenya. This combined with the loss of missionary zeal in the United Kingdom pushed forward the so-called decolonization of Christianity in Kenya. But here again, the failure of missionaries to maintain stability and zeal smoothed the path for an easier transition into a fully-fledged member church within the global Anglican community. They could not hold onto the missional Anglican church they created, therefore missionaries were forced to allow for the emergence of an African Anglican church, one that may have looked quite different from they had planned, but one that has stood the test of time in Kenya.

The transition of the CMS into the Anglican Church of Kenya is an important story, not just for those interested in the history of religion in Africa, but also to scholars of decolonization. We cannot begin to fully unravel the threads of the British Empire for analysis until we examine the full scope of the decolonization experience. In order to understand the actions of the CMS in the midst of civil war and independence, one must first examine their foundations in the colony and their decades of interaction with both Africans and the colonial state. Missionaries viewed

¹⁰“African Anglican Church Set to Expand in Kenya,” *Christianity Today*, accessed 2 November 2015, <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/africa.anglican.church.set.to.expand.in.kenya/3710.htm>

themselves as a lynchpin of empire. They were the only bridge that connected the British populace to colonial peoples. For the colonial subjects they were the protectors and translators to the authorities. And finally they also viewed themselves as the disseminators of visions of liberal empire from the state to every population under the British flag, both at home and abroad. In order to understand how this vision fell apart in the 1950s we need to first trace its inception in the post Great War period in Kenya. These ideals are most clearly laid out in the correspondence that passed between metropole and mission field. Mission secretaries in London wrote daily to the far flung parts of their empire, and Kenya was a key component in this patchwork of mission stations. Unfortunately this correspondence was largely contained to the leadership within the CMS, which presents an excellent picture of the ways in British missionaries conceptualized of colonialism and independence, but leaves room for few African voices. Additionally, British Parliament debates and Colonial Office records present an outside view of missional work and liberal empire. It is important to trace the decreasing importance of missionaries in official documentation. In the 1920s and 1930s missionaries are all over the pages of colonial records, but by the time Kenya is plunged into civil war, missionaries were bystanders in the imperial game. Shuffled aside by the British population, African converts, and the colonial state, the CMS was left to pick up the pieces and try carve out a future for itself in newly independent Kenya. This was decolonization on a smaller scale, there were no new flags or anthems to create, and the Bishop of Mombasa only acquired a new title, Archbishop of Mombasa. The smallness of the act does not convey the importance of this change in the long term. While the first Archbishop of

Mombasa was Leonard Beecher, every Archbishop after him was a Kenyan. In the 1920s there were dozens of Anglican missionaries in Kenya, today there are only four.¹¹

This narrative history of the CMS in Kenya will not only fill in important gaps in missional history, it will create a deeper understanding of decolonization as not only a political and military process, but one that was experienced at multiple levels of British society. In recent years, scholars have increasingly grappled with the impact that decolonization had on Britain, and this dissertation hopes to expand that conversation by highlighting the ways in which Anglican mission plans and projects were intertwined with the British imperial project, but dependent upon the engagement and support of the British people. Thus, decolonization is about more than a sense of managed decline or international politics—the process was, at least in part, shaped by the engagement of organizations such as the Church Missionary Society. As they became increasingly unable to participate fully in colonial programs and events they pushed forward a miniature decolonization of their own, one that led to the Anglican Church of Kenya.

¹¹ The CMS only lists two couples for their Kenya work currently, Caroline and Dick Seed and David and Liza Cooke. The Seeds provide religious education and training while the Cookes work on programs of reconciliation and restorative justice. For more see: <http://www.cms-uk.org/tabid/740/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>, accessed 2 November 2015.

Mission Histories

In the nineteenth century the Anglican missionary Henry Venn called for a church of the three selves—self-governing, self-sustaining, self-propagating.¹² For mission societies this meant that local churches should become financially self-sufficient. Once these churches became solvent, they could become self-governing, which meant that missionaries would no longer be needed.¹³ Another common, if unfortunate, term for this ideal was a call for the “euthanasia of mission.”¹⁴ This ideal became the motto but not the lived reality for many missionaries, particularly in the nineteenth century. This was true throughout the mission field, but particularly in Africa. Although Venn was a missionary in Africa, his vision of the church of three selves was primarily meant for churches in Southern and East Asia. Here were populations full of civilized people who needed Christianity, but had legitimate cultures and thus had to be handled delicately. Conversely, Africa was a pagan, civilization-free land where many second tier missionaries could find success.¹⁵ In fact, Brian Stanley argues that many mission organizations did not turn their full attention to the continent until the 1950s, after they had been expelled from China and realized how successful they had already been in African colonies.¹⁶

¹² Mathinus L. Daneel, “African Initiated Churches in Southern Africa: Protest Movements or Mission Churches?” in *Christianity Reborn: The Global Expansion of Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century* Donald Lewis, eds. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2004), 201.

¹³ C. Peter Williams, *The Ideal of the Self-Governing Church: A Study in Victorian Missionary Strategy* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1990), 1—8.

¹⁴ Jehu Hanciles, *Euthanasia of a Mission: African Church Autonomy in a Colonial Context* (Westport, CT: Preagar Publishers, 2002), 25—6.

¹⁵ Robert W. Strayer, *The Making of Mission Communities in East Africa: Anglicans and Africans in Colonial Kenya, 1875—1935* (London: Heinemann, 1978). 6.

¹⁶ Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2009), 236—37, 307.

While missionaries focused primarily on Asia at the expense of Africa, scholars have done quite the opposite. Most literature about missional activities can be divided into two primary camps—one group focuses on the long nineteenth century while the other examines the rise of African Christianities in the aftermath of political independence. Some scholars do include the interwar period, but generally as part of their conclusions or as a prelude to their larger narratives. It seems to be a tacit agreement among many scholars that the period covering the 1920s through independence was a lacuna.¹⁷ Trends that began in the late nineteenth reached their fulfillment in the birth of indigenous churches, but few have set out to trace those developments in detail. In many ways this seems to be a product of the wealth of material present for these two periods. Scholars have spent decades sifting through missional records to uncover social, political, cultural, and economic analyses of both British and African cultures. What has emerged is a complex, messy understanding of theologies and relationships that were constantly being negotiated and remade as both missionaries and their intended converts.

The first wave of British missional histories were largely completed by amateur historians who wanted to document the successes of their particular institutions. These works frequently are exacting in their detail, but lack scope and depth in regards to historical analysis.¹⁸

¹⁷ For instance in Timothy Yates' general history of missionary expansion, Africa is given two sections, one dealing with the nineteenth century. The concluding section devotes only four pages to the first fifty years of the century before jumping to the post-colonial period. Timothy Yates, *The Expansion of Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 68—87, 166—83. Similarly Andrew Porter's work on high imperialism and the scramble for Africa begins in 1880 and concludes in 1914, however, his narrative peters out at the turn of the century. Andrew Porter, *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions, 1880—1914* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2003). Steven Maughan, *Mighty England Do Good: Culture, Faith, Empire, and World in the Foreign Missions of the Church of England, 1850-1915* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2014) suffers from a similar fate.

¹⁸ Charles Hole, *The Early History of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East* (London, 1896). Richard Lovett, *History of the London Missionary Society, 1795—1895*, 2 vols. (London, 1895). E. Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, 3 vols. (London, 1899).

However, beginning in the 1960s there was a nationalist backlash against these kinds of histories as scholars in both former colonies and imperial nations began pushing back against the narrative of the brave lonely missionary, sent only to proclaim the pure Gospel.¹⁹ In this revised narrative missionaries became the “handmaidens of colonialism,” no longer the protective heroes but part of the imperial problem.²⁰ The most powerful articulators of this new type of thinking were the anthropologists Jean and John Comaroff, whose two-volume work, *Of Revelation and Revolution* radically altered the field of missional studies.²¹ They argued that not only were missionaries engaged in various political processes at every turn, but they were also the true conquerors of the African mind. For the Comaroff’s imperialism was imbricated in every facet of European life and while missionaries may have wanted to create what the Comaroff’s term liberal democracy, in fact they replicated a “racially-coded, class-ridden system of domination.”²²

¹⁹ Thomas Spear, “Toward the History of African Christianity,” in *East African Expressions of Christianity* Thomas Spear and Isaria N. Kimambo eds., (Oxford: James Currey, 1999), 9; J.F.A Ajayi, *Christian Missions in Nigeria, 1841—1891: The Making of a New Elite* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1965); CP Groves, *The Planting of Christianity in Africa*, 4 vols. (London: Lutterworth Press, 1948—1958); Roland Oliver, *Africa Since 1800* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967).

²⁰ Seth Quartey, *Missionary Practices on the Gold Coast, 1832—1895: Discourse, Gaze, and Gender in the Basel Mission in Pre-Colonial West Africa* (Youngstown, NY: Cambria Press, 2007), i.

²¹ Jean and John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa, Volume I* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991). In South Asia Susan Bayly’s work performed a similar function. Susan Bayly, *Saints, Goddesses, and Kings: Muslims and Christians in South Indian Society, 1700—1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

²² *Of Revelation and Revolution*, 254—55. For more on the connections between missionaries and democracy see: Robert Dowd, *Christianity, Islam, and Liberal Democracy: Lessons from Sub-Saharan Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); C. Rosalee Ewell, “Closer to Christ, Closer to One Another: Evangelicals in Partnership,” in *Called to Unity for the Sake of the Mission* John Gibaut and Knud Jørgensen, eds., (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2014), 90; Robert Woodbury, *The Missionary Roots of Liberal Democracy* (Washington D.C.: American Political Science Association, 2012).

Of Revelation and Revolution created one of the primary divisions within the historiography of missions—were missionaries truly imperial expansionists? Furthermore, how much of an impact did these religious groups have on African societies? Andrew Porter argues that in fact most missionaries were ambivalent at best towards imperialism; while they may have participated in colonial endeavors they were not in fact consistently pro-empire. In many cases they supported what they categorized as non-radical nationalist movements.²³ Others contend that missionaries did not destroy indigenous cultures; rather they saw themselves as the guardians of those cultures from both other Africans and colonial authorities.²⁴ However, scholars such as Martin Ballard contend that in fact missionaries could never escape their racialized notions of superior civilization, nor could they solely transmit Christianity, notions of cultural superiority always seeped through.²⁵ These debates are complicated by the firewall that exists between historians of empire and historians of missions. As Norman Etherington argues, “Just as the history of the British Empire can be written without much attention to missions, the history of missions can be written without much attention to empire.”²⁶ Both groups talk around

²³ Andrew Porter, *Religion Versus Empire? British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 322—3.

²⁴ Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989), 8—9, 108; Walter Gam Nkwi, *African Modernities and Mobilities: An Historical Ethnography of Kom, Cameroon, c. 1800—2008* (Bamenda: Langaa, 2015); David Maxwell, “Decolonization,” in *Missions and Empire* Norman Etherington, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 287—88. For some scholars the middle path is most attractive—British missionaries debated empire, feared empire, or were simply not important enough to worry about in the expansion of the British state. For more see: Hilary Carey, *God’s Empire: Religion and Colonialism in the British World, c. 1801—1908* (Cambridge University Press, 2011); A.P Thorton, *The Imperial Idea and Its Enemies: A Study in British Power* (London: Macmillan, 1959); Brian Stanley, *Bible and Flag: Protestant Missionaries and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990).

²⁵ Martin Ballard, *White Man’s God: The Extraordinary Story of Missionaries in Africa* (Oxford: Greenwood World Publishers, 2008).

²⁶ Norman Etherington, “Introduction,” in *Missions and Empire* Norman Etherington, ed., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 3.

each other, but rarely to each other. Part of the problem is the porous nature of missionary work; British missionaries worked all over the world, and missionaries from Europe and the United States worked freely in the empire. Added to these difficulties are complication of theological division, the unification, disappearance or modification of various missional societies, and of course the multitude of abbreviations and acronyms.

Thus the two fields have carried on, utilizing each other at the margins of their narratives, but rarely integrating the two. The most fruitful fields of recent in recent missionary historiography include class, gender, and nationalism. Emily Manktelow's work examines the ways in which many missionaries aspired to have middle class social lives, while inculcating working class ideals on the families they were trying to convert.²⁷ Missionary work was aspirational in more than the theological sense for many who traveled to the colonies for religious work. Imperial scholars frequently document the ways in which class and race intertwined throughout the British Empire, as whiteness amidst the sea of colonial faces became a marker of civilization, and thus higher class of persons.²⁸ This was particularly true for missionaries at the turn of the century. Few had university degrees, but their literacy, dress, and

²⁷ Emily Manktelow, *Missionary Families: Race, Gender, and Generation of the Spiritual Frontier* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 14.

²⁸ Juliette Bridgette Milner-Thorton, *The Long Shadow of the British Empire: The Ongoing Legacies of Race and Class in Zambia* (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2012), 65—75; Catherine Hall, "The Rule of Difference: Gender, Class, and the Empire in the Making of the 1832 Reform Act," in *Gendered Nations, Nationalism, and Gender in the Long Nineteenth Century* Ida Blom, Karen Hagemann, Catherine Hall, eds., (Oxford: Berg, 2000), 107—36; Catherine Hall, *Civilizing Subjects: Colony and Metropole in the English Imagination, 1830—1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Antoinette Burton, "New Narratives of Imperial Politics in the Nineteenth Century," in *At Home With the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World* Catherine Hall and Sonya Rose, eds., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 212—29; Margaret Stroebel, *European Women and the Second British Empire* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991); Vron Ware, *Beyond the Pale: White Women, Racism, and History* (London: Verso, 1992).

British sense of culture placed them above those they hoped to convert.²⁹ Women and gender studies have played an important part in the work of the above scholars in creating new ways to study missionary and imperial stories. Much as missionaries play on the fringes of the imperial narrative, women function in a similar manner for missional histories. The official record for most missionary societies focus almost entirely on male missionaries; single women were allowed to work in the field, but not to obtain that coveted title of missionary. Rather they were relegated to the “worker” position.³⁰ Wives of male missionaries were also overlooked, despite the fact that their work was necessary to the functioning of mission stations. They were valuable but unpaid labor.³¹ This remained the case for many missionary societies right up to independence. Today women can be missionaries in their own right for the CMS, but in many African churches, including the ACK, men continue to control the high clerical positions.

²⁹ Anna Johnston, *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800—1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 17; Susan Thorne, *Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture in the Nineteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999); Mary Taylor Huber, Nancy C. Lutkehaus, eds., *Gendered Missions: Women and Men in Missionary Discourse and Practice* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999).

³⁰ This is true for the CMS as well. Throughout their archives single women are always referred to as workers, never missionaries in their own right.

³¹ Dorothy Hodgson, *The Church of Women: Gendered Encounters Between the Maasai and Missionaries* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005); Ulrike Sill, *Encounters in Quest of Christian Womanhood: The Basel Mission in Pre- and Early Colonial Ghana* (Leiden: Brill, 2010); Elizabeth Elbourne, “Mother’s Milk: Gender, Power and Anxiety on a South African Mission Station, 1839—1840,” in *Missionaries, Indigenous Peoples, and Cultural Exchange* Patricia Grimshaw and Andrew May, eds., (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2010), 10—23; Rhonda Ann Semple, *Missionary Women: Gender, Professionalism, and the Victorian Idea of Christian Mission* (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2003); Elizabeth Prevost, *The Communion of Women: Missions and Gender in Colonial Africa and the British Metropole* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Clare Midgley, *Feminism and Empire: Women Activists in Imperial Britain, 1790—1865* (London: Routledge, 2007), 92—122.

For many missional scholars the nineteenth century is king.³² At the dawn of the short twentieth century, religious scholars turn their focus to indigenous Christianity, particularly the Revival movements that swept the continent.³³ For the decolonization period specifically there are only a small collections of works; however they tend to be case studies presented as articles or chapters in edited works.³⁴ These sketches of African missionary experience highlight the complex world of missionaries attempting to weather the transition from religious and political control to independence. In Kenya the Mau Mau uprising and the violent British response heightened these complexities. However, missionaries remain on the fringes of scholarship, always mentioned but never fully analyzed. Only John Stuart, a missionary historian, and

³² For example see Andrew Porter's chapter in *Missions and Empire* for the Oxford History of the British Empire series which is supposed to end in 1914, but peters out in the 1890s. Andrew Porter, "An Overview, 1700—1914," in *Missions and Empire* Norman Etherington, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 40—63.

³³ Kevin Ward, "Africa," in *A World History of Christianity* Adrian Hastings, ed., (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999), 192—237; Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998); Robert Houle, *Making African Christianity: Africans Re-Imagining Their Faith in Colonial Southern Africa* (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press, 2011); Kevin Ward and Emma Wild-Wood, eds., *The East African Revival: History and Legacies* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2012); Zablon Nthamburi, ed., *From Mission to Church: A Handbook of Christianity in East Africa* (Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1991); Derek Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival: A History of Dissent, c. 1935—1972* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Nicholas Creary, *Domesticating a Religious Import: The Jesuits and the Inculturation of the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe, 1879—1980* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011); Brian Stanley and Alaine Lowe. eds., *Missions, Nationalism, and the End of Empire* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2003). The first generation of African scholars to work in the aftermath of independence also focused on recreating and redeeming older religious traditions in African societies. The most prominent proponent of this idea in Kenya was John Mbiti. For more see John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (New York: Praeger, 1969).

³⁴ Sarah Stockwell, "'Splendidly Leading the Way'? Archbishop Fisher and Decolonisation in British Colonial Africa," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 36:3 (2008), 545-564; Andrew Porter, War, Colonialism, and the British Experience," *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte* 5:2 (1992), 269—88; Philip Boobbyer, "Moral Re-Armament in Africa in the Era of Decolonization," in *Missions, Nationalism, and the End of Empire*, Brian Stanley and Alaine M. Low, eds., (Grand Rapids, Mich: W.B. Eerdmans Pub, 2003), 212—36 are a few examples of this literature.

Caroline Elkins examine missionaries in any depth. Stuart's work focuses on the actions in the highest levels of Anglican leadership, particularly the infighting between church leaders in Great Britain and the Bishop of Mombasa, Leonard Beecher.³⁵ Conversely, Elkins highlights the complicity of missionaries in looking the other way or participating in British human rights abuses.³⁶

These two authors provide an important beginning for historians seeking to understand the connections between Mau Mau, missionaries, and the end of empire, but it is just that, a beginning. Stuart's insistence on divorcing missionaries from the larger context of decolonization and his single-minded focus on the highest echelons of church leadership mean that the various responses of missionaries on the ground are overlooked. Because Stuart only devotes one chapter of his work to Kenya, he does not have adequate space to delve into the complexities of missionary activities during the late colonial period. Elkins may have more space to analyze missionaries in the pages of *Imperial Reckoning*, but her treatment of their work is equally myopic.³⁷ She sees only 'bad' missionaries who used religion to buttress the colonial state or forsook their ethics in exchange for retaining colonial favor. This makes sense within her larger argument regarding the nature of the British Empire, but we must remember that the reality of missionary experience was multifaceted. In order to understand the diversity of missionary reactions one must analyze the church from top to bottom. Additionally, this dissertation will provide more research on the rehabilitation programs offered in detention camps

³⁵ Jon Stuart, *British Missionaries and the End of Empire: East, Central, and Southern Africa, 1939—64* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2011), 130—51.

³⁶ *Imperial Reckoning*, 94.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 298—304.

because those efforts will provide insight into a whole range of broader issues concerning Mau Mau, decolonization, and missionary experience in the twentieth century.

Stories of Decolonization

Historians who study the decolonization process in the British Empire generally fall into three opposing schools. Those in the first group, characterized by scholars such as John Darwin, argue that decolonization was a chaotic progression of British losses, pushed forward by lack of imperial will and indigenous nationalism.³⁸ The second school, advocated by historians such as Ronald Hyam, contends that decolonization was a process of managed decline, ably handled by pragmatic politicians and civil servants.³⁹ The third held by Wm. Roger Louis, maintains that international events were the decisive catalyst in decolonization.⁴⁰ In this school, the Cold War, the United Nations, and the United States all push and pulled the United Kingdom towards

³⁸ John Darwin, *Britain and Decolonization: The Retreat from Empire in the Post-War World* (New York: Longman, 1988); John Darwin, "British Decolonization Since 1945: A Pattern or a Puzzle?," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 12:2 (1984), 187—209; Raymond Betts, *Decolonization* (New York: Routledge, 1998); David Birmingham, *The Decolonization of Africa* (London: UCL Press, 1995); Robert Springhall, *Decolonization Since 1945: The Collapse of European Overseas Empires* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001); Larry Butler, "British Decolonization," in *Crisis of Empire: Decolonization and Europe's Imperial States, 1918—1975* (London: Bloomsbury, 2008), 1—17; Stanley Wolpert, *Shameful Flight: The Last Years of the British Empire in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Jeremy Black, *The British Empire: A History and Debate* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015).

³⁹ Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire: The Road to Decolonisation, 1918—1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Franz Ausprenger, *The Dissolution of the Colonial Empires* (New York: Routledge, 1989); JD Hargreaves, *Decolonization in Africa* (New York: Longman, 1988); Michael Turner, *Britain and the World in the Twentieth Century: Ever Decreasing Circles* (London: Continuum, 2010); Andrew Stewart, *Empire Lost: Britain, Dominions, and the Second World War* (London: Continuum, 2008); Lawrence James, *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1994).

⁴⁰ Wm. Roger Louis, *Ends of British Imperialism: The Scramble for Empire, Suez, and Decolonization* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007). David Percox, *Britain, Kenya, and the Cold War: Imperial Defence, Colonial Security, and Decolonisation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2004), 1—2. Percox also falls into the camp of managed decline as outlined by Ronald Hyam, but he stresses the Cold War priorities of the British official mind over domestic issues; Daniel Maul, *Human Rights, Development, and Decolonization: The International Labour Organization, 1940—1970* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Wm. Roger Louis, *Imperialism at Bay, 1941—45: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).

decolonization, particularly in the aftermath of the Suez Crisis. For scholars of decolonization Kenya continues to be a major point of contention. The chaos and horror of both the Mau Mau conflict and British attempts to suppress it provide ample fodder for academics of all sides of the debate.

In many ways Kenyan independence presents an anomaly within the decolonization process. White settlers dominated the colony and thus more traditional decolonization plans would not work in the region. When a civil war broke out that threatened multiple ethnic groups, white settlers, and the colonial administration, the British were pushed to the limit. Although the British had dealt with armed insurgency before, the combination of the shadowy faces of Mau Mau and inter-ethnic violence proved especially difficult. Whereas earlier violent uprisings were sustained by more traditional nationalist rhetoric, Mau Mau presented a new dilemma. The British attempted to follow many of the same procedures that proved successful in Malaya, but in their African context, these procedures took on increasingly dark overtones.⁴¹

For British historians the complexities of Mau Mau and the Kenyan independence provide ample opportunities to support diverse theories concerning decolonization. Historians are united in their presentation of the horrors that occurred in Kenya, but they do so within very

⁴¹ The connective tissues that bound the empire together, even in its waning days, have become increasingly important aspects of the study of decolonization. Naturally Kenya plays a large role in these studies, each of which highlight the violent nature of decolonization, and the necessity of force to suppress counterinsurgencies. For more see: David Anderson and David Killingray, eds., *Policing and Decolonisation: Politics, Nationalism, and the Police, 1917—1965* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992); Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame: Britain's Dirty Wars and the End of Empire*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Charles Townshend, *Britain's Civil Wars: Counter-Insurgency in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Faber and Faber, 1986); Leon Comber, *Malaya's Secret Police, 1945—60: The Role of the Special Branch in the Malayan Emergency* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2008); T.R. Mockaitis, *British Counterinsurgency, 1919—1960* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990).

different analytical frameworks. On one hand historians such as Caroline Elkins contend that the Kenyan Emergency is a perfect example of the dastardly devious nature of British rule.⁴²

Imperial Reckoning claims that the British administration undertook plans to imprison the entirety of the Kikuyu population.⁴³ In order to suppress the civil war and imprison thousands of Kikuyu people, the British relied heavily on their military and police forces. Scholars disagree on the use and abuse of force in the colony. Huw Bennett argues that, contrary to the myth of minimal force, the British armed forces regularly went knowingly out of bounds regarding legal uses of force.⁴⁴ Until the Special Branch arrived in Kenya, responsibility for Mau Mau fell on the shoulders of the police force. Despite its many problems throughout the Emergency, David Throupe contends that by independence it had successfully transitioned and reformed into a reliable Kenyan agency.⁴⁵ On the other hand scholars such as David Anderson and David Percox argue that Mau Mau is an example of British shortsightedness, but they focus more heavily on

⁴² Elkins, xv; For more general critiques of British imperial rule (including decolonization) see: Philippa Levine, *The British Empire: Sunrise to Sunset* (New York: Pearson Longman 2007); Richard Gott, *Britain's Empire: Resistance, Repression, Revolt* (New York: Verso, 2011); Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World* (New York: Verso, 2001); Kwasi Kwarteng, *Ghosts of Empire: Britain's Legacies in the Modern World* (London: Bloomsbury, 2011); Priya Satia, *Spies in Arabia: The Great War and the Cultural Foundations of Britain's Covert Empire in the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

⁴³ Elkins, xvi. At times Elkins compares British actions to those of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, as evidenced by her reference to "Britain's Gulag" in her title. However she places most of the blame for any genocidal rhetoric on Kenya's white settler population rather than on the British administration. Elkins, 60—1.

⁴⁴ Huw Bennett, *Fighting the Mau Mau: The British Army and Counter-Insurgency in the Kenya Emergency* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 107—08. Bennett argues that despite the use of heavy handed force in Kenya, there was no genocidal bent in British military actions in the colony.

⁴⁵ David Throupe, "Crime, Politics and the Police in Colonial Kenya, 1939—63," in *Policing and Decolonisation: Politics, Nationalism, and the Police, 1917—1965* David Anderson and David Killingray, eds., (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 127—57.

the internecine violence and African agency in creating and sustaining that brutality.⁴⁶

Despite Elkins' inflammatory rhetoric, within her narrative a murkier picture emerges. Those who were imprisoned on suspicion of Mau Mau activities were frequently forced to take the group oath once they were imprisoned or other detainees killed them.⁴⁷ This part of Elkin's narrative dovetails nicely with both Percox and Anderson who present a picture of a Kenya that was already on the brink of ethnic violence before the Emergency. In the end, Mau Mau was a violent movement, part of a larger movement of ethnic violence in Kenya, but that does not absolve the British of their own human rights violations. The presence of white settlers and the characterization of Mau Mau as a demonic, atavistic group, intently seeking to kill all whites and worship the devil complicated the British response. Most recently, Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon argues that Kenya is a prime example of the overall success of British policy to pursue the goals of liberal empire, despite the fact that they frequently required "illiberal dirty wars" before independence could be granted.⁴⁸ Myles Osbourne presents a picture of what exactly this liberal empire entailed in his examination of the largest development scheme ever developed for Kenya, Swynnerton Plan. Osbourne contends that even British attempts to establish liberal ideas of

⁴⁶ David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005), 278. David Percox, "Internal Security and Decolonization in Kenya, 1956—1963," in *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 29:1 (2001), 92—116; Frank Furedi, *The Mau Mau War in Perspective* (London: James Currey, 1989); Greet Kershaw, *Mau Mau From Below* (London: James Currey, 1997); C.J. Rosberg and J. Nottingham, *The Myth of 'Mau Mau': Nationalism in Kenya* (New York: Praeger, 1966); Nic Cheeseman, "Introduction: Political Linkage and Political space in the Era of Decolonization," *Africa Today* 53:2 (Winter 2006), 3—24; B.A. Ogot and W.R. Ochieng', *Decolonization and Independence in Kenya, 1940—93* (London: James Currey, 1995); Myles Osbourne, *Life and Times of General China* (Princeton: Markus Wiener, 2015).

⁴⁷ Ibid, 176—77.

⁴⁸ Grob-Fitzgibbon, 377. Piers Brandon emphasizes the intellectual seeds of liberty sown by the Empire as a cause for its eventual fall. Piers Brandon, *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire, 1781—1997* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007); Niall Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World* (London: Allen Lane, 2003).

development created new challenges for the British state as local chiefs continually thwarted British attempts to control populations through the use of funds.⁴⁹ Indeed defeat always nipped at British heels, as David Percox argues in his examination of the cooperation of British officials with the ‘moderate’ faction of Kenyan nationalists. British imperial strategy called for the continuation of British military forces even after independence, but Kenyatta refused to consider the notion. For Percox independence was a method of escape for British officials who were left with increasingly few tenable options in the colony.⁵⁰

Kenya has proved fertile ground for British scholars, but historians of Africa also turn to the former colony to analyze a host of issues, including collective memory and state formation. In the aftermath of independence Jomo Kenyatta and a small group of political elites focused on rebuilding Kenyan society and maintaining their hold on power. Kenyatta wanted a non-tribally based society, and his treatment of Mau Mau reflected those priorities.⁵¹ The official government slogan regarding the war years was, “Forgive and Forget,” but forgetting proved harder than expected.⁵² Today Kenya’s president is Uhuru Kenyatta, Jomo’s son, and the same cadre of elite families still control the country’s political future.⁵³ If the state wanted to forget Mau Mau, scholars did not. Robert Edgerton calls the story of Mau Mau, “a lesson for us all.”⁵⁴ In 2013 the

⁴⁹ Myles Osbourne, “Controlling Development: ‘Martial Race’ and Empire in Kenya, 1945—59,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 42:3 (2014), 465.

⁵⁰ Percox, 92—3.

⁵¹ Daniel Branch, *Kenya: Between Hope and Despair, 1963—2011* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 16.

⁵² Marshall Clough, “Mau Mau and the Contest for Memory,” in *Mau Mau and Nationhood* E.S. Atieno Odhiambo and John Lonsdale, eds., (Oxford: James Currey, 2003), 255—63.

⁵³ Kenya’s four presidents since independence are Jomo Kenyatta, Daniel Arap Moi, Mwai Kibaki, and Uhuru Kenyatta. Each served multiple terms, although Uhuru Kenyatta is in the midst of his first. The country suffers from periodic election violence, and Uhuru has appeared at the Hague to face charges for that violence.

⁵⁴ Robert Edgerton, *Mau Mau: An African Crucible* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989), xii.

British High Court awarded £19.9 million in costs and compensations for victims of British human rights abuses.⁵⁵ Several high profile scholars participated in the legal case calling for reparations to Mau Mau victims, and their activities created a furor in the academic world. *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* devoted a special section to the case.⁵⁶ Of particular interest was the discovery of ‘lost’ archives of Mau Mau material in the British National Archives at Kew. David Anderson claimed that “London’s response to this inquiry [about the lost files] was as cynical as it was deceitful.”⁵⁷ Their work has not been without controversy however, as historians such as Pascal Imperato and Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon urge for a different kind of historical engagement with Mau Mau and its attendant horrors. In a dual book review of Elkins’ *Imperial Reckoning* and Anderson’s *Histories of the Hanged*, Imperato castigates Elkins for

attempt[ing] to drape herself in a uniquely academic mantle, namely her assistant professorship in Harvard’s history department. There is obvious subterfuge here: In failing to inform readers of her primary role as a political activist, she has attempted to camouflage the bias this clearly imparts to her historical narrative.⁵⁸

Anderson is let off more lightly, with a nod to his “scholarly gravitas,” rather than an accusation against his legal activities.⁵⁹ Grob-Fitzgibbon also gives a nod to this debate with his conclusion

⁵⁵ “UK to Compensate Kenya’s Mau Mau Torture Victims,” *The Guardian* 6 June 2013. For more information see: <https://www.leighday.co.uk/International-and-group-claims/Kenya/The-Mau-Mau-claims>.

⁵⁶ *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 39:5 (December 2011).

⁵⁷ David Anderson, “Mau Mau in the High Court and the ‘Lost’ British Empire Archives: Colonial Conspiracy or Bureaucratic Bungle?,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 39:5 (December 2011), 708. In addition to their writings in this journal, several scholars also took to the popular press to lay out their claims against the government and archival officials. Most notably Caroline Elkins published several articles in *The Guardian*, as well as *The Atlantic*, and the *Washington Post*.

⁵⁸ Pascale Imperato, “Differing Perspectives on Mau Mau,” *African Studies Review* 48:3 (December 2005), 148.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 151.

to *Imperial Endgame*, claiming that judging the morality of British decolonization is, “a question best left to philosophers and kings.”⁶⁰

In many parts of the British Empire former colonies slipped away with little international fanfare. In Ghana Kwame Nkrumah and Sir Charles Arden-Clarke worked together to usher in Ghanaian independence. It was considered the model of peaceful transition by many.⁶¹ In the Persian Gulf, the British withdrew over the protests of local sheikhs.⁶² The story in Kenya was quite different. The presence of white settlers, Britain’s shrinking resources, and the desire to impose one last dose of British civilization on the unwilling Kikuyu led to a catastrophic battle for control over the future of Kenya. In this grand drama, missionaries played a small but important role, one that is frequently overlooked by scholars. Currently the vast majority of decolonization historians are political specialists and the narratives they create, however excellent, are also heavily devoted to politics. In the end, this means that decolonization persists in being seen only a process of political disengagement as opposed to one of imperial separation.⁶³ The British Empire was certainly a political entity, but it was more than that. The empire fostered social, cultural, and economic institutions as well. How should historians of decolonization begin to account for what Fanon called imperialism of the mind? Post-colonial scholars such as Richard Werbner and Laura Chrisman have begun to examine the ways in which imperialism still infuses many parts of African cultures, politics, and identities, but actual

⁶⁰ *Imperial Endgame*, 377.

⁶¹ Ama Biney, *The Political and Social Thought of Kwame Nkrumah* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 2.

⁶² Glen Balfour-Paul, “Britain’s Informal Empire in the Middle East,” in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume IV, The Twentieth Century* Judith Brown and Wm. Roger Louis, eds., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 512.

⁶³ There are of course exceptions to the rule, including: Maul and Robert Tignor, *Capitalism and Nationalism at the End of Empire: State and Business in Decolonization of Egypt, Nigeria, and Kenya, 1945—1963* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

examinations of the decolonization process remain largely unexplored.⁶⁴ Analyses of empire and postcolonial studies can shed light on the ways in which society, state, and faith are created and modified in newly independent countries, but without decolonization to act as a bridge key pieces of information will be left out of the narratives created.

It is perhaps only natural that for historians of decolonization life after independence is a subject best left to others. For instance John Darwin's only foray into neo-colonialism is to denounce it as solely economic and therefore not applicable to the heterogeneous British Empire.⁶⁵ For those who study the end of empire in Kenya the narrative tends to end on December 12, 1963 as the Union Jack was lowered for the last time. For missionaries that end date is even earlier, the spring of 1955. The Anglican Church of Kenya was not created until 1963, but the missionary field operated as an independent organization in all for the remaining years of British rule. Life for Anglicans in Kenya after independence is subject ably covered by Galia Sabar's work, *Church, State, and Society in Kenya: From Mediation to Opposition, 1963—1993*.⁶⁶ This dissertation cannot speak directly to the ways in which church and state function in contemporary Kenyan society, but it can expose the foundational stones on which that relationship was built in the formative years of the twentieth century.

⁶⁴ Richard Werbner, *Postcolonial Subjectivism in Africa* (New York: Zed Books, 2002) and Laura Chrisman, *Postcolonial Contraventions: Cultural Readings of Race, Imperialism, and Transnationalism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).

⁶⁵ John Darwin, *The End of the British Empire: The Historical Debate* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, Ltd., 1991), 52—3.

⁶⁶ Galia Sabar, *Church, State, and Society in Kenya: From Mediation to Opposition, 1963—1993* (London: Frank Cass, 2002).

A New Story: Divine Decolonization

Although the development of historiographical narratives of missions have become increasingly complicated and sophisticated in recent years, scholars remain fixated on the introduction and implementation of Christianity during imperialism, rather than the time frame during which imperial governments were beginning to leave their colonies. In addition to a heavy focus on the introduction of missionaries, historical studies also emphasize the transition from European to African leadership within missional churches. However, for various reasons scholars have generally overlooked the key period of decolonization within their studies. Despite the paucity of research for this period, scholars of multiple fields could attain greater insight into the process of decolonization, the growth of nationalism, race relations, the so-called Special Relationship between the US and the UK, the Cold War, power structures within societies, and the practice of Christianity by multiple denominations if only the period were given a deeper, fuller historical examination. Unfortunately the majority of works which consider these issues in relation to each other are quite short; articles, chapters, and paper presentations make up the bulk of the historical research thus far.⁶⁷ Despite this progress Jacob Dharmaraj successfully argues that the histories of Christian missions still need to be decolonized.⁶⁸ It is beyond the scope and ambition of this dissertation to decolonize two centuries of missional history. However by analyzing overlooked aspects of both missionary activity and decolonization, this dissertation hopes to provide fresh insight into both schools of study.

⁶⁷ For example many of the most recent discussions of this topic have been articles focused on very specific events within the larger narratives of decolonization. See Julie Hearn, “The “Invisible” NGO: US Evangelical Missions in Kenya,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 32:1 (2002), 32—60 and Stockwell’s, ““Splendidly Leading the Way””.

⁶⁸ Jacob Dharmaraj, *Colonial and the Christian Mission: Postcolonial Reflections* (Delhi: Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1993), 9.

The story of CMS work in Kenya in the twentieth century is one of small successes, many setbacks, and ultimately the creation of the Anglican church of Kenya. This dissertation will not tell a full narrative history of those stories, but will instead focus on key pressure points. These incidents and events highlight the importance of the CMS as both colonial subject and actor. Where did missions use the support of colonial authorities? Were there limits on the level of interference church officials would allow from their financial backers in both Nairobi and the local African councils? How and when did the CMS choose to speak out against injustices perpetrated by the state? In order to answer these questions this work will be divided into five chapters.

The first chapter examines the implementation of Christianity in Kenya in its early colonial days, as various missional groups attempted to stake their claim to African lands and peoples. In these heady early days of empire, missionaries struggled to find converts and it was only the disruptive force of the Great War that pushed Africans to join CMS churches. In the midst of conflict the CMS found its first role as lynchpin of empire in Kenya. While earlier British imperial efforts in Africa focused on the ideal of indirect rule and a soft touch, the demands of war pushed them into new territory. In 1915 authorities passed the Native Followers Recruitment Ordinance which conscripted hundreds of thousands of Africans into the Carrier Corps.⁶⁹ Pay was terrible, rations were abominable, and death was likely in these newly formed porter corps. Only missionaries seemed to be able to provide protection and an alternative to conscription. The Volunteer Carrier Corps a joint effort among various missionary groups, and each reaped the benefits of African gratitude.⁷⁰ It was here that missionaries in Kenya first

⁶⁹ Hew Strachan, *The First World War in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 115—16.

⁷⁰ Mary Bowman-Kruhm, *The Leakeys: A Biography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 7.

developed the patterns that would characterize their relationship between Africans and the colonial state. They wanted to prove their utility to the British state, in this case by participating in the formation of the Volunteer Carrier Corps, while also using that same mechanism to protect African converts.

As we will see in chapter two that premise immediately proved unworkable in the aftermath of the war. The CMS hoped to be prosperous peacemakers in Kenya, using their special state relationships to shield converts from the continued demands of the state for African labor and land. Unfortunately they could not maintain that balance, which damaged their work and identity in the 1920s. Rather than focus on the female circumcision crisis that rocked the colony the post-war decade, chapter two analyzes the Society's focus on education. By sidestepping the divisive circumcision question, missionaries hoped to provide protection to Africans and service to the state, but that dream was ultimately futile. The independent schools movement undercut them at every turn, which left the CMS with an identity crisis, one exacerbated by the Great Depression and the advent of World War II. Both of these events will be examined in chapter three, with an eye towards understanding the dawning of a new hope for the organization in the post-war period.

The final two chapters explore the ways in which the emergence of the Mau Mau conflict and the declaration of martial law in the colony affected the CMS. Initially many missionaries saw the colony's civil war as an opportunity similar to the Great War. If the CMS could again prove to be a protective force over Africans, while also proving their utility to the state, they could gain access to financial support which would allow them to continue their work. Even the violence of Mau Mau cheered missionaries, because they saw it as a chance to live out the dictums of their faith. True African converts would be willing to stand strong against evil and

thus receive the blessings promised in the New Testament, “blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you.” For missionaries, civil war was a chance to determine once and for all who the ‘real’ African Christians were, while also demonstrating to the colonial state how necessary missionaries really were. Unfortunately Mau Mau proved to be no Great War, and civil war did not deliver the same opportunities to missionaries. Added to these troubles were the increasing reports of human rights abuses in the colony, which perplexed and distressed the CMS. They needed access to the colonial state in order to maintain their presence in the colony, but they also needed to maintain the appearance of legitimacy for Africans. Again and again they attempted to play peacemaker by privately airing their concerns to colonial officials in Nairobi and London, but that was not enough to shield them from criticism in the metropole or colony. By 1955 they were a society on the brink, pushed into created a pamphlet, *Time for Action* which hearkened back to their glory days of missional glory, while also lambasting the state for enacting a “double Mau Mau” on the Kikuyu.⁷¹ Alas for the CMS the pamphlet had little effect on the British population; it did not bring in additional funds or missionaries to carry on the society’s work. The strongest reaction to *Time for Action* came from the Archbishop of Mombasa, Leonard Beecher. Missionaries and church officials in Kenya felt betrayed by the pamphlet and the fallout of its publication was felt for the eight years. In 1963 the Church Missionary Society in Kenya officially transitioned into the Anglican Church of Kenya, but independence in all but name was achieved in 1955. The story of the CMS in the twentieth century features more than its fair share of failures and setbacks, however each of these defeats paved the way for greater African leadership into the church. If *Time for Action* failed its

⁷¹ University of Birmingham Library, CMS/B/G3/A5/6/3, Pamphlet *Kenya: Time for Action* 18 January 1955.

objectives of serving as a clarion call for new missionaries, it did push CMS leadership on the ground in Kenya to look more actively for Africans to take up church positions. In turn, this secured their future in independent Kenya.

Failure bred success for the CMS in the twentieth story, and their stories of disappointment give us much insight into the varied nature of decolonization in the British Empire. Brian Stanley argues in the introduction to *Missions, Nationalism, and the End of Empire*, missionaries have generally been forgotten within the narratives of decolonization.⁷² Conversely, missional historians have overlooked the larger process of decolonization. As John Stuart writes, “whatever the causes of empire’s formal end in Africa they were too many and varied, and too complex to go into in a book concerned primarily with missions and missionaries.”⁷³ However, to separate these narratives only creates fractured historical theses—missionaries were intimately intertwined with the process of decolonization, whether or not they wanted to be, and decolonization, particularly in Kenya, was similarly enmeshed with missionary activities. By bringing these two stories together, one can create a better understanding of Mau Mau, the Emergency, and the process of decolonization. All too frequently decolonization is studied as a military and/or political process, but it was much more than killing insurgents or raising a new flag. Missionaries, by dint of their multiple connections across societal boundaries, lived and worked in a space that not only dealt with the politics of decolonization but also the lived reality of that process.

⁷² Brian Stanley, “Introduction,” in *Missions, Nationalism, and the End of Empire*, eds. Brian Stanley and A.M Low (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2003), 2.

⁷³ Stuart, 23.

Chapter One: The Advent of Success for the CMS in Kenya

“It was brought out at that time that there were three great instincts that had characterised our British relation to races, African and Asiatic, with whom we had had to do—I will not say as rulers, but as those who were in a position of responsibility and, in some sense, of authority—the instinct of freedom, the instinct of Empire, the instinct of philanthropy.”⁷⁴

Early Struggles

In 1836 a secretary from the Anglican Church visited the Basel Mission Institute in Switzerland. There he hoped to find new recruits to work in the far flung mission fields currently staffed by the missionary arm of the Church of England, the Church Missionary Society or CMS. While there, this secretary recruited a young man named Johann Ludwig Krapf to work in Ethiopia.⁷⁵ Krapf dutifully toiled in Ethiopia for the next year, albeit with very little to show for it. In 1837 he took a short furlough to Europe where he married a widow, sight unseen, and then traveled back to Africa. While away Ethiopia forbade any further European presence, but Krapf continued in his attempts to return to his ‘home’ mission field. It was only after his boat sank while trying to cross the Gulf of Aden that Krapf turned his attention further south to Zanzibar.⁷⁶ Thus begins the strange history of CMS work in Kenya.

Krapf first landed in Mombasa in 1844 and quickly lost his wife and child to a fever.⁷⁷ Consequently Krapf’s first act as missionary in Kenya was to bury his family outside the city

⁷⁴ *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Lords, “East Africa: Status of Indians and Native Labour,” 14 July 1920, Volume, 41, column, 132—33.

⁷⁵ Paul E. Kretzmann, *John Ludwig Krapf, the Explorer-Missionary of Northeastern Africa* (Columbus, Ohio: Book Concern, 1920), 32—34.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 53—58, 64—6.

⁷⁷ Grant LeMarquand, “Studies in East African Anglicanism,” *Anglican and Episcopal History* 80:3 (Sept. 2011), 237.

limits as a sign that he was “claiming Africa for Christ.”⁷⁸ He then ventured into the interior of the country and set up the first mission station at Rabai. The missionaries that followed were all Germans who were equally attached to the idea of conversion and linguistics. Each traveled widely throughout the interior, however their rate of success remained relatively small.⁷⁹ In 1853 Krapf returned to Europe on account of his failing health and the mission stations he left behind were slowly abandoned by Krapf’s fellow German missionaries.⁸⁰ While in Rabai, Krapf focused primarily on translating the Bible and discounting indigenous belief systems.⁸¹ There were no development projects or schools, although the men did have some material gifts to dispense at their discretion.

After Krapf’s departure, CMS work essentially ceased to function until 1875, when a joint effort by the British government combined with an upsurge in public support for missionary efforts to establish a new mission station in East Africa. This station would be located at Freretown and its primary purpose would be to take in freed slaves to provide them with housing and training for future employment.⁸² In many ways this station was a success, almost one

⁷⁸ Church of the Province of Kenya, *Rabai to Mumias: A Short History of the church of the Province of Kenya, 1884 to 1994* (Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1994), 1—2.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 6—10. Krapf’s first convert in 1851 was an elderly cripple on his deathbed, and his success rate did not improve throughout the rest of his tenure in East Africa. Robert Strayer argues that Krapf’s legacy has very little to do with his ministry or exploratory adventures, but instead with Krapf’s vision of a string of CMS mission stations that would stretch across the width of the African continent.

⁸⁰ Krapf’s work frequently only appears a sentence or anecdote in CMS histories, notable only for its early date, but it is important to elucidate on the origins of missions in the colony. Additionally, Krapf’s solo work serves as an important foil to highlight the importance of the connection between colonial authorities and missionary efforts in later projects.

⁸¹ Kretzmann, 94—5.

⁸² William Salter Price, *My Third Campaign in East Africa; A Story of Missionary Life in Troublous Times* (London: W. Hunt & Company, 1890), i. The station was named after colonial agent, Sir Bartle Frere, who had worked on the treaty signed with the Sultan of Zanzibar to end the slave trade.

thousand former slaves lived and worked on the thousand acre settlement between 1875 and 1890; however social tensions frequently curtailed any progress the missionaries might have made. Robert Stayer argues that Freretown laid the foundation for the social stratification and strict colonized-colonizer dichotomy present in colonial Kenya. These early missionaries had no interest in African leadership or participation within the larger Christian community. Rather they were there to be subjects—taught how to follow the rules or suffer corporal punishment.⁸³ By 1910 Freretown had ceased to be a rehoming station for freed slaves, but hundreds of Africans remained living on the property. Missionaries provided education to the children at Freretown, but it was heavily focused on re-created an idyllic pre-industrialization lifestyle. They wanted students to become artisans and farmers, not church leaders, teachers, or clerical employees. Missionaries at Freretown frequently claimed Africans did not have the capacity to adopt western style civilization or culture.⁸⁴

Despite the limitations placed on educational and vocational training placed on Africans at Freretown, the advent of British colonial rule in Kenya changed missionary objectives and outcomes. British colonial intervention began in Kenya with the bankruptcy of the Imperial East Africa Company in 1895. William Mackinnon first received a charter for the business in 1888, but the lack of developed economic and trade interests seriously hampered its ability to survive.⁸⁵ Mackinnon banked his hopes for prosperity and empire on two things—plans to build a railroad to the interior of Africa and his connections within the larger context of Indian Ocean trade. Particularly important for this second plan was Mackinnon’s close friendship with Sir Bartle

⁸³ Robert Strayer, *The Making of Mission Communities in East Africa: Anglicans and Africans in Colonial Kenya, 1875-1935* (London: Heinemann, 1978), 15—16.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 19—23.

⁸⁵ J. Forbes Munro, *Maritime Enterprise and Empire Sir William Mackinnon and His Business Network, 1823-93* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell Press, 2003), 409—12.

Frere.⁸⁶ In the aftermath of the company's collapse the British government would carry on with the first of Mackinnon's goals—the building of a railroad that would connect the East African coastline with the interior.

This railroad was meant to protect Uganda from invasion, and more importantly the headwaters of the Nile. Additionally it would allow for greater ease in the penetration of the interior of Britain's new holding, the East Africa Protectorate. Labor needs were high due to the hundreds of miles of track needed to traverse the land between the Mombasa port and Lake Victoria. For this the British turned to Indian migrants; over 30,000 came to work on construction of railroad.⁸⁷ One British official even termed East Africa, “an America for the Hindu.”⁸⁸ However, before East Africa could become a new India, colonial officials made two decisions. The first was that land found in the interior Highlands could only be successfully cultivated and civilized through white settlement.⁸⁹ The second decision was that in order to make the railroad profitable and to recoup the £6.5 million spent on construction this new line would need regular commercial usage.⁹⁰ Unfortunately for officials, throughout the 1890s very few white settlers came to East Africa. Even in 1903 there were only approximately thirty white settlers in the Protectorate. To counteract this lackluster response various settlement schemes and advertisements cropped up, promising fertile and profitable futures for British farmers who were brave enough to make the journey to East Africa. The first wave of white settlers to arrive in the

⁸⁶ Thomas Metcalf, *Imperial Connections India in the Indian Ocean Arena, 1860-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 169. This is the same Bartle Frere who inspired the name of Freretown.

⁸⁷ Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame: Britain's Dirty Wars and the End of Empire* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 209.

⁸⁸ Metcalf, 166.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 177—78.

⁹⁰ Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2005), 2.

protectorate after the completion of the rail line were Boer and British settlers looking to escape the aftermath of the Boer War. However, a relatively small group of British aristocrats and financiers also bought land and settled in the area. Naturally, the British were more enthusiastic about this second group, however the great expanses of seemingly available land and need for financial returns to pay for the railroad meant that all were more or less welcomed with open arms.⁹¹

These open arms were less generous to the last group who moved into the area—white missionaries. While Caroline Elkins states that one purpose of the railroad was to facilitate the spreading of Christianity, G.H. Mungeam contends that in reality the head of the protectorate, Arthur Hardinge, did not support all missional work. Hardinge claimed that the aggressive tactics of missionaries created antagonism between the British and Arab populations. He was certainly not the only colonial official to see British missionary work as counter-productive to the overall good of the colony. Another official, Francis Hall, declared that CMS missionaries in Mombasa were more interested in the ‘flesh-pots’ of the city and female missionaries were more interested in marriage than conversion.⁹² Despite these conflicting visions of missionary relationships with the Protectorate, one thing is certain—missionaries did come by the droves to East Africa, and not just CMS missionaries.

By the time the Ugandan railway was completed there were no fewer than four major missionary groups in the protectorate. Although the largest group was the CMS, they were joined by the equally ambitious Church of Scotland Mission (CSM), Africa Inland Missions (AIM),

⁹¹ Dane Kennedy, *Islands of White: Settler Society and culture in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987), 21—31.

⁹² G.H. Mungeam, *British Rule in Kenya, 1895—1915: The Establishment of Administration in the East Africa Protectorate* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 21—22, 37.

Evangelical Lutheran Mission, and the Gospel Missionary Society (GMS).⁹³ Each mission group competed fiercely to establish and maintain their holdings in various spots across the Protectorate. Many mission groups had more half a dozen stations, each with only a few missionaries responsible for the station and the CMS followed this plan, albeit to a larger scale. Their main area of focus became the Fort Hall district, where they had two larger stations, Karuri and Kahuhia. However, Scottish missionaries established three primary mission stations of their own at Thogoto, Tumu Tumu, and Chogoria with Thogoto becoming its main headquarters. They kept their focus and influence quite centralized in comparison to other missionary organizations.⁹⁴ Despite the overall unity of purpose presented by these various missionaries—namely conversion to Christianity, each denomination fought tooth and nail for the right to access various ethnic groups and villages throughout the Protectorate. For while the missionaries were plentiful, converts were not. Thus missional competition was not just about finding enough space to build a station, it was primarily a conflict over who would have access to amenable groups. In this the Uganda railway was quite helpful. Not only did it solve the logistical problems of travel into the interior, it provided greater contact with the Kikuyu people, who seemed to welcome the new faith, or at least seemed more welcoming than many of their African counterparts such as the Maasai.

⁹³ For more information about the various missionary groups see: Robert Macpherson, *The Presbyterian Church in Kenya: An Account of the Origins and Growth of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa* (Nairobi: Presbyterian Church of East Africa, 1970), David Sandgren, *Christianity and the Kikuyu: Religious Divisions and Social Conflict* (New York: Peter Lang, 1989), Lawrence Njoroge, *Catholic Missions in Kenya: The Case of the Spiritans and the Consolata, 1870-1970*, Thesis (Ph. D.)—University of Notre Dame, 1991, 1991.

⁹⁴ Robert Tignor, *The Colonial Transformation of Kenya: The Kamba, Kikuyu, and Maasai from 1900 to 1939* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 110—114.

Once the railway was completed, the CMS made a beeline for the interior, but Scottish Presbyterians were already on the ground. The two denominations co-existed unhappily until 1902 when they signed a spheres of influence agreement which carved out their own individual areas for missionary activities. Over the next decade as more and more missionaries arrived, additional spheres of influence agreements were created among the various Protestant groups.⁹⁵ They were not always friendly relations, but each faction managed to maintain *détente*. In part these agreements worked because Protestants feared Catholic influence over potential converts. Thus, although Catholics had an established a presence in the protectorate, they worked completely independently of the Protestant groups.⁹⁶ This separation was largely due to Protestant antipathy towards the Catholic faith. Many missionaries felt that belief in Islam was preferable to the taint of Catholicism on the pristine nature of Christianity.⁹⁷ Indeed one missionary, A.W. McGregor wrote:

To me it seems a serious matter that such a district [Murang'a] should be overrun with an influence so distinctly un-English... I ask what must be the effect on the loyalty of these people as part of the British Empire to have the country so overrun with an alien influence, if we, who stand for all that is true, straight-forward and loyal to God and country, do so little.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Strayer, 41—43.

⁹⁶ Catholics were actually the first Christian missionaries to work in Kenya in the late 1400s with the arrival of the Portuguese on the East African coast, but their numbers had quickly dwindled. They reemerged as a force to be reckoned with in 1899 with the arrival of the Holy Ghost Fathers. For more detail see Söng-gyu Pak, *Christian Spirituality in Africa: Biblical, Historical, and Cultural Perspectives from Kenya* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 88.

⁹⁷ This is true throughout Protestant missionary fields in both Africa and Asia, and extended even into a preference for pagan faiths as opposed to Catholicism. For more see Heather Sharkey, *American Evangelicals in Egypt: Missionary Encounters in the Age of Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 29—30 and Eric Robert Reinders, *Borrowed Gods and Foreign Bodies: Christian Missionaries Imagine Chinese Religion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 108—112.

⁹⁸ Qtd in, Strayer, *Making of Mission Communities in East Africa*, 43.

Catholic influence was a serious threat to many Protestant missionaries, on both theological and patriotic grounds, thus many of their maneuvers in the early part of the twentieth century were designed to keep Catholics away from precious potential converts. However, their desires were thwarted as Catholics were allowed entry into many of the interior regions south of the Tana River.

In addition to problems with their Catholic brethren, the particular form of ‘pious imperialism’ practiced by missionaries in the Kenya colony faced an even bigger hurdle, namely lack of converts.⁹⁹ As described in the annual CMS report for 1907-08, African Christians were a difficult commodity—women hindered missionaries in their work as did alcohol and illegal activities. Tellingly this section is entitled, “unworthy converts.”¹⁰⁰ Thus, even when Africans professed the Christian faith, there were always fears that this conversion was not soul deep. Rather it was a momentary choice, made for personal or social gain rather than for deep seeded beliefs. There was always be a tension for missionaries in their attempts to woo people to the faith, while also guarding that faith from what they saw as easy-day converts who did not truly believe.

Initially many mission societies were unsuccessful in their attempts to bring people to their respective mission stations, but changes from the protectorate authorities began to push them closer to church doors. Although unwitting the introduction of the hut tax in 1902 and the land alienation schemes of 1903 and 1907 meant that young Africans, particularly men would be forced to seek employment and missionary owned land was mainly attractive to the *ahoi*,

⁹⁹ David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005), 15.

¹⁰⁰ Church Missionary Society, *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East* (London: Salisbury Square, 1908), 56—7.

landless men in Kikuyu society. In fact most early converts in CMS areas emerged from this class. Slowly the reach of missionaries expanded as people came for medical care and religious teaching. However, it must be emphasized that the numbers of converts remained relatively small and were primarily those who had little power or agency within Kikuyu society.¹⁰¹

In addition to their small number of converts, missionaries also struggled with theological conflicts which usually emanated in the home country, but frequently traveled to the mission fields of Africa and Asia. At the turn of the twentieth century many Christian denominations attempted to form closer working unions, particularly for missionary endeavors, but that proved more difficult than expected.¹⁰² Missionaries on the ground remained wary of each other, despite their shared Protestant backgrounds. In stark contrast to the antipathy found in Kenya amongst various missionary groups, many back in the metropole wanted to focus more heavily on working together despite any theological differences. In 1910, the World Missionary Conference met under the leadership of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson. This conference was meant to herald a new world order of sorts—one in which the colonized people of the world, now under the authority of Christian governments, was ripe for mass conversion, if only cooperation could be achieved.¹⁰³ Unfortunately the optimism of Edinburgh would be shattered by two things: the increasing conflict between High Churchmen and Evangelicals within the Anglican Church and World War I.

¹⁰¹ Karanja, 52—63.

¹⁰² Pak, 88.

¹⁰³ Brian Stanley, “Twentieth Century World Christianity: A Perspective from the History of Missions,” in *Christianity Reborn: The Global Expansion of Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century* Donald M. Lewis, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2004), 52—55. For the definitive account of the 1910 Edinburgh Conference see Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference: Edinburgh 1910* (Grand Rapids, MIC: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2009).

Intra-church quarrels between Anglicans was certainly not new but in the twentieth century the scope of these disagreements would be wider than ever before due to the spirit of cooperation created by the 1910 meeting in Edinburgh. In 1913 four major denominations conferenced at the Church of the Torch in Kenya. Members present included the CMS, CSM, Methodists, and AIM and the goal was to create a federation of sorts as opposed to the previous spheres of influence agreement. Here the differences between Anglican factions created schism instead of cooperation. The Bishop of Zanzibar, Frank Weston, was an Anglo-Catholic while the Bishops of Mombasa and Uganda were Evangelicals. Weston wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury in the aftermath of the conference to decry what he saw as a slight against Anglican theology and an all too eager embrace of modernity.¹⁰⁴ Weston wanted his bishop compatriots to be put on trial for promoting heresy and schism, but after almost two years of debate among Anglican leaders in Britain, the Archbishop published a statement throwing his full support behind the Bishops of Mombasa and Uganda.¹⁰⁵ The Kikuyu Controversy pushed back any hope of greater cooperation between the denominations until after the war. It also made it even more difficult to procure African converts. Thus the first seventy years of Anglican missionary activity

¹⁰⁴ Julius Gathogo, "The Early Attempts at Ecumenical Co-Operation in East Africa: The Case of the Kikuyu Conference of 1913," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 36:2 (Oct 2010), 80—5.

¹⁰⁵ Gordon Hewitt, *The Problems of Success: A History of the Church Missionary Society, 1910—1942, Volume One* (London: SCM Press, 1971), 147—49. It is important to note that the Kikuyu Controversy is more important in terms of its impact on Anglican thought in Britain than on any practical effect on missionary activities in Kenya, at least in the immediate aftermath of the controversy. For a fuller discussion of the importance of the controversy within the context of twentieth century Anglicanism see Steven Maughan, "An Archbishop for Greater Britain: Bishop Montgomery, Missionary Imperialism, and the SPG, 1897—1915," in *Three Centuries of Mission The United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 1701-2000* Daniel O'Connell, ed., (London: Continuum, 2000), 358—369 and Gavin White, "Kikuyu, 1913: An Ecumenical Controversy," Thesis (Ph.D.)—University of London, 1970, 1970.

in Kenya were anything but successful—rather they were marred by intra-missional conflicts, power struggles with other missionary groups, and only a few success stories.

The Advent of War and Success at Last

Despite these lackluster beginnings, the fortunes of the CMS were on the verge of a windfall. Two things would turn missionary activity in Kenya into a success—the increasing number of schools available to educate young Kikuyu and the advent of World War I. Education will be analyzed in depth in the next chapter, but it is important at this juncture to highlight the importance of World War I in providing an impetus for Kikuyus turn to the churches as a buffer between themselves and the British state, or more particularly the British armed forces. It is only in 1914 that missionaries are able to provide large scale advantages to Kikuyus across multiple social classes and men sought to escape the forced labor policies of the state.¹⁰⁶ Therefore although for many the East Africa campaign was a mere sideshow to the ‘real’ war in the trenches of Europe, it is an incredibly important turning point both for missionaries and Kenyans.

The Great War began with a string of international incidents, miscues, and misdirects that still confound historians and it was no different for British and German settlers living in East Africa.¹⁰⁷ They had coexisted happily enough for the previous decade and neither empire was prepared for war, much less one with such murky beginnings. Nevertheless the two sides bungled into few naval skirmishes culminating with the bombardment of the German held Dar-es-Salaam.¹⁰⁸ Thus began the East Africa Campaign, which would cost 45,000 Africans their

¹⁰⁶ Wangari Muoria-Sal and Henry Muoria, *Writing for Kenya: The Life and Works of Henry Muoria* (Boston: Brill Publishing, 2009), 40.

¹⁰⁷ For examples of this debate see: Fritz Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1967), H.W. Koch, *The Origins of the First World War: Great Power Rivalry and German War Aims* (New York: Taplinger Publishing, 1972), and David Fromkin, *Europe's Last Summer: Who Started the Great War in 1914?* (New York: Knopf Publishing, 2004).

¹⁰⁸ Edward Paice, *World War I: The African Front* (New York: Pegasus Books, 2008), 13—16.

lives and the British Treasury more than 70 million pounds.¹⁰⁹ Initially this conflict affected primarily the white populations in each colony, although 10,000 Africans were recruited and sent to Mombasa in the fall of 1914 where they were attached to two Indian Expeditionary Forces. A few thousand were also sent to work on railway projects to aid in the transportation of troops and war materials. This first wave of African workers were relatively well paid and looked after. But in 1915 the demands of the state increased exponentially with the arrival of thousands of new troops to continent. This influx of new men required thousands of new laborers, particularly porters. In order to meet this demand the Carrier Corps was formed. Under the leadership of Lieutenant-Colonel Oscar Watkins the Corps quickly swelled to more than 45,000 men but still Watkins needed more. In response to these requirements, Protectorate authorities passed the 1915 Native Followers Recruitment Ordinance. This act allowed the authorities to conscript Africans into the Corps with a monthly stipend of only 5 Kenyan shillings per month.¹¹⁰ Additionally, chiefs and headmen were given quotas to fill and they used their newfound authority to send away males from troublesome families and rivals.¹¹¹ Despite the combined forces of indigenous and British efforts, these quotas were usually unfulfilled in most cases. The combination of low wages, the previous campaigns of heavy recruitment, and the horror stories filtering back to individual villages meant that African workers were still quite difficult to find and in order to make up the difference the state turned to harsher tactics including rounding up men in their homes at night, essentially kidnapping them for the needs of the state.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 3.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 281—82. Compare this to the earlier recruitment wage of Rs25 per month.

¹¹¹ Donald Savage and J. Forbes Munro, “Carrier Corps Recruitment in the British East Africa Protectorate, 1914—1918,” *Journal of African History* 7:2 (1966), 328.

¹¹² Robert Maxon, *Conflict and Accommodation in Western Kenya: The Gusii and the British, 1907—1963* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1989), 66.

In the midst of wartime chaos and forced recruitment, missionaries offered a safer and less coercive alternative. Initially mission students were exempt from recruitment attempts, forced or otherwise, but as the needs of the war machine intensified that became an increasingly unreliable method of evading service.¹¹³ Because mission stations offered some means of protection they became popular amongst the various ethnic groups in Kenya, but especially groups suffering under heavy conscription such as the Kikuyu. In keeping with missionary distress over the idea of ‘true conversion’ some stations actually began turning able-bodied men away due to fears that they were seeking a way to escape from the war as opposed to escape from sin.¹¹⁴ By 1917 it was clear to the missions that they could no longer provide shelter for African men, no matter their religious faith, and one missionary, a Rev. Dr. Arthur of the CSM decided to formulate a new solution. He, along with backers from the CMS and AIM, went to the authorities and proposed the creation of a Volunteer Carrier Corps, with Arthur as the captain. Arthur led his merry band of 1,800 men to Mombasa, and then on to Dar-es-Salaam where they served until January of 1918 when they were disbanded.¹¹⁵ Although this unit was relatively small, especially compared to the numbers of men who served in the Carrier Corps at large, it was a watershed moment for missionary and Kikuyu relations. For the first time they were able to provide concrete benefits to a wide array of men from a variety of social backgrounds.

Additionally, because the casualty numbers—and rations—for the Volunteer Corps were more

¹¹³ E.N. Wamagatta, *The Presbyterian Church of East Africa: An Account of Its Gospel Missionary Society Origins, 1895—1946* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009), 78. Additionally, African men who could find employment with white settlers were exempt for Carrier Corp duties.

¹¹⁴ Savage and Munro, 329. The Africa Inland Mission went so far as to turn in men they knew to be hiding from the authorities.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 332—33. The fullest account of missionary led Carrier Corps throughout East Africa can be found in Geoffrey Hodges, *The Carrier Corps: Military Labour in the East African Campaign, 1914—1918* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 169—87.

amenable to Africans, the missionaries—and their God—were seen to be effective for the first time. As one African quoted in an AIM magazine in December of 1917 stated, “Surely your God is a God [of] power, and he has cared for you and returned you to us safely.”¹¹⁶

Missionaries were also important in the care of porters who had been drafted into the regular Carrier Corps service. The army considered porters necessary due to the dangers presented by the tsetse fly, a carrier of trypanosomiasis. These perils rendered pack animals useless and thus men became beasts of burden in the eyes of the British army. Porters were used in a wide variety of tasks, including road building, stretcher ferrying, and munitions supplying but their own needs were generally overlooked. While soldiers were given rations of over 4,000 calories, while the carrier corps were supplied with less than 3,000.¹¹⁷ Some historians argue that in fact their daily rations frequently dipped below 1,000.¹¹⁸ Although they were not fighting on the front lines, casualty rates were incredibly high for the Carrier Corps. Officially 45,000 Africans died in service during the Great War, but unofficially over 100,000 carriers perished during the four years of conflict. Even British officials at the time acknowledged that poor accounting meant that “the full tale of the mortality among native carriers will never be told.”¹¹⁹ For porters who did not die on the front, authorities created convalescence centers which were frequently staffed by missionaries. Colonial authorities and missionaries also banded together to

¹¹⁶ qtd in, *Ibid*, 333.

¹¹⁷ Opolot Okia, *Communal Labor in Kenya* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 58—62.

¹¹⁸ David Killingray, “Labour Exploitation for Military Campaigns in British Colonial Africa, 1870—1945,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 24:3 (1989), 493.

¹¹⁹ Qtd. in Paice, 392.

form the East Africa War Relief Fund to provide succor to wounded porters in field hospitals, usually in the form of tobacco and fruit.¹²⁰

The cumulative effect of missionary efforts in wartime meant that they emerged as a true force to be reckoned with in Kenyan society. They had provided spiritual and physical protection through their schools and later the Volunteer Carrier Corps. Additionally the Bibles they passed out to their carriers were seen as a strong defensive shield from opposing fire and the rampant diseases which spread through porter camps. However, missionaries would still be faced with a new series of hurdles as they worked to solidify their newfound popularity and prestige. During this period they will be drawn into—and create—new alliances, controversies, and problems. They will also be forced to reckon with changing British policies on a whole range of issues, beginning with land usage in the Highlands. As CMS missionaries moved into a new decade they began to formulate their own imperial plans and would unwittingly initiate a series of actions that set them on the path towards the formation of the Anglican Church of East Africa.

Thus the decolonization of the Anglican Church in Kenya can be traced back to these formative post-war years. By re-framing the missional timeline to focus less on the traditional nineteenth century narrative, especially important here given the truncated nature of missionary involvement in the colony, we can begin to see new fracture lines within the missionary society relationships and policies. The remainder of this section will discuss missionary activity in three realms—politics, education, and health in order to highlight how missionary reactions laid the groundwork for future failures and successes. Analyzing these topics in greater detail provides

¹²⁰ Savage and Munro, 340. This was necessary because the usual war relief organizations refused to provide such materials to Africans on the front lines. Unused funds at the end of the war were eventually used to help build the Alliance High School, which was mission led.

much needed insight into the ways in which missionary societies and colonial authorities sought to extend their control over African bodies and minds in the twentieth century. In the end, the 1920s proved a challenging decade for missionary groups of all stripes, and the CMS was particularly well situated to allow for greater exploration and analysis of how the events and controversies of the inter-war period bled over into the era of decolonization.

Protectorate to Colony

Much has been made of the African collaborators needed to make the British Empire function—this is true throughout the entirety of the continent, not just in Kenya. However it is also important to highlight the importance of missionaries in providing suitable men to liaison with the colonial authorities. In Kenya there were no more than eighty men in the colonial government and they were tasked with governing over five million Africans. As scholars such as Caroline Elkins highlight, cooperative Africans were necessary to allow the colony to function, but many overlook the importance of missionaries at all stages of this process.¹²¹ They were in many ways a fulcrum to the continuation of colonial rule, as evidenced by their myriad roles in societies. They were teachers, political leaders, doctors, and pastors for the Kikuyu and provided much needed manpower at a reduced rate for the British, but their position always felt insecure. They were a lynchpin but one that could easily be overridden by the expanding arm of the colonial state or the increasing demands placed upon them by their African converts. Thus missionary collaborators worked to push forward the goals of both parties, often leaving everyone unhappy. Missionaries could not meet the demands of the state and the populations they served, leaving them vulnerable to a host of issues in the post-war period.

The most pressing of these topics was the use of land in Kenya. In the aftermath of the war, colonial authorities continued their wartime policies of increasing their control over the movement and labor of Africans living in the Protectorate and their first target was land usage. The colony was used as a suitable attraction to lure demobilizing soldiers away from the economic pressures back in the United Kingdom. The authorities provided plots of land to

¹²¹ Elkins, 18.

soldiers with sufficient capital. Thanks to these stringent financial demands the type of settler coming to Kenya would vary widely from the early pioneer days of white relocation in the Highlands. Post-war Europeans who migrated to the colony were largely from the officer class in the army, and had a modicum of social standing.¹²²

Initially missionaries welcomed the presence of more Europeans, especially European Christians, to the land, but the nature of settlement pushed many of them away.¹²³ Instead of the missionary model which relied heavily on middle and lower class men with little training but much heart, Kenya received men with public school educations and while they may have had little training, they also had little heart for missionary work. In fact, many settlers were openly hostile to mission work because they argued that it made young men lazy, or worse, it encouraged Africans to think they could achieve equality with the white population.¹²⁴ Missionaries created separate worship spaces and services for the white populations, but they rarely mixed socially. For these populations class remained an important marker of distinction—missionaries rarely had the right background, education, or sporting skill to build deep friendships in the colony.¹²⁵

The introduction of a second wave of white immigration to the protectorate was not the only change made by the authorities in the aftermath of the war. First, Sir Edward Northey was shipped out to take over leadership of the Protectorate. Northey was a war hero, renowned for his exploits in the Nyasaland campaign. Additionally his background and bearing, “dapper,

¹²² Kennedy, 53—58, 67—74. The second major group of Europeans who took possession of large tracts of land in the aftermath of the war were colonial officials themselves.

¹²³ Renison Muchiri Githige, “The Mission State Relationship in Colonial Kenya: A Summary,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 13:2 (1982), 110—11.

¹²⁴ Kennedy, 162.

¹²⁵ Githige, 113.

monocle, and autocratic,” seemed to bode well for the settler community.¹²⁶ Indeed Northey’s inauguration into the role of Governor coincided with a reshuffle at the Colonial Office that promised a resurrection of high imperial ideals.¹²⁷ This resurgence corresponded with Northey’s plan to reward settlers for their hard work during with war with greater political involvement as well as promotion to colony from protectorate. For settlers this new status was seen as but a step on the road to self-governance.¹²⁸ They now had elected representation, albeit with delegates who could always be outvoted by officials and limits on their legislative powers, but for whites it was an important first step, especially since Africans and Indians were largely shut out of the legislative process.¹²⁹ While white settlers saw this as a stamp of approval for their prominence in the region, Northey was more practical. The East Africa Protectorate needed loans and it was much less complicated to get those loans as a colony. Therefore in conjunction with the Colonial Office Northey made the Protectorate an official colony and changed its name to Kenya.¹³⁰

Missionaries focused less on the new colonial status of Kenya and more on the labor and land practices that evolved in the aftermath of this new political reality. In the wake of Northey’s appointment several important trends were highlighted and accelerated, particularly in terms of African labor and land usage. During the war the Registration of Natives Ordinance was passed but was not put into full practice until 1919. As part of the Ordinance the state required every Kikuyu adult male to wear a metal box around his neck. This box contained his employment papers, including his occupation and wage, as well as personal information.

¹²⁶ Elspeth Huxley, *White Man’s Country: Lord Delamere and The Making of Kenya, Volume Two 1914—1931* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1935), 51—2.

¹²⁷ Robert Maxon, *Struggle for Kenya: The Loss and Reassertion of Imperial Initiative, 1912—1923* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1993), 128.

¹²⁸ Huxley, 53.

¹²⁹ Tignor, 357.

¹³⁰ Maxon, 181.

Collectively the box and papers were known as a *kipande* and by 1930 almost every adult male had been registered with the state and needed to have the *kipande* on his person every time he left the reservation.¹³¹ If an African male proved unwilling to register for a *kipande* or to work outside the boundaries of the land reserves, colonial authorities utilized higher taxation rates to force Africans out of what was presumed to be their natural state of laziness. Both the authorities and white settlers assumed that the only way to push forward the economic success of the colony was to coerce labor out of an unwilling population and the best methods to do so were registration cards which would highlight and punish labor ‘deserters’ and high rates of taxation that would push Africans into wage labor.¹³²

In addition to the *kipande* and new taxes, the colonial state also worked to control land usage in ways that benefited white settlers and ‘modernized’ the Kenyan economy. Throughout the first two decades of the twentieth century, authorities passed multiple native land ordinances all designed to reify the notion of land ownership. Essentially authorities declared through a series of regulations that all land not visibly occupied was free and ready to be redistributed to private ownership via land grants. The 1915 Crown Lands Ordinance expanded this process and created new legal categories for those living in the Protectorate—citizens and subjects. White settlers were given the rights of citizens, while Africans were considered subjects. Citizens received land grants from the government with leases for nine hundred and ninety nine years, while subjects access to land was granted through customary tenure which involved complicated channels and

¹³¹ B.J. Berman and J.M. Lonsdale, “Crisis of Accumulation, Coercion and the Colonial State: The Development of the Labour Control System in Kenya, 1919—1929,” *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 14:1 (1980), 71.

¹³² *Ibid*, 81.

the authority of British appointed chiefs. This Ordinance also created land reserves for various ethnic groups that would not be open to white settlement.¹³³

In 1919 the government released a new labor circular linked together the authorities' desire to control African land and labor. This document called upon local headmen to 'encourage' African males under their patronage to find employment outside the reserves. The effectiveness of these efforts became part of a tally kept by colonial authorities in order to measure how accommodating and efficient these headmen were in pushing men towards 'legitimate' labor. In addition to African encouragement, district officers were to hold public meetings to highlight employment opportunities. In many ways this circular merely built upon ongoing practices utilized by the authorities. They already encouraged labor and they certainly kept records on the usefulness of headmen, but codifying these practices in a public document provided new opportunity for critics to publicize their dissatisfaction with the looming specter of forced labor.¹³⁴ Additionally, the circular included a small section promising that other "special" measure would be introduced to promote wage labor if the endeavors of chiefs and district officers were unsuccessful.¹³⁵

¹³³ Karuti Kanyinga, *Re-distribution from Above: the Politics of Land Rights and Squatting in Coastal Kenya* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2000), 37—8. While Kanyinga argues that these land reserves were meant to be small and created in areas where whites did not want settlement, Robert Maxon argues that originally the Colonial Office prioritized "extensive and inalienable reserves;" they just had a difficult time maintaining that policy in the face of settler demands. The end result was the same; Africans were restricted to reserves but the ultimate motivations are very different for each author. For more details on this debate and details of land alienation process see Maxon, 57—72; Paul Collier and Nicholas Sambanis, *Understanding Civil War Evidence and Analysis* (Washington DC: World Bank, 2005), 141—46; M.P.K. Sorrenson, *Origins of European Settlement in Kenya* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1968), Tabitha Kanogo, *Squatters and the Origins of Mau Mau* (London: James Currey, 1987), 8—29.

¹³⁴ Tignor, 167.

¹³⁵ Anthony Clayton and Donald Savage, *Government and Labour in Colonial Kenya, 1895—1963* (London: Cass Publishing, 1974), 112.

Northey's labor circular was immediately controversial. Numerous humanitarian groups in the UK voiced their displeasure over the coercive elements, but the most powerful organization to take a stand came from Kenya in form of the Alliance of Protestant Missions. In 1913 missionaries had attempted to join into a loose sort of organization but the Kikuyu Controversy torpedoed those efforts. However in the summer of 1918 the four major missionary denominations joined the Alliance, which called for various theological compromises and relationships. However the alliance evolved to become primarily an organ through which missionaries could communicate with the government on matters.¹³⁶ Their first major test would be the labor circular of 1919 and their response was a public letter, the Bishop's Memorandum. This notice was signed by the Bishops of Uganda and Mombasa as well as the CSM leader J.W. Arthur. Despite its criticism of the government, the authors of the Memorandum included several members of the colonial authorities, including the Chief Secretary. Rather than denounce all labor coercive labor policies, the Memorandum focused on the potential abuses perpetrated by chiefs in their attempts to corral labor. Missionaries also condemned the inclusion of women and children in the circular and pushed for only able bodied men to be subject to its regulations.¹³⁷

It is important to note that missionaries and colonial authorities were still seen as part and parcel of the same system, despite their criticism of the government. In the House of Lords debate, Viscount Milner described the situation as such:

As to the importance—not primarily in the interests of the white settlers, but in the interests of the natives themselves—of encouraging them in the habits of steady industry, there is, I venture to say, absolutely no difference of opinion between any persons who have practical acquaintance with native conditions and native life in South Africa. There is no difference really between the administrators and those who have lived long in the country, and above all the missionaries, who may be regarded as the chief advocates and

¹³⁶ Hewitt, 142—52.

¹³⁷ Clayton, 113—14.

defenders of native rights. I say there is absolutely no difference of opinion between all these classes as to the vital importance to the natives themselves of encouraging them to more steady and continuous industry.¹³⁸

Thus the Bishops Memorandum performed its function quite well. It was widely and publicly discussed in both Kenya and the United Kingdom and it reinforced the notion that missionaries were the “chief advocates and defenders” of Africans. In fact throughout the discussion in the House of Lords missionaries were repeatedly referenced as protectors of not only Africans but also the moral imperative of empire. In the Archbishop of Canterbury’s speech he lays out imperatives of the British Empire on a whole as, “the instinct of freedom, the instinct of empire, and the instinct of philanthropy.”¹³⁹ Within this trifecta of imperial ideals, missionaries are the lynchpin for two of them and it is clear that both the Archbishop and the Memorandum attempted to strike a balance between their two primary roles—trustees over the fortunes and futures of their African subjects and important cogs in the imperial machine. Throughout the twentieth century missionaries would struggle to maintain a balance between the two and when they contravened each other, usually the Empire emerged as the victor. This is clear even in 1919 with the Memorandum and its opening line, “The Missions welcome His Excellency’s general policy.”¹⁴⁰ Historians debate the motivations of the Memorandum and its effectiveness at manifesting change in imperial policy. For Opolot Okia the Memorandum was “half-hearted” in its criticism but surprisingly successful in bringing to light in the metropole the plight of those forced to participate in labor schemes throughout the empire.¹⁴¹ Others, such as David Clayton and Anthony Savage contend that while the Memorandum unfortunately still supported coercive

¹³⁸ *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Lords, “East Africa: Status of Indians and Native Labour,” 14 July 1920, Volume, 41, column, 132—33.

¹³⁹ *Ibid*, 133.

¹⁴⁰ Clayton and Savage, 114.

¹⁴¹ Okia, 65—6.

labor for Africans, it did stir deeper feelings in some individual missionaries which pushed them to take stronger stances against these types of regulations. In particular, Clayton and Savage highlight the work of the Bishop of Zanzibar and his pamphlet, *The Serfs of Great Britain*.¹⁴² This pamphlet, combined with the Memorandum and several embarrassing House of Commons debates forced the publication of a modified circular, one that preached encouragement of African labor rather than compulsion.¹⁴³

An important component in the eventual partial victory of the Alliance was the work of J.H. Oldham in London. Oldham was the secretary of the Conference of Missionary Societies and a child of empire, born in India to Scottish parents. Despite his status as an Anglican layperson, Oldham worked tirelessly throughout his life on various ecumenical movements, including the 1910 Edinburgh Conference.¹⁴⁴ Oldham presents an important strain in missional work—one that focuses wholeheartedly, if paternally, on the importance of protecting Africans. He is also become an important model for later CMS missionaries to use when dealing with unfavorable government policies—private deputations to the Colonial Office or the Governor of a specific colony. While Oldham blasted both the labor circular and the Bishop’s Memorandum in private, publicly he was moderate and spoke little.¹⁴⁵ Oldham wanted to persuade the Colonial Office to employ his vision of trusteeship over their African populations, and in order to do so he spoke quite softly indeed, using meetings Lord Milner and Leo Amery to push for a change to

¹⁴² Frank Weston, *The Serfs of Great Britain: Being a Sequel to the Black Slaves of Prussia* (W. Knott, London, 1920). Apparently Weston was inspired to write this pamphlet because of the public outcry of the Bishop’s Memorandum as well as an unhappy meeting with Viscount Milner. Weston’s writing denounced the circular as a new form of slavery.

¹⁴³ Clayton and Savage, 115.

¹⁴⁴ Gerald Anderson, *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions* (New York: Macmillan Reference, 1998), 505—6.

¹⁴⁵ For more see John W. Cell, ed. *By Kenya Possessed: The Correspondence of Norman Leys and J.H. Oldham, 1918—1926* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 144—177.

Northey's circular.¹⁴⁶ As we have seen, ultimately missionaries were successful to a point in forcing some key changes to Northey's circular, although communal labor would continue unabated.

Theoretically the ultimate victory for missionaries came not with the modified labor circular, but rather with the Devonshire Declaration of 1923. This document laid out the premise of 'native paramountcy,' or in simpler terms—Africa would be a colony for Africans, with their welfare being the highest priority for colonial authorities.¹⁴⁷ Ironically this proclamation of African primacy was in fact targeted towards the Indian population in Kenya, a population clamoring loudly for their own political voice in the colony. In addition to their desires for greater political action, they also wanted access to the coveted lands of the Highlands, which Devonshire absolutely forbade. However, he did ensure that the white settlers would not be able to push forward a South African style of white dominated rule.¹⁴⁸ Thus Africans were largely reduced to pawns in a larger political game in the colony, however, missionaries considered this a victory. Or at least Oldham considered this a missional victory. He wrote in a letter to Dr. Norman Leys, a British doctor working in Kenya, that he "had a hand in the preparation of the document."¹⁴⁹ Despite Oldham's boast, historian Robert Maxon definitively proved that the Devonshire Declaration was less about Oldham's power of persuasion and more about cold blooded political realities, namely that Kenya could not survive economically without Indians.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ Okia, 75—6.

¹⁴⁷ Daniel Gorman, *The Emergence of International Society in the 1920s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 134.

¹⁴⁸ Sana Aiyar, *Indians in Kenya: The Politics of Diaspora* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 107—8.

¹⁴⁹ Cell, 218—19.

¹⁵⁰ Robert Maxon, "The Devonshire Declaration: The Myth of Missionary Intervention," *History in Africa* 18 (1991), 261—2.

In the end, Indians were unhappy with the compromise, but missionaries were pleased by the idea that they effectively protected their African trustees.¹⁵¹ At the time it seemed another notch in the belt for that particular style of missionary activism that promoted private conferences and personal relationships over more outspoken forms of protest.

In addition to the work of the new Alliance and JH Oldham, individual missionary leaders in Kenya also proved formidable foes to the colonial authorities at various points during the hectic post-war years. The most important of these was W.E. Owen, an Anglican missionary originally stationed in Uganda.¹⁵² Owen had been appointed the archdeacon of Kavirondo in 1918 and he quickly drew the ire of white settlers in Kenya who often referred to him as the Archdemon. For some in the government Owen was worse than the Archdemon, he was a full on Bolshevik.¹⁵³ Unlike Oldham's policies of utilizing private persuasion, Owen pursued a policy of public denunciation and passionate writings. Frequently his reports and letters to the *Manchester Guardian* raised eyebrows and drew the indignation of his fellow missionaries.¹⁵⁴ Despite his unpopularity in missional circles in Kenya, he is an important figure to study as an example of alternate methods of engagement with the problems of increasing government control of a colonial society.

¹⁵¹ Gorman, 135—36.

¹⁵² In addition to W.E. Owen, scholars frequently mention H.D. Hooper and Harry Leakey as missionaries with a similar theology and outlook on African society and colonial rule. Hooper and Leakey will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. However it is important to note here that both men favored the Oldham approach rather than Owen's brash publicity campaigns.

¹⁵³ Strayer, 107.

¹⁵⁴ Nancy Uhlar Murray, "Archdeacon W.E. Owen: Missionary as Propagandist," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 15:4 (1982), 653-4.

Owen's work is particularly notable in regards to the question of forced labor; he saw himself as the father-protector over his African children and he would defend them as vigorously as any parent who saw his children under threat. This paternalism sits awkwardly within our modern understandings of activism, but both sides of Owen must be understood in order to square the circle of his complicated personality and work. In the early 1920s Owen began his campaigns upon realizing that in fact the modified form of Northey's Circular had done little to curb the abuses in forced or child labor. Owen himself had witnessed several suspect situations and took his concerns to the local district officers. On multiple occasions the district officer upon investigation would find that no coercion had been used and upon interviewing them the children maintained they were simply standing near the workers. While the authorities took these testimonies at face value, Owen did not. He repeatedly sent information to the *Manchester Guardian* and the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, and it did raise debate in England concerning the appropriateness of this labor.¹⁵⁵ Successive Secretaries of State for the Colonies were forced to answer questions in Parliament about this very topic.

One of Owen's major concerns was the printing of labor ordinances and regulations only in English. He expounded on the topic frequently in the public press and here he was more successful, to a certain extent. In a Parliamentary debate in 1927 Leo Amery, then Secretary of State of the Colonies, promised to speak to the Governor, Edward Grigg about the situation.¹⁵⁶ However, the first actual labor ordinance translated in Kenya was the work of the Presbyterian missionary, Arthur Barlow who rendered a Native Authority Ordinance into Gikuyu in 1940.

¹⁵⁵ Okia, 96—103.

¹⁵⁶ *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Commons, "Ordinances, Language," 2 May 1927, Volume 205, columns, 1252—53.

Due to cost concerns regarding printing it was never disseminated in the colony.¹⁵⁷ Owen's tireless work on behalf Africans made him few friends and in the end he was less than successful in his attempts to change the working conditions and regulations for African laborers. After his death in 1945, the *Times* obituary tried to reconcile the many facets and contradictions of his character, calling him a "crusading champion of African causes, and a caustic critic of administrative policies." The article took pains to point out that despite his condemnation of many imperial schemes he "supported the principles of British settlement as good for native peoples." In the end, even the *Times* seemed relieved that "of late years the fire of his controversial spirit died down and he turned enthusiastically and successfully to archaeology."¹⁵⁸

The Church Missionary Society was no less relieved than the *Times* that Owen's fierce personality turned away from judging colonial regulations and towards ancient history. Owen's methods, at least in their eyes, proved untenable and it was clear to them that the less controversial, more personal communications with those in power were equally effective. In the eyes of many of Owen's contemporaries the work of Oldham proved a prime example of how affect change in imperial and metropole settings, never mind that Oldham was only marginally more successful. Thus for many succeeding generations of missionaries and missional officials public declarations against colonial activities threatened to draw only ire and disdain from those in power. This would only be highlighted and enhanced by the increasing dependence upon government funds throughout the twentieth century. By 1930 missionaries not only had to worry

¹⁵⁷ Okia, 104—5.

¹⁵⁸ Obituary Ven. W.E. Owen, *Times*, September 21, 1945. The local Kenyan newspaper *East African Standard* was more scathing in their review of Owen's life. *East African Standard* September 20, 1945. During his life, the place and protection of African women was Owen's other major concern. For more see, Hannington Ochwanda, "Negotiating Difference: The Church Missionary Society, Colonial Education, and Gender Among Aḅaluyia and Luluo Communities of Kenya, 1900—1960," (PhD diss., University of Indiana, 2007).

about harsh obituaries, they also had to be concerned with the loss of funds to continue their work or even loss of their salaries. This would be a lesson that many within the CMS would learn too well, as evidenced by the relative lack of outcry during the Mau Mau conflict.

Owen's work, and its antagonistic reception within many CMS circles also highlights another important distinction within the context of missionary history. Nineteenth century missionaries frequently characterized themselves as rebels and individualists in the extreme. The most famous missionary in all of Africa, arguably in the world, David Livingstone disagreed so vehemently with his parent organization, the London Missionary Society, that they parted ways before his famous Zambezi River expedition. While Livingstone still saw himself very much as a missionary, technically he was an explorer with government funding when he traveled to the interior of the continent.¹⁵⁹ Conventional wisdom would seem to indicate that in the twentieth century such rebels would be brought to heel as communication and technology made it much easier to keep tabs on missionaries in far flung imperial locales. However, Owen is a prime example of the danger of assuming a correlation between control and communication for missionary organizations. In conjunction with colonial authorities, the home office of the CMS would certainly attempt to exert policies and practices in Kenya, but those efforts could be stymied by strong personalities like Archdeacon Owen. Additionally change in the CMS was a slow moving animal and in many cases nineteenth century office practices carried over well into the 1950s. As we move deeper in the 1920s it will become apparent that the separation between home office and missionary was a distance measured in more than miles, it could be calculated in attitude, personality, power, and future outlook.

¹⁵⁹ T. Jack Thompson, *Light on Darkness? Missionary Photography of Africa in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2012), 56.

Conclusion

The first two decades of missionary work in Kenya seemed to portend a bright future. Despite their initial failures, the advent of World War I pushed missionaries into a position of power and prominence, one that they seemed well situated to consolidate and develop in the post-war years. However, there were also signs of trouble. Although the CMS had provided protection during the war, they proved less able to do so in the postwar years.¹⁶⁰ Labor ordinances and land regulations challenged missionaries' abilities to walk the fine line between protecting Africans in their care while also not unduly upsetting the balance of power in their relationships with colonial authorities. During the war missionaries were able to do both—protect and support, but the new world of the Kenya Colony proved more difficult to navigate. Additionally the spread of education and Christian social mores meant that many in both missional and colonial circles worried that Africans were becoming 'detribalized' too quickly. For missionaries the goal was not only to prove their worth to potential converts, colonial authorities, and white settlers, but also shepherd Africans into some sort of understanding with the modern world. In order to do this they created various plans and processes to deal with both the mundane and significant conflicts they encountered. They also created patterns of practice and thought that extended into the period of full scale decolonization. It is important that we examine them here in order to see their full fruition in the 1950s.

¹⁶⁰ The importance of protection as a tool for missionaries cannot be understated. For more on this theme see Meredith McKittrick, *To Dwell Secure: Generation, Christianity, and Colonialism in Ovamboland* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Publishing, 2002).

Chapter Two: The Problems of Success: Politics, Health, and Education in Kenya¹⁶¹

Whatever we do, I am sure that we need to cultivate our friendship with those who are administering the country; that is, the officials directly concerned with native welfare. To secure the progress of that welfare, it is not sufficient to be good Protestants; we must cultivate the co-operation of the D.Cs. and A.D.Cs. I think you are really of the same way of thinking, and I do beg you to exercise great discretion in all future sections.¹⁶²

Introduction

The previous chapter provided an overview of early missionary activity in Kenya, including its initial period of success during the Great War. In the aftermath of war, missionaries struggled with their transition into a powerful group, however they did score some minor successes with the creation of Alliance of Protestant Missions and the individual work of men like J.H. Oldham. In the 1920s the CMS found itself embroiled in new issues, beginning with African political organizations. For many missionaries the future of education became the paramount issue of the day, particularly in regards to their own status with the colonial authorities and their African converts. This is especially true for the CMS. Because of its importance to missionaries on the ground, as well as the home office in London, education became the key that held the proverbial kingdom together. It provided a natural bridge between Africans and their colonial rulers while also giving missionaries essential work in the colony. This chapter will analyze a host of issues, culminating with education, in hopes of examining in greater detail how the actions of missionaries and the government set in place patterns that would inform how both groups responded to the decolonization period.

¹⁶¹ This title is taken from the aptly named general history of the CMS, *The Problems of Success* by Gordon Hewitt.

¹⁶² This quote is found in a letter from H.D. Hooper to W.E. Owen on 20 June 1927 CMS/B/OMS/A5/1927/55. Hooper was trying to convince Owen that public denunciations were damaging to the long term policies and plans of the CMS. As seen in Chapter 3, Owen did not heed this call.

Missionaries used their newfound popularity in the post-war period in many ways, but their relationship to the colonial state was always integral to their actions and decisions. This was especially true for their two largest issues—education and public health. One cannot understand the ways in which decolonization unfolded without tracing its origins in the inter-war period. Although scholars have analyzed the rise of African nationalism and the role of controversies such as female circumcision in fueling the civil war that beset Kenya in the 1950s, missionaries have remained on the fringes of these narratives. However if we are to understand the full picture of decolonization religious organizations should be included. The CMS, more than any other missionary group, saw itself as the bridge between whites and Africans; in fact in many ways it considered itself the only qualified group to transmit imperial ideas while also protecting ‘its’ African populations. Concomitantly, colonial authorities looked to missionary groups, particularly the CMS, as the largest and usually most agreeable, to implement many of the policies of development in twentieth century empire. However, official circles created patterns of communication in the aftermath of World War I that would prove quite difficult to overcome in the midst of Mau Mau and Kenyan independence. These precedents are important to analyze as part of a larger study of decolonization because they provide a fuller analysis of how the British saw the end of empire. Although decolonization is largely the study of politics and military maneuvers, the British presence in the empire was not just represented by the official mind and military. There were a whole host of British organizations and groups living and working in the empire who considered themselves vital parts of the British Empire and as that imperial age drew to a close they too had to navigate a whole new world. In order to understand how that process works, we must begin here in the 1920s as missionary groups such as the CMS were increasingly

caught between African and official demands. How the CMS handled those tensions is the subject of this chapter.

Politics

Missionaries saw themselves as harbingers of modernity in Kenya. With that power came great responsibility—the great fear for many Europeans in both official and private circles was that introduction to modern life would be too destabilizing for Africans. Therefore missionaries worked hard to provide controlled access to all things ‘modern.’ They began with education, largely in Swahili, and by 1920 they had a small cohort of educated African men. As John Lonsdale has argued repeatedly, this first generation of converts, or *athomi*—a Kikuyu word meaning reader—wrestling with modern life largely revolved around the idea of reconciliation.¹⁶³ In the aftermath of World War I, the *athomi* had joined their generational cohorts in a ceremony honoring elders and marking the passage of time.¹⁶⁴ Namely the *athomi* were now men and presented themselves as the ‘saviors’ of Kikuyuness.¹⁶⁵ Missionaries certainly played a part in the creation of this identity, and they sought to use it to introduce the chosen few to the next stage of modernity—politics.

The first Kikuyu led political organization was the Kikuyu Association, which formed in 1921. There is some debate about who deserves the responsibility for the organization. One school of thought led by John Lonsdale and David Anderson argues that this was a mission led endeavor, one that was always supposed to be under their supervision or least very friendly to

¹⁶³ John Lonsdale, “Kikuyu Christianities,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 29:2 (May 1999), 206—29; Lonsdale, “Kikuyu Christianities: A History of Intimate Diversity,” in *Christianity and the African Imagination: Essays in Honour of Adrian Hastings* David Maxwell and Ingrid Lawrie, eds., (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill Publishing, 2002), 157—98; John Lonsdale, “Listen While I Read: Patriotic Christianity Among the Young Gikuyu,” in *Christianity and Social Change in Africa: Essays in Honor of J.D.Y. Peel* Toyin Falola, ed., (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2005), 563—94.

¹⁶⁴ Kikuyu Christianities: A History of Intimate Diversity, 172.

¹⁶⁵ Kikuyu Christianities, 209.

their interests and desires for the Kikuyu.¹⁶⁶ Conversely, Robert Tignor contends that the formation of the Kikuyu Association had more to do with chiefly politics and missionary attempts to contain local politics, rather than creating political involvement.¹⁶⁷ Thus rather than introduce modern politics into the colony, missionaries were participants in hybrid political systems which combined longstanding local politics with the British invention of tribal chief. What is clear is that despite the best missionary intentions their involvement with Kikuyu politics would quickly spiral out of control and they would be scrambling to maintain their position as partners of the *athomi*, contrary to their original intention to be the paternalistic trustees of both politics and modernity.

At the end of the Great War, missionaries pushed several converts into the office of chief and four of these men would eventually be the leaders of the Kikuyu Association (KA). Two of the men came from CMS mission stations, Mbiu Koinange and Josiah Njonjo, while the others came from the Presbyterian and Gospel Missionary Society. Despite the divided theological backgrounds of the men, the CMS was by far the most powerful of the missionary groups involved, as evidenced by the work of missionary Harry Leakey. He personally sponsored the two of the delegates.¹⁶⁸ The most pressing issue for the KA was land—namely African rights to the titles for land. Despite their repeated lobbying efforts, the government continually ruled against them, stating that the right of customary occupation was the ‘traditional’ and therefore

¹⁶⁶ David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005), 15; Kikuyu Christianities, 215.

¹⁶⁷ Robert Tignor, *The Colonial Transformation of Kenya: The Kamba, Kikuyu, and Maasai from 1900 to 1939* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 227.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 227—28. The Presbyterian leader was Philip Karanja and the GMS appointed member was Waruihiu wa Kungu.

correct view for African property.¹⁶⁹ Essentially the Kikuyu did not own land on which they lived on because their traditional customs did not recognize private property rights. This allowed the government to redistribute land to European settlers and provide them with deeds to land while simultaneously denying the Kikuyu that same privilege.

Although the land question was certainly an important one for many Kikuyu it was of primary importance to those elites who made up the leadership of the KA. These men wanted to prove to the British that they were spokesmen for the Kikuyu people, despite their ‘detrribalized’ status.¹⁷⁰ These efforts, however, proved less than successful for the KA thanks in part to the emergence of a new, more broadly based rival organization, the East African Association (EAA). The EAA was led by Henry Thuku and was an independently minded, urban counterpoint to the KA.¹⁷¹ While the Kikuyu Association focused on the rural issues of the elite—land ownership and control, Thuku focused on issues such as the *kipande* and heavy taxation.¹⁷² Soon his popularity, and his speaking engagements, spread to the countryside. These new tactics made African leaders nervous, but initially missionaries welcomed the work of the Methodist educated Thuku. His first supporters were the young *athomi* and Thuku used biblical analogies and imagery liberally in his speeches to the various ethnic groups. It was not until the EAA moved into Murang’a that problems cropped up. Thuku used increasingly aggressive tactics and

¹⁶⁹ Sara Berry, *No Condition is Permanent: The Social Dynamics of Agrarian Change in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), 113—14.

¹⁷⁰ John Lonsdale, “Contests of Time: Kikuyu Histories,” in *A Place in the World: New Local Historiographies from Africa and South-Asia* Axel-Harneit-Sievers, ed. (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill Publishing, 2002), 214.

¹⁷¹ Anderson, 15—6.

¹⁷² Marshall S. Clough, *Fighting Two Sides: Kenyan Chiefs and Politicians, 1918—1940* (Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1990), 25—27.

language and his popularity soared while his relationships with the KA and missionaries began to sour.¹⁷³

For the CMS, the man in charge of combatting Thuku's popularity was H.D. Hooper who worked out of the Khuhia station in Murang'a. Hooper was Cambridge educated and socially well connected, unusual for a missionary in Kenya. He was generally sympathetic to Kikuyu grievances, even those highlighted by the EAA, however he had a firm vision of African society as one in flux, released from tribalism but not yet equal to the "finished product" of European society.¹⁷⁴ In the absence of a true understanding of what civilization means, Hooper believed that Africans would be swayed by any number of factors, most notably the Indian press that was currently booming in the colony.¹⁷⁵ Even more worrisome was that the *athomi* who followed Thuku seemed to become less malleable in terms of religion—missionaries frequently complained that those who joined the EAA saw Thuku as their savior. The EAA not only threatened the conservative social policies of many within the CMS, but it also strongly critiqued mission education, which was of primary importance to missionary relations with the government.¹⁷⁶ Thus missionaries' distress ran along two fronts—they worried that the political organizations they helped create were spiraling out of control and that their relationship with the authorities might suffer due to the widening breach within African politics.

¹⁷³ Robert Strayer, *The Making of Mission Communities in East Africa: Anglicans and Africans in*

Colonial Kenya, 1875—1935 (London: Heinemann, 1978), 123—25.

¹⁷⁴ H.D. Hooper, *Leading Strings: Native Development and Missionary Education in the Kenya Colony* (London: Church Missionary Society, 1921), 6—7.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁷⁶ Strayer, 124—26.

Hooper attempted to heal these cracks by meeting privately with Thuku, but his heavy-handed, paternalistic approach did not persuade the EAA leader to tone down his rhetoric or tactics.¹⁷⁷ The conflict between the KA, EAA, missionaries, and the government came to a head in the spring of 1922. Thuku's popularity continued to rise and government officials and some in missionary circles worried about the deepening rifts in Kikuyu society. One CMS missionary, A.W. McGregor, even warned of "another India or Ireland."¹⁷⁸ On March 14th, Thuku was arrested and deported under the Removal of Natives Ordinance of 1909.¹⁷⁹ In response many Africans in Nairobi marched in general protest and sat vigil outside the Thuku's prison. Two days later women called for these protesters to rescue Thuku or be branded cowards.¹⁸⁰ In the aftermath of the violence the EAA went underground and re-emerged in 1925 as the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA). Much like the EAA before it, the KCA primarily appealed to young mission educated Kikuyu and initially had the support of at least one missionary, HD Hooper. He was set to be their European supporter and President, a necessary condition for government support and recognition, but he was recalled to England before taking up this position. Other CMS missionaries would prove less amenable to this new body and a piecemeal effect would soon emerge. More conservative missionaries refused any cooperation, and in response local KCA chapters became quite hostile to missionary leadership and political involvement. Only in

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, 128.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, 127.

¹⁷⁹ Carl Rosberg and John Nottingham, *The Myth of "Mau Mau: " Nationalism in Kenya* (Stanford: Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, 1966), 49—50. Thuku was to be shipped from Nairobi to Kismayu. According to Strayer, A.W. McGregor helped gather evidence and writing the affidavits for Thuku's arrest. Strayer, 127.

¹⁸⁰ Rosberg and Nottingham, 52. Specifically, one protestor, Mary Muthoni Nyanjiru, took off her dress and told the men assembled that they should give up their trousers in favor of her dress because they were all too weak to storm the prison. This rather rousing charge had its intended effect and the crowd moved towards the police, whereupon they opened fire. Sadly, Ms. Myanjiru perished along with 20 other Africans while another 28 were wounded.

Kahuhia where Hooper worked did the KCA and CMS achieve unity of purpose.¹⁸¹ However even this unity would be shattered with the coming of the most volatile controversy of Kenya in the 1920s, the female circumcision crisis.

¹⁸¹ John Casson, “‘To Plant a Garden in the Slums of Paganism...’ Handley Hooper, the Kikuyu and the Future of Africa,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 28:4 (Nov. 1998), 388—89.

The Crisis¹⁸²

Historians generally point to three general issues when tracing the evolution of Kikuyu nationalism and the eventual rise of Mau Mau—the loss of land rights, the rise of political parties, and the female circumcision crisis. Each of these conflicts peaked at different points during the post-war period and each played a different role in the evolution of the relationships between Africans, missionaries, and the state. Despite the importance of each of these issues in the overall analysis of Kenyan independence, scholars tend to provide in-depth focus on missionaries only when discussing the female circumcision crisis. These analyses tend to blend together all missionary groups into one religious mass, thus missing the important differences between groups such as the CMS and CSM.¹⁸³ Despite the blurring of denominational lines in many works, it is important to highlight the distinctions between missional groups as they handled this crisis. While the Church of Scotland mission took the aggressive route, the CMS wanted to preserve their primary objectives; the maintenance of their relationship with both Africans and the colonial state. In order to do this they needed to provide education, and they were willing to take a soft stance on female circumcision in hopes of persuading students to remain in school. By keeping schools in session and full of students, the CMS could better prove their utility to the state, which was more important than any ritual performed by the Kikuyu as part of their coming of age ceremonies. Thus although scholars highlight the actions of CSM

¹⁸² Throughout this section I will refer to the medical procedure performed on these young women as female circumcision, as opposed to female genital mutilation. FGM is an important and ongoing issue in many parts of East Africa, however I will be restricting my analysis to the historical period of 1929—1930. In order to maintain clear separation between the two, I will refer only to female circumcision as opposed to the more accurate/inflammatory FGM.

¹⁸³ Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2005), 20—21. Anderson, 19—21. Adam Lewis, *The Age of Garvey: How a Jamaican Activist Created a Mass Movement and Changed Global Black Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 231—37.

missionaries, they miss the diversity of responses to this issue. Historians who study decolonization focus on two separate relationships that of the colonial government and burgeoning African nationalists, while missional scholars concentrate on groups such as the CSM and CMS with Africans but we need to see how the work of each group was deeply intertwined with the other two. By highlighting the CMS response to the crisis we can see how the patterns of response within the group maintain the same procedures they developed in the midst of the Great War. These same processes would carry over into the Mau Mau conflict and independence. For CMS missionaries female circumcision would always be secondary to education, and the crisis would provide them further opportunities to push for private deputations and conversations with those in power, as opposed to the more public demonstrations of groups such as the CSM.

For young Kikuyu men and women, circumcision was an important marker that signified marriage availability and adulthood. Peer groups went through the coming-of-age ceremony together and the process knit kin and age groups together in ways that impacted the community for the rest of their lives. For those who were not circumcised they were doomed to a life of childhood, never marrying or joining adult society.¹⁸⁴ They were also subject to a series of dances which mocked their perpetual adolescence called *muthirgiu*. These dances and accompanying songs called young women who were uncircumcised ill-mannered and incapable of bearing human offspring. The songs also accused missionaries and government officials of corruption and the seduction of young African women.¹⁸⁵ In addition to the important cultural

¹⁸⁴ Strayer, 136—37.

¹⁸⁵ Lynn Thomas, “Imperial Concerns and Women’s Affairs’: State Efforts to Regulate Clitoridectomy and Eradicate Abortion in Meru, Kenya, c. 1910—1950,” *Journal of African History* 39 (1998), 130.

and generational symbolism presented by female circumcision, the ritual also provided avenues through which Africans of both genders were able to push forward their own agendas and independence. For women, the ceremony was rife with power and a very specific culture that was theirs and theirs alone. Men's responses to the ceremony are more difficult to pin down; some men supported the abolishment of the practice as a way to consolidate control over their households, while also reinforcing their support for religious and political authorities while others used their support of the practice as a way to highlight their own nationalist urges.¹⁸⁶ Thus, female circumcision was not only a cultural conflict but a political one as well. For the colonial authorities this was not only a political issue but also one of labor. They wanted to ensure that future generations of African laborers would be available for state labor schemes and white owned farms. Their response to the crisis was predicated upon keeping these various priorities balanced in the face of the most significant conflict to face the colony before Mau Mau.¹⁸⁷ Because the issue of labor was so important to colonial officials, particularly at the level of district officer, they actually undertook their own circumcision campaigns, called *Kigwarie* in parts of Kenya. During *Kigwarie* medical professionals performed what they called the minor operation. Lynn Thomas argues that despite the tacit acceptance of the practice by many in the colonial administration in Kenya, they never included news of *Kigwarie* in their official correspondence to London or Nairobi because it was a flagrant contravention of regulations.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ Janice Boddy, *Civilizing Women: British Crusades in Colonial Sudan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 109—27.

¹⁸⁷ Lynn Thomas, *Politics of the Womb: Women, Reproduction, and the State in Kenya* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 1-2.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 45—46. Because *Kigwarie* infringed upon traditional women's authority in many Kikuyu societies, after the official circumcision many women would circumcise young women a second time in order to regain that power. The official policy was laid out in the Governor's Conference of 1926. For details see The National Archives, Colonial Office, CO 533/392/1.

Despite the lack of official correspondence about *Kigwarie*, it is clear that even at the highest levels ideas about medicine and modernity were changing. As early as 1924 Colonial Office administrators set out new syllabi and regulations for African, Indian, and European medical officers. These modifications were meant to provide greater training and incentives for those working at the lowest level in the medical field. Overwhelmingly this lowest class was staffed by African men who worked as dressers, but officials hoped that by the next decade they could begin more complex work.¹⁸⁹ Although these new regulations said nothing specifically about female circumcision, they highlighted the importance of labor for the authorities. Within a memorandum from the Director of Medical and Sanitary Services in Kenya, the need to provide healthy labor was repeatedly emphasized. In fact the new job responsibilities for future African dressers was to be medically examining every laborer before he left the reserve for work.¹⁹⁰ Thus female circumcision amalgamated a whole host of issues and relationships. It became an important labor and humanitarian issue for some British officials; it was a touchstone for African nationalists and large segments of Kikuyu women; and finally it provided missionaries, particularly the CMS, with an opportunity to prove their usefulness and discretion to the colonial authorities. It also provided a valuable, if dangerous, litmus test for Africans who claimed Christian conversion.

Officially, the female circumcision crisis began in 1929 with the publication of “Memorandum on the Circumcision of Kikuyu Native Girls,” written by the leader of the CSM, Dr. John Arthur. The memo focused on a recent court case involving two elderly women who

¹⁸⁹ TNA, CO 533/350, Memorandum from Director of Medical and Sanitary Services.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

carried out the circumcision ceremony and the long term ramifications of the procedure.¹⁹¹ Despite the attention Dr. Arthur's publication drew to the issue it is important to remember that missionaries had objected to the practice from their earliest days in the protectorate.¹⁹² They decried both forms of female circumcision—the so called minor version which was a 'simple' clitoridectomy and the major excision which called for both a clitoridectomy and labiaectomy. For Dr. Arthur, both forms of the circumcision were unacceptable and subject to major church discipline, up to and including excommunication. Several older members of the Presbyterian churches went along with this dictum, but many young converts resisted and resented this intrusion into their claims for adulthood.¹⁹³ Arthur was unwilling to compromise but faced backlash from colonial authorities and other missionaries for his hard line stance. By 1929, Africans were not confined by the older spheres of influence and they voted with their feet—they rejected the CSM standard and moved to other Christian groups in Kenya. In order to combat this, Arthur pushed for a joint resolution in the inter-denominational Kenya Missionary Council, but Anglicans refused to agree. Arthur wanted every church to make rejection of circumcision a condition of church membership, but other churches were not willing to take such a risky step.¹⁹⁴ Colonial authorities tended to agree, arguing that full scale abolition was impossible because of

¹⁹¹ Penelope Hetherington, "The Politics of Female Circumcision in the Central Province of Colonial Kenya, 1920—1930," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 26:1 (1998), 103.

¹⁹² As early as 1913 the CSM attempted to excommunicate families who circumcised their daughters, but only for 18 months. This practice only served to drain church attendance and was softened after the beginning of the war, only to be picked up again in the mid-20s. For more see, Mary Nyangweso Wangila, *Female Circumcision: The Interplay of Religion, Culture, and Gender in Kenya* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 31.

¹⁹³ Susan Pedersen, "Unspeakable Acts: The Sexual Politics of Colonial Policy-Making," *The Journal of Modern History* 63:4 (Dec. 1991), 651—52.

¹⁹⁴ Jocelyn Murray, "The Church Missionary Society and the 'Female Circumcision' Issue in Kenya 1929—1932," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 8:2 (1976), 93.

the backwardness of the Kikuyu. As G.V Maxwell, Chief Native Commissioner stated in a 1929 circular, the government “merely [had] a desire, in the interest of humanity, native eugenics, and increase of population, to revert to the milder form of the operation, which is indeed more in keeping with ancient tribal usage.”¹⁹⁵

Unfortunately for the Colonial Office two things hampered their desire to find compromise—the Duchess of Atholl and the Kikuyu Central Association. In the United Kingdom, the Duchess sparked a public outcry about officials’ toleration of the practice in the minor form. Despite her conservative and anti-feminist background, the Duchess worked tirelessly for an end to the practice. Unfortunately it was more effective as a tool to make fellow MPs blush than a successful campaign in its own right.¹⁹⁶ In the dozens of letters she sent to the Colonial Office and the Governor of Kenya, Sir Edward Grigg, the Duchess repeatedly pushed for the government to take a stronger stance against the practice and highlighted the medical consequences of the procedure.¹⁹⁷ On behalf of the Committee for the Protection of Coloured Women in the Colonies, the Duchess also stressed the need to ensure that “girls” who were circumcised gave their full and informed consent to the procedure.¹⁹⁸ In response to these pleas, Colonial Office officials relied on two defenses—the ancient tribal nature of Africans and the

¹⁹⁵ TNA, CO 533/392/1, Native Affairs Department Circular Letter No. 28.

¹⁹⁶ Christine Bolt, *Sisterhood Questioned?: Race, Class, and Internationalism in the American and British Women Movements, c. 1880s-1970s* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 65 and Catriona Burness, “Count Up to Twenty-one: Scottish Women in Formal Politics, 1918—1990,” in *Women and Citizenship in Britain and Ireland in the Twentieth Century: What Difference Did the Vote Make?* eds., Esther Breitenbach and Pat Thane (New York: Continuum, 2010), 51—52.

¹⁹⁷ TNA, CO 533/407/14, Correspondence between Duchess Atholl and Dr. Drummond Shiels, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, February-October 1931.

¹⁹⁸ TNA, CO 533/394/11, Correspondence between Duchess Atholl, Governor Grigg, and Dr. Drummond Shiels, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, February-March 1930.

intractability of certain mission groups.¹⁹⁹ Although they do not specify which mission group shoulders most of the blame, it is clear that the CSM was their primary target. As the Directory of Medical and Sanitary Services, Frederick Johnstone stated,

The attitude of certain of the Churches in making the question of circumcision a religious test during the last few months has undoubtedly raised the resentment of the Kikuyu and it is unquestionable that the action of these Churches in [the] excommunication [of] some of their members (who have for years been acceptable members of the Church) because they declined to accept a newly imposed test is having exactly the opposite effect to that which the Missionaries desire. The actual result unquestionably is that the practice of female circumcision holds a stronger place among the Kikuyu today than it did six months ago. These missionaries have lost sight of the fundamental principle in dealing with native development, and that is that progress must be slow and gradual.

In the end, the Committee for the Protection of Coloured Women in the Colonies and Duchess of Atholl were less than successful in changing official minds concerning the practice of female circumcision.

The combined efforts of the public crusade led by the Duchess of Atholl in the UK and Dr. Arthur's efforts in Kenya were unable to stem the practice of female circumcision in the colony. The issue did provide new avenues for Kikuyu nationalists to advocate for continued traditions and greater autonomy within the colony. Their fight was not about gaining complete independence, but it was decidedly anti-colonial, and it was significant on multiple levels. The main thrust for the pro-circumcision camp was the Kikuyu Central Association, a political organization that emerged from Harry Thuku's EAA. The KCA's relationship with missionaries was spotty, depending on the individual missionary, but thanks to the circumcision crisis their rapport with colonial authorities was almost uniformly tense and unhappy. The leader of the KCA during this period was Jomo Kenyatta, a young *athomi* living and working in Nairobi.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

Kenyatta rose through the ranks of the organization was known for his writings in the KCA press organ, *Muigwithania*.²⁰⁰ Kenyatta argued that female circumcision was not a medical problem, as presented by the British, but rather one of ethnic nationalism. For the Kikuyu to continue to survive as a people, they must be allowed to perform the rituals that made them who they were. He frequently compared the ritual to that of Jewish circumcision and highlighted its symbolic importance and negligible long term physical impact.²⁰¹

When Dr. Arthur released his memorandum in the summer of 1929, the KCA took immediate action, sending around circulars of their own, warning local chiefs that circumcision could be completely outlawed in the near future if they did not take action. They also solicited funds to continue fighting against banning the practice. The organization encouraged the spread of the *muthirgiu* and the targeted of specific men and women who had not complied with the customary requirements.²⁰² In addition to lobbying colonial authorities, the KCA also urged its supporters to leave mission churches and schools to join independent, African led schools. In an attempt to broker compromise, the Colonial Office invited Kenyatta to London to discuss the issue. While in the UK, Kenyatta met with various parliamentary committees, the Colonial Office, and Church of Scotland officials. Essentially Kenyatta attempted to circumvent church leaders, white settlers, and district officers by appealing directly to those in charge in the

²⁰⁰ Bruce Berman, “Jomo Kenyatta,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* www.oxforddnb.com

²⁰¹ Jomo Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya* (New York: AMS Press, 1953), 130—54. Both sides in this debate focused almost entirely on the cultural or medical significance of the practice rather than the sexual importance to women. For more about why this was the case see, Bodil Folke Frederiksen, “Jomo Kenyatta, Marie Bonaparte, and Bonsilaw Malinowski on Clitoridectomy and Female Sexuality,” *History Workshop Journal* 65 (Spring 2008), 23—48.

²⁰² Hetherington, 113—14.

metropole.²⁰³ His efforts were unsuccessful in the short term; the KCA petition he presented to the British government was unfulfilled and during his meeting with Scottish Presbyterians they refused to comply with his plan for a slow and gradual reduction in the practice of female circumcision.²⁰⁴ Despite his failures, the trip did play a key role in shaping the future of Kenyatta's nationalism and political aspirations. All told Kenyatta would spend sixteen years living and traveling throughout the UK and Europe, spending time in the Soviet Union and graduating from the London School of Economics with a post-graduate degree in social anthropology.²⁰⁵

Kenyatta's work in the UK did bear one significant fruit in Kenya; he was successful in pushing Dr. Arthur off the government's Executive Council. As a member of the board Dr. Arthur was seen as an advocate and spokesman for African interests, but in the aftermath of Kenyatta's visit and the continuing debate concerning the crisis the government wanted to distance itself from Arthur's inflammatory rhetoric.²⁰⁶ Despite this setback, the CSM continued to work against female circumcision, submitting a lengthy report on the matter to the Colonial Office in December of 1931.²⁰⁷ This commentary provided a history of the CSM's work against female circumcision, but it also strove to paint a full picture of each missionary group's work against the issue. As evidenced above, one mission group's name was conspicuous in its near absence—the CMS. Initially Arthur had hoped that the CMS would provide a strong ally, and in

²⁰³ Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1998), 70—1.

²⁰⁴ Ann Beck, "Some Observations on Jomo Kenyatta in Britain, 1929—1930," *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines* 6:22 (1966), 320—24.

²⁰⁵ Berman.

²⁰⁶ E.N. Wamagatta, *The Presbyterian Church of East Africa: An Account of Its Gospel Missionary Society Origins, 1895—1946* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009), 168—75.

²⁰⁷ TNA, CO 533/418/2, Church of Scotland Memorandum—prepared by Kikuyu Mission Council on Female Circumcision.

fact the lack of CMS support created a rift between the two mission groups that would take years to heal.²⁰⁸ In their Colonial Office file, the CSM claimed that the Anglicans did not have the proper medical facilities and the subsequent lack of first-hand knowledge for the devastation created by the forcible circumcision of unwilling young girls meant that the CMS chose to remain silent.²⁰⁹

While Arthur counted on the CMS's status as state church to strengthen his cause, missionaries used the same reasoning to recuse themselves from the very public campaigns waged by the CSM. They wanted to maintain and protect their relationship with the colonial and domestic state, not to publicly push agendas about indiscreet matters concerning female biology. In fact the CMS is almost entirely absent from the record on the crisis until after most considered it finished. In late 1930 an African Inland Mission worker, Hilda Stumpf, was murdered in her bed. Stumpf had recently been embroiled in a case involving a young girl claiming she did not want the circumcision but had the rite forced upon her despite these protestations. In the aftermath of Stumpf's murder there were rumors that she too had been forcibly circumcised before death, but those whispers were largely unfounded.²¹⁰ In the aftermath of the grisly murder the controversy slowed died—Arthur was no longer a political force to be reckoned with, Kenyatta had relocated to London, and the government was more than happy to allow the status quo to continue with little interference so long as birthrates and infant mortality remained stable.²¹¹

²⁰⁸ Murray, 93.

²⁰⁹ TNA, CO 533/418/2.

²¹⁰ Klaus Fiedler, *Christianity and African Culture: Conservative German Protestant Missionaries in Tanzania, 1900—1940* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill Publishing, 1996), 75.

²¹¹ This description of the female circumcision crisis provides important insights into the male dominated discourse, and lack thereof by CMS missionaries. For more on how African women

In their report of 1931 the Church of Scotland mission claimed that the CMS did not have adequate medical personnel or facilities to truly understand the female circumcision crisis, however a more accurate assessment would have been that CMS priorities were different. While the CSM focused on female circumcision, even at the cost of attendance in their churches and schools, the CMS felt that its educational efforts were more important than debates about Kikuyu rites and traditions.²¹² In the long term this strategic plan seemed to work well for the CMS. They argued from the beginning that female circumcision and membership in the KCA was a “political” issue not a spiritual one, and thus not under their purview as messengers of the Gospel.²¹³ Despite this bit of verbal sleight of hand, the CMS did find plenty of ‘political’ issues worth their attention in the inter-war period. The most important of these was education and it is schooling to which they primarily focused their attentions because it was here that they felt could provide the biggest impact, both on potential converts and for the state.

responded to the crisis see, Claire Robertson, “Grassroots in Kenya: Women, Genital Mutilation, and Collective Action, 1920—1930,” *Signs* 21:3 (Spring 1996) 615—42. The lack of female agency and voice, Duchess of Atholl excepted, is an important part of the historical debate surrounding this crisis.

²¹² In their December 1931 report, the CSM claimed that they had lost 90% of their church members and suffered a similar drop in school attendance. TNA CO 533/418/2.

²¹³ University of Birmingham Library Special Collections (hereafter UBL), Church Missionary Society papers (hereafter CMS), CMS/B/OMS/A5/1930/12, Letter from the Bishop of Mombasa to H.D. Hooper, 6 February 1930.

Education in the Inter-war Period

Scholars frequently link the growth of independent African educational efforts, frequently called out schools to the female circumcision crisis. Derek Peterson argues that the issue of education is more complicated than that. Although it shared many advocates and was a clearly connected conflict by many within Kenya, those who pushed for out schools had to forge a common agenda and identity in the midst of political infighting within their social circles and in the face government antipathy.²¹⁴ Thus while schools in Kenya were certainly part of the larger cultural nationalist conflict, they must be studied separately in order to fully understand their importance in the development of anti-colonial, and often anti-missional, feeling in the colony. While for many scholars of decolonization out schools were a footnote to the larger female circumcision crisis, it did not feel that way to CMS missionaries at the time.²¹⁵ For the CMS education was the key issue of the day, and one in which they were willing to stake their claims for legitimacy in the colony. We can see these prerogatives in their dealings with the colonial authorities, as they strove to prove that they were useful members of colonial society. As we have seen the CMS developed their patterns of action regarding their place and function in colonial society in the midst of World War I and those prototypes would not change throughout the twentieth century.

The action plans developed by the CMS during World War I revolved around the idea that supporting the colonial state in order to fix a problematic aspect of imperialism was a more

²¹⁴ Derek Peterson, "Writing in Revolution: Independent Schooling and Mau Mau in Nyeri," in *Mau Mau and Nationhood: Arms, Authority, and Narration* eds., John Lonsdale and E.S. Atieno Odhiambo (Oxford: James Currey, 2003), 77—78.

²¹⁵ Elkins, 20—1; Anderson, 18—20; Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire: The Road to Decolonisation, 1918—1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 17.

effective, gentler method than publicly decrying the dark side of empire. For the most part they were true believers in the liberal mission of empire and saw themselves as important cogs in the imperial machine. As one author describes it, they believed they were the “moral conscience of empire.”²¹⁶ Missionaries may have truly imagined themselves as such, but one of the important questions we must answer here is if the official apparatus of empire agreed with the CMS’ vision of itself. Again and again we will see the answer to that question was a resounding no. If the ‘official mind’ of empire truly prioritized a vision of community development and liberal empire, missionaries only played a part in that vision in fits and starts. Colonial officials relied upon missionaries, particularly the CMS to provide development and modernity ‘on the cheap’ but frequently excluded them from larger strategic planning and goals for those development schemes. Throughout the twentieth century the CMS desperately worked to convince officials that they were necessary to empire, but they were never able to properly procure security which meant they focused on trying to walk softly and carry a very small stick. These same ideals can be traced from 1916 to 1963 and the most important spike in this timeline is the fight over education in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

African out schools began as early as 1924 as local elders agreed to start the process and residents provided land, building supplies, and salaries. In this first phase of African led schooling, missionaries acquiesced to provide training and supervision of teachers for these schools.²¹⁷ Despite these copasetic origins many missionaries began to feel that they were losing control over these out schools. Some groups, such as the Africa Inland Mission, attempted to

²¹⁶ John L. Comaroff, “Images of Empire, Contests of Conscience: Models of Colonial Dominations in South Africa,” *American Ethnologist* 16:4 (Nov. 1989), 661.

²¹⁷ J.K. Karanja, *Founding an African Faith: Kikuyu Anglican Christianity, 1900—1945* (Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1999), 92—93.

press the issue regarding female circumcision in order to regain the upper hand.²¹⁸ At the same time the colonial state attempted to establish greater control over the type of education provided in Kenya with the passage of the 1924 Educational Ordinance.²¹⁹ This new ordinance emerged from the Phelps-Stokes Commission's visit to East Africa that same year. The Commission recommended an education that focused heavily on "adaptation," or schooling that would push Africans to be useful contributors to society. In order to do this there would be two separate tracks for education—one for the masses and one for those who were destined to inherit leadership roles within tribal societies.²²⁰ The result of these new educational efforts would be a mixed bag: the new regulations meant that they would possibly have access to greater state funding for their schools, but it also signaled a shift in the types of education they could provide. No longer would literacy via religious theology and an introduction to a modern, English country style life be the main thrust of education. No longer would teaching Africans to be good Christians via biographies and religious tracts be enough for the colonial government.²²¹ However for those missions who could successfully make the transition, there seemed to be a promise of long term financial stability and government support.

²¹⁸ David Sandgren, "The Kikuyu, Christianity, and the Africa Inland Mission" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 1976), 213.

²¹⁹ J.C. Ssekamway, *A History of Education in East Africa* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2001), 7.

²²⁰ Deborah Gaitskell, "Race, Gender, and Imperialism: A Century of Black Girls' Education in South Africa," in *'Benefits Bestowed'? Education and British Imperialism* J.A. Mangan, ed., (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 159 and Brendan Patrick Carmody, *Conversion and Jesuit Schooling in Zambia* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1992), 48—9.

²²¹ Derek Peterson, "Casting Characters: Autobiography and Political Imagination in Central Kenya," *Research in African Literatures* 37:3 (Autumn 2006), 178—9; Strafford Kay, "African Roles, Responses, and Initiatives in Colonial Education: The Case of Western Kenya," *Paedagogica Historica* 16:2 (1976), 279—283.

The CMS was more than willing to make such modifications part of their educational policies, and indeed despite these new ordinances and initially they were given a relatively free hand to shape that education in a manner befitting their religious ideals. Indeed, so long as a school was not solely providing religious teaching, as was frequently rumored to occur in Catholic schools, private enterprise in education was considered the best, most British form of instruction.²²² Thus a delicate balance was achieved, whereby mission groups might be on less stable footing, but with more assistance than they had previously enjoyed. However the arrival of H.S. Scott as the new Director of Education in Kenya in 1928 imperiled that delicate balance. Scott was an Oxbridge educated modernist who focused heavily on science.²²³ While in Kenya he presented several scientific, racially based papers concerning the positive intellectual aptitude of Africans.²²⁴ In order to fully capitalize on these capabilities, Scott focused on what he saw as the neglect of teacher training in the colony. Naturally this focus brought him into heavy conflict with missionary groups, particularly the CMS.

The question of teacher training had dogged the CMS since 1925 when the annual education report presented by the colony argued that the group had not used their government funds to provide said training and employment of a European teacher for the CMS run Buxton

²²² Clive Whitehead, "The Concept of British Education Policy in the Colonies, 1850—1960," *Journal of Educational Administration and History* 39:2 (2007), 164. As Whitehead argues, this privately driven education was considered the 'British' way, as opposed to the rigid state sponsored educational style favored on the continent. These ideas and preferences certainly carried over into empire.

²²³ Tignor, 259.

²²⁴ Chloe Campbell, *Race and Empire: Eugenics in Colonial Kenya* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 68—71. Scott believed that education could help bridge the gap between European and African intellectual capacities.

High School. Instead it appeared that the CMS had used that money to pay for their headmaster's yearly salary.²²⁵ The report went a step further by declaring:

Government should no longer be regarded as assisting the Missions: the missions should be regarded as lightening the task of Government in the work of education, and the major portion of the cost of education should be borne by the Government, provided the fullest supervision is exercised by Government over the education given in Mission schools.

The Kenyan Department of Education claimed that this new manifesto had proved quite effective in pushing all missionaries to proffer their services to the government.²²⁶ Despite this optimistic statement, it was clear that much work remained to be done, and the introduction of Scott as the new director in 1928 would push relationships to their breaking point, particularly once it combined with the demands of Local Native Councils for greater control over their own schools.

In the same year Scott came to the colony, the Special Committee on the Organization of Agriculture Education also presented a report calling for a greater attention to agricultural education. This commentary highlighted many of the new issues the government wanted to prioritize, namely a return to agricultural education as a way of reversing or slowing the trend of 'de-tribalization.' The committee argued that these new educational guidelines should focus on farming and animal husbandry for small self-sustaining plots of land as opposed to the current models which focused on creating graduates trained for white collar jobs.²²⁷ Unfortunately

²²⁵ TNA, CO 533/645. We can see the same type of sentiment expressed in a March 1925 report which again called upon the government to provide greater responsibility by the government because the results of mission led education have been less than satisfactory on many accounts. TNA, CO 533/388/11.

²²⁶ TNA, CO 533/644

²²⁷ TNA, CO 533/379/4. Despite the call for more agricultural education, the committee was careful to note that agricultural experiments with new types of crops were not recommended. Clearly those working on groundnuts in Tanganyika would have done well to pay heed to the committee's warnings here. The committee also highlighted the importance of agriculture in the educational priorities of the American South, with a nod towards the hope of creating something similar in Kenya.

missionaries were already struggling with their previous directives for more academic style training. Their problem was twofold; they could not find enough recruits with the proper educational background and training, a problem that would only worsen as they attempted to find missionaries who could provide agricultural and industrial training.²²⁸ Missionaries also struggled to find enough donors to keep their various endeavors afloat. This was particularly true for schools. As the CMS financial officer in London stated in February of 1928,

the Mission cannot maintain all its Institutions on their present basis for more than a short space of time; and it is absolutely necessary to appeal to the [Parent Committee] to assist it material either by increasing the number of Missionaries payable by Salisbury Square; or by increasing the A.O.H. specifically for Educational work...otherwise some schools must be closed.²²⁹

Although missionaries on the ground disagreed with this dire prediction, they were forced to admit that not only were educational standards still quite low, but that finances had indeed been dropping precipitously through the decade. Indeed one missionary, Mr. Cribb, was forced to resign because he felt he could not successfully carry out both his mission work and teaching responsibilities. He claimed that the only possible solution was, “It must be either [government] or CMS. As you are doubtless aware the Government’s attitude towards Missionary Societies is no longer so friendly as before.”²³⁰ For poor Mr. Cribb the only successful future he could envision was one working as a missionary to Europeans in the colony.²³¹

In 1929 this state of affairs was further exposed by Director Scott’s first annual report, which called for sweeping changes, not only for school curriculum but to the categories and types of school available to Africans. By the 1920s school classification in Kenya ran along three

²²⁸ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1927/62

²²⁹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1928/32

²³⁰ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1928/34

²³¹ Ibid.

types. The first of these were A schools, or bush schools which were entirely under missionary auspices. These schools focused on the basics of education and only those deemed worthy would receive governmental financial support, known as grants-in-aid. One step up from A schools were B schools, which were akin to grammar schools and focused on students until approximately age 12.²³² Finally, C schools most closely resembled high schools, and ran through Standard VII. Scott was most interested in the B and C schools; he felt the Education Department had already wasted too much time, energy, and money on A schools despite their low standards and outcomes. Essentially A schools were to become “a real force in the campaign against illiteracy” but little more.²³³ Scott argued, and the Governor of the colony agreed, that in many cases these schools were little more rudimentary theological training centers. Catholic schools seemed to be a particular target for the authorities, although they frequently lumped all missionaries under the Christian umbrella. This characterization of bush schools naturally angered Catholics, but the CMS was also quite upset, in part because they were being grouped with said Catholics.²³⁴

The CMS reaction to these recommendations for bush schools was two fold: they wrote private letters to both the Colonial Office in London and Governor Grigg but they also joined with the Kenya Missionary Council to publicly dispute Director Scott and his plans. The KMC’s memorandum to Grigg tried to highlight the importance of mission education in Kenya, and they

²³² Age and grade approximations are difficult for mission schools in Kenya and throughout Africa because they began *in medias res* so to speak. Therefore a 16 year old might be in a class for standard one students. Although colonial and missional authorities used British standards, they were never more than an ideal version of a very messy reality. B schools usually dealt with British equivalent standard I through III or IV.

²³³ TNA CO 533/388/11

²³⁴ Catholics expressed their discontent via a series of angry letters to the main newspaper of the colony, *East African Standard*.

agree with Scott that higher standards of education need to be reached in the A schools, however they worry that Scott's proposals would place too much of a financial burden on the mission bodies themselves. In the end, they attempted to reach a consensus with the government by subtly disavowing the work of Catholic mission schools. They concede that catechetical schools, or those that only teach theology should be closed and not given government support.²³⁵ The only schools that would fall under this umbrella, at least for Protestants, would be those that were led by Catholics. Despite the conciliatory nature of this memorandum, Scott was unmoved. He argued that the combination of low-quality teachers and suspect financial management meant that it was time for the government to take a stronger stance in the development of the African intellect. Equally important, Scott maintained that Africans did not want mission education anymore, at least not along the old independent lines set out by the government. As he wrote to the Colonial Office, "he [the African] does not know what he wants, but he feels dimly that there is something above the mission schools. He is not antagonistic, but dissatisfied."²³⁶ Not only were Africans unhappy with the quality of education they received, Scott's distress over the financial management of government funds was palpable in each of his memos over the subject. He argued that it was difficult to tell where the money to missions went, and he implied that because of the close connections between schools and mission stations frequently that money went to support direct evangelical work as opposed to funding teacher salaries.²³⁷

Scott was a dangerous figure to missionaries, not only because he seemed to impinge on their financial relationship with the government, but also because he seemed eager to usurp the individual missionary's role as protector over their African 'children.' Mission groups saw

²³⁵ TNA, CO 533/388/11.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

²³⁷ *Ibid.*

themselves as the only force that could hold together a unified vision of a Kikuyu identity in the modern world—the only group who could aid Africans in their attempts to confront the problems of modernity and its offshoot, detribalization. Scott’s plan to erode missionary control over education seemed to threaten CMS missionaries on every front in a way that the female circumcision crisis did not. Education was how the CMS made itself feel useful, but Scott’s dismissal of their training, standards, and oversight undercut the mission group at every turn. Additionally, Scott positioned himself as the primary interlocutor with Africans, he frequently referenced his conversations with them and indicated that he was the one who truly understood what they wanted and needed from British colonial society and culture. However, in the first years of the education debate they preferred to utilize the inter-alliance Kenya Missionary Council to strike back against these claims. The KMC’s first defense, as we have seen, was to focus on how they could provide conciliation with Scott’s proposal, pushing out Catholics in favor of their own work, however this first plan was less than successful, which is why the CMS Home Office would take up the charge in 1931.

Part of the problem for the CMS was the all-inclusiveness of these plans. Not only did Scott and the Department of Education want to change the funding for A schools, they also planned on implementing reforms in B and C schools. While missions could maintain control over B schools, they had to reassure the government that all children would be taught basic subjects as prescribed by the government, in the required language, Swahili.²³⁸ The government would no longer allow for the idea that only converts, or potential converts were worthy of education, all children deserved the basics of literacy and some agriculture training. Additionally these B schools, both old and new were to be staffed with Africans; European teachers would be

²³⁸ Ibid.

subject to the same pay rates as African educators. Additionally, the government wanted new schools to be built, approximately two hundred in total, one for every 15,000 inhabitants in the colony.²³⁹ The reason for such an aggressive building scheme was the increased demands from Local Native Councils to build and operate their own schools within their communities. Indeed the LNCs were so eager for new schools they taken up their own tax collections to raise funds, but the government wanted to make sure that they only gained a foothold on power in A and B schools.²⁴⁰ Although these demands upset the missions, Scott realized that Africans had to be given some agency within formal education parameters or they might make a total break for educational independence, therefore support and financial buy-in should be concentrated at the A and B school level.²⁴¹ By 1929 the financial support provided by LNCs was vital to the continuation and expansion of education in the colony. The Colonial Office frankly stated that “Mr. Scott’s proposals as a whole depend financially to a large extent on their winning the financial support of Local Native Councils.”²⁴² It is important to note at this juncture that no mention is made of the financial necessity of missionary support. It is clear that missionaries were necessarily, if only for the presence of teachers and the upkeep of physical buildings, but they would not be allowed to maintain a vice grip on education for the foreseeable future. This did not mean that missionaries were largely useless by 1929. Their religious teachings were still a priority for the authorities, but they were one priority amongst many. Missionaries had to navigate the new waters of colonial development in the twentieth century.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Tignor, 261.

²⁴¹ TNA, CO 533/388/11.

²⁴² Ibid.

Despite these ominous tidings missionaries, still had a place of prime importance for C schools. Although only a few C schools existed in Kenya, they were to be left almost entirely in the hands of missionary groups. The Colonial Office's proposal was to support these mission schools, as opposed to building their own schools and attaching denominational hostels.²⁴³ There were a few reasons for this. First, there were not many C schools in Kenya, and it was assumed that very few Africans would ever be educated there. The main thrust of these educational proposals was meant to prepare the vast majority of African schoolboys for work on farms, either their own or European owned estates.²⁴⁴ C schools were for those select few elites who would take up white collar jobs in the colony and as such a religious foundation would be a benefit to their incorporation into larger colonial society.

The initial debate concerning the future of education in Kenya began in 1925 with the creation of a sub-committee for education in East Africa and culminated with Grigg's presentation to the Colonial Office of Director Scott's 1929 Annual Report. The Colonial Office debated these proposals for two full years before submitting their final recommendations. During the two years of debate a flurry of letters passed between the Colonial Office and Governors Grigg and Byrne. The rapid growth of the female circumcision crisis complicated the debate, and it is clear that both sides were trying to find a compromise to suit every side in the conflict. In 1929 the semi-retired Labourite socialist stalwart Baron Passfield was a surprise appointment as

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Although education for girls crops up occasionally throughout this debate it is clear that they are secondary in the eyes of Local Native Councils, colonial authorities, and missionaries. The general consensus seems to be that they should sort out the general direction of education and then begin to work on expanding education for women. For more see, "Education Policy in British East Africa: Memorandum Submitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies by the Advisory Committee on Native Education in the British Tropical African Dependencies," which can be found in TNA, CO 533/388/11 and the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies meeting of December 1931 which can be found in TNA, CO 533/400/5.

Colonial Secretary, and it would be his task to bring some sort of resolution to the education situation in Kenya.²⁴⁵ In the spring of 1930, as the Colonial Office and its Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies continued to debate Scott's proposals, Governor Grigg wrote to Passfield in an attempt to shed more light on the tangled web of mission, government, and LNC in the colony. Grigg gently pushed for greater LNC involvement in C schools, allowing them to build schools with denominational hostels. He argued that if they were denied this type of school they would distrust the government and push back educational progress of the colony.²⁴⁶ This plan went far beyond even Scott's proposals, as he had argued that LNCs authority should extend only to A and B schools.

One reason for Grigg's malleability may have been the stark realization that colonial development schemes required African money to survive. As the Great Depression sank its teeth into every colony with deepening ferocity, indigenous tax collection became an integral part of colonial budgets. By September 1930 it was clear that schools would not remain open without African support, and Africans demanded a share in the prestigious C schools. Despite the importance of this source of funds, Passfield's belief in the paternalistic vision of the empire would not allow him to give Africans too much power. He understood that with every voluntary taxation scheme African demands for authority would increase, thus he forbade Grigg from allowing LNCs to call for special taxes to pay for educational needs unless absolutely necessary. Indeed the Advisory Committee fortified their previous support of Scott's decision that government C schools with religious hostels was an inferior product to mission run C schools.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁵ John Davis, "Beatrice Potter Webb," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*
www.oxforddnb.com

²⁴⁶ TNA, CO 533/400/8.

²⁴⁷ TNA, CO 533/400/8.

At this juncture missionary displeasure seemed out of line. They wanted more funding and support with no increase in oversight, and essentially their plan was endorsed. Although Scott's plan slightly increased A and B school requirements, and Swahili was encouraged, missionaries still had plenty of room to provide theological training. Despite these positives missionary protest was only beginning in both Kenya and the UK. The disconnect between government and missionaries only deepened throughout the debate. Just as the CMS had developed patterns of behavior and communication, so too had the colonial government. They accepted missionary aid in their endeavors and received the private deputations from missionaries, but in return they provided little in the way of communication. In their attempts to placate LNCs, the government soft-pedaled their support for missionary schools, and they did not effectively share information with missionary groups to alleviate their fears. For instance, the Advisory Committee for Education stated,

the greatest importance must be attached in all areas, where contact with civilization tends to weaken tribal authority and the sanctions of existing beliefs and moral instruction, to religious beliefs and moral instruction. It is recognition of this need that impels governments to desire to assist forms of education which rest on the basis of religious beliefs.²⁴⁸

Kenya seemed to be a perfect example of this type erosion of 'traditional' culture, as evidenced by the female circumcision crisis and thus, missionaries were arguably in a better position in 1930 than they had been in 1928, at least in terms of government support. Yet missionaries did not understand their own security, in part because the government did not publicize or communicate these priorities very well and missionaries failed to decipher winks and nods from the government regarding their place in the colony. This is obvious in a letter from Passfield to

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

Grigg in September of 1930 as he highlighted the angry feelings of the Kenya Missionary Council about these proposals.²⁴⁹

One reason for this lack of clear understanding was the distress created by the Great Depression. As the economy of Great Britain fell so too did the coffers of the CMS, and by the summer of 1930 they were desperate. If the colonial government's development plans could not run without African taxes, missionary groups could not perform their work without government support. Success and failure were tied up in increasingly difficult and intricate knots in Kenya and for many missionaries any threat to funding, no matter how miniscule was a threat to the entire endeavor. The Home Office in the UK only fueled this anxiety as the Finance Committee agreed to a plan created by the Executive Committee in Kenya to pool all the funds given by the government for teachers' salaries and dole it out individually in an attempt to pay everyone at least part of their salary.²⁵⁰ Not all missionaries were happy with this new plan, as evidenced by a set of letters from a CMS missionary and secretary of the Kenya Missionary Council, W.A. Pitt-Pitts to H.D. Hooper, the Africa secretary of the CMS. One missionary in Kenya objected to the Education Pool plan, and in response Hooper wrote to Pitt-Pitts decrying the plan. In response Pitt-Pitts lambasted Hooper and the missionary in question for their "unconstitutional" actions.²⁵¹ The Education Pool helped matters in Kenya, but the problem of lesser pay, lack of

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1930/87. Missionaries with employment grants from the government already made less than teachers working solely for the government, and this plan to pool resources only highlighted the CMS straightened circumstances. For specific details regarding pay discrepancy see UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1929/134.

²⁵¹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1930/116.

recruits, and furlough pay continued to plague the CMS throughout the remainder of their time in the colony.²⁵²

In November of 1931, the KMC proactively decided to appoint a special Educational Adviser to serve missions in Kenya and Uganda. This adviser was to be “a leader of policy, not merely a servant of the Government. It is quite essential that he should be a “missionary” first.” It was no accident that the KMC’s plan of attack felt very similar to previous efforts by the CMS. The secretary of the council was a CMS missionary and CMS finances kept the organization afloat. For this position the CMS paid £300 while all the other Protestant missionary bodies paid in a combined £300. The Kenyan and Ugandan governments each chipped in £100.²⁵³ Eventually the missionary chosen was J.W.C Dougall who, despite his Scottish Presbyterian background, had a quiet and diplomatic personality. He had been a member of the Phelps-Stokes Commission and principal of the Jeanes School in Kenya and many considered him to be the perfect candidate for the appointment. Dougall served in this position until 1936 when he returned to Scotland to take up the position of secretary to the Conference of British Missionary Societies.²⁵⁴

It is difficult to evaluate Dougall’s record as educational adviser in Kenya, but in the larger imperial context miscommunication remained the order of the day. Despite the private support of missionary led education in the various sub-committees and writings of the Colonial Office, Director Scott continued to make anxiety inducing public statements. In a speech given just one week after Dougall’s appointment he stated,

²⁵² For more on the CMS’ salary problems, particularly as they related to furlough see UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1931/7.

²⁵³ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1931/6.

²⁵⁴ Kenneth Ross, “The Legacy of James Dougall,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 32:4 (Oct. 2008), 206.

In connection with African education, I have been asked by the Government to make one thing clear in regard to policy in connection with native education as present administered. The general policy in regard to native education is that Government welcomes and will encourage all voluntary educational effort which conforms to the general policy of Government. . . During the last few years there has been a tendency undoubtedly to emphasise, [sic] and possibly over-emphasise [sic] the importance of mission schools.²⁵⁵

Scott's phrasing passively aggressively accentuated his own feelings concerning missionary educational efforts and while it nominally sought to placate missions, his conclusion was far from reassuring. The tensions in Scott's speech were equally apparently in his annual reports as sections blatantly contradicted each other. Within the 1929 Annual Report page seven stated that education must be carried out through missionaries, while the next page claimed that Africans no longer wanted missionary education.²⁵⁶ Governor Grigg sent the text of Scott's speech to Passfield and indicated in the accompanying letter that Scott was amenable to the Colonial Office's interpretation of these contradictory passages.

The debate concerning the future of Kenyan education continued to rage into 1931 and the local press in Kenya began to play a larger role in shaping the debate. In January the *East Africa Standard* published an article detailing Scott's proposal and accepted his characterization of African discontent with the "inadequate" education currently provided by missionaries. The article concluded with a forewarning that if the debate were not brought to a hasty conclusion African might begin running their own schools free of government and missionary influence.²⁵⁷ Pitt-Pitts enclosed the article in a letter to HD Hooper without comment, but the dire warnings of the piece were all too evident. Additionally, Pitt-Pitts was upset because Dr. Scott had not forwarded the 1929 Annual Report for Education to him, which he claimed was a deliberate

²⁵⁵ TNA, CO 533/403/2

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ *East Africa Standard* January 28, 1931.

oversight, meant to highlight Scott's refusal to work with missionaries. Rather than draw attention to this slight publicly, Pitt-Pitts wanted Hooper to liaison with J.H. Oldham in hopes of preventing such lapses in the future.²⁵⁸ It is interesting that Pitt-Pitts chose to use London connections, rather than go through Scott himself or the Department of Education in Nairobi. Clearly Pitt-Pitts wanted to flex the power of his connections to the larger political world within the empire and going over Scott's head, but using Oldham had other advantages. Namely Oldham worked extensively with the Colonial Office, and had a reputation as a discreet and effective diplomat. Thus Pitt-Pitts could make his displeasure known without public consequences to the CMS or authorities. Again, the patterns of communication continue.

While the CMS relied on privacy and personal relationships to convey their discontent, Catholic missions did not have the same avenues of communication; therefore they relied on the public option. In early February a Catholic representative penned an editorial for the *East Africa Standard* which claimed that Scott had "pursued a definite anti-mission policy, and has taken advantage of his privileged position to discredit missions, [while] hurling insults from behind the official barricades." In addition to deceiving the public, the author claims that Scott was manipulating and using LNC naivety for his own advantage. Contrary to Scott's claim that he was merely publicizing African unhappiness over the quality of their education, the article claimed that he created their dissatisfaction by telling Africans that their education was too meager.²⁵⁹ The article concluded that Scott was able to perform these nefarious feats by using the female circumcision crisis to discredit all missionary activity in the colony.

²⁵⁸ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1931/36.

²⁵⁹ *East Africa Standard* February 12, 1931.

The combination of public and private remonstrance brought Scott to heel by March. Early in the month Pitt-Pitts and the Bishop of Mombasa, Richard Heywood, met with Scott. The summit was quite contentious, but Pitt-Pitts claimed that “I think the row has done good, because really while Mr. Scott does support us, he has a habit of making these unfortunate statement which are not true.”²⁶⁰ The next day all three men, including a Catholic delegation, met with Governor Grigg, and at this meeting the Governor pressed home how important cooperation with the missions was to the authorities, both in Kenya and London.²⁶¹ In the end both denominations received the assurances they so craved, but the delay of a year and half between the outbreak of debate and resolution did not help either side. However it is important to note that in this instance the patterns of communication for both the government and missionaries eventually did work. Private complaints in London led to meetings with the Governor in Kenya which satisfied CMS needs, while government recalcitrance upset the CMS, but not enough to push them to the Catholic style public reproach.

Despite the restoration of good feeling on behalf of both parties, the education debate was far from over. The CMS felt secure in government backing, but they still had to make ends meet, an increasingly difficult task in the midst of the Great Depression. Funding for mission fields had begun dropping off in 1927 and reached a critical stage by 1931. Committees in both colony and metropole worked to stretch economies so that every school could stay open. They grouped various schools together to create more pools to maximize their money from the government. The Nairobi boys school was of particular importance, not because of its significance educationally. As the CMS Educational Finance Committee admitted, the schools was “really

²⁶⁰ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1931/37.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

more an evangelistic agency than an educational institution.”²⁶² Despite its shortcomings the fact that the school was in Nairobi automatically made it worthwhile. For many in official and religious circles large cities, which Nairobi was on the verge of becoming, were the ultimate danger for young African men.²⁶³ Thus they felt the school had to remain in order to create young men who were “true servants of Christ.” Despite the school’s supposedly vital role and high priority within official circles of the CMS, the school was only solvent through the generous donations given by its main teacher, Canon Burns.²⁶⁴ Because individual missionaries could not be relied on to maintain their own schools via their salaries, the impetus to find more creation solutions, particularly for institutions such as the Nairobi Boys School, were paramount. The CMS included less educationally based schools in with their more productive offerings, in hopes of blending them all together and receiving government funds for each. In the case of the NBS, the CMS knew that it did not meet the government requirements but felt that its evangelical importance outweighed any lack of academic rigor.²⁶⁵

It is clear from the internal debates within the CMS that despite their protestations, Director Scott’s claims that missional education was in some cases lacking in basic academic preparation were true. However, attempts to focus more heavily on the scholastic side of mission education came with its own backlash. In late 1931 the CMS attempted to fill an educational post

²⁶² UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1931/52.

²⁶³ Fears of urbanization were long standing and ever present throughout the British Empire and the same was true of Kenya. For more information about cities and their potential harmful effects on African women and men see: Rosalind O’Hanlon, “Gender in the British Empire,” *The Oxford History of the British Empire Volume IV: The Twentieth Century* eds. Judith M. Brown and Wm. Roger Louis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 391; Joanna Lewis, *Empire State Building: War and Welfare in Kenya, 1925—52* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000); Luise White, *The Comforts of Home: Prostitution in Colonial Nairobi* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

²⁶⁴ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1931/52.

²⁶⁵ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1931/113.

in the Kabete Girls' School. Their ad for this opening focused mainly on the educational requirements needed to be considered as well as the teaching duties the young woman would be required to fulfill. Despite the attempts to craft a position that would provide both spiritual and intellectual guidance, i.e. one that would attract a person with missionary desires combined with academic qualifications that would satisfy government officials, not everyone was happy with the new tack taken by the home office. The first response out of Kenya came from the Cambridge educated missionary W.A. Pitt-Pitts and he railed,

Never have I read in any C.M.S. paper or anything that the C.M.S. has ever issued such a travesty. We might be a Government department looking for employees. There is not a word of spirituality in it and if the arrival of this secondary school genius is going to introduce this element into our recruitment, then I consider it extremely serious for the out-look of the Mission... We unitedly feel that we would rather be without missionaries than have people who are coming out on these terms. We do not want people who are out for what they can get, but we want men and women filled with the Holy Ghost and simply do not count the cost.²⁶⁶

Unfortunately for Pitt-Pitts, the difficulties in staffing could not be solved simply by wishing for good Christian servants. Missionary numbers throughout the empire began to fall off in the aftermath of World War I, and the emergence of the Great Depression only hastened the decline.²⁶⁷ There were new questions from both colonized and colonizer about the assumptions of superiority and civility and these inquiries were not useful selling points for those in the UK attempting to recruit new missionaries for far-flung colonial mission fields. Even for those who did feel the call to mission work, placing them in teaching posts became more complicated

²⁶⁶ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1931/148.

²⁶⁷ Brian Stanley, *The Bible and Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990), 175—209; Frank Furedi, *First World War: Still No End in Sight* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 27—29. This was not only true in Africa, but throughout mission fields in empire. For more see: Oi Ki Ling, *The Changing Role of the British Protestant Missionaries in China, 1945—1952* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Press, 1999) and Myra Rutherdale, *Women and the White Man's God: Gender and Race in the Canadian Mission Field* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2002).

because of the need to maintain government funds for those posts. Pitt-Pitts may have dreamed of finding missionaries who “simply do not count the cost,” but in the reality of 1930s Kenya the CMS itself could no longer afford to ignore economic realities.

While the CMS struggled to keep its educational operations afloat, the Colonial Office concluded its two-year debate concerning the future of education in Kenya. The resulting 1931 Education Ordinance dealt with schools for whites, Indians, and Africans. Settlers had separate demands and requirements for their children, and thus were considered separate from Arab and African needs.²⁶⁸ The new education policy that took shape with the ordinance focused on placating African demands for education by allowing for their creation in locales without mission schools already in operation. However, these schools were not to compete with mission schools for locations or schoolchildren because mission schools remained the government ideal.²⁶⁹ In some ways the 1931 Ordinance was a signal of defeat for missionaries—the scores of Africans calling for independent education would not be denied, but nor would they be in direct competition for the souls and minds of Africans. Additionally, the government placed extra safeguards to ensure that LNCs did not have much authority over the ways their collected monies aided schools. The Ordinance called for the creation of School Area Committees that serviced each community. These committees would be chaired by the appropriate Provincial Commissioner and members would be nominated by LNCs, but approved by the Commissioner. Basic committees had at least six members, depending on the size of the area served by the

²⁶⁸ For more on education for settlers’ children see Dane Kennedy, *Islands of White: Settler Society and Culture in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890—1939* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987), 169—174. For more education regulations for the Indian population of the colony see T.O. Eiseman, *Benefitting From Basic Education: School Quality and Functional Literacy in Kenya* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1988), 40—7.

²⁶⁹ Theodore Natsoulas, “The Politicization of the Ban on Female Circumcision and the Rise of the Independent School,” *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 33:2 (1998), 151—2.

committee. Three were LNC nominees and the remainder came from the Commissioner's direct nomination. The Governor also had the power to appoint and expel any committee member he wanted to.²⁷⁰ The stated purpose of the SAC was to provide guidance concerning school management and finances to the Director of Education, but the Director retained direct control to spend money in the manner of his choosing. Additionally the Governor held a *de facto* veto power with his power to force resignations with no show cause. In the end, the 1931 Ordinance attempted to appease every faction in the education debate. The colonial authorities wanted school attendance to return to normal levels and the concurrent female circumcision crisis had devastated attendance in some denominational schools. The Ordinance was meant to provide an outlet for Africans to express their educational priorities while also limiting their ability to effect real change within that educational system. The creation of the SACs also ensure government access to LNC funds without which they could not have funded mission schools.

This compromise worked well in the short term but overall the Ordinance did little to assuage missionary fears or mollify Africans. The trends in education towards more scientific and "practical" knowledge still befuddled and vexed missionaries as they struggled to reconcile their theological desires and official requirements. In spite of the new regulations, they struggled to maintain schools with the proper content and pupils. The government wanted to focus more heavily on female education schemes, but the CMS did not feel ready to provide wide scale education for women. Part of their problem stemmed from the traditional focus on male missionaries as the heart of missionary work.²⁷¹ Women were part of all missionary endeavors,

²⁷⁰ TNA, CO 533/410/5.

²⁷¹ Elizabeth Prevost, *The Communion of Women: Missions and Gender in Colonial Africa and the British Metropole* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). In the eyes of many missionary groups female missionaries remained second class citizens, at least in the official records. The same is true in many cases for female African converts. For more see Dorothy Hodgson, *The*

but primarily worked as ‘help-meets’ to their husbands. For single women the mission field was a possible career, but one that frequently ended in death or marriage. Women were essential to mission work, but the CMS remained concerned about directing their resources away from their traditional focus in order to find trained women for girls’ schools.²⁷² The CMS continued to rely primarily on missionary wives to provide domestic education to African women, particularly those married to students at the higher level schools in Kenya such as the Jeanes School. The idea was to provide a trickle down approach where informally African wives would learn proper domesticity from missionary wives and then provide the same training to local women when their husbands graduated from Jeanes School and became teachers.²⁷³

In addition to their problems with female schooling, the education crisis of 1929 also spurred on an identity crisis revolving around missionary purpose in Africa. Were they primarily evangelists or educationalists? As the educational advisor, J.W.C. Dougall wrote in 1933, “Supposing for instances, that a Mission School could be maintained entirely by Government Grants, would it be any longer a Mission School?”²⁷⁴ Furthermore, if there were no differences between mission and government schools would there be any distinction between mission and secular teachers other than a lower salary?²⁷⁵ Dougall argued that the CMS needed to provide

Church of Women: Gendered Encounters Between Maasai and Missionaries (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005); Patricia Grimshaw, “Missions, Colonialism, and the Politics of Gender,” *Evangelists of Empire?: Missionaries in Colonial History* Amanda Barry, Joanna Cuickshank, Andrew Brown-May, and Patricia Grimshaw, eds. (Melbourne: University of Melbourne eScholarship Centre, 2008), 3—13; Jane Haggis, “‘A Heart That Has Felt the Love of God and Longs for Others to Know It’: Conventions of Gender, Tension of Self and Construction of Difference in Offering to be a Lady Missionary,” *Women’s History Review* 7 (1998), 171—92.

²⁷² UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1932/91.

²⁷³ TNA, CO 533/461/3.

²⁷⁴ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1933/65.

²⁷⁵ For instance the government salary scale for European principals was £600 for men and £500 for women in addition to passage money, housing, medical attendance, traveling allowance, and

some support, even if largely symbolic, so that make missionaries would feel like real evangelists, despite the fact they would receive the vast majority of their salary from the government.²⁷⁶ Unfortunately the CMS could not see their way clear to provide even a modicum of support if government grants were available. As Pitt-Pitts contended in a letter to the Africa Secretary, HD Hooper, the CMS needed to put all of their available funds towards evangelical work. Despite the fact that Pitt-Pitts claimed he saw no difference between education and more direct faith based outreach, his own argument implicitly reaffirms those distinctions.

‘Traditional’ missionary work involved direct attempts to create conversion opportunities, which could still find some support in the United Kingdom, even in the midst of financial difficulties. Conversely education was in the process of transforming into an official colonial project, one that the Church could and should participate in, but primarily as a method through which they could prove their necessity to the colonial state.

The sacrifices missionaries were willing to make in order to preserve their educational position were evident in the shifting curriculum of the early 1930s. J.W.C. Dougall attempted to recast the set of courses currently undertaken in missionary schools to more closely adhere to the official standards while not offending religious sensibilities. Thus the primary purpose of school remained “the enrichment of life through the encouragement of love for the right things and through close personal relationship. For the Christian teacher this means bringing boys and girls

a pension. Missionary principals received £480, although that salary decreased as the Depression wore on to £364, with a varied amount for passage and pension. For more see UBL/CMS/B/OMS/A5/1929/134.

²⁷⁶ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1933/65.

into fellowship with God through Christ.²⁷⁷ Despite this primary goal, Dougall argued within the same memo that the one way to ‘fix’ education in Kenya is to make it more secular. He stated

We might say that education is a secular affair, (though religious teaching on a non-sectarian character might be permitted) that it is really the function of the State, its purpose the imparting of knowledge and the acquisition of skills, its goal the economic and social improvement of the people in a sense that in no way concerns the essentials of the religious life.²⁷⁸

Dougall’s understanding of the government’s policy seemed unnecessarily grim in regards to education. Frequently within Colonial Office memos it is clear that for the administration wanted to maintain the religious foundation of education, however those reassurances never trickled down through the ranks to missionaries or the home office. At this juncture Dougall could not bring himself to advocate for the type of education he thought the government wanted, but despite his explicit denials of a purely secular education it was clear that mission schools moved away from their heavy emphasis on theological and denominational teaching at the behest of the government, or more accurately at the behest of the money the government provided.

Even with the modifications made by missionaries to placate the government and LNCs it was not enough. African demands for particular types of education would not be denied and the furor over the female circumcision crisis only added fuel to the fire. The creation of the Kikuyu Independent Schools Association, or KISA, threatened to destroy the co-dependent relationship between church and state in Kenya. The KISA and its rival independent organization, the Kikuyu Karinga both worked to build and operate schools independent of mission control. KISA first organized in 1933 and focused on education in English so that upon graduation students would be eligible for white collar clerical jobs.²⁷⁹ But as Derek Peterson argues, these early education

²⁷⁷ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1933/161.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ Tignor, 270—71.

efforts were about more than potential employment opportunities; the leaders of KISA saw themselves as the leader of a moral project that aimed to teach the Kikuyu the value of *wiathi* or self-mastery.²⁸⁰ As part of their *wiathi* teachings, KISA also focused on strengthening Kikuyu culture and heritage; students learned songs that created a bridge between these customs and the future of Kenya.²⁸¹

Not surprisingly, missionaries were deeply unhappy about the creation of KISA. They believed themselves to be the only moderator of modernity in the colony. Scholars are correct to link the rise of the independent schooling movement to the female circumcision crisis, but in doing so they fail to see the importance of language. In the infamous 1929 Annual Report, Scott called for the primary language of instruction to be Swahili as opposed to English. Missionaries welcomed this instruction, in part because they thought Africans could not grasp both the academic subject and language simultaneously.²⁸² The CMS' strong desire to retain Swahili helps explain why KISA schools dominated in CMS areas, such as Fort Hall, despite the fact that they did not partake in the female circumcision crisis in any meaningful way. All attempts to compromise proved useless for missionaries as the 1930s faded into the 1940s. Independent schools proved to be of wildly varying quality in terms of academic rigor, but they were entirely successful in relation to student enrollment. By World War II these schools existed alongside

²⁸⁰ Peterson, 78.

²⁸¹ James Wilson Jr., "Political Songs, Collective Memories, and Kikuyu *Indi* Schools," *History in Africa* 33 (2006), 364—65. These songs included lyrics such as "If this were Ndemi and Mathaathi's era/Father I would plead for a feast/Then demand a spear and shield/But now father I plead for education." These songs allowed for many Kikuyu to not only manage their own ideas about modernity, but also their understanding of masculinity and adulthood.

²⁸² UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1933/161, UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1933/98, UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1934/13.

mission schools in many areas and they flourished until the outbreak of Mau Mau and subsequent closure by the authorities.

Conclusion

It was increasingly clear why missionary groups struggled so mightily to retain and recruit employees in the decade following the Great War. Their purpose, work, and finances shifted rapidly as the increased push for autonomy by Africans, coupled with the expansion of colonial development projects into their traditional spheres of influence created a crisis of identity. What remained for missionaries in the aftermath of these abrupt changes was a Sisyphean desire to provide protection and oversight for their African populations united with a need to prove their necessity to the Empire as a whole. These warring priorities came to a head with the advent of rehabilitation programs during the Mau Mau conflict as missionaries attempted to reconcile their conflicting purposes and concerns. Both missionaries and colonial officials created the foundation for the patterns of engagement and communication that proved so disastrous in the 1950s here, in the post war decade and early days of the Great Depression.

Politics, ethnic customs, and education all combined to create a perfect storm for the missionaries of Kenya. Each denomination handled the various conflicts differently. The CSM focused heavily on circumcision, and argued that the practice was incompatible with true Christianity. They publicly pushed for the state to entirely outlaw female circumcision and attempted to excommunicate African members who were unwilling to comply with their dictates. Conversely Anglicans attempted to divorce themselves of the issue in order to focus on what they saw as their primary purpose in the colony, education. They claimed that female circumcision was a political issue, and thus out of their purview. This stance directly contradicted their involvement with the creation of political organizations in Kenya, nevertheless it allowed the CMS to maintain a public stance which supported the government's moderate efforts in regards to the crisis. In exchange for their backing in regards to the circumcision crisis, the CMS hoped

that their discretion would be rewarded with renewed educational support. Despite these aspirations, the reality seemed much less optimistic. Director Scott's 1929 Annual Report seemed to cut missionaries off at the knees by highlighting their intellectual inadequacies. The resulting debate over the report eventually led to a missionary triumph but it was a hollow victory. The very fact that the 1931 Education Ordinance took two years to craft meant that missionaries had lost valuable ground to the independent schools movement. In the end, the Colonial Office reaffirmed their belief in the necessity of mission led education and it is clear from their internal dialogues that missionary education was preferable to LNC or KISA schools. Unfortunately this in-house transparency did not translate into a public affirmation for missions and they were left bewildered and anxious about their place in the colony. This pattern remained in place right through to independence as the CMS made repeated efforts to prove their worthiness through discretion and compliance and while the government appreciated their efforts, their own communication efforts remained entirely lackluster. In the education debate of 1929—1931, missionaries ultimately received the support necessary to carry out their educational efforts, but that would not always be the case. The Gordian knot of education, female circumcision, language, politics, and finances remained a difficult one for missionaries to untangle in the interwar years. Their efforts would achieve moderate success, however their failures proved to be the most important in shaping the future of religion in independent Kenya.

Chapter 3: Global and Local Conflicts: CMS in Wartime

There are signs that western culture is breaking down tribal authority and the social structure built upon indigenous beliefs... Western culture is infused with spiritual ideals and if our education is to be the living force we all desire it is essential that it should be infused with the same ideals. It is therefore the policy of the government to continue to work to a great extent through the Christian missions and churches and through other religious bodies.²⁸³

Introduction

The fallout from the various political, educational, and medical crises that erupted in Kenya during the 1920s affected mission groups to varying degrees. While the CMS emerged unscathed from the political and health controversies, lack of funds, recruits, and students all took their toll on morale and effectiveness. The state also evolved throughout the decade as development schemes began to coalesce around the idea of preparing Africans for life in the ‘modern’ world. Many of the same ideas of nineteenth century liberal empire retained their allure in the post-war years, but now the colonial state seemed willing and able to take on more responsibility for themselves. Naturally these new initiatives created a lot of anxiety for mission organizations and they scrambled to reform their ideas and goals to fit these new parameters. Groups such as the CMS were more successful than most in adapting to the needs of the state—they provided more technical training, even at the expense of their own missional ethos, but the resulting crisis of identity plagued Anglicans throughout the interwar period. The question of how to be a missionary and state employee beleaguered many in Kenya and London and the resulting answers were many and varied. The stark lack of resources and personnel available from the Home Office meant that they were more willing to compromise in terms of theological vigor and mission bona fides than most missionaries actually in the field. The resulting split

²⁸³ TNA, CO 533/565/9.

between metropole and colony reverberated throughout the halls of missional leaders and the colonial state.

This chapter will examine the deepening rifts between missionaries within the context of their relationship to the colonial authorities. Although the Great Depression overshadowed every action and decision of the 1930s, the discovery of gold in the Kavirondo region temporarily revived old methods of intervention and protection in the CMS. Despite this brief resurgence, the advent of World War II put paid to any plans the CMS had for expansion of their role in the state. In the aftermath of war, everything changed for the British Empire. This chapter will analyze these changes for both church and state, particularly as they relate to both group's responses to the Mau Mau conflict. Finally, we will return to education which was both a burden and boon to missionaries in empire.

In 1949 one CMS missionary, Archdeacon Leonard Beecher undertook a government survey of education. The results of his findings, published in the Beecher Report, modified the church, state, education relationship in important ways. Although the same patterns of communication and action between missionaries and authorities continued throughout this period, as they had done since 1916, the advent of Mau Mau and the beginning decolonization in Kenya brought these archetypes into sharp relief. This chapter will delve deeper into the foundations of modern liberal empire as practiced by missionaries and examine how it modified or strengthened earlier understandings of church and state interactions in the colonial field.

Gold

In the midst of the education crisis, gold was discovered in the Kavirondo reserve. Authorities had set aside the land for the Bantu-Luo, but unearthing such a valuable resource changed state priorities. They maintained that the protection of African interests remained their paramount responsibility, but they could not overlook a gold mine. The Kavirondo reserve housed more than half a million Africans and that infamous missionary W.E. Owen, sometimes known as the Archdemon.²⁸⁴ Unlike many in the CMS, Owen believed that full and public outcry was the best response to problems in the colonial setting. Rather than wait for private deputations with the government, Owen took to the press to highlight the injustices of Kavirondo. These public denunciations frequently created problems for his fellow missionaries. Africa Secretary, W.A. Pitt-Pitts wrote to Hooper in the fall of 1930 and described the government's response to the negative press. Apparently Owen's letter had "caused such a blaze in the press" that the authorities felt the need to write to Pitt-Pitts and ask what he planned to do to keep Owen in check in the future. Additionally the authorities argued that CMS representative Canon Leakey had promised in the late 1920s that all protests would go through private channels via a Native Interest Committee run through the Kenya Missionary Council rather than be aired in the press.²⁸⁵

Pitt-Pitts had legitimate reasons to worry about the government's wounded feelings; two years earlier they had threaten to discontinue grants-in-aid to Owen's region. The CMS was only able to secure the grants after promising that no money would go to Owen personally, but rather

²⁸⁴ Priscilla Shilaro, *A Failed Eldorado: Colonial Capitalism, Rural Industrialization, African Land Rights in Kenya, and the Kakamega Gold Rush, 1930—1952* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2008), 18.

²⁸⁵ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1930/101.

to a more amenable missionary, Carey Francis.²⁸⁶ One week after Pitt-Pitts disclosed this information, Owen met with the Acting Governor in Kenya. He asked about the withdrawal of aid, but the Acting Chief Native Commissioner, Dobbs claimed that the money transfers were the consequence of “unsatisfactory inspection reports on the schools concerned.” Henry Monk-Mason Moore, then Acting Governor reassured Owen that no steps were taken to silence him, while also reiterating the promise of Leakey to use the Native Interest Committee.²⁸⁷ Despite Moore’s assurances of free speech, it was clear that Pitt-Pitts was running scared. In the same letter to Hooper, he claimed that he would support Owen’s fight, even if he believed it to be very dated, but the presence of government grants made that impossible. Other missionaries relied on the government for their salaries and Pitt-Pitts could not abandon them.

But look at the long list of faithful souls who are out here on Government Grants. The Colony is very badly hit at present, and reductions have to be made in any case at the end of the year and if we let this sort of thing go on then they will drop us in a very nice and easy manner.²⁸⁸

If the government withdrew all funds from the CMS they could not have carried on their work in Kenya in any meaningful way. Pitt-Pitts contended that he was willing to fight for Owen, but he was also on good terms with “Government folk” and did not like to upset them with what they termed “blackmail.”²⁸⁹

Clearly the CMS and Owen were working at cross purposes. Both wanted to maintain their trusteeship position in regards to the African population, but Owen’s tactics and character put him at odds with many of his fellow missionaries. While many within the CMS leadership wanted to delicately raise concerns with colonial authorities, utilizing unofficial communication

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ TNA, CO 404/13; UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1931/16.

²⁸⁸ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1930/101.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

channels based on previously established relationships, Owen had no such desires. He lacked the finesse and conciliatory attitude possessed by men such as Pitt-Pitts. This made him a fierce opponent, but it did not necessarily prove any more effective in the long run. This was due, at least in part, to his inability to persuade those within the CMS to follow him. As Pitt-Pitts described it, if Owen were allowed to continue to publicly denounce the government with no pushback from the Home Office would become the “dictator of the Mission.”²⁹⁰ Pitt-Pitts certainly overdramatized the situation, but it was clear that Owen’s personality and tactics won him few friends within the CMS.²⁹¹ His lack of allies would hurt him in the fight over gold mining in Kavirondo, but it also reaffirmed many missional official’s beliefs that private deputations were more effective. At the very least, private criticism did not lead to veiled threats for the removal of financial aid for many essential CMS services.

In the aftermath of the initial crisis, Owen took a furlough to the United Kingdom, but was soon back in Kenya prepared to do battle over the mining of gold in his district.²⁹² His first line of defense was through, the Kavirondo Taxpayers Welfare Association, which he helped created in 1923.²⁹³ The organization’s members were primarily alumni from the local CMS school, and they focused heavily on improving the economic and hygienic lives of the Luo. Throughout the 1920s the organization, with Owen as its official mouthpiece, fought against

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Even the hagiographic biography/memoir of Owen written by C.G. Richards notes that Owen was criticized by his fellow missionaries who thought he pushed the boundaries of mission work too far past the theological into the realm of the controversial. C.G. Richards, *Archdeacon Owen of Kavirondo: A Memoir* (Nairobi: The Highway Press, 1947), 32—33.

²⁹² R.M.A. van Zwanenberg, *Colonial Capitalism and Labour in Kenya, 1919—1939* (Kampala: East African Literature Bureau, 1975), 158—59.

²⁹³ T.O. Ranger, *Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 22—3.

forced labor by the state. Owen and K.T.W.A.'s efforts had decidedly mixed results in that the state remained largely unwilling or unable to curtail the worst labor abuses in the colony.²⁹⁴

Despite the lack of concrete results, the K.T.W.A. was well positioned in 1932 to defend the land and political rights on the Luo in the face of increasingly aggressive incursions on their land in search of gold. By early 1933 there were almost 2,000 Europeans in Kavirondo, making it one of the largest European population centers in the colony.²⁹⁵ This influx of whites into the land reserve strained resources that were already at their breaking point. The government faced a serious quandary. Gold would provide a much need influx of energy into the local economy and fund development projects but the gold fields were almost entirely in land dedicated to the Bantu-Luo reserve. The easiest method forward for colonial authorities was to divide the land into two spheres—underground and above ground. Underground mineral rights were always under the purview of the state and could be safely explored with little disruption to the above land reserve.²⁹⁶ They released a memorandum to those on the land reserves explaining their plans and promising that full compensation would be paid out for any man who had to move his hut due to the discovery of gold.²⁹⁷ Even missionaries struggled to accept this proposal, as they argued that it would completely destroy African trust in the Native Land Ordinance, which had been passed only two years prior.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁴ Opolot Okia, *Communal Labor in Colonial Kenya: The Legitimazation of Coercion, 1912—1930* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 94—5.

²⁹⁵ George Ndege, *Health, State, and Society in Kenya* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2001), 115.

²⁹⁶ *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Commons, “Kavirondo Gold Discovery,” 24 February 1932, Volume, 262, column, 376.

²⁹⁷ TNA, CO 533/428.

²⁹⁸ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1933/1.

In order to counteract the deep betrayal represented by the *de facto* repeal of the Native Land Trust Ordinance, the CMS focused its efforts on two aspects of the mining scheme—compensation and the need for the state to oversee all mining operations rather than private companies. Initially the CMS hoped that the introduction of cash compensation would provide impetus for growth and development amongst the Africans, but they quickly realized their mistake as locals demanded land for land.²⁹⁹ Part of the problem was that the land on offer from the government was more than one hundred miles away from the reserve, in Elgon, and it was thought to be inferior to the land in Kavirondo.³⁰⁰ While leaders such as Pitt-Pitts chalked up African resistance to the plan to lack of foresight and planning, Owen was ready to lead the charge against government infringement.

Owen's first call to action was an article published in the *Manchester Guardian*, a frequent recipient of his efforts.³⁰¹ Just as in his earlier campaigns, again the colonial authorities attempted to muzzle him both personally and through the CMS. Pitt-Pitts met with the new governor, Sir Joseph Byrne soon after Owen's article was published. Byrne was a military man, and a former police officer. Kenya was to be his last colonial appointment before retirement back to the United Kingdom.³⁰² He was less enamored with white settler opinion than earlier governors, but retained their distaste for Owen's antics.³⁰³ In this meeting, Pitt-Pitts claims that Byrne harped on the Church's responsibilities to be loyal citizens of the Government and not

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1933/19.

³⁰¹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1933/31.

³⁰² Martin Thomas, *Violence and Colonial Order: Police, Workers, and Protest in the European Colonial Empires, 1918—1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 21.

³⁰³ Richard Frost, *Enigmatic Proconsul: Sir Philip Mitchell and the Twilight of Empire* (New York: Radcliffe Press, 1992), 69.

“stir up trouble.”³⁰⁴ Despite the repetition of earlier patterns of communication from the authorities, in this instance the CMS was not willing to completely backtrack. For the first time in Kenya, the CMS pushed for a division between mission and home field. Pitt-Pitts acquiesced to the governor’s heavy-handed suggestion, but encouraged Hooper in the home office to carry on the fight for land compensation back in the United Kingdom.³⁰⁵ This type of division would be repeated in the midst of the Mau Mau conflict, albeit with less support from the mission field.

After the publication of Owen’s article, both houses of British Parliament heatedly debated the bill. Although the CMS was not the subject of the debate, this was one instance in which they were important catalysts for publicity and the possibility of creating change in one of their mission fields. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Cosmo Gordon Lang, collaborated with Lord Lugard in both the House of Lords and the press to decry the change in the land ordinance to allow for payment in monies rather than land. Lang was a practical Scotsman, overworked and overtired in his position as the Archbishop. He generally refrained from political entanglements despite his deep personal friendship with George V.³⁰⁶ Lang broke from his normal habits in 1933 to take part in the public campaign against the repeal of the Native Land Ordinance. In an article to the *Times*, the Archbishop highlighted both the need for state leadership in mining efforts and for time to be given for public debate before opening up the land for additional mining efforts.³⁰⁷ This letter set off a very public debate in the paper between the Archbishop

³⁰⁴ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1933/20.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

³⁰⁶ Alan Wilkinson, “(William) Cosmo Gordon Lang,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* www.oxforddnb.com.

³⁰⁷ Cosmo Gordon Lang, “Letter to the Editor: Gold in Kenya,” *The Times* 5 January 1933.

and Edward Grigg, former governor of Kenya.³⁰⁸ The dispute spread to both the House of Commons and House of Lords, where it was hotly debated. Lord Lugard took the floor in favor of slowing down mining momentum. He argued that the loss of confidence Africans would experience through the breaking of the Land Trust Ordinance was more important than any individual profits to be made from mining.³⁰⁹ Both Lugard and the Archbishop were careful within their speeches to highlight their loyalty to both government and empire. As the Archbishop stated in a rare speech to the House, “I need scarcely say that the last thing I wish is to do anything to embarrass the Government charged with so great responsibilities in every part of the world.”³¹⁰ Throughout these speeches, both men were very careful to separate the issue of mining rights and land rights. Both sides of debate agreed that mining gold in Kavirondo was a fiscally sound future plan, but men such as Lugard and Lang wanted to ensure that African land rights were not entirely trampled in the process.

The House of Commons debate followed among similar lines, with the realities of the British financial situation butting against ideological concerns of empire. For some, the right to rule was absolute. One Parliamentarian compared Kenya to a book written by the British. With the privileges of creation, he argued came the rights to handle the land in the manner best suited to British needs.³¹¹ However, it was clear that the Archbishop’s public pleas did have some effect on political opinions. William Lunn, MP from Rothwell stated:

³⁰⁸ Edward Grigg, “Letter to the Editor: Gold in Kenya,” *The Times* 6 January 1933. The debate soon spread to include members of the Colonial Office, namely T. Drummond Shiels and Lord Passfield.

³⁰⁹ *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Lords, “Native Rights in Kenya” 8 February 1933, Volume, 86, columns, 548—612.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹¹ *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Commons, “Colonial Administration” 8 February 1933, Volume, 274, columns, 187—262.

There is indignation in the Church, and we cannot ignore the Church in its opinion in this matter. It is not usual for the Archbishop to rush into the Press, but the Archbishop of Canterbury has come out on this matter because he knows, or at all events he fears, the possibilities to missionary work, to missionary societies and perhaps to missionary funds from what is being done by the Government to destroy the interests of the natives.³¹²

Lunn argument hearkened back to the ideas put forth by Randall Davidson, who served as Archbishop during the Great War. Davidson argued that missionaries were the moral compass of empire and trustees of native interests. But 1933 was a different time, and more politicians agreed with Sir John Allen, who claimed, “One cannot help feeling that if Church dignatories (sic) in East Africa confined themselves to their missionary work and did not try to do anything outside their proper sphere it would be better for all concerned.”³¹³ The gold mine debate presented the CMS with a rare opportunity to critique imperial practices and sway public debate. Unfortunately their efforts were in vain, as Parliament passed a motion supporting the policy of financial compensation rather than land for land.³¹⁴

In the aftermath of their public loss, the CMS began to back away from the issue, with one notable exception. While church leaders quietly moved on, W.E. Owen remained passionately devoted to the cause. He worked with a small group of local Africans to create a petition for the British government.³¹⁵ This petition highlighted the betrayal of the land compensation scheme launched by the government, and expressed their worries that Kavirondo would turn into another Johannesburg where they would have no power and no land.³¹⁶ In May that year, the whip for the Scottish Liberal Party, Sir Robert Hamilton presented the appeal to

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Ibid. The final vote tally was 208 to 57 in favor of the government policy.

³¹⁵ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1933/43.

³¹⁶ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1933/62.

Parliament.³¹⁷ Hamilton had worked in East Africa during the early part of his career and only turned to politics upon his retirement from the civil service in 1920. He was the ideal candidate to present a petition of this nature, but the document was presented and then disappeared with no further public debate. Economic realities had clearly won the day, and CMS efforts to affect change would quickly revert to more traditional patterns, namely private discussions and cultivated relationships with high ranking colonial officials.

This reversion to older tactics was made clear by their reactions to Owen's repeated attempts to bring publicity to the issue of mining and labor. In May 1933, Owen complained in a letter to HD Hooper that the miners in Kavirondo had conspired to push for the passage of the Undesirables Expulsion Bill in order to force him to leave the reserve.³¹⁸ In reality, the bill's passage was thanks to the work of a CMS missionary on the Legislative Council, Canon Burns. The Council hoped that the Bill would allow for the eviction of European men who engaged in sexual relations with African women on the reserve.³¹⁹ The combination of Owen's paranoia and the embarrassment over the failure of the Archbishop of Canterbury's campaign in the press concerning mining rights meant that many in the CMS leadership wanted to place this issue permanently on the back burner. In a letter to Hooper, Pitt-Pitts still expressed limited support for Owen, namely in his right to bring his case before the British public and land for land compensation for those in Kavirondo, but on all other counts, the secretary was ready to push past the whole controversy. Pitt-Pitts' claimed that Owen was

determined to get an inquiry into what he believes are grievances, and I am afraid that his own prophecy; that they were worrying him so much, that he dreaded the day when his

³¹⁷ *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Commons, "Native Lands, Kenya," 9 May 1933, Volume, 277, column, 1337—8.

³¹⁸ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1933/103.

³¹⁹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1933/106.

power of seeing things in their real light would vanish has come true. Much as I love Owen I cannot but feel that this has taken place in or two cases.³²⁰

The one or two cases that Pitt-Pitts refers to specifically are the expulsion bill and the mining situation in Kavirondo, but the bigger question for CMS personnel was how to support Owen in his claims back in the UK. In the aftermath of the disastrous meeting with the Chief Native Commissioner, Owen, and Pitt-Pitts on May 15th, Owen demanded to be released from his work to travel to the UK and make his case to the British public. The Executive Committee of the CMS Kenya ultimately decided to support Owen's trip but they also claimed "we [the Executive Committee] cannot make ourselves responsible for all that he is going to do and say when he gets home, especially if he is in the mood that he is in at present."³²¹ The Bishop of Mombasa took this warning a step further. In the aftermath of their meeting, the Commissioner wrote to the Bishop of Mombasa, Richard Heywood, claiming that Owen looked "haggard" and needed a vacation away from the colony. Rather than providing caveats for supporting Owen, Heywood refused to provide succor. He stated that he felt "that if we are to do any good out here we must let the authorities realise (sic) that while critical we do believe in the absolute sincerity of their actions and that they too from their point of view do really mean to do what is right."³²²

Owen dutifully traveled back to the United Kingdom, but it was clear to the CMS and the colonial authorities that the protest was over for everyone but Owen. The government doubled down on their support for the original compensation and mining plans for the land reserve. In 1934 a government commission recommended the continuation of the government's earlier policies, albeit with a small addition of land to the reserve.³²³ Despite these losses the so-called

³²⁰ UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1933/108.

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² UBL CMS/B/OMS/A5/1933/111.

³²³ Shilaro, 42—5.

Archdeacon remained dedicated to his causes in Kenya. Until his death in 1945, Owen worked tirelessly, if paternally, to help Africans under his charge. His refusal to alter his tactics, despite the repeated attempts by the government to stifle his voice. This is clear from a meeting he held with the Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1938. Prior to the meeting, the Colonial Office prepared talking points for the Secretary, most notably one highlighting the need for Owen to modify his approach.

It might be suggested to Archdeacon Owen in this connection that the most fruitful line of advance in the checking of abuses in connection with any of the subjects which he proposes to discuss would be for all missionaries to make a point of bringing any case of abuse, which may come to their notice, to the notice of the District Officer concerned with a view to his considering what action he could appropriately take in the matter. This would surely be a much more fruitful method of dealing with these abuses than by merely saving them up and then writing about them in the press of this country.³²⁴

Clearly Owen had not been swayed by persuasion or threats from the authorities, nor had the CMS cowed his outspoken attitude.

Both Owen and the CMS held onto the notion presented by the Archbishop of Canterbury during World War I—that Christianity is the moral lynchpin of the British Empire; however their respective visions of what those ethical safeguards should look like. In a letter to the *Times* in 1938 Owen claimed

For me there is only one issue, and it is this: Can Empire be based on the Christian religion? Some would deny this. I believe that there is a Christian basis for Empire, that it can be for the glory of the Church, and that its aim is, broadly, that outlined by the present Secretary of State for the Colonies in the recent Colonial Office Summer School... He stated that it was our task to fit the backward races for freedom, which will take a long time.³²⁵

Owen could only see issues in black and white; the empire worked for the advancement of Christianity or it did failed and thus deserved a public denunciation. Conversely many in the

³²⁴ TNA, CO 847/17/2.

³²⁵ W.E. Owen, “Meaning of the Empire,” *The Times* 28 July 1938.

CMS saw shades of grey in their imperial endeavors. In order to maintain their position in the colony, compromises had to be made with the authorities. For the CMS to provide the services necessary to continue to bring in potential converts they needed government funding. These grants-in-aid came with invisible strings attached; namely the promise to keep their protests private. Additionally, it was clear in the aftermath of their first foray into public dissent that loud did not necessarily equal success. The reaffirmation of personal relationships and quiet objections was reaffirmed in the wake of Owen and Archbishop Lang's articles and speeches.

War

War proved to be a boon for the CMS in 1914, but the same could not be said for the conflict that emerged after the twenty-year cease fire that was the Treaty of Versailles. The resulting global war against the Axis powers irrevocably altered the course of the British Empire and missionaries' place within that empire. The financial consequences for the British state were catastrophic and the cost to the spiritual health of was no less extreme. Naturally these changes in the metropole affected missionaries in the far flung locales of empire. And while World War II was a watershed moment for the British Empire and its denizens United Kingdom, in Kenya the situation was more complicated. CMS missionaries in the colony had to contend with not only war but the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, as well as the beginnings of communal violence amongst the Kikuyu.

When war broke out in 1939, the British immediately began recruiting for soldiers throughout the empire. Most of the propaganda efforts focused on the dominions—Canada, New Zealand, and Australia—but the armed forces depended heavily on African soldiers as well. Unlike in the Great War, widespread conscription for portorage duties was not utilized in Kenya, thanks largely to the absence of German colonies in the region. Nevertheless, Kenyans fought in large numbers for the British Army during the six years of conflict. Additionally, Mombasa's status as a major port city for Africa troops headed to Burma to fight the Japanese.³²⁶ Despite the appearance of a voluntary army, many in East Africa were in fact men who had been conscripted by their local leaders. The British set recruitment quotas each week, and African leaders used

³²⁶ Ali Mazrui, *African Thought in Comparative Perspective* (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 329—30.

this as opportunity to again purge their local communities of rivals and troublemakers.³²⁷ Once enrolled or conscripted into the army, Kenyans received decent pay, usually around 20-30 shillings a month, almost twice what many could make on the land reserves. The army also provided some semblance of education to many young men, teaching them sufficient literacy and mathematical skills to fire artillery.³²⁸ This separate branch of education, completely outside missionary purview, had 600 African teachers working to educate new recruits and proved to be quite effective, at least in terms of teaching the limited subjects the army felt it necessary for African soldiers to learn. These schools were doubly important because the army only recruited mission educated African men if no other alternatives were available. They wanted the more traditionally martial ethnic groups, and eschewed the *athomi* as cowards.³²⁹

Africans were not the only group to participate in the war effort. Both missionaries and white settlers joined the armed forces, and were promoted above Africans, no matter their level of training or battlefield skill.³³⁰ More importantly, Kenya's agriculture sector became an increasingly important part of the larger imperial economy. Before the war African squatters cultivated almost two million acres of land for their own use, but the advent of war and the increasing demand for foodstuffs meant that white settlers had the financial means to take back control over that land.³³¹ In 1941 the Agricultural Production and Settlement Board obtained the

³²⁷ Timothy Parsons, "The Experiences of Ordinary Africans in World War II," in *Africa in World War II* Judith Byfield, Carolyn Brown, Timothy Parsons, and Ahmed Alawad Sikainga, eds., (New York: Cambridge University Press 2015), 14.

³²⁸ David Killingray, *Fighting for Britain: African Soldiers in the Second World War* (Woodbridge: James Currey, 2010), 59.

³²⁹ Timothy Parsons, "Dangerous Education? The Army as School in Colonial East Africa," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 28:1 (2000), 113.

³³⁰ Killingray, 147.

³³¹ Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame: Britain's Dirty Wars and the End of Empire* (Houndsmill: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011) 213.

power to plan the agricultural output of the entire colony to meet wartime needs. The Board stipulated that corn was the crop of choice, and European settlers were paid a guaranteed price for their yields. Africans also had a price assurance, but it was for considerably less than white produce.³³²

While young African men were off, learning to read and fighting in the far flung fields of Asia, the financial and ideological underpinnings of empire were being reshaped, strengthened, or destroyed. As Adrian Hastings described the conflict, colonial troops learned that European powers were merely “emperors without clothes.”³³³ Veterans returned to Kenya with a wider perspective on the world and their own place within it. No longer would small scale imperial efforts be accepted; for some no imperial schemes were tolerated. Conversely, just as Africans began to reject empire in greater numbers than ever before, the British seemed more determined to hold onto that empire than ever before. John Darwin argues the British entered into a new imperial era in the twentieth century, a third British Empire predicated on the importance of alliances with the white Dominions.³³⁴

Kenya was only tangentially connected to the ideas of the third British Empire and the Dominions, but the colony felt the full force of Churchill’s claim that, “We mean to hold our own. I have not become the King’s First Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the

³³² Judith Byfield, “Producing for the War,” in *Africa in World War II* Judith Byfield, Carolyn Brown, Timothy Parsons, and Ahmad Alawad Sikainga, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 36—37. African farmers received on average 4/90 shillings, while European owned farms fetched prices of 8/50 shillings.

³³³ Qtd. in, Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa, 1450—1950* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 547.

³³⁴ John Darwin, “A Third British Empire? The Dominion Idea in Imperial Politics,” *Oxford History of the British Empire Volume IV: The Twentieth Century* eds. Judith M. Brown and Wm. Roger Louis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 64—87.

British Empire.”³³⁵ The showcase piece for this new imperial vigor was the passage of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act. This new legislation promised new funds to colonies in order to provide better social services and living standards. Earlier acts had provided little money and focused heavily on development leading back to encouraging industry in Great Britain, but after a series of strikes throughout various parts of the empire in the late 1930s, the Colonial Office decided to act.³³⁶ Although the CDWA passed Parliament in 1940, the advent of war delayed its implementation into the empire. Initially the CDWA called for £5 million a year to be spent in the colonies, but that was a hard sell to the Treasury. Eventually the CO packaged the grants with a debt forgiveness program and it was presented to Parliament on May 2, 1940.³³⁷ Unfortunately for the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Malcolm McDonald, May proved to be an inauspicious date. Ten days later his Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain lost his position in a hail of denunciations and Winston Churchill created a War Coalition. The act finally passed in July but by this point Britain prioritized survival over colonial development.

³³⁵ Kathleen Burk, *Old World, New World: Great Britain and America from the Beginning* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2008), 504.

³³⁶ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 31.

³³⁷ Stephen Constantine, *The Making of British Colonial Development Policy, 1914—1940* (London: F. Cass, 1984), 211—22.

A Whole New (Postwar) World

The combination of desperation, *de facto* conscription, and development schemes meant that the British policy of a light touch via indirect rule could no longer be sustained. Every aspect of colonial life felt the impact of war and economic necessity. The CDWA did not take full effect until after the conclusion of the conflict, but for many missionaries it signaled a troubling future for their colonial work. In the midst of the war the CMS elected a new general secretary, Max Warren. This appointment was a momentous one on multiple levels—Warren’s leadership would guide the CMS through the era of decolonization and his centrist policies envisioned a mission society that would provide a helpmeet to self-sustaining indigenous churches.³³⁸ This renewed focus on a blueprint of aided churches was close to Warren’s heart, but it was a decision predicated on financial and personnel necessities. In the aftermath of war, Anglican identity and purpose shattered as the Church attempted to restore order in a fundamentally altered society. In other words, the Church of England became the Anglican Communion as missionaries and church leaders attempted to rebuild confidence throughout the world.³³⁹ These attempts were moderately successful, but church attendance and devoutness never fully recovered. Instead, those in Britain slipped into a type of “secular Anglicanism” which allowed English men and women to retain a core sense of Anglican morality without practicing their faith on a daily or weekly basis. In this understanding of Anglicanism, questions of theology or doctrine were

³³⁸ John Stuart, *British Missionaries and the End of Empire: East, Central, and Southern Africa, 1939—64* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B Eerdmans Publishing, 2011), 133—34.

³³⁹ William Sachs, *The Transformation of Anglicanism From State Church to Global Communion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 302—3.

irrelevant in the face of social and moral movements that attempted to elevate the living standards of people in England.³⁴⁰

While secular Anglicanism proved useful in many ways to the Church of England, it also presented new wrinkles in an old set of problems. In 1948 Anglicans still had almost one thousand missionaries in the field, but recruits were increasingly hard to find.³⁴¹ Secular Anglicanism did not lend itself to missionary careers or to massive donations for missionary programs. For Warren, the renewed emphasis on a self-sustaining church was not only a theological imperative, but also an economic necessity. In order to bridge the gap between personnel needs and recruiting realities, Warren worked with other Protestant mission groups to create a new type of employment—missionary associate. Now young men and women could work for short, fixed terms in overseas mission fields without the pressure of signing onto a lifetime of mission work. Warren heavily targeted teachers with this scheme, in hopes of providing enough educators to satisfy indigenous needs, particularly in places such as Kenya.³⁴² Despite these hopes, missionary staffing would never achieve pre-war levels and the CMS was consistently understaffed throughout the post-war period.

While the CMS worried about the potential overreach of the CDWA in the midst of their own crises, Colonial Office administrators faced massive problems of their own. In the aftermath of the war, they reaffirmed their support for the CDWA, and even upped the financial backing for the program to £120 million as a signal to the colonies that the British Empire was still a long

³⁴⁰ Charles Stephens, *A Study in Legal History Volume II; The Last of England: Lord Denning's Englishry and the Law* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 38. The idea of secular Anglicanism was first developed in the nineteenth century, but found its full fruition in the aftermath of World War II.

³⁴¹ Stuart, 133.

³⁴² *Ibid*, 134.

term endeavor with a definite strategic policy. The main problem, in addition to financing this grand plan, was the worry that their efforts would be for naught. As assistant under-secretary A.J. Dawe argued, elevated social services and living standards would not be an “acceptable substitute for freedom.”³⁴³ This seemed especially true in Kenya, where the white settler population complicated every aspect of colonial development.³⁴⁴ Indeed white settlers confounded many post-war colonial development policies, however that did not deter authorities from pushing for greater white settlement in Kenya after the war. By 1948 a further 8,000 white settlers had moved to the colony, bringing the overall European total to 30,000.³⁴⁵ This new influx of settlers only strengthened the desires of the pre-existing white population to create a stranglehold on the economic and political future of the colony. War already allowed them to reassert control over the farmland of the Highlands and now they wanted to create a dominion which would retain its connection to the United Kingdom but would also completely exclude Africans.³⁴⁶

Their political aspirations ran directly counter to the nascent nationalism exhibited by Africans, particularly de-mobilized servicemen. These discontented men and women found a spokesman in Jomo Kenyatta. Born Kamau Ngengi, the young man morphed into mission educated and re-named Johnstone Kenyatta in the 1920s before undergoing his final

³⁴³ Qtd in. Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire: The Road to Decolonisation, 1918—1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 87—88.

³⁴⁴ Dawe was so worried about Kenya, he suggested an East African Federation which would include Kenya, Tanganyika, Zanzibar, Uganda, and a white state. For more see Hyam, 89. The idea popped up several times throughout the ensuing decades, even after independence. For more see Timothy Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies and the Making of Modern East Africa* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003) and Paul Bjerk, “Postcolonial Realism: Tanganyika’s Foreign Policy Under Nyere, 1960—1963,” *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 44:2 (2011), 215—47.

³⁴⁵ John Springhall, *Decolonization Since 1945: The Collapse of European Overseas Empires* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2001), 157—8.

³⁴⁶ Hyam, 89.

transformation in Jomo Kenyatta after living and studying in the United Kingdom. He waited out World War II and on September 24, 1946 he returned to the colony. He was thronged after stepping off the passenger ship and he immediately took the reins of the nascent nationalist movement in the colony. In order to fully realize his vision of an independent Kenya, he created the Kenya Africa Union.³⁴⁷ When Kenyatta left the colony in 1930, most Africans remained on land reserves or squatted on white owned farms, but upon his return he tapped into a new source of power—the urban poor. During the war Africans flocked to Nairobi and for young men in the city life had few benefits and much hardship. The combination of poverty, unemployment, and high crime rates all meant that youth in the city were ripe for militant politics. Kenyatta did not necessarily agree with the fringe elements on these new radical ideologies, but he did want to persuade them to incorporate their politics into the KAU.³⁴⁸ In this he was only partially successful as militant gangs in Nairobi and rural groups outside the city both paved their own way forward. For those in the country oathing proved to be the most attractive viable alternative to party politics. As early as 1943, oathing ceremonies began in Olenguruone with elders practicing the ritual on men, women, and children in a pledge to fight against social injustice. By the end of the war, the practice spread to other towns and would eventually spawn the Mau Mau movement.³⁴⁹

In the midst of the confusion and disarray of the spread of oathing from rural areas such as Olenguruone to Nairobi and the outset of violence, missionaries were more concerned by a long standing problem—education. By the 1940s African taxpayers were wholly responsible for

³⁴⁷ Robert B. Edgerton, *Mau Mau: An African Crucible* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989), 44—9.

³⁴⁸ David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2005), 35—7.

³⁴⁹ Grob-Fitzgibbon, 213—14.

funding education in Kenya, and their financial power meant that missionaries needed to alter their methodologies to better accommodate African needs and priorities.³⁵⁰ Of course the government still funneled those taxpayer funds through their own departments before trickling down to missionary coffers. This meant that missionaries more than ever needed to please both of their masters. As L.B Greaves, the Educational Advisor to the Non-Roman Missions in Kenya and Uganda, stated at the end of a long career in East Africa,

Perhaps the crucial question is this: Are we educationalists (missionary) or missionaries (educational)? This is not a quibble; ... We are bound to class ourselves as educationalists (missionary). And if so, I think it is only a matter of time before we are assimilated to that group—so long as it remains in which we can fulfil our Christian vocation. The process will be gradual, [and] I do not say it would be wise to speed it up; but it would be even less wise, I think grudgingly to retard it. I do not think it will come about without a change in the organization, but I think such a change is inevitable, in the direction of schools under local authorities or under self-governing Boards whether united or denominational.³⁵¹

The question of “educationalists (missionary) or missionaries (educational)” was a persistent one for missionaries. It was equally relevant in 1946 as it had been in 1929, but missionaries still had no good answers. For Greaves the solution was clear; use African funding through government channels and hope that the Christian aspect of education continued to be respected by Africans and the government.

In addition to the frank acknowledgement concerning the future of missionary work in Kenya, Greaves also understood that the future of Christian work on the continent would need to be performed by Africans. As he said, “There is no future in African education for what one may call, without offence, the rank-and-file European; he must be replaced as soon as possible by the African.”³⁵² One reason for Greave’s desire for African teachers was the explosion of

³⁵⁰ TNA, CO 533/530/11.

³⁵¹ TNA, CO 1045/617.

³⁵² Ibid.

educational demands in the immediate post-war period. Both those on the ground and the Colonial Office through the CDWA wanted to provide more teachers, but both groups worried about the low quality of many European teachers in the colony.³⁵³ The rudimentary education given by many missionaries was adequate for colonial needs in the 1920s, but by the 1940s many in both Kenya and London were calling for university level schools. In 1943 the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Oliver Stanley appointed Justice Cyril Asquith to head up a commission specifically dedicated to the question of university education in East Africa. In their report, published in 1945, the commission recommended the implementation and construction of universities in various colonies. Upon completion, these new universities would link up to universities in the UK to receive proper training and develop proper academic rigor.³⁵⁴ Within this expanded framework for all levels of education, missionaries struggled to retain and express their purpose in the colony.

In the immediate post-war period, the government appointed multiple commissions to examine African education and each successive meeting, conference, and report confirmed the new trend in educational policy in Africa—universities and technical schools were the future, while universal primary education was an all too expensive pipe dream.³⁵⁵ Within the CMS there were multiple strategies to deal with the new threats and opportunities presented by the expansion of liberal empire in the aftermath of World War II. The CMS not only had to contend with the Colonial Office, independent schooling in Kenya through the KISA continued unabated

³⁵³ J.C.S. Musaaazi, *Planning and Development in Education: African Perspectives* (Abingdon: Routledge Press, 1986), 235—37.

³⁵⁴ Bhekithemba Mngomezulu, *Politics and Higher Education in East Africa from the 1920s to 1970* (Bloemfontein: Sun Media, 2012), 58—60.

³⁵⁵ Clive Whitehead, “The Impact of the Second World War on Education in Britain’s Colonial Empire,” in *Education and the Second World War: Studies in Schooling and Social Change* ed. Roy Lowe (London: The Falmer Press, 1992), 155—56.

throughout the war.³⁵⁶ For Max Warren, the solution was to continue recruiting Europeans for short terms as missionary/educationalists and hope that volume would replace careers of service. LB Greaves saw the future quite differently; he argued that only by co-opting African talent could mission groups survive. Into this swirling debate the Colonial Office published the Beecher Report in 1949.

Of the many educational commissions set up by the Colonial Office, none would be more important than the Beecher Report for missionaries. Scholars focus primarily on the report's recommendation to formally promote English as the preferred language of instruction in the colony as opposed to Swahili.³⁵⁷ This was a remarkable break from the government's earlier educational policies of actively discouraging English in schools. The final switch to English as the language of instruction is an important moment in the colonial history of Kenya, but the Beecher Report had deeper implications than language for Africans and the missionaries who taught them.

In CMS circles the appointment of Archdeacon Leonard Beecher to head up the commission that would bear his name was a large feather in their cap. He had a reputation for being sympathetic to African causes and a man destined to move up the promotional ladder within the CMS.³⁵⁸ One reason for his stellar reputation was Beecher's aptitude with languages.

³⁵⁶ Bruce Mitchell and Robert Salsbury, *Multicultural Education: An International Guide to Research, Policies, and Programs* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing, 1996), 202.

³⁵⁷ S. Nombuso Dlamini, *New Directions in African Education: Challenges and Possibilities* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2008), 23; George Eshiwami, *Education in Kenya Since Independence* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1993), 24; Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o talks about the long term impact of this recommendation for English to be the *lingua franca* of the colony in *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (London: J. Currey, 1986).

³⁵⁸ Hilary Sunman, *A Very Different Land: Memories of Empire from the Farmlands of Kenya* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Ssekamwa, 22.

He was fluent in nine separate dialects of Kikuyu and worked with Arthur Barlow to publish Scriptures in Kikuyu along with a Kikuyu-English dictionary.³⁵⁹ Beecher's work with language propelled him through the ranks of CMS hierarchy, but he was also helped by a fortuitous marriage to Gladys Leakey. Her parents were arguably the premier missionary couple in the colony—Harry and Mary Leakey.³⁶⁰ The final piece of the puzzle for Beecher was his appointment to the Executive Council in 1943.³⁶¹ This led to his ultimate appointment to the commission whose report would bear his name in 1949. Initially both Africans and the CMS praised the appointment, but the final report proved to be controversial at best.

Despite the fact that the report bore the name of missionary, its findings were not altogether friendly to missional interests. The commission set out to examine the quality, quantity, and fiscal implications of African education in Kenya at all levels and began with a brief history lesson of education in Kenya. Naturally missionaries play an important part in the early story—they established the first schools and the commission praised their work with grant-in-aid funds. The report also heavily glossed the controversy created by Dr. Scott's proposed changes to education in Kenya with his annual report in 1928. However, the report makes it clear that missionaries were becoming increasingly irrelevant, particularly in terms of finance by

³⁵⁹ Gerald Anderson, *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions* (New York: Macmillan Reference, 1998), 44. Beecher's wife was also a talented linguist and they published several volumes together. Mrs. Beecher also helped her brother, Louis Leakey compile and publish some of his most famous archeology and anthropological research.

³⁶⁰ John Stuart, "Overseas Mission, Voluntary Service, and Aid to Africa: Max Warren, the Church Missionary Society and Kenya, 1945—1963," *Ambiguities of Empire: Essays in Honour of Andrew Porter* R.F. Holland and Sarah Stockwell, eds., (London: Routledge, 2009), 185. The Leakey's were an important social connection for Beecher as well. They had traversed the gap between missionaries and white settlers, in part thanks to their affection for riding, and Beecher's familial ties now meant that he was intimately connected as few other missionaries were to Africans, white settlers, other missionaries, and the government. For more see L.S.B. Leakey, *By the Evidence: Memoirs 1932—1951* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovitch, 1974), 158.

³⁶¹ Ranger, 73.

the mid-1930s.³⁶² Africans wanted universal literacy and university education which posed an insurmountable problem for missionaries.³⁶³ African teachers could provide basic literacy skills and missionaries were unable to provide college level instruction. Added to these difficulties, the Beecher Report made it clear that African education, while still requiring a moral Christian foundation, should be focused on “the restoration of a practical bias to education appropriate to the kind of life which the great majority of the products of this expanded programme (sic) will lead.”³⁶⁴ What the report meant by this was the creation of a 4-4-4 system which aimed to provide primary education to half the population over the course of the next decade.³⁶⁵ Previously Kenyan education was based on the 6-2-4 system, which provided for six years of primary education, but the Beecher report advocated for a four year system across the board.³⁶⁶ Many Africans opposed this plan due to the relatively small enrollment numbers promised by the plan. Of the fifty percent who would be targeted by schools, only thirty percent would advance from the first four years of primary school to the four year intermediate stage.³⁶⁷ Africans also strenuously opposed the report’s contention that despite expansions to education, most African men would eventually find jobs doing manual labor.³⁶⁸

³⁶² Government of Kenya, *Proposals for the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Report on African Education in Kenya* (Nairobi: Govt. Printer, 1950), 1—10.

³⁶³ *Ibid*, 27.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid*, vii.

³⁶⁵ Ssekamwa, 22. One major critique by Africans of this new 4-4-4 scheme was that their four year primary school curriculum was almost half the length of the European and Asian seven year curriculum. Additionally, they were forced to sit exams earlier than the other two branches of schools. For more see Anthony Somerset, “Universalising Primary Education in Kenya: The Elusive Goal,” *Comparative Education* 45:2 (May 2009), 234.

³⁶⁶ Musaaazi, 237—38.

³⁶⁷ Ssekamwa, 22—23.

³⁶⁸ Government of Kenya, 39. The report contends that in earlier decades some level education meant, or least was thought to mean, white collar employment, but in the aftermath of the Great Depression that was no longer the case. One of the recommendations given by the report is to

The Beecher Report strove to highlight the continued importance of missionaries to education in Kenya. This was done primarily through the lens of morality:

Little or nothing is done in most homes to inculcate moral standards; the child does not, in consequence, acquire character in its early years which is built up on principles which alone have any relevance in the modern society of which the child is to become a part. It is, therefore, the task of the schools to implant these principles, and to do so almost entirely without help from the parents. This is a specialist task, like teaching chemistry or history, and it should be given to those who are qualified to do it. The secular teacher, whatever his other qualifications, has generally has not been trained to take part in this work.³⁶⁹

In other words, secular Anglicanism was not enough for Kenyan schoolchildren. They needed the training only a missionary could provide, even if that missionary could not teach chemistry or welding. Despite this strong statement of support, missionaries remained unhappy with the report for two reasons. First it revealed the deep cleavages and contradictions currently facing missionary work. While Greaves freely stated that missionaries were now primarily educational, even the report acknowledged that some missionaries “deplored” the fact that they were expected to provide so much attention and effort to education at the expense of their evangelistic efforts.³⁷⁰ At the turn of the century, a missionary’s only real requirement to work in the field was a heart for God and basic literacy, but by 1949, missionary applicants needed more education and training at every level. Not only did their home societies demand it, so too did colonial authorities. As missional coffers, particularly for the CMS, came to rely more and more heavily on grants in aid from the government, those in leadership positions focused on providing the types of services and skills that the government preferred. This meant an increased emphasis on “moral standards” in education, and less of a focus on strict evangelical teachings. This did not

encourage teachers to promote agricultural, technical, and “rural” skills. Naturally many Africans remained unconvinced by these efforts.

³⁶⁹ Government of Kenya, 55.

³⁷⁰ Ibid, 31.

mean that CMS leadership at the home office in Salisbury Square made a deviously calculated money grab, but they firmly believed that in order to carry on with any missionary work, they needed to have government backing and they planned accordingly.

The need for government funds highlights the second problem that the CMS had with the Beecher Report. While they agreed with the importance of moral teachings and the church's role in that sphere, the report added an important addendum to their recommendation, "We desire to see a morally sound education, largely based on Christian principles, conducted with adequate inspection and supervision."³⁷¹ Missionaries wanted to continue receiving grants in aid, but they worried about the inspection and quality standards demanded by the report. If the CMS could not do that, Max Warren warned the Bishop of Mombasa that if they could not achieve the benchmarks set out by the Beecher Report by 1952, the government would take over all failing CMS schools.³⁷² Without schools, CMS work in the colony would be seriously hampered at all levels, but Warren had little faith that the mission could maintain control over a majority of their schools. Thus the question became how to maintain that influence without a monopoly on education. For the CMS, the emergence of the Mau Mau conflict seemed to be that chance.

Traditionally, government authorities and the Colonial Office remained relatively uncommunicative with missionary bodies. There were personal relationships, particularly in the colonies, but generally the CMS was left to decipher colonial intentions on their own time and in their own company. The exception to this state of affairs was of course when particular missionaries raised the ire of the government. At that point communication generally came swiftly and from multiple government offices. The Beecher Report marked a departure from

³⁷¹ *Ibid*, 57.

³⁷² UBL CMS/G59/AC1/L-Z 1952.

standard operating procedure—administrators in the Colonial Office knew the report had created a firestorm of angst and worry in missional circles and their concerns were valid. As P.J. Kitcatt commented, “unless educational standards were raised at [mission] schools the Beecher Report would be indefensible in ten years’ time.”³⁷³ Their plan to blunt missionary concerns was to use communication channels in the UK to forewarn mission societies of potential changes to school authority. The Colonial Office believed that home offices understood the big picture better than individual missionaries on the ground.³⁷⁴

The CMS focused the majority of their attentions and efforts on education in hopes of proving that they were necessary, not only to the government but Africans. Unfortunately they failed on both fronts. The Beecher Report accidentally seemed to write them out of legitimacy and authority, even while trying to uphold the status quo. More damning than the details of the Beecher Report were the feelings of Africans who also largely rejected their claims. Local leaders in Kenya objected to the lack of access and short duration of primary schools for Africans, but they also demanded that control be wrested from missionaries and given to Local Native Councils or be put under direct supervision of the government.³⁷⁵ Many Africans argued that even so-called mission schools were in fact independent, despite any previous affiliation with the CMS.³⁷⁶ Africans no longer wanted mission schools; they demanded something better. The Colonial Office attempted to find a middle ground, keeping both groups but compromise was difficult to achieve. They struggled to develop a long term strategic policy that clearly

³⁷³ TNA, CO 533/529/22.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Commons, “Kenya (African Education)” 13 December 1950, Volume, 482, columns, 1140—1, 1303—12.

³⁷⁶ One such African leader wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury to plead his case, and while his claims were investigated, the CMS Home Office ultimately dismissed him as a Mau Mau agitator. Lambeth Palace Library, Fisher Papers, 102.

elucidated the purpose and end goal of African education reforms. The Beecher Report was entrusted with that task, but largely failed because the larger imperial structure could not or would not set forth a clear agenda. What was the purpose of education for Africans? Was it to merely provide them with enough education to take up positions as manual laborers on farms and in mines? Or was it something larger? Rather than create a firm policy, colonial authorities crafted a sort of intellectual loop, Africans were always at threat from modern society and needed to be sheltered from those horrors, but they also had to learn to function in the enlightened society established by the British.

This type of intellectual loop is clearly seen in the Colonial Office documents. In the 1925 Educational Policy in British East Africa: Memorandum it states:

Since contact with civilization—and even education itself—must necessarily tend to weaken tribal authority and the sanctions of existing beliefs, and in view of the all-prevailing belief in the supernatural which affects the whole life of the African it is essential that what is good in the old beliefs and sanctions should be strengthened and what is defective should be replaced. The greatest importance must therefore be attached to religious teaching and moral instruction. Both in schools and in training colleges they should be accorded an equal standing with secular subjects.³⁷⁷

The 1950 African Education: A Statement of Policy sounds eerily similar:

There are signs that western culture is breaking down tribal authority and the social structure built upon indigenous beliefs: education must encourage a strong sense of responsibility to the community and inspire in the individual a devotion to a spiritual idea. Western culture is infused with spiritual ideas and if our education is to be the living force we all desire it is essential that it should be infused with the same ideals. It is therefore the policy of the government to continue to work to a great extent through the Christian missions and churches and through other religious bodies which have the same devotion to a spiritual ideal and to habits of self-discipline and loyalty essential to the well-being of the community. The Government will at the same time seek to achieve the same discipline and spiritual foundations to the teaching in its own schools.³⁷⁸

³⁷⁷ TNA, CO 533/388/11.

³⁷⁸ TNA, CO 533/565/9

Despite these assertions, the Beecher Report seems much more realistic when it declares that education should prepare men for manual labor. Missionaries were unsure which vision of African society will win out—should education be a pragmatic endeavor, designed for entry into the work force, or should Christianity be the tool which allowed Africans to more fully participate in wider colonial society via universities and higher education? No matter the outcome, missionaries would struggle to fulfill their government sanctioned duties. They did not have trained teachers to help students prepare for university life, nor did they have instructors in the arts of industrial training. Lack of suitable employees, combined with a dearth of clear strategic planning on the part of colonial authorities proved to be a long standing problem for the CMS, one that they futilely hoped to overcome with the outcome with the outbreak of Mau Mau.

Conclusion

The post war years were not kind to the CMS. They struggled to maintain their entrenched positions within Kenyan society, but it was clear that there had been fundamental shifts amongst both their African congregations and the colonial authorities. Despite these changes, certain patterns remained the same, particularly in regards to communication between CMS leadership and the government. When individual missionaries such as W.E Owen attempted to breach these informal rules and publicly demand change from the authorities, he revealed deep fissures within the CMS. Those back home in Salisbury Square briefly engaged with the issue of compensation and protection for those living in the Kavirondo land reserve, but after a short-lived publicity campaign, headed by none other than the Archbishop of Canterbury, they quickly learned that open denunciations and demands only led to veiled threats from those in power. In the face of government hostility they chose their relationship to the state over their traditional claims to provide protection to Africans. This choice was not made with malice, but rather CMS leadership looked at their financial situation and realized that only with government backing could they continue to function as a missional society in Kenya. Thus the compromise became—we shall protect Africans, but only if we can do so discreetly and directly. W.E. Owen was left with his job, but his personal campaigns only earned him the enmity of his fellow missionaries.

The Archdeamon's understanding of missionary work became increasingly divorced from the larger CMS organization throughout the 1930s and 1940s. World War II did provide the same opportunities for missionaries to prove their usefulness that the Great War had. Rather than glory and safety through the Volunteer Carrier Corps, missionaries had to contend with the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, which offered them no chance to demonstrate their

power. Instead it seemed to remove their responsibility and agency in Kenya in favor of government development work. This combined with the publication of the Beecher Report in 1949 created much anxiety in missional minds. In spite of the fact that the CDWA and Beecher Report promised additional funds to missionary schools, the concurrent increase in government oversight meant that the specter of government takeover loomed large in the minds of men like Max Warren. They hoped to find some other means of serving Africans and the colonial state, but again individual missionaries proved problematic. For those who came to Kenya to evangelize, working on government approved projects such as education were only distractions from their true calling. Again this was not a new debate for the CMS, they also struggled in the aftermath of the Great War to find their footing, but the combination of straightened finances, the CDWA, and the Beecher Report strengthened these conflicts.

In the midst of these setbacks, there were signs of hope as the CMS moved into the 1950s. If they could prove their worth to the state, bring their schools up to appropriate standards, while also recruiting new personnel, they had a chance of maintaining their positions. The decade also provided a chance to choose new leadership for the CMS in Kenya, as the current Bishop of Mombasa was close to retirement. New leaves could be turned over and funds were theoretically available thanks to the CDWA. The source of their angst could also be the key to their continued stability if the CMS played their cards right and Warren could find suitable short term missionary associates. Even the outbreak of communal violence in the colony was initially welcomed by many in CMS ranks. Mau Mau seemed to be catalyst the CMS needed to ensure that they could fulfill their plans. The colonial authorities quickly branded the violence Satanic, thus necessitating the presence of good Christians to cleanse the fighters of their vile contamination. Even missionaries who balked at state led work in education could agree that

rehabilitation and cleansing were necessary evangelical efforts. New recruits would flock to CMS stations so that they too could participate in the redemption of Kenya and its people. Most importantly, Mau Mau offered the CMS opportunities to prove their worth to both Africans and the colonial state. They could protect good African Christians from the terrible violence of the bestial Mau Mau fighters and only those with Christian training could work with the state to cleanse and restore the population to good order. Mau Mau was a watershed moment for the state and missionaries working under their auspices. How they handled the conflict would determine the success or failure of decolonization in Kenya.

Chapter 4: Optimism in the Midst of the Devil: CMS and the Outbreak of Mau Mau

*“And let us be quite sure, this society of Mau Mau is not African, it comes from Satan. It is evil, It is against Jesus and His Church.”*³⁷⁹

Introduction

“May you die of this oath.” The utterance of this phrase in land reserves and squatter holdings signaled a sea change in the future of Kenyan politics and society.³⁸⁰ These were the final words in an oath taken by evicted squatters in Olenguruone as they promised to unite and fight land injustice in the region.³⁸¹ Initially the CMS response to oathing ceremonies was varied, with some blaming the evil influence of communism, while others condemned aggressive white settler tactics.³⁸² No matter the cause, CMS missionaries faced the ultimate test to their future work with the arrival of the Mau Mau conflict in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Their response to these conflicts would set the tone for their church/state relationships through decolonization and independence in the colony.

Missionaries firmly believed that Mau Mau provided them with a key opportunity to stake their claim for legitimacy in the colony—if they could supply recruits, support, and cleansing for the colonial state they would cement their place as a key cog in the colonial machine. Indeed, this seemed like the perfect time to remind the authorities of the Archbishop of Canterbury’s 1920 speech about the imperatives of the British Empire, namely “the instinct of freedom, the instinct of empire, and the instinct of philanthropy.”³⁸³ For the CMS, Mau Mau was

³⁷⁹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1953.

³⁸⁰ Robert Edgerton, *Mau Mau: An African Crucible* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989), 55.

³⁸¹ Tabitha Kanogo, *Squatters and the Roots of Mau Mau, 1905—1963* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1987), 120—27.

³⁸² UBL CMS/B/OMS G59/AC1/I-R 1950; UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/ACI/L-Z 1952.

³⁸³ *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Lords, “East Africa: Status of Indians and Native Labour,” 14 July 1920, Volume 41, column, 155.

the opportunity to prove the Archbishop correct; they were the lynchpins to empire. Only through Christian faith could Africans find the full freedom offered by the imperial mission; one without the other was only half a mission, half a person. Missionaries still saw themselves as trustees over the fortunes and futures of their African subjects and important cogs in the imperial machine, and Mau Mau was to be their ultimate test, and their ultimate victory.

In this vision of missionary responsibilities the CMS needed to do two things for their African converts: protect them from both Mau Mau violence and unwarranted state detention. This promise hearkened back to earlier decades of missionary work during the Great War. In 1916 the Volunteer Carrier Corps ably safeguarded young African men from the worst horrors of portage duties and in return for that shield, locals began attending churches and schools in larger numbers than ever before. However in the post-war years the CMS had been much less successful. They could not halt the spread of *kipande* regulations or the spread of native land reserves. Even their attempts to protect those in the mining district of Kavirondo had proved disastrous. In the face of missionary defeats, Africans became increasingly independent minded. They refused to bow to religious pressures regarding independent schooling and political organizations. Because missionaries were on shaky ground with many Africans, their relationship with the state became increasingly important. They developed a certain mindset and pattern of behaviors which stressed privacy, discretion, and working with the government to improve the situation on the ground in hopes of forestalling the need to publicly accuse anyone of abuse.

This method worked brilliantly in the Great War, as their corps provided support and an outlet to escape the worst conditions of the war. Unfortunately for the CMS, the post-war years proved less beneficial. When the state halted their attempts to provide similar protection and

benefits to Africans under their paternalistic care, CMS priorities began to shift. Education became the most important tool in the missional tool belt. It was subsidized by government and local funds, and it seemed that only missionaries had the right skills to produce Africans with a proper moral mindset. Unfortunately this type of education only pleased the state and the rise of the independent school movement forestalled any attempts by missionaries to monopolize education. By 1952, the CMS realized that education was no longer the key to maintaining their position vis a vis the state and their African congregations. Thus their response to Mau Mau became even more important as an indicator of their long term viability in the colony. Initially missionaries did not think of the clash as a pre-cursor to independence, but rather a small skirmish that needed to deal with a multitude of issues. Importantly it was not about the sustainability of the British Empire.

If Mau Mau was not a nationalist fight for independence, missionaries felt that their primary goal should be the maintenance of their relationship to the state. However, they also needed to provide some benefits and protections to their own converts. In the first phase of the conflict, CMS leadership in Kenya and Great Britain attempted to find the delicate balance between protection and compromise. Not surprisingly they again fell back into old patterns of communication, in the hopes that working within the system would curtail the worst of the abuses perpetrated by the state. The CMS was caught in the midst of an internecine war and their plan of attack was to retreat. By falling back into the protective arms of the state, they hoped that they could keep everyone, both African and British, happy. Alas that was not to be their fate. Their tactics only served to alienate those on every side of the war and following CMS failures will be our touchstones through the next two chapters. This chapter will highlight the early phases of the conflict, as the CMS struggled mightily between their desire to protect the Africans

under their care and their requisite need to keep the state happy. Despite their failures, ultimately this dark period of CMS history paved the way for success once independence arrived in Kenya.

Mau Mau: The Beginning

The first oaths promising loyalty to what would become Mau Mau were taken in Olenguruone, a rural area dominated by squatters. But Mau Mau put down roots in the cities as well, particularly in Nairobi where trade unionism was aggressively on the rise. As oathing spread to cities it underwent several important changes, namely the inclusion of support for Jomo Kenyatta, the independent schools movement, and the Kenya African Union.³⁸⁴ Kenyatta had returned to Kenya in the aftermath of World War II and immediately set himself to the task of shepherding a new nationalist movement into the forefront of African politics. During his two decade absence in London, the British had banned the KCA and in 1944 its successor, the Kenya Africa Union made its debut on the Kenyan stage. Upon Kenyatta's return, he immediately assumed leadership of the group, but it would always be a difficult movement to contain.³⁸⁵ Despite British protestations to the contrary, Kenyatta was ultimately a moderate who wanted independence, but the militant faction of the party demanded not only independence but support for trade unions. This faction of the KAU called themselves the *Muhimu*; they were the working class balance to Kenyatta's middle class lifestyle. It was the *Muhimi* who brought united the rural desires for land security with urban demands for better working and living conditions.³⁸⁶ The third factor that galvanized the Kikuyu into action was the demobilization of World War II veterans on two fronts. African men who returned home from the war expected benefits for their service. In Britain the first post-war election saw the election of the Labour Party and a new Prime Minister, Clement Attlee. Attlee promised homes for heroes and to win the peace for Great

³⁸⁴ Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame: Britain's Dirty Wars and the End of Empire* (Houndsmills, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 214—15.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 212—13.

³⁸⁶ David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005), 35—41.

Britain.³⁸⁷ But it was unclear whether or not any of these homes and victories would be found in the empire. African veterans certainly wanted better lives and benefits upon their return to the colony, but it was a different group of veterans who prospered in the aftermath of war—demobilized British soldiers who were promised land via settlement schemes.³⁸⁸ In the face of what they saw as betrayal from the state, Kenyan soldiers quickly joined this burgeoning movement.

British government officials and CMS missionaries were unsure what to make of these mysterious nighttime oaths. Some blamed communism, while others assumed that Jomo Kenyatta was the puppeteer behind the movement, and a third faction looked to witchcraft and Satan as the culprit.³⁸⁹ The porous nature of Mau Mau leadership certainly did not help the situation—each group pledging its oath did so within a very local context, and while many of the words were the same, their local interpretation could vary widely. Part of the difficulty for those on the ground was the forcible nature of the oaths and the murky meaning of even the word Mau Mau. While the Kikuyu had long taken oaths in times of war or distress—these oaths were voluntary and only given to men.³⁹⁰ But the new generation of oathers targeted everyone. No longer were oaths voluntary or for men; those in charge of the ceremonies claimed every

³⁸⁷ Laura Beers, *Your Britain: Media and the Making of the Labour Party* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 176; Michael Mannin, *British Government and Politics: Balancing Europeanization and Independence* (Plymouth: Rowan and Littlefields Publishers, 2010), 21.

³⁸⁸ Daniel Branch, “The Enemy Within: Loyalists and the War Against Mau Mau in Kenya,” *Journal of African History* 48:2 (2007), 298—9.

³⁸⁹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/AC1/I-R 1950; Grob-Fitzgibbon, 216; Carolyn Martin Shaw, *Colonial Inscriptions: Race, Sex, and Class in Kenya* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 155—56.

³⁹⁰ For more on the history of oathing see Adda Bozeman, *Conflict in Africa: Concepts and Realities* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 155—64.

member of society, even the children were to participate in the ritual.³⁹¹ Ultimately these oaths promised to fight for *ithaka na wiathi* or self-mastery through land. Rosalind O’Hanlon ties this promise to the Kikuyu conception of manhood; one could not be an adult until he had created a self-sustaining household. Land and marriage were key components to this model of masculinity.³⁹² Unfortunately for colonial leaders and missionaries, *ithaka na wiathi* was truly a foreign concept, which only added to their confusion.

As oathing spread to the cities, so too did violence. Initially clashes were localized, as squatters and militants clashed. The government attempted to quell the rising dissent, but they repeatedly ran into a veritable brick wall of silence in every village. By August 1950, Mau Mau was officially an illegal organization, but since no one would talk, local district officers still struggled to make headway. It was not until the end of 1951 that the first Mau Mau adherent was put on trial for his membership.³⁹³ Initially this may have been seen as a success by colonial officials, but in the end it only seemed to spur on more violence, as each act of destruction was meant with its own form of retribution by those who eventually formed the backbone of the loyalist factions. By 1952 Kenya was on the brink of all out civil war, as Mau Mau fighters and loyalist factions destroyed each other’s property and land at will. In an attempt to regain order colonial authorities passed the Collective Punishments Ordinance, which called for fines against entire villages if they failed to cooperate with police forces. Ultimately the CPO failed to produce any major breakthroughs for the police; it only upped the communal violence among the

³⁹¹ Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain’s Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2005), 25.

³⁹² Rosalind O’Hanlon, “Gender in the British Empire,” in *The Oxford History of the British Empire Volume IV: The Twentieth Century* eds. Judith M. Brown and Wm. Roger Louis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 390—91.

³⁹³ Anderson, 41—45.

Kikuyu. The very next month the colony experienced the first murders of the brewing civil war when two bodies were found floating in a local river.³⁹⁴

In many ways both the government and CMS faced watershed moments in the early days of 1952. The Empire was then embroiled in two separate military operations in East Asia: the Malayan emergency and the Korean War; but the current governor, Sir Philip Mitchell's term was up that summer.³⁹⁵ Many of the British tactics to quell violence and deal with the communist insurgency in Malaya would eventually be transferred to Kenya with varying results, but in 1952 the main concern for the British would be manpower and money.³⁹⁶ Counterinsurgency campaigns are rarely cheap and despite the promise implied in the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, financially the British were in deeply straitened circumstances.³⁹⁷ For the next twelve years Britain would attempt to quash the civil war, but financial concerns would always be paramount in their minds. They wanted victory as quickly and cheaply as possible, although neither would prove to be easily attained. The then governor of the colony, Philip Mitchell

³⁹⁴ Grob-Fitzgibbon, 216—17.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 217.

³⁹⁶ The literature examining counterinsurgency campaigns and their connections is growing apace. Although this dissertation's primary purpose is not to trace the complicated military links of the British Empire; these connections are an important part of the decolonization narratives for the British Empire. It is also important to note the ways in which the Kenyan situation differed from earlier insurgent campaigns. For more see: David French, *The British Way in Counter-Insurgency, 1945—1967* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Andrew Mumford, *The Counter-Insurgency Myth: the British Experience of Irregular Warfare* (New York: Routledge, 2012); Victoria Nolan, *Military Leadership and Counterinsurgency: The British Army and Small War Strategy Since World War II* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012); and Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame*.

³⁹⁷ In the aftermath of the Labour Party's victory in 1945, John Maynard Keynes called the British economic situation, a "financial Dunkirk." Indeed wartime rationing did not end until 1954, and American aid via the Marshall Plan was necessary to allow the country to remain solvent. Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire: The Road to Decolonisation, 1918—1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 130; Randall Woods, *A Changing of the Guard: Anglo-American Relations, 1941—1946* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

proved to be a liability as well. Mitchell served with a long and distinguished career in both Asia and East Africa but seemed ill-prepared to deal with the rising violence.³⁹⁸ Mitchell frequently refrained from reporting acts of violence in the colony, which meant that his successor would have little forewarning about the true state of things in the colony.

Much like the British Empire, the Church Missionary Society was in a state of flux by 1952. While the colony descended further into violence, the CMS worried over their continuing recruitment and personnel woes. After his appointment as general secretary of the CMS in 1942, Max Warren attempted to modernize missionary service. He wanted to increase the number of British men and women who served overseas, but he believed that short term appointments were the key to the long term survival. No longer would most evangelist minded solitary men and women toil for decades in the far flung fields of empire; now they would serve as missionary associates for short fixed terms, usually three to five years. Warren hoped that these missionary associates would fill the gap left behind by retiring career proselytizers.³⁹⁹ There were high hopes for this new type of missionary service, but the postwar years were not successful ones for the CMS.

Staffing difficulties took center stage for CMS officials, even when Kenya was on the verge of martial law. Almost every letter home in the first six months of 1952 concerned the

³⁹⁸ While scholars can agree that Mitchell failed to be an effective governor in the last six months of his term, they disagree on the cause. Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon argues that his optimism, and previous experience in Fiji led him to believe that a multi-racial society was easily obtained. *Imperial Endgame*, 217. Caroline Elkins contends that Mitchell was more concerned with his legacy and his then “spotless record” made him unwilling to pass on reports of violence in the colony. *Colonial Reckoning*, 29—30. Ronald Hyam simply calls him “over-complacent.” *Britain’s Declining Empire*, 190.

³⁹⁹ John Stuart, *British Missionaries and the End of Empire: East, Central, and Southern Africa, 1939—64* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2011), 133—34.

difficulties of finding enough qualified staff members to carry on with mission work. Assistant Bishop Leonard Beecher highlighted these problems in a circular letter sent back to Britain. In this missive, he focused on one problem area in Kikuyu territory. Recently locals had discovered two dead goats, one of which was found on the altar of the local church. Despite the implications of the deeply anti-Christian message, Beecher was more concerned with the relative lack of staff in the area. He urged the Anglican Church to send more help and lamented the loss of workers. He claimed that twenty five years ago there had been 8 or 9 European clergy there, with their wives, along with several single lady “workers.” Alas by 1952 there was only one missionary and one “woman worker.”⁴⁰⁰ Beecher’s decision to deemphasize local conditions while underlining European staffing conditions illustrate two important points. First, while Beecher himself harped on the need for more African staff, European men were still the gold standard in the mission field.⁴⁰¹ Second, the origin of the problems in Kenya were less important than the solution, namely more British Christians to come and work in the colony. The question of whether or not the Kikuyu had legitimate grievances was less important than the cure-all of missional work.

In the nineteenth century Henry Venn had laid out his plans for the future of Christian work in the ‘heathen’ lands of the world. He called for a euthanasia of missions and the creation of churches that were self-sustaining, self-propagating, and self-governing. As part of the creation of these churches, indigenous bishops would be appointed to govern the new bishoprics.⁴⁰² While many in the CMS gave vocal support to Venn’s ideas, as evidenced by the

⁴⁰⁰ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1952.

⁴⁰¹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/AC1 I-R/1950.

⁴⁰² Susan Billington Harper, *In the Shadow of the Mahatma: Bishop V.S Azariah and the Travails of Christianity in British India* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2000), 110—11. Despite the importance given to the Venn model in the scholarly writing concerning missionary efforts in

various church union schemes of the late 1920s, actually turning power over to Africans proved more difficult. The financial strain of the 1930s meant that more Africans became padres, i.e. local church leaders who could conduct services, but an independent Anglican church in Kenya was certainly not seen as a quickly approaching reality. As part of their self-propagating plans, the CMS worked in the early 1930s to combine in closer union with other missionary societies. The idea was to pool resources and help push forward some semblance of independence for churches in Africa. While missionaries supported these plans, African congregations did not want greater independence from the home office or from the Archbishop of Canterbury.⁴⁰³ They worried that independence would provide openings for Europeans in Kenya to take more control, which Africans did not want. As Hooper explained, “There is a sort of sentimental feeling that the nearer one gets to King George and Canterbury the safer one is for justice. That is putting it crudely, but that is the way they put it.”⁴⁰⁴

The weight of ninety years of missionary philosophy colliding with continuing African desires for closer connections to the Archbishop of Canterbury left the CMS with a morass of conflicting desires and on the ground realities. In the face of staffing and financial difficulties, they increasingly relied on Africans to fill positions. By 1951 each clergy member needed African lay-readers to fulfill their duties. One missionary had sixty two churches under his purview. Naturally lay-readers shouldered the majority of the priestly role in many of these

Africa, in the immediate future it was largely meant for an Asian context. The missionary experience with church union and independence was one that many in the African context looked to follow. Many missionaries felt that with the introduction of greater civilization and modernity, African Christians could follow the lead of their more ‘developed’ Indian brethren. For more see, Brian Stanley, “The Church of the Three Selves: A Perspective from the World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh, 1910,” in *Ambiguities of Empire: Essays in Honour of Andrew Porter* Robert Holland and Sarah Stockwell, eds. (London: Routledge, 2009), 93—109.

⁴⁰³ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G/A5/1933/161.

⁴⁰⁴ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G/A5/1934/102.

churches.⁴⁰⁵ As missionary staff declined, Africans became indispensable in the day to day workings of the organization. But the CMS had other reasons to want to include “an expanded African ministry.”⁴⁰⁶ African responses to Christianity were never monolithic or passive, as evidenced by their strong reactions to the female circumcision crisis in the 1920s. By the next decade some Africans had split from European denominations and formed independent churches. Many of these new churches were swept up in the revivalist movement of the early 1940s.⁴⁰⁷ Known as the Ruanda movement, revivalists called for a return to strong evangelist theology and liturgy. Their belief and behaviors frightened church, state, and Mau Mau and it was clear to men like Beecher that African leadership was necessary in order to maintain some semblance of European order in Kenyan churches. While white, male missionaries remained the ideal model, the CMS was willing to bend and accept African leadership for some positions within the organization. However, for what they considered their most important work, the CMS remained firmly dedicated to the idea that British men, and a few women, were the only force strong enough, moral enough, to lift Kenya from the quagmire of Mau Mau.

Before the CMS or the government could ‘fix’ the problem of Mau Mau, they had to decide what Mau Mau was. In the intervening years between Kenyan independence and the recent electoral violence in the country, historians have spilled much ink concerning the origins of Mau Mau and the initial British response to oath-taking and the outbreak of violence. Initially race

⁴⁰⁵ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/AC1 I-R/1950.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ Cynthia Hoehler-Fatton, “Possessing Spirits, Powerful Water, and Possible Continuities,” *The East African Revival: History and Legacies* Kevin Ward and Emma Wild-Wood, eds. (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), 73—4; Derek Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival: A History of Dissent, c. 1935—1972* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 213—14.

was seen as the primary motivating factor but other theories soon complicated the picture.⁴⁰⁸ The second wave of historiography focused primarily on the internecine aspects of the war; for these scholars Mau Mau was partially about self-mastery and injustice, but it was primarily a civil war between those who benefitted from colonialism and those who bore the brunt of colonial and tribal authority.⁴⁰⁹ The second school of thought concerning the origins and development of Mau Mau stress the grey areas between those who took the oath and those who refused. To understand the CMS response these historiographical debates are less important, but it is imperative to understand the complexity of the movement as a whole. While there were many shades of gray between loyalists and Mau Mau fighters, for missionaries the distinction that was most important was believer and non-believer. They hoped that the division between those who had participated in the oath and those who refused was a mirror image to the group who professed belief in Christ. Unfortunately, as tended to be the in case in regards to Mau Mau, the issue was never that cut and dried.

⁴⁰⁸ The primary adherents to the race based notion of Mau Mau are Tabitha Kanogo, *Squatters and the Roots of Mau Mau, 1905—1963* (London: J. Currey, 1987); Wunyabari O. Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya: An Analysis of a Peasant Revolt* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993); Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning*; and Edgerton, *Mau Mau: An African Crucible*.

⁴⁰⁹ Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa* (London: J. Currey, 1992); Derek Peterson, "The Intellectual Lives of Mau Mau Detainees," *The Journal of African History* 49:1 (March 2008), 73—91; Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged*; Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame*; Daniel Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau: Creating Kenya: Counterinsurgency, Civil War, and Decolonization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

The Declaration of Emergency

The initial period of violence and oathing Kenya confused British missionaries and officials on the ground. Both groups were sidetracked by personnel issues in 1951, but by the summer of 1952 it was clear that war had arrived in the colony. After the departure of the outgoing governor, Sir Philip Mitchell, new appointee Sir Evelyn Baring was due to arrive in June 1952 and take up his post. Unfortunately before he could take leave of the United Kingdom, he suffered a small wood chopping accident that incapacitated him until September. In the meantime Henry Potter was sent in as a short term Acting Governor. Potter had no idea that Kenya was then in the midst of a civil war and due to the nature of his appointment had little power to proscribe any remedy. Potter held the colony together until the arrival of Baring on at the end of September in 1952. His first act as Governor would be to initiate the process for a declaration of a state of emergency in the colony.⁴¹⁰

Martial law was meant to give the government the tools necessary to regain control of the situation in Kenya, but that was quickly becoming impossible. Soon after Baring's arrival Mau Mau claimed its biggest prize, the assassination of the loyalist Chief Waruhiu. On October 7th Mau Mau assassins ambushed Waruhiu's chauffeured Hudson, killing him while leaving his driver and other passengers unharmed. The chief's power, particularly in relation to land tenure and usage rights made him a primary target for Mau Mau, as did his Christian faith and close relationship to those in power. Within a few weeks, the attackers had been arrested and tried. They were hanged seven months later.⁴¹¹ The chief's assassination was but a first step in the ever escalating violence in Kenya. Waruhiu had been a vocal and powerful Christian within his

⁴¹⁰ Grob-Fitzgibbon, 218—19.

⁴¹¹ Anderson, 56—8.

community, and a close friend of the Leakey family. Despite this the CMS spent little time mourning his death in favor of focusing on their own needs. Waruhiu's death had been tragic, and it sparked new fears in the hearts and minds of every un-oathed Kikuyu that the government could not properly protect them. The CMS hoped that they could step in and shield believers from the violence. If they could provide protection and security from Mau Mau, much as they had done in the face of the harsh British practices during World War I, their recent setbacks might fade away.

These plans help explain why the first bulletin released by the CMS in the aftermath of Waruhiu's death remains silent on the killing in favor of focusing on two different issues—a perceived slight in a Parliamentary speech by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Oliver Lyttelton and the continued financial and personnel needs of the CMS. In an October speech updating the House of Commons on the progress made in finding Waruhiu's killers, Lyttelton tried to explain the presence of secret societies in Africa. He explained that,

I have some diffidence in giving the House a considered opinion about what the causes are. There are a great many causes for these secret societies. One, which perhaps will strike hon. Members as being rather curious, is that many of the tribal dances and other means of "letting off steam" have been suppressed by the missionaries, and this has given an impetus to secret societies. Other causes, no doubt, are land famine and social problems, but as regards the second part of the hon. Member's question, I think I could reply that in the main the object of the Mau Mau is to drive the Europeans out of Kenya.⁴¹²

While Lyttelton only partially blames missionaries for creating the right atmosphere for Mau Mau to emerge, missionaries could not accept even partial blame. These bulletins were sent from the office of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the current Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher, lamented that such statements hurt missionary work. He blamed land hunger, population

⁴¹² *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Commons, "Kenya (Mau Mau Activities)," 16 October 1952, Volume 505, column, 392.

increases, and increased social and culture pressures for the creation of Mau Mau and argued that the CMS forestalled such terrible violence for as long as possible. But Fisher also acknowledged:

The situation in Kikuyu-land calls for radical rethinking of the organization of the Church. No longer is it possible to secure the money required for the Divinity School and for overheads, nor for employing the army of evangelists and padres, aggravated as such burdens are by the steadily increasing cost of living. This structure belongs to the days when the Church was numerically strong.⁴¹³

Clearly the CMS realized that it could not carry on using old methodologies, but that is what it continued to do throughout most of the 1950s. Only when the “army of evangelists and padres” failed to appear, did the CMS grudgingly turn to Africans to staff their church leadership positions. Patterns of church life and practice were hard to shake, even in the midst of the massive upheavals in Kenya.

In the short term Lyttelton apologized to the CMS for the perceived slight. In a letter to Canon Bewes he tried to clarify that the suppression of traditional practices, even traditions that were seen as detrimental to the social well-being of the group, would always lead to the creation of other outlets such as Mau Mau.⁴¹⁴ Bewes’ response to Lyttelton has not been preserved, but it seemed that all the ruffled feathers had been smoothed over. But this was the first in a long line of miscommunications between the government and church officials. Throughout the decolonization process, CMS leaders felt shut out policy decisions and planning strategy. Naturally, the government did not consult the church for every decision, but the lack of meaningful interactions between the two groups seriously hampered the CMS’ ability to plan for the coming of political independence. And the state church of England would not necessarily be the state church of Kenya. In the absence of communication, the failures of the missionary group

⁴¹³ UBL CMS/B/OMS G3/A5/6/1/1952.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

made *de facto* decisions for them. The government felt free to use the CMS as an unofficial enforcer of state policy throughout the twentieth century, but they took few steps to include the group in the creation of that same policy. Consequently, the CMS repeatedly tried to uphold colonial policies that they could neither fulfill nor agree with. This disconnect formed the heart of the decolonization and independence experience for the CMS—failure to succeed in terms of colonial policy meant long term success for the independent church that emerged in the aftermath of political independence.

In the first months of the Emergency the CMS had plenty to be optimistic about, despite the violence in the colony. Baring's first goal after the declaration of martial law was to arrest the leaders of Mau Mau, which for the governor and his advisors meant the leaders of the KAU, as well as other nationalist and trade union leaders. On October 20th, Baring made the formal announcement that Emergency regulations were now in place, and at midnight on the same night a joint military and police task force rounded up over 150 men who were suspected of being Mau Mau leaders, including Jomo Kenyatta. The government hoped that a show of force would restore their authority in both Nairobi and the surrounding countryside. Unfortunately it had the opposite effect. With most moderate nationalists now in jail, Mau Mau now had fled to the forests and were prepared to fight in force for self-mastery.⁴¹⁵

The first consequence of Operation Jock Scott was an increase in violence on all fronts. The very next day Mau Mau murdered a local chief and two police escorts when they tried to break up an oath-taking ceremony. While officials and white settlers were concerned about the bloodshed in the colony, at this point it was still largely contained within African communities.

⁴¹⁵ Anderson, 62—3.

While Kikuyu men and women had died, the only loss to white settlers thus far were cattle and a few outbuildings. That all changed on October 22nd when Mau Mau claimed its first white victim. While Eric Bowyer was relaxing in his nightly bath, militants broke in and hacked him to death. Two of his servants were also killed with *pangas*, the Kikuyu version of a machete.⁴¹⁶ Soon thereafter the Meiklejohns, an elderly couple enjoying their after dinner coffee were also attacked by roving bands of Mau Mau fighters. Mrs. Meiklejohn managed to survive despite her numerous injuries, but the violence was only beginning.⁴¹⁷

Most missionaries remained remarkably unconcerned about the deaths of their fellow Europeans, despite their shared heritage. The CMS saw the declaration and the violence surrounding the introduction of military force into the colony as an opportunity for growth. Mau Mau was a terrible, internecine war for self-mastery among the Kikuyu people, but Africans generally remained in the background for the CMS. Not surprisingly, most of the correspondence between home office and mission field were written by British men talking about how to survive this war with the bulk of their congregations and government financial support intact. These were necessary concerns for the CMS to be sure, but it also created a narrative that focused primarily on the missionaries themselves. Africans rarely had individual voices within the trans-continental relationships maintained between Salisbury Square and Mombasa.

Within this paradigm, Africans played an important but passive role. As a group they were meant to provide important anecdotes about the strength of Christianity in the face of the devilish Mau Mau forces, and they were a group of victims that the Church could protect, but rarely were they individual names and faces. This is evident in one of the few letters written by a

⁴¹⁶ Grob-Fitzgibbon, 234.

⁴¹⁷ Elkins, 38.

Kikuyu to the Home Office. Samuel Muhoro was a teacher at St. Paul's Divinity School in Limuru and padre at a church in Njumbi. This testimony may have been passed along by CMS leaders because it fit so neatly into these categories; namely he provides evidence of the importance of the CMS and Christian faith in fighting Mau Mau. Muhoro began by describing a goat left on their altar, but more important were the descriptions of two nameless Christian wives who refused to take the oath. Their husbands had been members of the church, but backslid and joined Mau Mau. When the women defied their husbands, they were "trussed up and left to die by their husbands."⁴¹⁸ It is unclear what the wives' ultimate fate was, but Christian bravery to the point of martyrdom would become an important part of the CMS story in the coming years. Mau Mau also claimed two more victims in Muthiria. A young married couple refused to take the oath and were killed. Muhoro officiated at their funeral and put forth the call to all Christians to resist the siren song of Mau Mau:

I told the people that this was the saved ones' time. Before this the war was not ours; but now it was ours, so then let us stand firm and fight it together wherever we meet it. From that day on we all rejoiced whenever we heard that so and so had completed his course and each and all of us were ready to go whenever God called.⁴¹⁹

Muhoro's sermon highlighted the ways in which Christian Kikuyu were increasingly drawn into a conflict that coalesced among the powerful figures in their society and those who had little experience with the benefits of imperialism.

The situation on the ground in Kenya was quite murky. The war drove apart friends and families, but the CMS was less interested in the familial impact of the war. They concerned themselves with the second half of Muhoro's sermon—those who professed the faith must be willing to suffer, even unto death, for their fate. Mau Mau had several unexpected consequences,

⁴¹⁸ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1954.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

and one of the most important, at least for missionaries, was the ability to separate the wheat from the chaff. From the beginning of their tenure in Africa, missionaries worried that those who ‘converted’ were doing so only for the temporal benefits it provided—greater access to those in power, education for their children, or potential for white collar careers.⁴²⁰ Mau Mau offered a useful, if dangerous, tool that missionaries could use to determine who had the ‘true’ faith. For this reason martyrs, or almost martyrs, were an incredibly important part of CMS narratives of the fight against Mau Mau. This was the case, despite the fact that rarely if ever were these faithful Christians named or rewarded for their bravery.

Muhoro’s sermon contained another piece of important dialogue for missionary ideation of self during Mau Mau:

The Government has now come to understand that those whom the Lord Jesus has truly saved are the only Kikuyu able to stand up to the Mau-Mau oath. Yet these people feel no need of protection from Government as they know that Jesus is looking after them. You may be surprised to hear that at Weithaga for instance there are 300 living in the camp on the Mission station about 16 miles west of Fort Hall. They and the Missionaries have no troops to guard them, indeed many have lost all their possessions and are just helping each other with food and clothes (sic) and the money which was sent from C.M.S. London. They have no fear of death.⁴²¹

This story functioned on multiple levels for the CMS. It highlighted the good work they had already done in creating a strong base of Christian believers, able to stand against an anti-

⁴²⁰ These fears were present in every mission field and for every missionary body. Virtually all scholarly texts that focus on missionary work include a section on the difficulties missionaries faced in trying to determine who ‘true’ Christians were. For more information on the idea of ‘true conversion’ and the various tactics used by missionaries to test their new congregants see Karen Vallgård, *Imperial Childhoods and the Christian Mission: Education and Emotions in South India and Denmark* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 41—2; Susan Neylan, *The Heavens are Changing: Nineteenth-century Protestant Missions and Tsimshian Christianity* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2003), 112—18; Tara Alberts, *Conflicts and Conversion: Catholicism in Southeast Asia, 1500—1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 7—12; Jean Brierly and Thomas Spear, “Mutesa, The Missionaries, and Christian Conversion in Buganda,” *International Journal of African Studies* 21:4 (1988), 601—18.

⁴²¹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1954.

government force, but it also emphasized that missionaries were still needed in the colony. They could deliver protection that the government could not, despite its military strength. Only the evangelists had the personal connections and spiritual strength to withstand the bestial onslaught of the forest fighters. Brave missionaries, living with their Christian brethren despite the fact that they have no possessions and only the charity of British Anglicans to offer succor drew parallels to an older generation of missionaries who suffered and died for Christ. It seemed at the time that the pressure of Mau Mau might produce a few diamonds for the CMS.

Stories such as Muhoro's also allowed the CMS to combine their two priorities—protection of African Christians and aid the state in its efforts in new ways. If Mau Mau forced men and women into taking satanic oaths, only the CMS could create a cleansing ceremony that would rid the Kikuyu individual of his internal disease. By late November 1952 the CMS had done just that with the creation of a ceremony that would allow an individual to return to the church and proper Kikuyu society. Wisely Leonard Beecher turned to an African padre, Obadiah Kariuki, to help craft this ceremony.⁴²² Much like later state run efforts, confession was a key component of cleansing and reentry into the church involved multiple steps of confession. First one had to confess to the padre and to a council of church elders selected by the padre. When this body was convinced of true atonement, the penitent then had to confess before the church at a regular worship service. Beecher and Kariuki their own oath to counteract those taken in service Mau Mau. It stated:

I Confess to God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, that I have sinned through my own fault in having taken a heathen oath which I most earnestly believe to be contrary to God's most holy law; I truly repent, and pray God to have mercy upon me, to cleanse and purify me though the blood of Christ my Saviour who died on the Cross that

⁴²² UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1952.

I might cease from sinning, and I pray that, in the power of god, the Holy Spirit, I may be enabled to live faithfully in accordance with God's will and commandments.⁴²³

If, after all of these conditions are met, the congregation believed the former Mau Mau adherent to be truly repentant he or she would be allowed to resume membership, although they would be barred from communion for a time.⁴²⁴

Eventually these types of cleansing ceremonies would be used for re-entry into society, not just the Christian fold. Although based on Christian ideas of cleansing, this oath focused more heavily on loyalty to the government and Crown:

I SWEAR THAT:-

- a. If I _____ have ever taken this secret oath known as Mau Mau oath, let this Githathi kill me.
- b. If I have even been present at a Mau Mau ceremony or if I have ever forced, persuaded or induced anybody to take the oath, let this Gitathi kill me.
- c. If I have ever known any of the Mau Mau secrets which I never revealed to the Government, or if I have ever withheld from the Government any information concerning Mau Mau, let this Githathi kill me.
- d. If in future I take the Mau Mau oath voluntarily or if I fail to report immediately I am forced to take it or if I consent to its administration to anybody or if I induce, persuade force anybody to take it, let this Githathi kill me.
- e. If in future I fail to supply to the Government any information known to me now, or which I will know if future, regarding already committed, intended, planned and future atrocities or if I fail to give Government any information whatsoever concerning Mau Mau movements, let this Githathi kill me.
- f. If I made to vomit this oath, let this Githathi kill me.
- g. And finally, I swear that I am and will always be a faithful and loyal subject of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and her Government.”

Signature or Thumb-print⁴²⁵

No doubt the CMS would have preferred a more specifically religiously oath of denunciation, but they still had plenty of opportunities to make their mark in knitting Kikuyu society back together.

⁴²³ Ibid.

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

For missionaries the first step in reconstituting Kenyan social order was re-entry into the church; the second step was regaining control over the independent schools that had flourished for the past two decades. The government closed thirty four independent schools in Kikuyu areas, which left more than seven thousand students with few options. They could flee to the forest, which many did, or attempt to enroll in a mission-led school, which few did. As a further deterrent, the government also seized the school buildings and surrounding property, all of which had been built with funds raised by the communities themselves.⁴²⁶ The CMS hoped for a return to full classes, and they were excited about the opportunity to prove themselves. Unfortunately they still needed to grapple with the reality that the schools were “hopelessly understaffed.”⁴²⁷ Despite these problems, the CMS entered into 1953 confident that they could secure their future in the colony via education and cleansing ceremonies.

In the face of such positivity, the CMS faced two major problems—the dawning realization that government actions frequently descended to the level of brutal retaliation and localized violence was also on the rise. The first police action post Operation Jock Scott was a “mixture of tragedy and farce.” Police opened fire on an unarmed crowd of two thousand Kikuyu gathered in the Thika marketplace to listen to a young man prophesying an end to the war. Police attempted to arrest him, the crowd grew restless and the commander ordered his men to open fire. Sixteen people were killed and another seventeen were wounded.⁴²⁸ Other police actions fared better; they frequently moved on the basis of little intelligence and their tactics generally

⁴²⁶ Anderson, 71—2. In addition to the school closures, thousands of Kikuyu families were repatriated onto land reserves, which theoretically meant the possibility of even more school children for mission schools.

⁴²⁷ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/2.

⁴²⁸ Anderson, 70.

aroused bitterness in the local population but did little to stem the tide of fighting.⁴²⁹ The CMS acknowledged these problems as early as November 1952, but it would take them years to sort out how to respond. However, the organization knew it needed to place a high priority on the protection of African Christians. One missionary discussed the treatment of a local deacon when he omitted the honorific *bwana* when handing over his *kipande*.⁴³⁰ He was careful to emphasize the danger presented by Mau Mau or as he called them “roaming bands of male youth,” but he also stressed the importance of trying to contain police violence when directed at good Christians.⁴³¹ Back in London, Max Warren also lamented the official tendency to see Mau Mau as a local problem, not one connected to larger strands of African nationalism.⁴³²

While Warren was correct in linking Mau Mau to the nationalist storm then brewing across the continent, independence in Kenya played out in a very specific and violent context. In the aftermath of school closures and with bitterness running high due to police actions, Mau Mau attacked a Church of Scotland service in the village of Nyeri on Christmas Eve 1952. Although rebel leadership called off the attack at the last minute, one group still attacked and killed eleven loyalists.⁴³³ This attack put African Christians into a panic, and helped lend credence to those who pushed for an understanding of Mau Mau based less on broader nationalist trends in Africa and more on the supposed occult foundations of the movement. As Canon Bewes argued,

I think that it is a spiritual movement and therefore of the devil, and I think it is the devil's way of getting in on particular people with their particular characteristics at a

⁴²⁹ Huw Bennett, *Fighting the Mau Mau: The British Army and Counterinsurgency in the Kenya Emergency* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 14—6.

⁴³⁰ *Bwana* is a title meaning master or boss.

⁴³¹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1952.

⁴³² UBL CM/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/2.

⁴³³ Edgerton, 73—4.

particular time (as in Hitler's Germany for example) and because of that it is anti-Christian and the people who suffer most are the keen Christians.⁴³⁴

It was important for missionaries to accentuate the strength and suffering of African Christians, but it would be difficult for them to understand the root causes of Mau Mau. Indeed, they would waver between satanic and real world explanations throughout the conflict. In turn, this confusions hampered their ability to respond to the violence perpetrated by both the state and Mau Mau fighters. Although they struggled mightily to craft an effective response, the lack of ideological clarity and resources meant that the CMS would always be playing a dangerous game of catch up in Kenya. Their ability to maintain a legitimate presence would be sorely tested in the years to come.

⁴³⁴ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1952.

Colonial and Religious Transitions

As the war against Mau Mau carried over into the new year, Governor Baring reassured those in Kenya and the United Kingdom that the conflict would be short-lived.⁴³⁵ Unfortunately this proved not to be the case as the events of 1953 so amply evidenced. Combatants and adherents on every side dug in, with missionaries while desperately to appeal to white settlers, Mau Mau fighters, African Christians, and the government. The year would prove to be a watershed one for the CMS as they faced for the first time widespread police and military brutality. As the internal debate raged about the proper response to the violence, the CMS also grappled with the possibility of increased funding from the state for rehabilitation and education efforts. However, they worried that by speaking out against the government, those funds might be withdrawn. In the end CMS leaders decided, with one or two key exceptions, to keep quiet regarding official abuses in hopes of better protecting African Christians and maintaining their funding from the government. They did not become puppets of the government, as scholars such as Caroline Elkins have suggested, and their responses were always predicated on previous experiences with government officials.⁴³⁶ The future of Anglican missionaries in the colony were perched precariously on the foundation of government support; therefore they would always try to ameliorate the worst of the abuses privately, while trying to keep the government happy.

CMS leaders in London may have had a pragmatic outlook, but that perspective did not always trickle down through the ranks as smoothly as they would have hoped. Indeed their primary opponent in the early days of Mau Mau was a retired missionary, Walter Carey. Self-described as “racehorse rather than a carthorse,” Carey was the fiery Bishop of Bloemfontein in

⁴³⁵ Anderson, 70.

⁴³⁶ Elkins, 308—09.

South Africa before retiring to Kenya at the onset of Mau Mau.⁴³⁷ He had written several articles for the *Evening Standard* and even published a short book entitled *Crisis in Kenya: Christian Common Sense on Mau Mau and the Colour Bar*.⁴³⁸ His very public opinions frustrated CMS officials in Salisbury Square. Soon after the initial flurry of publications, Warren wrote to Carey and promised him that the CMS was working hard to collect all the pertinent details, but they were “distressed” at the tone of his letters to the press.⁴³⁹ While Warren’s letter to Carey was conciliatory, he was much more direct in a letter to another CMS official. Warren argued that if Carey could not be silenced, it needed to be made clear to the public and the government that he spoke for no one but himself. Warren’s anger was palpable at the misconception that Carey was

Splash-headed in *The Evening Standard* as “The Bishop on the spot”, the implication to everybody being that he is the bishop of the diocese speaking with authority for the Church in East Africa. It really is quite damnable! He is also advertised as a missionary. The fact that he is an old man and retired and is speaking for nobody but himself is cleverly obscured.⁴⁴⁰

The CMS wanted to contain the Mau Mau situation, and they felt that Carey’s words would only stoke the flames of violence. Indeed, the CMS’ depth of concern was so deep they released a press statement one day later, calling Carey’s article “contentious and ill-balanced.”⁴⁴¹ This show of force was not only an effort to keep a retired firebrand in line; it was meant to highlight to the British public and the state that the CMS was not a loose cannon. As stories of abuses continued to mount, they hoped to maintain that status quo to the best of its ability.

⁴³⁷ “Obituary Bishop Walter Carey,” *The Times* 19 February 1955.

⁴³⁸ Walter Carey, *Crisis in Kenya: Christian Common Sense on Mau Mau and the Colour Bar* (London: AR Mowbray, 1953).

⁴³⁹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1953.

⁴⁴⁰ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1953.

⁴⁴¹ *Ibid.* LPL, Fisher Papers, 120.

The first opportunity to walk this perilous line between cooperation and contention came with the journey of Canon Bewes to Kenya in late January. Violence in the colony was on an uptick, and on January 24th another white settler family, the Rucks, were brutally murdered in their homes. The press attention was intense and the violence of the killings meant that white settler fears were at a fever pitch. Indeed, pictures of six year old Michael Ruck, killed in his bed by former servants, raised such an outrage that over a thousand white settlers marched on Nairobi the very next day to call for protection and justice for their besieged community.⁴⁴² Into this powder keg Canon Bewes made his first trip to the colony since his return to London in 1949. Bewes had been a career missionary, working in Kenya for two decades and he retained multiple correspondences with various missionaries and African Christians working on the ground. Even before he landed, Bewes was worried about the future of the mission, particularly as he looked at the situation in other places where nationalists charged missionaries with implementing western imperialism by another, more religious name.⁴⁴³

Essentially the CMS had sent Bewes on a fact finding mission. He was to meet with Africans on the ground as well as Governor Baring and report his findings back to the Home Office. General Secretary Max Warren wrote to Baring before the visit, assuring the Governor that Bewes' only purpose was "to bring to the Kikuyu Christians the assurance of the continued remembrance of the members of the Society during these very difficult days."⁴⁴⁴ Despite Bewes guarantees, the personal correspondence between Warren and Bewes made it clear that his job was to document abuses, but he also had a secondary purpose, namely to ensure that William

⁴⁴² Paige Whaley Eager, *From Freedom Fighters to Terrorists: Women and Political Violence* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing, 2008), 101.

⁴⁴³ Stuart, 138. Bewes was worried that missionaries might be expelled from Kenya in much the same manner they had been in China.

⁴⁴⁴ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/1.

Carey remained silent after the repeated warnings from Warren. Bewes would be unsuccessful at this task, and his visit ultimately created more problems than solutions for the CMS.

Before Bewes left for Nairobi, Warren laid out his tasks in a letter, stressing the need to follow the proper chain of communication regarding military and police abuses. First any information which may have been “political dynamite,” it would first go to Governor Baring and then Secretary of State for the Colonies Oliver Lyttelton before ever becoming public.⁴⁴⁵

Warren believed that Bewes “may very well have some really important things to say about the need for the Government to make definite gestures with regard to some of the African grievances,” but documentation of abuses would be necessary, as would discernment about the bigger picture in Kenya.⁴⁴⁶ As Warren stated,

Revolting as it is to think of this kind of brutality occurring at all a distinction must be made between the brutal action of individuals and a brutal policy either encouraged or connived at. In any Police Force there will be brutal individuals and brutal things will be done, but that is not a condemnation of the authorities (sic) unless the authorities have been informed and have failed to take action.⁴⁴⁷

Thus even when abuses occurred, the CMS wanted to ensure that the government was given every opportunity to respond, before any public action would be taken. This allowed the CMS to maintain its position as helpmeet to the Government while still allowing them to claim they were protecting Africans in their care. The only avenue through which public outcry was possible was through a lengthy series of steps:

The Governor must be both convinced and given the opportunity to issue instructions. If his instructions are not obeyed then the next step would be to report to him this disobedience. It will only be after the complete failure to get effective action taken that there will be any question of raising things in this country, though I am of the opinion that when you get back and have an opportunity of seeing the Archbishop that you would

⁴⁴⁵ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1953.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

be well advised to open the matter up with him so that he may have been informed in case action has to be taken at a later stage.⁴⁴⁸

In order to for each of these steps to be followed properly, weeks, if not months, would pass between the first documented abuse and a public response by the CMS. It is important to note that any notion of “raising things,” would be done in the United Kingdom, not in Kenya. Warren worried that the position of missionaries in Kenya would be harmed if public campaign originated *in situ*. This would be a common theme among missionary writings during the early days of Mau Mau.

Missionaries had multiple obligations in Kenya; they felt that they had to propitiate the government, but they also need to mollify their congregants. Bewes trip was an attempt to accomplish both tasks, but he had an uphill battle. One missionary wrote from Fort Hall that, “religious instruction classes have generally lapsed; many churches no longer have any service at all; and the bottom has fallen out of church finances.”⁴⁴⁹ Like many missionaries, the author of the letter, Neville Langford-Smith believed that despite these setbacks,

we look on this scene of trouble and sorrow, with the glory shining through, to gain renewed hope and confidence in the loving purpose of God. The time has come that judgment must begin at the house of God. We know that judgment lies over the world, not only Kenya; and to the people of God belongs the responsibility and the glory of proclaiming the way of salvation and life in Christ alone. And only through a church judged and purified will this be done.⁴⁵⁰

If Mau Mau was God’s judgement on Kenya, Langford-Smith welcomed it as a tribulation worth suffering for such a worthy cause. It would separate the true believer from the false convert and allow for growth in faith. Unfortunately at this point it seemed that few true believers were left for Langford-Smith to shepherd! Bewes’ job was to forestall this mass exodus and prove to

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1952.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

Africans that not only could Christianity protect them, just as it had during the Great War, the CMS was the best vehicle through which to obtain this security.

When Bewes arrived in Kenya his first job was to reassure those Africans who were still loyal to the Church. After landing, Bewes quickly went to the local radio station to present a broadcast message written by the Archbishop of Canterbury, which reminded them that Christians in Britain had not forgotten them, nor had the leader of the Anglican Church.

From England there goes out a constant volume of prayer to Almighty God that you may be upheld in all perils; kept true to the Christian faith in all temptations, and that you may find God's peace even in the middle of your suffering. May He lead you and your whole Kikuyu people, and all the citizens of Kenya back into the ways of quietness and peace, and we pray that with the return of mutual trust and confidence all may go forward together for the good of the Country and of all races within it.⁴⁵¹

The speech called for a restoration of peace so that real change could be effected in the colony. Bewes highlighted the upcoming work of a Royal Commission concerning the "land question," and reminded his listeners that only with peace would progress come.⁴⁵² But the Archbishop was careful to highlight the primacy of the Christian faith in the midst of the trials and tribulations of Mau Mau. State violence was deemphasized in favor of quotes that praise for those who remained true to the faith:

[t]errible tribulations have fallen upon you; many of you have had to suffer grievously, and some have died as faithful witnesses to the Christian duty of upholding law and order, and rejecting the ways of violent men. The Church in Kenya has been tested in the fire of affliction; and indeed some have been found faithless; but in every affliction the disciples of Christ shine out with the light of His strength and truth, and he has been found among you, a true Saviour (sic) indeed. God be praised for your steadfast faith and courage.⁴⁵³

⁴⁵¹ UBL CMS/ACC 722/F3.

⁴⁵² UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/3.

⁴⁵³ Ibid.

In this speech both Bewes and the Archbishop attempted to stand firm on middle ground. They acknowledged that Africans had legitimate grievances, but no mention was made of possible abuses, and the call to peace was reiterated.

Publicly Bewes remained neutral, but privately he became increasingly concerned about the actions of the state. Soon after his radio address, Bewes met with Governor Baring to discuss the situation on the ground.⁴⁵⁴ After the meeting ended, Bewes took the additional step of sending Baring a letter, laying out in explicit detail he described multiple types of abuse, beatings on the head and genitals, castration seemed to be the tip of the iceberg. Bewes confronted Baring with these stories, and claimed, “this information was given to me from such widely separated sources that I am sure it was at least based upon fact.”⁴⁵⁵

Soon after this meeting, Baring received a troubling report about a mission teacher, Elijah Njeru, who was beaten to death by police forces. Two officers, Reuben and Keates, suspected Njeru of having Mau Mau sympathies and during the course of the interrogation Njeru expired. RA Wilkinson was the local magistrate in charge of the subsequent investigation, and his conclusion was that although excessive force killed the captive, an old tuberculosis infection rendered the victim much more susceptible to the blows. His conclusion was that while the police may have been at fault, Njeru’s health was equally to blame.⁴⁵⁶ Bewes received notice of the death from the local missionary, Neville Langford-Smith. While reassuring Langford-Smith of Baring’s desire to see that kind of behavior stamped out, Bewes admitted that despite Baring’s

⁴⁵⁴ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1953.

⁴⁵⁵ TNA, CO 822/471/6.

⁴⁵⁶ Fabian Klose, *Human Rights in the Shadow of Colonial Violence: The Wars of Independence in Kenya and Algeria* trans. Dona Geyer (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 176; UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1953. The trial for the two police officers did not begin until 1955 and will be discussed in the next chapter.

new corrective to the police, it may not be obeyed throughout the colony. Bewes also promised to bring the issue to the Kenyan public's attention in his press conference which was to be held the next day, but admitted that he did not "want to raise the issue in England at present."⁴⁵⁷

Despite Bewe's desire to keep police issues in Kenya and not publicize the troubles in the United Kingdom, it became increasingly difficult to do so as the scope of abuses and violence widened in the colony. Three days after Langford-Smith's letter, CMS Information Officer, BD Nicholls crafted a memo for the Home Office entitled "Kenya 'Atrocities.'" Nicholls enclosed a copy of a letter from a local missionary in Kenya, Jean Drinkwater, which again highlighted the recent human rights abuses, particularly in Embu. In addition to the shocking tales of police cruelty, Nicholls worried, "how long will it be before missionaries include such accounts as this in their duplicated circular letters to their friends? Or send such letters as this to their relations?"⁴⁵⁸ Indeed, as Information Officer, Nicholls' anxiety centered primarily on the idea that, "[t]ime is short. It cannot be very long before the truth—or worse—a garbled version of the truth—gets out. Then will come a day of reckoning if C.M.S. appears to have "suppressed" such information."⁴⁵⁹ The fallout from a public outcry about a hypothetical missionary cover-up might have sunk the organization entirely. Therefore the Home Office needed to craft a scheme through which they could reveal enough information to satisfy their African and British audiences that they were working hard to stamp out abuses, while not becoming overly critical of the government's program.

⁴⁵⁷ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1953.

⁴⁵⁸ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/3.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

It was in the midst of this heated swirl of events that Bewes returned to London and gave a press conference on February 9th, 1953. He established his *bona fides* via his twenty year career in the colony and his close friendships with many Kikuyu men and women. The tone of his speech was measured and moderate; he described the grievances of those on land reserves, but to soften the blow he also ascribed a measure of blame to the continuance of occult behaviors in Kikuyu society.

We were, however, aware that witchcraft had not died out, and there was an undercurrent of real grievances. It we were aware of a streak of savagery and cruelty we were conscious of its presence also in all of us. (Perhaps more refined in Europe after centuries of Christian civilization, but none the less dangerous and able to defeat us, if we get away from Christ.)⁴⁶⁰

Bewes wanted to inform the British public, and perhaps even alarm them, but he also wanted to push them towards specific ends. Namely, he hoped to induce the public to provide financial assistance and prayer to the CMS and the persecuted Christians suffering under the double punishment of Mau Mau and the state. Bewes praised the “strong and courageous” spirit of African Christians, but compared it to first century Christianity: it was the responsibility of those living with a twentieth century faith to aid their brothers and sisters in Christ.⁴⁶¹

This press conference served a dual purpose. It informed and exhorted British Christians to support the CMS, but it also functioned as a public notice to the government that the CMS would not keep silent forever. Bewes public denunciation of state actions was relatively mild compared with what was to come from MPs and human rights organizations, but it was an important moment for the CMS. This was their first official open critique of government policy since W.E. Owen and the Archbishop of Canterbury’s press tour regarding gold mining in

⁴⁶⁰ UBL CMS/ACC 722/F3.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid.

Kavirondo. Their most recent attempt had been a dismal failure, and thus it was more important than ever to not only assess critically government actions, but to do so in a way that maintained their privileged position in the colony. In essence, the CMS wanted to ensure they would not be charged with “suppression” of the truth, but they did not want to launch a full-scale offensive in the manner of William Carey. Therefore, Bewes carefully selected certain aspects of colonial rule to appraise; Home Guard action and collective punishment. He claimed that many Africans were “bitter and puzzled” by collective punishment, and it only engendered bitterness among locals.⁴⁶² In regards to the Home Guard, Bewes argued that while the government might prefer members of the militia to loyal Christian subjects, they were sadly mistaken. Loyalist Christians wanted to join the group, but “some resistance groups are brutal in their methods, and this has caused Christians to shy off joining the Home Guard.”⁴⁶³ If the government cleaned up these problems, African Christians would provide an important force to counteract the violence and witchcraft of Mau Mau. With this press conference Bewes brilliantly managed a host of complex and contradictory priorities. He highlighted the importance of Christianity as a force for good, and thus the need for missionary groups such as the CMS and he prodded the government in regards to certain policies but in such a way as to sidestep many of the most controversial and heated aspects of police action.

Scholars see the press conference as an important moment in terms of public outcry against British policies, however they frequently miss the multiple layers of meaning presented by the CMS in presenting this particular speech at this particular point in time. For many historians, Bewes is important by virtue of being first. Both Fabian Klose and David Anderson

⁴⁶² Ibid.

⁴⁶³ Ibid.

argue that Bewes was successful in forcing Baring to publicly pursue the Njeru murder, and opened the veritable floodgates of public knowledge concerning the abuses in Kenya.⁴⁶⁴ Caroline Elkins sees the press conference as damning of both government and missionary actions. Bewes wanted to keep things quiet, as evidenced by several earlier statements, but government inaction pushed him into the spotlight.⁴⁶⁵ Bewes public critique provides her with ammunition to decry later missionary efforts, especially the Archbishop of Mombasa, which focused almost entirely on private communications with officials.⁴⁶⁶ Others argue contra-Elkins that full scale condemnation is incorrect. Rather we must understand Bewes' actions within the larger scheme of missionary philosophies and realities. As William Sachs contends, the CMS worked hard to create “indigenous ecclesiastical” churches, but their understanding of order, even in the face of colonial violence made that difficult. Indeed CMS actions in the midst of Mau Mau were located within difficult realities regarding church state relations, but they also emerged during a period of importance transition within the Anglican Church as it moved towards becoming a true Anglican Communion.⁴⁶⁷ Each of these perspectives highlights a different fact of the cause and effect of the press conference, but it is important to remember the delicate balance between missionaries in the field and those at home. Despite the expansion of the Church to a truly global, independent force, the experience of many Anglicans in the twentieth century was one of fear and contraction—within that paradigm government relationships became increasingly

⁴⁶⁴ Anderson, 309—10; Klose, 175.

⁴⁶⁵ Elkins, 93—4.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid, 298—303.

⁴⁶⁷ William Sachs, *Homosexuality and the Crisis of Anglicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 139—40. What Sachs means by Anglican Communion is the ways in which the Church of England expanded and transformed in the twentieth century to become a multi-cultural church with loci all over the globe. As the end of empire neared, it became increasingly important to push for greater autonomy within the indigenous churches. This was certainly the case for Anglicans in Kenya.

important. It was no accident that the Anglican Communion came to fruition in the midst of the loss of the British Empire. The two are inextricably linked. The liberal British Empire could not exist without the presence of evangelistic and educational missionaries, and missionaries could not exist without the financial and administrative succor of the state.

In the aftermath of Bewes' press conference, the Colonial Office went into damage control. Granville Roberts crystallized their fears:

It is unnecessary for me to say how very damaging to the Government accusations in these terms are particularly in view of the fact that Bewes told Press he would not give many details but left to go 'straight to the Archbishop with whom he would be completely frank.' This implies that he could have told much [a] worse story if he cared.⁴⁶⁸

Clearly Bewes press conference had jolted the Colonial Office into motion, as Baring quickly passed the "Governor's Directive on Beating up," which was meant to formalize his earlier assurances to Bewes that he doing his level best to stop atrocities.⁴⁶⁹ In the end, the CMS' public actions had mixed results. The two police officers went on trial later in the year, but were only fined £150 and dismissed from the armed forces as part of their sentence for battery.⁴⁷⁰ Elkins argues that this light verdict caused Bewes to "reconsider the public nature of his reproach."⁴⁷¹ Certainly by late 1953 and early 1954 the CMS strategy had retreated from press conferences to denounce government actions, but did the organization back off due to their lack of success in this one instance. That was certainly part of the reason, but the development of the CMS response was an ever evolving organism. One judicial case was not enough to create a sea change. There were multiple factors that led to their declining public presence in regards to

⁴⁶⁸ TNA, CO 822/471/7.

⁴⁶⁹ Anderson, 310.

⁴⁷⁰ Klose, 176. They were found innocent of the more serious manslaughter charge levied against them.

⁴⁷¹ Elkins, 94.

publicizing abuses, including their increasing work within the government's plans of rehabilitation.

Certainly the CMS did not immediately retreat in the days and weeks after their moment in the limelight. One week after the press statement, Bewes wrote to William Carey, previously seen as an outspoken thorn in the side of the CMS, to ask for more details regarding the death. He urged Carey to get information to him, "no matter the cost," because he believes the conference had a positive impact on the situation.⁴⁷² Bewes wrote,

Neville [Langford-Smith] has written stressing that the Governor's injunction to the Police is already having effect, in that the D.C. is exercising stricter control. I want to make that point to those who should know at this end, and it will help our whole case very considerably.⁴⁷³

Rather than being disheartened, Bewes believed that he had effected positive change for the colony. Importantly he had done so without angering the government, while also reassuring Anglican African congregants. He also took his talents to the radio. On February 25th, he gave a talk on BBC's radio home service. This broadcast was meant to be a travelogue of sorts for his recent trip, but Bewes spent the majority of his time stressing the connections between African and British Christians. He implied that African believers were closer to Christians in the UK than to their fellow Kikuyu, and this is why Mau Mau fighters hated the faith. Bewes concluded his speech with a story about a Kikuyu Christian who told him, "'Do you know we are now called European by our people?' It is the Kikuyu equivalent of 'Quisling.'"⁴⁷⁴ Clearly the enmity between white settlers and most missionaries had not abated.

⁴⁷² UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1953.

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/3.

The early months were a time of transition for the CMS, and not just in terms of their willingness to go public with stories of police atrocities. By January of 1953 it was clear that the Bishop of Mombasa, Reginald Crabbe was on the verge of retirement.⁴⁷⁵ His successor would be the most powerful Anglican in the colony, and it was important to find the right man, and find him quickly. This was a mutual feeling in both metropole and colony. As William Carey wrote concerning a recent meeting of the Standing Committee of the Synod of the Diocese of Mombasa, “[t]he disastrous consequences to the colony of the interregnum between Sir Philip Mitchell’s retirement and the arrival of Sir Evelyn Baring was pointed out, and the parallel strains in relation to Christian affairs was stressed.”⁴⁷⁶

As the CMS continued to work on maintaining their position in the colony and protecting Africans under their care, things were changing rapidly in the colony. In late January the war office appointed Major General W.R.N. “Looney” Hinde as the director of military operations.⁴⁷⁷ Upon his arrival, Hinde toured the colony and created new policies which he believed could quickly and efficiently defeat Mau Mau forces without the need to call in special forces. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff disagreed and sent in army and air reinforcements.⁴⁷⁸ In the aftermath of these changes, it became clear that Mau Mau was now a war, no longer a series of skirmishes primarily between African groups. One unfortunate side effect of Hinde’s tour of the colony was his immediate sympathy for white settlers, particularly those who had served in

⁴⁷⁵ John Stuart, “Overseas Mission, Voluntary Service, and Aid to Africa: Max Warren, the Church Missionary Society and Kenya, 1945—1963,” *Ambiguities of Empire: Essays in Honour of Andrew Porter* eds. R.F. Holland and Sarah Stockwell (London: Routledge, 2009), 185.

⁴⁷⁶ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/ACI/L-Z 1953.

⁴⁷⁷ Grob-Fitzgibbon, 248.

⁴⁷⁸ Bennet, 17.

World War II as he had. These feelings were heightened when a fellow veteran, Anthony Gibson, was killed by Mau Mau only days before Bewes' press conference.⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁷⁹ Grob-Fitzgibbon, 248.

The Carrot and Stick—War Comes to Kenya

Two actions signaled the change in Kenya from small scale revolt to full scale war. The first was the arrival of Looney Hinde and the transition of responsibility for British counterinsurgency tactics to the British military. Previously military action had been under the purview of the police force, but their long history of brutality combined with Canon Bewes' press conference convinced Lyttelton that the change was necessary.⁴⁸⁰ Unfortunately Hinde lived up to his namesake a little too well. He was outmatched in every respect for his post, but his worst deficiencies were in the social realm. Immediately upon his arrival Hinde cozied up to white settlers and was relieved of his duties after commenting at a party, "100,000 Kikuyu should be put to work in a vast swill-tub."⁴⁸¹ Hinde was quickly replaced with Lieutenant General Sir Bobbie Erskine, but the damage was done.⁴⁸² Despite the military weaknesses of Mau Mau, the British would struggle for another year to contain and defeat the irregular forces and guerilla forces.

The second indication of war was the attack by Mau Mau forces on the village of Lari in March of 1953. The Lari Massacre created on the largest single incident death tolls of the war, and was an unsettling change of pattern from their usual guerilla tactics.⁴⁸³ In the middle of the night on March 26th, local Home Guards were called away for their posts to retrieve a dead body. While they were gone, Mau Mau forces attacked and burned the village, killing 120 men, women, and children. The same night they attacked a police station in the neighboring town of

⁴⁸⁰ Anderson, 179; UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1953.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid, 180.

⁴⁸² Grob-Fitzgibbon, 255.

⁴⁸³ S.H. Fazan, *Colonial Kenya Observed: British Rule, Mau Mau and the Wind of Change* John Lonsdale, ed., (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 204—7.

Navisha and freed more than 150 prisoners and stealing necessary implements of war. Security forces and the Home Guard took their revenge, killing many suspected Mau Mau fighters and sympathizers. Those who were not killed were arrested, and the court ordered 71 of them to be hanged for their actions in Lari.⁴⁸⁴

The CMS response to the Lari Massacre was muted to say the least; there were no letters put forth discussing the increase in violence or the long term implications of the village's destruction. Instead the CMS doubled down on their attempts to understand the origins of the movement; it was their hope to classify Mau Mau in order to better serve the state in ridding Kenyan society of this scourge. There were two primary theories put forth by missionaries and CMS leaders—the first condemned Mau Mau as the work of outside communist forces while the second attributed the violence to the rapid change in lifestyle and culture among the Kikuyu people. Missionary Peter Bostock spent most of 1953 pushing for a communist interpretation of Mau Mau, and the Information Officer, B.D. Nicholls seemed sympathetic, but CMS leadership worried that these charges would backfire. Indeed, the Archbishop of Canterbury wrote to Canon Bewes to instruct him to keep Bostock quiet. The Archbishop worried that Moscow wanted to intervene and by publicizing their preferred narrative Bostock had in fact become “Moscow’s number 1 agent.”⁴⁸⁵ While claiming such prominence for a local missionary in Kenya was a bit hyperbolic on the Archbishop's part, it spoke to the sensitivity at every level of church leadership to ensure that no government feathers were unduly ruffled by loose talk in the colonies. Loose lips could still sink ships apparently.

⁴⁸⁴ Grob-Fitzgibbon, 251—55.

⁴⁸⁵ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1953.

In a 1953 article for *International Affairs*, Canon Bewes presented the second argument for Mau Mau origins. Additionally he integrated the local with the international by tying the colonial violence to the larger goals and purpose of the CMS throughout their mission fields.⁴⁸⁶ He argued that while the advent of a British style modernity may have created Mau Mau, it was not enough to simply identify the problem. Only Christians, and specifically the CMS could rectify the issues besetting Kenya. Missionaries had long provided educational services and the “partnership of government and missions” had created “a close knit educational system for the whole country.”⁴⁸⁷ In order to defend the work done by missionaries, Bewes overstated the church’s importance and scale by a large margin. While it might seem strange to highlight the success of an educational framework that many argued pushed too hard too quickly and thus created the “pagan” backlash that was Mau Mau, Bewes claimed that missionaries were not to blame for their good work. Rather the true culprit, and thus the true problem in Kenya was that the church was too successful.

and yet the Church herself was facing a problem of her own which was to prove perhaps the greatest of all. And this is the strange disease from which she was suffering. She had actually become too large, too successful, and too popular. In some parts it was the ‘done thing’ to go to Church. Progressive people liked to be thought Christians. When applying for a job, it was thought a ‘good thing’ to have a letter from a missionary. It was thought a ‘good thing’ to have a Christian name. To be a Christian was to be respectable. In other words, the way was open for a flood of nominal Christianity.⁴⁸⁸

Thus the real evil Kenya was less about a murderous civil war, and more about the ways in which Christianity had been abused by Kenyans.

⁴⁸⁶ T.F.C. Bewes, “The Work of the Christian Church Among the Kikuyu,” *International Affairs* 29:3 (July 1953), 316—25.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 320.

⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 323.

Bewes gloried in the remnant of what he termed the “Christian Resistance” in Kenya and the ways in which they embodied the true spirit of what it meant to find new life in Christ. Their numbers may have been small, down to 800 from 22,000 in Fort Hall alone, but their dedication was more important than size.⁴⁸⁹ By 1953 the missionary experience had come full circle from the struggles of 1916. The crucible of war initially pushed Africans to join the ranks of Christendom, but missionaries were never quite sure if those conversions were heartfelt. Only through struggle and persecution would true Christians preserve. As Bewes described it, “Perhaps this was the purge the Church had been needing.”⁴⁹⁰ For some missionaries Mau Mau could prove to be the test the Church needed in order to emerge from the ashes, stronger and more faithful than before.

Unfortunately for missionaries such as Bewes, they no longer had sole control of the narrative and theology of Anglican Christianity in the colony. While CMS leadership was still overwhelmingly white and male, by the 1950s Africans had greater access to media platforms and church pulpits.⁴⁹¹ While Bewes crafted his article for *International Affairs* he received a letter from Obadiah Kariuki, a local Christian. Kariuki presented a very different picture of Kenyan society and the Church; he argued rather than British modernity, the true culprit was

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid, 324.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid, 324.

⁴⁹¹ This is first evidenced in a letter written by an African Christian to the *Manchester Guardian* on March 4, 1953. Although unsigned, it claimed that the lack of “brotherly, Christlike love between Kikuyu and European” created Mau Mau. Throughout the conflict Africans increasingly made use of press and political sources in the United Kingdom to air their grievances. The literature on written African political discourse is growing, but less has been said about the ways in which African letter writers advocated for their own narrative of history and theology within the Christian framework. For more see Marshall S. Clough, *Mau Mau Memoirs: History, Memory, and Politics* (Boulder, Lynne Rienner Publishing, 1998), 190—92; Elkins, 334—36; Stephen Morton, *States of Emergency: Colonial, Literature, and Law* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), 119—45; Derek R. Peterson, “The Intellectual Lives of Mau Mau Detainees,” *Journal of African History* 49:1 (2008), 73—91.

British imperialism. He claimed that land hunger was a trigger but so too was the lack of respect Africans received in Kenya.

There is another point: if a man has gone ahead in his education as far as Makerere or South Africa or England, when he comes back home again he finds a great difficulty in reconciling his new habits with his old ways, whether it is the question of wages or esteem or responsibility.⁴⁹²

Kariuki contended that Kikuyu men handled the transition to modern life quite well, but the stark realities of life in a racially divided society drove them to violence. Kariuki did not stop there, however, he also laid blame at the feet of the Church by claiming,

Then there's another point: up till now the Church has not yet set a good example. You may remember there was an occasion years ago when some of the European churches used to spray Africans with disinfectant when they came into their church. Surely this was not in the spirit of Jesus? Darkness is cast out by light—darkness can never cast out another darkness.⁴⁹³

Bewes' response to this letter was not preserved, but it seems clear that Kariuki's version of events did not sway those in the Home Office to change their tactics, as evidenced by their continued public support of the arguments Bewes presented in the *International Affairs* article.

Throughout the remainder of the year, the CMS focused less on changing their churches and more on pushing forward their dual schemes of celebrating the internal purge of the church while simultaneously convincing the government that Christian missionaries and teachers were needed to cleanse Kenyan society. In the midst of their attempts to achieve both of these goals, the CMS also continued to struggle with the best way to deal with the abuses perpetrated by the state. 1953 was not a year of decolonization for the CMS, it was another year of transition within the familiar framework of the British Empire.

⁴⁹² UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1953.

⁴⁹³ Ibid.

Chapter 5: Who Will Save Your Soul?—Rehabilitation Efforts in the Pipeline

“The problem for the British government, therefore, is to find a method by which these inexorable African forces can be reconciled with future British interests. How are we to bind these people to us in such a way that their moral and material sources of strength will continue to be ranged on the side of Great Britain?”⁴⁹⁴

Introduction

After the arrival of new military leader Bobbie Erskine to Kenya, the British military began winning the war on the ground against Mau Mau forces. But the British were not simply hoping to win tactically; they needed to win the war for the hearts and minds of the Kenyan people. CMS missionaries had few fighting skills, but they believed they were the only group in the colony who could aid the British in restoring British ideals and values into society that seemed, at least to them, to have slipped back into the dark days of paganism. When CMS missionary Peter Bostock raised the specter of communism, CMS leadership moved quickly to silence him because this explanation left less space for missionaries to maneuver in regards to their plans to prove their usefulness to the British colonial state.⁴⁹⁵ Although the last major Mau Mau general was not captured until the fall of 1956, military operations began winding down as early as 1954.⁴⁹⁶ It is during this phase of the war that missionaries remained optimistic about their future in Kenya. If 1953 was not a year of decolonization nor was 1954. The CMS firmly

⁴⁹⁴ TNA, CO 967/57 Memo by AJ Dawe, Assistant Under-secretary in the Colonial Office, July 1942. Qtd. in Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 88.

⁴⁹⁵ Historians generally disregard the theory that Mau Mau was a communist force, however that has not stopped several African writers and intellectuals from placing both the conflict and independence within a Marxist framework. For more see Aida Mbowa, “Between Nationalism and Pan-Africanism: Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s theater and the Art of Politics of Modernizing Africa,” in *Modernization as Spectacle in Africa* eds., Peter Bloom, Stephen Miescher, and Takyiwaa Manuh (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2014), 328—48.

⁴⁹⁶ David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2005), 392—3.

believed that their future as a missionary society in the colony would eventually be secured, as would British imperial control. Anglican missionaries were incredibly late to the decolonization game, and did not realize that Kenya was on the verge of independence until the spring of 1955 by which point they were almost too late.

The CMS greeted war and the declaration of emergency by Governor Baring with a hope that it would fill their coffers and their pews, and that confidence remained intact despite the early losses in both church and school attendance. Both of these setbacks were easily explained away, as evidenced by Canon Bewes' article in *International Affairs*, and there was still the likelihood of the state opening its pocketbook for rebuilding and rehabilitation schemes. The largest problem on the horizon for the CMS in late 1953 was not the prospect of Kenyan independence, loss of membership, or even the violence of an internecine civil war but rather the repeated perpetration of acts of brutality by police and military forces as they waged their campaigns against Mau Mau fighters. CMS leadership had little inkling that the British Empire was on its last legs, they assumed they could quickly refill the pews, and the state had created a militia to protect loyalists after the Declaration of Emergency.⁴⁹⁷ The only problem missionaries could never quite solve was how to respond to human rights abuses in colony. In early 1953 it looked as if they would take a strong stand when the public face of the CMS, Canon Bewes spoke out in a press conference about the situation in the colony. However at the press conference Bewes pulled his punches and focused only on the evils of collective punishment and Home Guard abuses. The CMS would not speak on the issue again publicly until 1955.

⁴⁹⁷ E.S. Atieno-Odhiambo, "The Formative Years: 1945—55," in *Decolonization and Independence in Kenya, 1940—93* eds., B.A. Ogot and W.R. Ochieng' (London: James Currey, 1995), 40—2.

Their silence was due to a variety of factors, all of which will be explored in more depth throughout this chapter. CMS actions during the height of the Emergency bring to light the ways in which the idea of decolonization began to trickle down through the cogs of the imperial machine. Scholars have long understood that the British Empire was more than just a military or political force. Colonial subjects adapted, adopted, and modified the cultural, social, and religious precepts presented by the British throughout their empire.⁴⁹⁸ Our job now is to

⁴⁹⁸ This has been a hallmark of much imperial scholarship presented over the previous three decades. Postcolonial studies focus on the ‘imperial hangover’ of values and ideas even after independence. India has received the bulk of the attention, but so to as Africa, particularly in relation to religion. Currently historians are turning their attention back to the metropole in hopes of understanding how imperial mores shaped British understandings of culture and Christianity. For more on the cultural impact of empire see: Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Mrinalini Sinha, *Specters of Mother India: the Global Restructuring of an Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); Mary Procida, *Married to Empire: Gender, Politics, and Imperialism in India, 1883—1947* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002). For more on postcolonialism see: Franz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (London: Paladin 1970); Laura Chrisman, *Postcolonial Conventions: Cultural Readings of Race, Imperialism, and Transnationalism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003); Parama Roy, *Indian Traffic: Identities in Question in Colonial and Postcolonial India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India, and ‘The Mystic East’*, (New York: Routledge, 2009); Paul Landau and Deborah Kaspin, eds., *Images and Empires: Visuality in Colonial and Postcolonial Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Jean Comaroff and John L. Comaroff, *Modernity and Its Malcontents: Ritual and Power in Postcolonial Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Coloniality of Power in Postcolonial Africa: Myths of Decolonization* (Oxford: Africa Books Collective, 2013). For more on the turn back to the metropole see: Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, eds., *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Stuart Ward, ed., *British Culture and the End of Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001); Kathleen Paul, *Whitewashing Britain: Race and Citizenship in the Postwar Era* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997); Antoinette Burton, *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865—1915* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Philipa Levine, *Prostitution, Race, and Politics: Policing Venereal Disease in the British Empire* (New York: Routledge, 2003); Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Colony and Metropole in the English Imagination, 1830—1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Bernard Porter, *The Absent Minded Imperialists: Empire, Society, and Culture in Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). For specific work on missionaries see: Elizabeth Prevost, *The Communion of Women: Missions and Gender in Colonial Africa and the British Metropole* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,

understand how that process carried through into decolonization and how missionaries are key part of that process. British decolonization was not a speedy or clean process. It began in 1947 with the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan and carried on throughout the 1960s. Some may argue that the Britain is still in the process of shedding its imperial power and mindset, as evidenced by the short lived Falklands War in the 1980s. Scholars continue to debate the hows and whys of how British leaders and colonial nationalists worked through the political and military processes to achieve independence. This chapter will focus on one small part of that by examining the transition of the CMS from an imperial organization into one that eventually transformed into the Anglican Church of Kenya. That path begun by missionary activity in 1916 climaxed in 1955 with failure of the publication of the CMS pamphlet, *Time for Action* to produce new revenue or recruits for service in East Africa. In the fallout after its publication, *Time for Action* created a decisive split within the CMS and paved the way for decolonization to move forward, but in order to get there we must first examine the CMS' initial participation in various rehabilitation programs for Mau Mau detainees.

By the fall of 1953 the CMS realized that their best avenue forward was to focus on rehabilitation work in the detention camps. This work would allow them to theoretically protect their African converts while bringing more true believers into the fold. They hoped that it would also allow them to privately persuade the government that their current carrot and stick approach leaned far too heavily on the stick, and not enough on the carrot of Christian civilization. Before

2010); Meredith McKitterick, *To Dwell Secure: Generation, Christianity, and Colonialism in Ovamboland* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2002); Richard Price, *Making Enemies: Colonial Encounters and the Creation of Imperial Rule in Nineteenth Century Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Justin Bradford, *Prophetic Identities: Indigenous Missionaries on British Colonial Frontiers, 1850—75* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2012).

his dismissal Looney Hinde outlined the “carrot” approach which was modeled after similar successful counter-insurgency tactics in Malaya. It focused on promising a better standard of living for those Kikuyu who submitted to British authority. For Hinde, and most British intelligence and administration officers, the carrot needed the stick in order to function properly. In this case, the stick came in the form of police operations throughout the colony which focused on the maintenance law and order while Mau Mau operatives were “hunted and annihilated by the Army.”⁴⁹⁹ Unfortunately under the Hinde the carrot received short shrift in favor of the application of brutal force. After Hinde’s dismissal and the arrival of General Erskine, the carrot received new attention and missionaries hoped to capitalize on Erskine’s moderate sensibilities.

These new tactics coalesced primarily on one group of people: detainees who were held indefinitely in one of three camps throughout the colony. The government detained these men without benefit of a trial, and declared prisoners to be prisoners of war. Unfortunately the British classified them as such without actually declaring war on anyone, which was problematic to say the least.⁵⁰⁰ They contravened international law to keep these men, and later women in the name of public safety and rehabilitation. In the succeeding decades scholarly debates concerning the nature of the detention camp system in Kenya, known as the Pipeline, have been both heated and prolific. While all historians condemn the violence of the British state, their understandings of the nature and purpose of that brutality differ. For Caroline Elkins and David Anderson, the violence of camp life was akin to that of a Soviet gulag: the purpose of British aggressiveness was to maintain control and punish those who they saw as threats to “the life of the colony [and]

⁴⁹⁹ Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame: Britain’s Dirty Wars and the End of Empire* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 250—51.

⁵⁰⁰ Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: the Untold Story of Britain’s Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2005), 94—98.

that of British civilization as well.”⁵⁰¹ For Elkins particularly, the violence of repression practiced by the authorities in Kenya during the Emergency fit neatly into a vision of an authoritative and repressive empire.⁵⁰² Kenya was not unusual in terms of brutality practiced but rather its uniqueness lies in its visibility and scope. Others such as Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon and Huw Bennett see this violence as reprehensible, but not as part of a larger condemnation of the imperial project. For Grob-Fitzgibbon atrocities were an unfortunate side effect of British determination to see through their ideas of liberal empire.⁵⁰³ Conversely Bennett downplays ideological concerns such as liberalism, in favor of highlighting the long standing British military tradition of responding with overwhelming force to crush rebellions quickly, even if that meant “bending” the law. Anything less was a sign of weakness.⁵⁰⁴

Missionary planning and action provides scholars with important counterpoints and confirmations for scholars of Mau Mau, decolonization, and violence. Much like Bennett’s vision of a Britain terrified of appearing weak, or as Churchill would term it “scuttle,” missionaries scrambled to maintain an appearance of and connection to larger powerful forces in Kenya.⁵⁰⁵ This led them to condone, or at least not publicly denounce various activities that in normal circumstances they would find inexcusable. They did not want to appear to abandon, or scuttle, their responsibilities to the British Christians who financially supported them, or to loyal African Christians, but in order to do that they needed to placate their main fiscal backer, the

⁵⁰¹ Anderson, 311—17; Elkins, 97.

⁵⁰² Elkins’ vision of empire is laid out very clearly and succinctly in the opening chapter of *Imperial Reckoning*. See pages 1—30.

⁵⁰³ Grob-Fitzgibbon, 376—77.

⁵⁰⁴ Huw Bennett, *Fighting the Mau Mau: The British Army and Counterinsurgency in the Kenya Emergency* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 265.

⁵⁰⁵ Churchill repeatedly warned of the dangers of scuttling the British Empire and British position on the world stage. For example: *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Commons, “India (Government Policy),” 6 March 1947, Volume 434, column, 671—72.

state. Their ensuing silence would be roundly condemned by many of those same Christians as well as successive generations of historians. What this dissertation seeks to accomplish is provide the larger context as to why CMS missionaries wanted to work in camps that were later compared to gulags. Why did they remain silent after Bewes' initial press conference? Were missionaries supporters of the ideals of an oppressive, brutal colonial power? Yes, but they were also true believers in the civilizing mission of empire. Scholars have examined the ways in which these opposing ideals clashed during the Emergency in Kenya, but that is not enough. By analyzing these issues in a missional context we can better see how difficult the tangled web of the British Empire was picked apart during decolonization.

The Early Days of Rehabilitation

The first thread we need to unravel is that of detention camps. As evidenced in the discussion above, debate concerning the use and abuse of these camps has been hotly contested by scholars, but missionaries only appear on the edges of the debate. Only John Stuart delves with any depth into missionary actions in Kenya as they relate to camps, but he focuses primarily the initial optimism of CMS officials who hoped to provide support to detention camps. But he shies away from delving into the darker side of camp life in favor of examining the short lived inter-denominational work that accompanied many rehabilitation efforts.⁵⁰⁶ Elkins condemns them for their silence, but for most missionaries were an irrelevant side show.⁵⁰⁷ The scholarly desire to shunt aside missionary involvement in camp programs can be partially attributed to the attitude exhibited by colonial officials. While they were certainly willing to use missionary ‘expertise’ in providing the civilizing mission experience to Africans, officials shied away from sharing long term goals and plans for the empire. This is equally true for decolonization as authorities used missionary labor in camps and to provide positive press for rehabilitation schemes, but never discussed plans for independence. This stance provides an important counterpoint to the view that the end of Britain’s empire was less about chaos and nationalism and more concerned with “managed decline” and an understanding of pragmatic realities.⁵⁰⁸ If

⁵⁰⁶ John Stuart, *British Missionaries and the End of Empire: East, Central, and Southern Africa, 1939—64* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2011), 146—66.

⁵⁰⁷ Elkins, 91—4. Neither Anderson, Edgerton, Ogot, nor Grob-Fitzgibbon provide any in-depth treatment of the missionary question.

⁵⁰⁸ Ronald Hyam and Wm. Roger Louis are two of the strongest proponents for the idea of “managed decline,” but this notion has been challenged by scholars such as John Darwin. For more see: Hyam, *Britain’s Declining Empire*; Wm. Roger Louis, *Ends of British Imperialism: The Scramble for Empire, Suez, and Decolonization: Collected Essays* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006); John Darwin *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World System 1830—1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

the British truly planned a managed decline why did they not also push for the same type of staged withdrawal for those groups who made liberal empire possible?

The first missionary to take up the mantle of rehabilitation work was Howard Church, a priest at St. Marks Church in Nairobi.⁵⁰⁹ In September of 1953 he preached his last sermon and took up work as a Rehabilitation Officer for the British government at the Athi River Camp. Church gathered around him a staff of Kikuyu instructors, including David Waruhiu, son of the assassinated chief Waruhiu. Church and his Kikuyu assistants wanted to “rehabilitate Mau Mau detainees and return them cleansed and made new,” but in order to accomplish this task he felt that labor was necessary.⁵¹⁰ As Church stated:

When we first arrived we found the detainees, bearded and sullen, doing practically nothing and spending all day doing it. Their food was good, convicts performed the menial tasks and the Camp was nicknamed ‘Queen’s Lodge.’ Many of the men had taken an oath not to work. To idle indefinitely has a diastorous (sic) effect on men’s minds and bodies and breeds an antisocial attitude. Left thus they would never change and would be a drain on public funds for an indefinite period. So our first objective was to get them to work.⁵¹¹

The idea that labor makes the man was certainly not a new one for colonial authorities or missionaries—many scholars that the expansion of the British Empire in Africa was predicated on the ever increasing labor needs of the colonial state. Missionaries also saw labor as important stepping stone in the creation of good Christians. The natural laziness of Africans must be stamped out to produce a modern Christian man.⁵¹² Thus, Howard Church tapped into a long line

⁵⁰⁹ Church was Oxbridge educated and seemed well suited for life in the church. He worked as a missionary from 1933—1946 until he took up his post at St. Marks. After his stint in the Athi River Camp, Church retired to Birmingham, England.

⁵¹⁰ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1953.

⁵¹¹ Ibid.

⁵¹² For more see: Christopher Paulin, *White Man’s Dreams, Black Men’s Blood: African Labor and British Expansionism in Southern Africa, 1877—1895* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2001); Timothy Parsons, *The Second British Empire: In the Crucible of the Twentieth Century* (London: Rowan and Littlefield, 2014), 55—143; Anthony Clayton and Donald Savage,

of colonial and missional attitudes regarding Africans in their ‘natural state’ when he argued for the saving grace of labor. And CMS leadership was certainly happy to have a missionary work in such an important position within the rehabilitation program.

However there will still problems for the CMS to overcome, not only in terms of their continuing financial difficulties, but also the presence of a new group in Kenya, Moral Rearmament. Not only was Church’s main assistant, David Waruhiu, a member, so too was the camp commandant, Colonel Alan Knight.⁵¹³ The main goal of MRA was to provide an anti-communist force in the world, while also highlighting the four cornerstones of its rather porous theology: honesty, purity, unselfishness, and love.⁵¹⁴ Despite these positive ideations, the Bishop of Mombasa, Leonard Beecher worried that the MRA would only rid Kenya of Mau Mau, not also bring that back into the Christian fold.⁵¹⁵ Indeed, he claimed that the watered down version of Christianity presented by the MRA would only drive Africans away from both real faith and rehabilitation. Thus while it was important to move Howard Church into Athi River, the CMS needed to ensure that they maintained their strong links with the authorities outside of the detention camp programs.

Government and Labour in Kenya, 1895—1963 (New York: Frank Cass, 1974). For more on the missionary emphasis on and benefits from labor see: Christoph Strobel, *The Testing Ground of Modern Empire: The Making of Colonial Racial Order in The American Ohio Country and the South African Eastern Cape, 1770s—1850s* (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), 61—90, 117—42; Kevin Grant, *A Civilised Savagery: Britain and the New Slaveries in Africa, 1884—1926* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

⁵¹³ Gerald Horne, *Mau Mau in Harlem: The U.S. and the Liberation of Kenya* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 133—34.

⁵¹⁴ Caroline Elkins, “The Struggle for Mau Mau Rehabilitation in Late Colonial Kenya,” *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 33:1 (2000), 30—1.

⁵¹⁵ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/AC1/A-K 1953.

These links were increasingly important as the rehabilitation program began to take shape under the leadership of Thomas Askwith, the commissioner of the Community Development Department. Askwith was a sporting legend in Britain, famous for his rowing prowess, but he was also a liberal minded colonial official, known for his progressive tendencies in regards to race relations.⁵¹⁶ Askwith's job was to create a workable model of rehabilitation in Kenya based on earlier tactics utilized by British defense forces in Malaya.⁵¹⁷ As Howard Church entered into employment at Athi River, Askwith set to work recreating Malayan models in Kenya, focusing on cleansing detainees from their Mau Mau influence while also providing resettlement and reemployment schemes. Essentially while authorities tasked Erskine with bringing the stick down on Mau Mau guerilla forces, Askwith and Church provided the carrot. The ultimate result of these combined plans was the Pipeline, so termed by Askwith because it was meant to be a process through which both individually and communally the Kikuyu could find healing and purpose.⁵¹⁸ Erskine and Askwith certainly believed in their programs and each man focused on creating programs of rural development and education, and they had the full support of the CMS, but there were always kinks in the system, namely while the leadership supported the carrot and stick approach, rank and file British soldiers, the white settler militia, and the Home Guard

⁵¹⁶ *Imperial Reckoning*, 100—02.

⁵¹⁷ The classification systems and protected villages used in Kenya were variations on the Malaya model. However there were a few key differences that neither Askwith nor the British properly accounted for, in particular the use of deportation to China for intractable communist adherents. This meant that while British hearts and minds campaigns worked relatively well in Malaya, they would be far more complicated and produce widely varied outcomes. For more on the Malaya schemes see: Leon Comber, *Malaya's Secret Police, 1945—60: The Role of the Special Branch in the Malayan Emergency* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asia Studies, 2008) and Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon, "Securing the Colonies for the Commonwealth: Counterinsurgency, Decolonization, and the Development of British Imperial Strategy in the Postwar Empire," *Britain and the World* 2:1 (Sept. 2009), 12—39; and *Imperial Reckoning*, 103—6.

⁵¹⁸ *Imperial Reckoning*, 108—9.

frequently espoused rhetoric and actions that celebrated retribution and death, rather than rehabilitation and release.⁵¹⁹

CMS leadership was also caught between these two extremes. They wanted to reduce abuses, but they did not want to lose their entrenched positions within the rehabilitation and release section of the pipeline. While they did not fight in the forest, missionaries were on the front lines in detention camps and protected villages, beginning with Howard Church and ending with no less than the Bishop of Mombasa, Leonard Beecher. In the early days of camp life, CMS missionaries worried more about the influence of other European groups such as the MRA, but they realized rather quickly that their problems were larger than wishy-washy theology. Despite the optimism of rehabilitation, the stories and rumors of human rights abuses continued to swirl in both colony and metropole. In late October Canon Bewes met with Oliver Lyttelton, Secretary of State for the Colonies to discuss the need for greater restraint of the part of the armed forces. He also wanted to highlight the need for increased missionary input in detention camp policies.⁵²⁰ It was a propitious time for the meeting, as it was the one year anniversary of the declaration of emergency by Baring, and thus the conflict received additional press coverage for the entire week, which Bewes hoped to use to his advantage.⁵²¹ In a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury he discussed his plans for the meeting and cited the article, “A Kenya Balance Sheet,” which he claims includes an Erskine quote which argued that Mau Mau could not be defeated purely by military force. Bewes wanted to use this article to push for greater responsibility for missionaries. He stated,

⁵¹⁹ *Imperial Endgame*, 265—75; Bennet, 216—27.

⁵²⁰ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/AC1/A-K 1953.

⁵²¹ For instance *The Times* devoted a large chunk of their October 19th edition to the Kenyan situation.

Here I would ask what steps are being taken by Government to consult Kikuyu Christian opinion and get alongside missionaries. We are not out to catch the Government out, but we want to help, even though we may have to maintain an independent line on many matters.⁵²²

Bewes' letter was an optimistic viewpoint to say the least; he wanted to push Lyttelton into an admission that Christianity was a necessary part of the rehabilitation process, but he was on shaky ground. In reality the article took a much softer stance, with no direct quotes from Erskine on the issue. The special correspondent stated,

Whatever form the operations now take they must last for some time. The authorities realize that military operations alone can never end the Emergency. That can only come about when the bulk of the Kikuyu cooperate with the Security Forces and the Home Guard instead of with Mau Mau, as they still do in many places.⁵²³

Indeed the article concludes with a call for stronger work by the "information services," because, "a self-destructive mania seems to have taken the tribe in its grip; it is only up to a point that this can be dealt with by rational methods and its duration is incalculable."⁵²⁴ Nowhere is Christianity specifically mentioned, but Bewes still wanted to push hard for the inclusion of the CMS within the "rational methods." This will be a recurring problem for the Home Office, and one they never quite managed to solve.

In their attempts to maintain their position as a necessary force for good in the colony, the CMS made deals with devilish forces. However, Bewes was not alone in his determination that the CMS must remain independent, or at least maintain the appearance of an autonomous organization. The day after Bewes wrote to the Archbishop concerning the upcoming agenda for his meeting with Lyttelton, he received a letter from B.D. Nicholls, the CMS Information

⁵²² UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/AC1/A-K 1953.

⁵²³ "A Kenya Balance Sheet: One Year Since the Proclamation of State of Emergency," *The Times* 19 October 1955.

⁵²⁴ Ibid.

Officer. Nicholls wanted Bewes to “give a ‘cutting edge’ to [his] visit with Mr. Lyttelton by pressing him to do at least one thing publicly in the near future.”⁵²⁵ Not only should Lyttelton publicly assuage the public conscience concerning the abuses, Nicholls demanded that the Secretary of State for the Colonies should simultaneously reaffirm government support for the Church. Indeed the authorities should state that, “the Christian Churches and Missions have vigorously supported the Governor and Administration in its endeavours (sic) to effect an improvement.”⁵²⁶

Nicholls and Bewes prepared to go on the attack at this particular meeting. Nicholls wanted Lyttelton to:

understand that through our endeavours (sic) to avoid undue embarrassment to the Kenya Government and colonial Office in their difficult task we have laid ourselves wide open to the criticism (which I know to be widespread) that we in particular, and the Christian Churches in general, have condoned all the jiffery pokery that has been going on. There comes a point at which our interests could be so prejudiced by this situation that we would have to speak up to defend the name of our Society and the Church at large. Such a defence, if we were forced to it, would involve our revealing a great deal that we know that would be unfortunate for the Government. It would not be unfair of us to ask and it would not be impossible for Mr. Lyttelton to make it clear that the strongest representations have been made by the Churches from time to time, and that whilst these may have been irksome at the time the Government has been glad to have this moral under-girding and has been sensitive to it.⁵²⁷

Essentially the CMS threatened to blackmail the British government with a public shaming concerning the human rights abuses in Kenya if they did not accept some of the criticism currently being leveled at missionaries. Unfortunately Nicholls’ leverage proved less effective than he hoped for. There no letters discussing the fallout from that meeting, but it is clear from subsequent actions by both parties that the CMS emerged with little show from their private

⁵²⁵ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/AC1/A-K 1953.

⁵²⁶ UBL CMS/B/OMSG59/AC1/A-K 1953.

⁵²⁷ Ibid.

show of force. Lyttelton's next public address on the Kenyan situation came during a Parliamentary question on the 28th of October and despite his full speech and replies, no mention was made of the Church.⁵²⁸ While the government remained silent, the CMS' response highlighted their lack of agency—none of the Nicholls' threats ever panned out. There were no press conferences to “defend the name of our Society and the Church at large,” only a speech given by Bishop Beecher two weeks later in Nairobi. During his talk, Beecher spoke of the need for the church and state to continue to work together and the necessity of financial aid via charitable contributions for rehabilitation work, because success will come with a large price tag for both church and state.⁵²⁹ While Beecher's philosophy on the nature of the church state relationship diverged from that of the Home Office in that he never called for a public denunciation of state abuses, it is clear that by the end of 1953 the CMS seemed to have two options: they could continue to support rehabilitation programs and hope to stem the tide of abuses from within the system or they could burn their bridges, and call out the state's treatment of detainees, but in turn they would lose their largest financial backer and access to detention camps and protected villages.⁵³⁰

The CMS continued to debate the issue until the end of the Emergency, and with only one major exception, they largely chose the path of most discretion. Access and optimism

⁵²⁸ *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Commons, “Kenya (Situation),” 28 October 1953, Volume 518, column, 2801—5. *The Times* was also silent on the issue, presumably because Lyttelton never managed to “do one thing,” as the CMS wanted. However, in January of 1954, the CMS was given a grant of £3750 for the purchase of several “mobile units” to travel throughout Kenya.

⁵²⁹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/Y/A5/2A.

⁵³⁰ Evidence of how important the state's financial backing was to the CMS is evident throughout their archives. Even as Beecher praised the British for their financial contributions in his November speech it was clear that the £7000 received by the CMS would not be enough for them to successfully complete their work in Kenya.

remained their keywords—access to detainees and protected villages meant they could perform many of the same services they had in 1916, especially in regards to the protection of African Christians. And church leaders in Kenya persisted in their belief that they could more effectively change things for the better in the colony by remaining restrained in public forums. There was only one kink in this system, the presence of the Christian Council of Kenya. This interdenominational body pushed for a public statement concerning abuses, a move which angered the Anglican on the body, Bishop Beecher. He and the Church of Scotland representative butted heads throughout the Emergency, and frequently the work of the CCK all but shut down as the two men proved immovable and unbending in their stances. Steele demanded a full public reckoning for the authorities, and in December 1953 they published an open letter to discuss the issue.

The furor raised by the relatively mild open letter continued to haunt CMS officials into the early days of 1954. Beecher in his capacity as Bishop of Mombasa and member of the Christian Council of Kenya expressed his agitation publicly in a statement about the CCK's open letter. Beecher reaffirmed his support for security forces, including the Home Guard. He concluded his statement by implicitly condemning public attention hitherto given to abuses.

I should be clear that the Churches in Kenya have sought to secure that local problems are solved locally. We would dissociate ourselves from extravagant Press comment and from attempts to exploit the situation for political ends. These things were neither instigated by the churches in Kenya nor are they approved by them.⁵³¹

But it was clear, at least to CMS officials, that Beecher was not solely condemning the CCK; they were also under attack. Beecher argued vehemently that CMS missionaries on the ground could best provide succor and restraint in the colony. They were the local solutions, not the

⁵³¹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1953.

Home Office. For Beecher those back in London were meant to provide recruits and funds, not criticism of colonial situations that they could not hope to understand.

All of a sudden the very private workings of the CMS had become available for public scrutiny and consumption via these two statements. For an organization that prized discretion, these comments were frightening and confusing. They laid bare both internal and interdenominational conflicts that the CMS preferred to keep hidden. For the remainder of 1954, CMS officials debated, sometimes at great length and passion, how and what to reveal to the public concerning their activities in Kenya. Naturally many officials in London bristled at the notion that they should remain silent merely because Bishop Beecher demanded obedience. General Secretary Max Warren wrote to the East Africa Regional Secretary, Colonel Grimshaw demanding more updates on the situation on the ground and a brief on local public opinion. He grouched that at the moment the only people, “in England who are not being kept properly informed are the missionary societies whose responsibility it is to give a Christian slant on things.”⁵³² In another letter written to Willoughby Carey he argued that the only way they receive notice of local Christian opinion was through the press. The best Warren could tell “the position would appear to be very confused.”⁵³³ It was left to Information Officer BD Nicholls to play peacemaker. He wrote back home to soothe ruffled feathers in the aftermath of Beecher’s statement. His mediation boiled down to this:

I do realise (sic) that the C.M.S. at home and specially the General Secretary are anxious that the Society should raise its voice against wickedness in high places and unlawful practices in the treatment of fellow human beings, but we also have a very definite and clear responsibility to the Government so long as the authorities give us access and a sympathetic hearing on all matters we bring to their notice.⁵³⁴

⁵³² UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/2.

⁵³³ UBL CMSB/OMS/G3/A5/7A/2.

⁵³⁴ UBL CMS/G3/A5/6/1/1954.

Nicholls' attempt was ultimately a failure, as evidenced by subsequent correspondence between Nairobi and London. Pressure was too great on those in London to make a public statement, and those in Kenya felt that it was too dangerous to make any statement, other than one that supported government efforts. As Carey wrote to Warren:

In view of this safe-guard [the press] the churches and Missionary Societies in Kenya must exercise the greatest care in not bringing unnecessary embarrassment to the Government, since in fact the British Press is well able to take care now of unlawful happenings by police or military. We must as far as it is right and possible (provided we do not omit our clear duty to make representations to Government about unlawful matters) keep in step with the Government. The people of Kenya will not be greatly helped by an open breach between the Churches and Missionary Societies and the Government during this time of emergency when the only independent observers in the Reserves are the Missionaries.⁵³⁵

Beecher reiterated this sentiment in his description of a meeting he held with the Governor, during which he worked “in exercise of my own personal relationship with Government House, to endeavor to secure the redress, where redress was needed.”⁵³⁶ This meeting, despite its inherent dangers in terms of losing his privilege access, Beecher was ultimately successful. He created his own Rubicon moment, “Protest was needed. Protest was made. Protest has been heeded.”⁵³⁷

The complexities of the relationships between church and state in both Kenya and the United Kingdom became increasingly fractured throughout the decade, and the fissures between missionaries in the field and those back in the Home Office exacerbated these tensions. Both sides used the plight of Africans, particularly African Christians, as fodder for their debate, but

⁵³⁵ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/2.

⁵³⁶ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/3. Beecher boldly ended his narrative of the meeting by highlighting that he did not need the “aid of C.M.S. in London or of Edinburgh House.” Edinburgh House was the headquarters of the Church of Scotland Missionary Society, and the chosen denomination of his main foil in the CCK, David Steele.

⁵³⁷ Ibid.

this was really a power struggle and Africans remained pawns in the larger game. The links between Home Office and government on one hand, and CMS with colonial authorities on the other added an extra layer of complexity to proceedings. Both groups understood the importance of maintaining good rapport and support from the government, but for those in Kenya it was an imperative to their continued existence and work in the colony. The CMS could not see past this tangle to understand the larger picture, namely that the British Empire was in retreat. Conversely, the authorities, despite their avowed adherence to the ideals of liberal empire did little to help the CMS realize that the future was written on the wall. Thus the frustrating cycle of debate continued unabated.

In late January Canon L. John Collins of St. Paul's Cathedral in London launched another grenade into the fray with his Sunday sermon. Collins claimed that pushed for a sympathetic reading of the Mau Mau situation in favor of the Kikuyu.⁵³⁸ Beecher again displayed his displeasure, writing to Secretary Warren that,

the dismay caused by irresponsible statements in word and in print from people, some of whom hold high posts in the Church's life in England. I still believe that the Church is fashioning a way towards a successful plural society. But my task is made virtually impossible when chaps like Collins and Acland lump all the white settlers in one category, condemn the lot, and the Church with them.⁵³⁹

⁵³⁸ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/2.

⁵³⁹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/3. Beecher was also referring to Richard Acland, a Labour member of Parliament who also defended missionary work in Kenya and was a frequent thorn in the side of various other members of Parliament, particularly in relation to his strong stance on nuclear disarmament. This can be clearly seen in one quip by the Viscount Lambton, "It is one of the traditions of this House that one should always follow some of the arguments of the previous speaker. I did try very hard, when the hon. Baronet the Member for Gravesend (Sir R. Acland) started, to understand him, but I found him so incomprehensible that I turned to my neighbor (sic) and asked whether the hon. Baronet was speaking in Welsh." *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Commons, "Foreign Affairs," 17 December 1953, Volume 522, column, 577—699.

Beecher wanted the CMS to put a muzzle on those back in London raising a ruckus about abuses, and initially the Home Office placated these desires. Warren soothed Beecher's anger by claiming that Collins has been silenced and that he recently read Elspeth Huxley's biography of Lord Delamere.⁵⁴⁰ This work allowed him to better understand the settler's mindset, with the implied correlation that he could better understand Beecher's position as well. But Warren may have had ulterior motives in his placating missive. He concluded the letter by suggesting that Beecher needed a vacation, one that would allow him to see things "afresh from a remoter perspective, so that [he] can really get the feel of the things in this country and America. [He] is ever so close to things in Kenya and that isn't altogether an asset."⁵⁴¹ Ultimately this call for a vacation went unheeded, and tensions continued unabated. Beecher's appointment as Bishop of Mombasa was initially controversial, and it is clear that a residual uneasiness remained over a year into his appointment. His bombastic personality, coupled with lingering resentment over the Beecher Report for Education pushed Home Office officials to work around him.

It was clear that the lines of communication were still open between home and colony, but the information transmitted was less than welcome. In many ways the church still operated with a nineteenth century mindset despite living in a twentieth century world. Thanks to improved communication tools whispers, or sermons, in Britain could reverberate in Kenya. Likewise, the freedom with which missionaries on the ground in the colonies was curtailed by the availability of communication tools. Despite the fact that most missional correspondence was still conducted via letters, the availability of carbon copy meant that the letter could be easily

⁵⁴⁰ Elspeth Huxley, *White Man's Country: Lord Delamere and the Making of Kenya* (New York: Praeger, 1968). Huxley created a hagiographic account of the life Hugh Cholmondeley, the ever indebted big game hunter who was one of the first white settlers in East Africa.

⁵⁴¹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/3.

passed throughout the office at a relatively rapid pace. In spite of these advances, CMS officials were never able to corral this technology and use it to their best advantage. It became a tool to sow dissent rather than one to streamline workloads and communication. These problems also transferred to their dealings with the authorities. They were never able to leverage quicker communication into a larger platform which would push the government to recognize their legitimacy as an organization that was still able to provide liberal empire. Thus, when CMS officials back in London threatened blackmail, the Colonial Office brushed them aside.

Although colonial officials did not fear power of the CMS publicity machine, they did provide much needed financial assistance throughout the rehabilitation period. Through their special CMS Kikuyu Relief Fund, missionaries were able to raise and collect almost £150,000 for their programs. For the first time since the Great Depression, CMS coffers were in the black.⁵⁴² Some of this money was raised through special donations, but the majority of it came from the government. Church officials were cagey about where exactly this money originated, but it was made clear several months later in a letter passed on from W.H Carey. Property destruction was a hallmark of Mau Mau violence, and they burned down many schools as part of their campaign of violence. In villages with destroyed schools, the government forced the locals to pay an extra tax to fund their rebuilding. The tax was a punishment for allowing the schools to be burned in the first place. The CMS hoped that for inclusion into the rebuilding process. “We need to pray very much that reconstruction as it is now beginning many be founded upon the Rock which is Jesus Himself.”⁵⁴³

⁵⁴² UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1954. The CMS’ first major expense out of this fund was for a Fordson van. They hoped to use to travel to various villages and provide audio and visual programs of rehabilitation and Christianity.

⁵⁴³ Ibid.

This sentiment was foremost in CMS' minds as they continued to participate in the rehabilitation process. It seemed to offer all kinds of opportunities for sustainable growth and financial security, so long as 'proper' relations with the government could be maintained. For missionaries, rehabilitation was a pathway to relevance: simultaneously they could protect their own members, stock their coffers, and prove their usefulness to the state. But there were problems with CMS plans, namely the march towards independence in Kenya and their inability to provide effective pushback to the state. Missionaries did not plan for independence despite the writing on the wall. The empire was in a state of retreat, but missionaries refused to acknowledge that fact until it was almost too late. Independence presented a complex tangle of issues for many British led organizations throughout the empire, and the CMS was no exception.⁵⁴⁴ In addition to their lack of foresight, problems on the ground always hampered their ability carry out their optimistic plans of redemption and re-education. In early spring 1954 the Colonial Secretary announced that Kenya would have a new constitution one that provided for a multi-racial society.⁵⁴⁵ Two months later, security forces began clearing out the city of Nairobi, detaining and deporting 50,000 men from the city in a month long security action known as Operation Anvil. Officials devised the plan as a way to cut off supply chains and support for Mau Mau fighters in

⁵⁴⁴ For more see: Timothy H. Parsons, "No More English than the Postal System: The Kenya Boy Scout Movement and the Transfer of Power," *Africa Today* 51:3 (Spring 2005), 61—80. The Boy Scout movement did not begin to grapple with the future of the organization in independent Kenya until 1961. Parsons' article is an important foray into an understudied aspect of End of Empire studies.

⁵⁴⁵ Anderson, 278—9. The CMS felt uneasy about the constitutional development, although they did advocate for a multi-racial society. As Bewes put in a letter to Lyttelton, he might disagree with him, but he, and the society, would not undermine the "achievements as have been secured under present constitutional plans." UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/2.

the forests, while also ridding the city of potential troublemakers.⁵⁴⁶ For British officials Anvil was an unmitigated success, but for the CMS it was a disaster.

In the aftermath of Operation Anvil, CMS missionaries scrambled to find and protect their own loyal followers, but they were largely unsuccessful. One missionary, George Grimshaw, wrote to Cecil Bewes describing the plight of his houseboy, Jidruf, a victim of the ruthless efficiency of the operation. Grimshaw went to Langata camp in an attempt to secure Jidruf's release, but was turned away. He was able to bring Jidruf several supplies, including his Bible, but the two police officers who escorted Jidruf to the meeting stated that "They should all be shot and then we would have no more trouble."⁵⁴⁷ Naturally Grimshaw's distress only increased after hearing this kind of statement, and he redoubled his efforts to petition the Magistrate for Jidruf's release but to no avail. Jidruf was held for several months before his eventual release. Grimshaw's fury at the treatment of his employee, as well as the lack of respect given to a missionary practically leaps off the pages.

Unless Sir Evelyn Baring, who presumably knows the public feeling at home, can do something to improve the situation, I think we will have to get questions asked at home as you suggest. My own feeling is that we wait far too long for the sake of relationships to be maintained and strengthened when in fact the conditions are such that no-one gains anything and the innocent man suffers.⁵⁴⁸

Clearly Grimshaw doubts Beecher's ability to influence Governor Baring and keep the security forces in check.⁵⁴⁹ He drove this point home in his concluding sentence, "[m]y own opinion is

⁵⁴⁶ Daniel Branch, "The Enemy Within: Loyalists and the War Against Mau Mau in Kenya," *Journal of African History* 48:2 (2007), 302—3; Frank Furedi, "The African Crowd in Nairobi: Popular Movements and Elite Politics," *Journal of African History* 14:2 (1973), 285.

⁵⁴⁷ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/5/2a.

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁹ Grimshaw specifically targets police officers for their brutality in his letter, which highlights a common theme in early CMS writing. They attacked local police forces for being out of hand as opposed to the imperial system. It was a priority for Canon Bewes during his visit to Kenya and remained a leitmotif for the CMS until the publication of *Time for Action* in 1955.

that if officials out here knew that the Church was a body to be reckoned with and which did not waste time in getting justice done, they would respect it much more.”⁵⁵⁰

In an unusual divergence from normal practice, Jidruf himself wrote a letter to the CMS Home Office. The vast majority of African Christians had little to no contact with the Home Office in London. It was clear that Africans understood who the Archbishop of Canterbury was, and many held the office in great esteem. In the earlier days of empire, many African Christians turned to the Archbishop in hopes of securing protection and privileges from the state. But their ability to communicate directly with church leaders remained difficult due in part to language barriers. Jidruf’s letter to Canon Bewes required the work of an unnamed translator, and if Bewes responded no record of that response was kept. Jidruf’s epistle was written very much in the style of a testimony, which was not unusual for Kikuyu Christians at the time. He described his internment at camp and how his faith in Christ saved him from destruction at the hands of other detainees and the police:

Now, about 600 people were [there] who had gone to the bad, and the Lord helped me so much to give them the Gospel, some of them said I should be thrown down the lavatory pit to me saying that Jesus is Lord. But He over [came the] war of words and physical persecution because May was a month of continual rain, and there was nothing to sleep on but mud. Another thing was that a letter came to call and, I went to the gate where there was an important European who asked me all about my affairs.

He asked me how many times I had taken the oath, but because Jesus had saved me I told him I had never taken it—because of Jesus—so he told me to come into the prison, because if I had never [taken] the oath, nor had been killed by Mau Mau, my God could deliver me from prison. But Jesus did not leave me alone—He was there with me. Now my friend, the Gospel is Jesus, for only He could take me out of the camp. The time I was there was a long time—nearly 100 days. But I love Jesus very much for I learnt the witness of my Lord, that He would decline me from all my sins and my temptations.⁵⁵¹

⁵⁵⁰ UBL CMS/G3/A5/7A/5/2a.

⁵⁵¹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1954.

Jidruf's testimony was exactly the type of fodder CMS missionaries needed to restore their faith in the idea that Mau Mau was a useful crucible, sent to test Kikuyu men and women on the authenticity of their conversion. But that would not be enough; the CMS needed more than testimony they still needed financial support and that could only come from the government. Additionally, despite Jidruf's faithfulness, the inability of the CMS to free him from prison blunted the usefulness of his witness. Indeed, the only real boon of Jidruf's release was the discharge of CMS' responsibility to take up the matter with the Colonial Office.⁵⁵²

During the early years of the Emergency the CMS desperately wanted stories such as Jidruf's to highlight the faithfulness of their converts, but by 1954 the situation on the ground was more complicated. CMS personnel now focused primarily on rehabilitation through the detention camp/protected village system and they had presented an image of a well-functioning, safe process. In May a group of church leaders including CMS missionary Peter Bostock visited Langata camp, the same one which held Jidruf, and Bostock affirmed that screening was,

done most carefully, and that it is most unlikely that any people are classed as hard-core on false identification. We are satisfied that everything possible is being done to protect the detainees from brutal or rough handling either by the Mau Mau hard-core in the unscreened pens or by security personnel.⁵⁵³

Bostock presented a picture of a camp with "adequate" living quarters and plenty of food, unlike Jidruf's description of sleeping directly on the mud.⁵⁵⁴ But to contradict Bostock's picture would mean jeopardizing their access to rehabilitation funds. This was made clear in a parliamentary

⁵⁵² UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1954. Bewes' laid out very specifically in his response letter to Grimshaw how relieved he was to no longer have to press the issue with Oliver Lyttelton. After Jidruf's release there were no more efforts to publicize the issue, despite the fact that many African Christians were still detained.

⁵⁵³ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/3.

⁵⁵⁴ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1954.

debate on July 22, 1954 when Colonial Secretary Lyttelton praised churches for their work in the colonies saying,

Let me in passing pay tribute to the contribution the churches in Kenya have made in this work. They are co-operating wholeheartedly with the Government in the work of rehabilitation, and a working party under the chairmanship of Mr. Ohanga, the Minister for Community Development, is studying new schemes for combined action by the Government and the churches.⁵⁵⁵

However these accolades came at a cost, namely the use of a CMS report to promise Parliament that conditions in the camp were quite good. Lyttelton quoted,

The Government of Kenya have informed me of a report by the Church Missionary Society which might be worth quoting. as it comes from outside Government circles. The report says: On the whole, conditions in the camps are good. The food is adequate, and even in some cases liberal.⁵⁵⁶

These quotes most likely came from Bostock's letter back in May, and to turn back on those words in the aftermath of the debate would have seemed very dangerous for CMS leadership.

They did not remain quiet out of a sense of collusion with the government, but they did hope to reform from within, rather than using public pressure to enforce change. This seemed to be a much safer, fiscally responsible solution for the CMS, even as late as 1954.

Five days later Oliver Lyttelton's resignation seemed to throw a wrench into the proceedings. The Colonial Secretary needed to shore up his financial affairs before his final retirement, and working for the Establishment was not lucrative enough.⁵⁵⁷ Despite the surprising turn of events, the CMS soldiered on and remained hopeful about their future prospects in imperial Kenya. George Grimshaw, the same missionary who struggled so mightily to free Jidruf

⁵⁵⁵ *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Commons, "Kenya," 22 July 1954, Volume 530, column, 1596. Several other parliamentarians, including A.G. Bottomley, who recently returned from Kenya also praised the work of the CMS.

⁵⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 1592.

⁵⁵⁷ *Imperial Endgame*, 275—6.

from Langata wrote glowingly of the prospects for missionary work in villages. Grimshaw described the religious make up of these villages as largely pagan, with some who had been “nominal Christians,” and a few who had remained faithful. He believed that,

I suspect that we will find more knees that have not bowed to Baal than we realise once a greater security is available. The newness of this opportunity may sweep some people off their feet. Be cautious [at] your end.⁵⁵⁸

Grimshaw seemed incognizant of the fact that connecting security to conversion threatened to create many of the same problems that led to fears by missionaries that converts were not ‘truly’ believers in Christ. However, his letter again highlighted the connection that many missionaries felt between protection, safety, and Christianity. Belief in the Christian God was not merely a question of theology, it was tied to the ideas of modern life—hygiene, education, domestic life. Missionaries such as Grimshaw believed that in this moment, as Kikuyu society fractured beyond repair, true English Christianity could stake its claim in perpetuity. As he stated,

Church, school, and welfare must come together in a new way to cope with this opportunity. I believe that the Church has an opportunity to reach pagans which it has not had for ages. Schools will be required for the 50% of the children who in the past just ‘slipped’ school. Welfare will be needed for the families who in this new community life will not be able to go their own sweet way as in the past. With close neighbours domestic science and hygiene must be carried out or we will faced with slum conditions miles from any town.⁵⁵⁹

In making this argument, Grimshaw ignored fifty years of Christian development in Kenya, as well as the numerous African led religious movements, but he was not alone in these sentiments. Canon Bewes expressed very similar ideas in writing to Lyttelton concerning his resignation, as did Peter Bostock in his early comments on the detention camp system.⁵⁶⁰

⁵⁵⁸ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1954.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁰ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1954.

In order for this new beginning to be effective, churches needed money from the government. The CMS was not the only organization which benefitted from government assistance, indeed the MRA, CSM, and various other groups all worked to a certain extent with government funds. Monies had to be divvied up among the various groups, and that created friction, particularly with the Christian Council of Kenya. The CCK was a conglomeration of multiple churches, including the CMS and CSM. The *de facto* leader of the group was S.A. Morrison, a former CMS missionary in Egypt, who acted as the organization's secretary.⁵⁶¹ Morrison and the CMS were in agreement that, "the Christian Church has a very important role to play in the process of rehabilitation," but they had different visions of how exactly that needed to happen.⁵⁶² Morrison argued that the government and the CCK should each provide forty percent of the funds for rehabilitation works, with the missionary societies financing the remaining twenty percent. Bewes however wanted the government to grant full financial backing to the missional societies in exchange for recruitment of personnel to work on rehabilitation schemes.⁵⁶³ Both of these options proved unfeasible in the long term for the CCK and the CMS. The government did eventually endow missions with money to work on their rehabilitation plans, but it was never enough money, nor were there ever enough recruits.⁵⁶⁴

Despite these problems, the CMS remained optimistic throughout much of the remainder of 1954. While the CCK expressed some discomfort at the continued existence of abuses in detention camps and in protected villages, the CMS refused to do so. The two groups worked together for the release of Christians from Nairobi who had been swept up in Operation Anvil

⁵⁶¹ Bengt Sundkler and Christopher Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2000), 900.

⁵⁶² UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1954, Morrison to Bewes.

⁵⁶³ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/3, Bewes to Beecher, 29 June 1954.

⁵⁶⁴ TNA, FCO 141/5670, Kenya Emergency; *Imperial Reckoning*, 119—20.

and even tried to create special identity cards for those who professed faith in Christ so that they would be spared in future sweeps.⁵⁶⁵ These joint ventures did little to mask the internal strife in the CCK. Bishop Beecher, representing the CMS frequently butted heads with the CSM leader, David Steel.⁵⁶⁶ The two men did not agree on the proper methodology for airing their grievances with the state, nor did they particularly care for each other. In September the CCK published a mild statement on the situation in Kenya, gently condemning certain aspects of standard operating procedures in the camps. This statement focused heavily on the idea that things will keep getting better, so long as the government remains careful to uphold traditional British standards of justice.⁵⁶⁷ If the first half of the statement was Steel's voice, the conclusion was all Bishop Beecher. It focused on all the ways in which churches could aid the government. The CCK promised that, "The Government has on several occasions openly avowed its desire to secure the full co-operation of the Christian bodies in Kenya in its policy of rehabilitation."⁵⁶⁸ Whether or not this was actually the case remains to be seen, but Beecher was a true believer in his cause.

Beecher's steadfastness seemed to imbue his fellow missionaries with a renewed sense of purpose. Earlier doubts were pushed aside in favor of full participation in the camp and village system. Peter Bostock wrote again about the process of village development in August, enthusiastically describing how important missionaries are to the process.

⁵⁶⁵ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/3, Minutes of the Christian Council of Kenya meetings, 5 August and 27 September 1954.

⁵⁶⁶ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/Y/A5/2B, letter Warren to Beecher, 14 July 1956.

⁵⁶⁷ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/7A/3/7, Statement Christian Council of Kenya, September 1954. Of particular note was the use of hooded screeners, which the CCK felt was not becoming of the British sense of fair play.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid.

The work is handed over to the Missions for educational and spiritual purposes. Not only shall we be able to gather the people together for instruction, but if it is necessary to build a church or school, or an evangelist's house, then there is labour available. If, as is quite often the case, the village is close to the school plot and it is not necessary to put up any more buildings, then we can use the labour for terracing our plot and putting it in general good shape.⁵⁶⁹

Bostock glosses over the methods through which this free labor was obtained, nor did he spend much time discussing the demographic makeup of many of these villages. By 1955 there were over one million people scattered throughout the 854 protected villages built by the state.⁵⁷⁰

Bostock saw these camps as opportunities to bring Africans into modern, domesticated life via Christian teachings concerning community living. By making such arguments Bostock clearly fit into long held patterns and philosophies held by the CMS concerning the need, not just for Christian theology, but the connection of that theology to a British lifestyle. Two months later he wrote a very similar letter concerning detention camps. In this missive, Bostock discussed the screening process, arguing that it was free of violence and that many detainees had begun to confess.⁵⁷¹ In fact the only complaint the Venerable Archdeacon made was that food rations had been too high, leaving men too well fed and no work to occupy their time. Bostock's visit was due to his membership in a newly formed Visiting Committee, and their only recommendation

⁵⁶⁹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/3, memo from Bostock, "Village Development in the Kikuyu Reserves," 16 August 1954.

⁵⁷⁰ David French, *Army, Empire, and Cold War: The British Army and Military Policy, 1945—1971* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 116—17. Living conditions and population numbers for these villages are hotly contested, just as they are for detention camps. For some, such as Caroline Elkins, protected villages were cesspools of violence, degradation, malnutrition, and death. For more see, *Imperial Reckoning*, 241—43. Others, such as French focus on the usefulness of resettlement as a way to protect families from insurgents while also cutting off supplies for guerilla fighters.

⁵⁷¹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/3, letter Bostock to Bewes, 21 October 1954.

after touring the camp was that food rations be lowered, “and the scales brought into line with those commonly practiced in the prisons in the country.”⁵⁷²

While Bostock praised government work, Beecher continued to work closely with the government. It was his influence that placed Bostock on the Visiting Committee for detention camps and he himself was on the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee formed by the authorities. This group first met in October 1954 and it seemed that, again missionaries were successful in their attempts to carve out a sustainable niche for themselves within colonial society. Beecher specifically asked for the right not only to cleanse those Kikuyu tainted by Mau Mau, but also to lead in the creation of “the whole policy of social rehabilitation for the country as a whole.”⁵⁷³ Echoing Bostock’s earlier comments regarding the importance of work and domesticity, Beecher explicitly lays out the necessity for cleansing Kikuyu women because they, “provided the toughest material to cope with.”⁵⁷⁴ While Bostock eschewed naming women, the demographic realities of protected villages meant they had an overabundance of women whose male spouses and relatives were in detention camps. While men received rehabilitation efforts in the camps, women were to be taught how to be proper wives and mothers. Eventually the CMS even moved into the Kamiti prison, where women classified as hard-core were kept. There were only two problems with the current situation, lack of recruits and Catholics. Beecher closed his letter with a plea, “that we should be much more aggressive and more effective in providing men and women to fill posts for which the Government is in fact prepared to pay, and in point of fact become members of the specially recruited Civil Service.”⁵⁷⁵ If the CMS could find enough

⁵⁷² Ibid.

⁵⁷³ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/3, letter from Beecher to Nicholls, 9 October 1954.

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁵ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/3, letter from Beecher to Nicholls, 9 October 1954.

recruits to travel to Kenya and work for the government in a Christian capacity, they could forestall their own slide into obscurity. But at this point the only group able to provide enough able bodied men and women to put into the field were Catholics, which greatly distressed Beecher. If the CMS found recruits they could outflank Catholic missionaries and cement their position of strength in Kenya. Indeed everything old had become new again for the CMS in Kenya.

Unfortunately, old squabbles and long term staffing issues were to be just the beginning. The final months of 1954 foreshadowed the ultimate fractures that brought the CMS to its knees in 1955. The first evidence of what was to come was the work of Howard Church. He was a CMS golden boy after his appointment to work on the rehabilitation staff at Athi River Camp in the summer of 1953. Church was a “dye in the wool” believer in the Moral Rearmament movement, which worried several church leaders, but his initial appointment was met with much rejoicing in CMS circles.⁵⁷⁶ In his Christmas newsletter for 1954, Church described the work being done in the camp and is positively optimistic about the future. He claimed, “[t]hey (the detainees) have completely lost their hates and hurts and fears and their very facial features are changed.”⁵⁷⁷

No doubt CMS leadership was pleased by this report however they must have been concerned about the next section of his missive, which described a play written by his wife Elizabeth entitled *The Good Way*. This drama, as Howard described it, allowed detainees to see “how all races in Kenya are responsible for Mau Mau.” Additionally he claimed that Mrs. Church wrote the play because detainees “had a hard time divorcing Christianity and

⁵⁷⁶ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/7A/3, letter Beecher to Warren, 13 February 1954.

⁵⁷⁷ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/3, Howard Church Christmas newsletter, November 1954.

imperialism.”⁵⁷⁸ In his private epistles, Howard was little better, emphasizing the need for trained Africans to perform the work of rehabilitation, not recruits from Great Britain.⁵⁷⁹ He claimed that, “We are convinced that it is the Kikuyu & preferably the Ex-MM leaders who must be trained & used to visit other camps. They will get a hearing where we Europeans or Kikuyu in pay of Government cannot.”⁵⁸⁰ Clearly this was not what the CMS wanted to hear, the attempted dissolution of their ties with imperialism, and the taking away of their rehabilitation jobs in favor of Africans. Granted not many recruits had been found for these types of positions, but the CMS lived in hope that more would be found eventually.⁵⁸¹ This was the first of many steps that would lead to Church’s eventual dismissal from the Athi River camp in 1956.

In addition to their problems with Church, the authorities dealt the CMS another devastating blow at the end of the year. In December, Colonel Arthur Young resigned from his post as commissioner of police in Kenya. Young’s job was to clean up the police force in Kenya, and tamp down on the abuses currently bedeviling Kenya. After less than year Young returned to Britain with tales of Baring’s incompetent and overbearing nature.⁵⁸² CMS officials in London were horrified by Young’s resignation, they met with him upon his arrival home and published several letters in local newspapers.⁵⁸³ Young’s ousting was the proverbial straw that broke the camel’s back for CMS officials in the Home Office. They were no longer willing to stand by and

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1, letter Church to Bewes, 4 November 1954.

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁸¹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/7A/3/7, Kenya Survey and the Christian Council of Kenya, September 1954; UBL CMS//B/OMS/G59/A5/7A/6, Minutes of Meeting with Colonial Office, 28 March 1955.

⁵⁸² *Imperial Reckoning*, 276—77.

⁵⁸³ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1955, Statement by Canon Bewes to Executive Committee; UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1955, Letter to the Editor, Kenneth Grubb; “Surrenders in Kenya,” *The Times* 22 January 1955.

privately discuss these issues with the Colonial Office and Governor Baring. Not only did many in CMS leadership no longer want to play by the proscribed rules that governed church/state relations, they also began to call for Baring's head.⁵⁸⁴ Unfortunately in their rush to condemn Baring and support Young, they overlooked a key aspect of the situation—the feelings of the Bishop of Mombasa. This would prove to be a most untimely and unfortunate oversight.

⁵⁸⁴ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1955, Letter Grubb to Warren, 17 January 1955.

Time for Action?

If optimism was the byword for the CMS in 1954, depression and disarray were hallmarks of 1955. The optimism of 1954 evaporated in early days of 1955, never to return. In the aftermath of Young's resignation and the powerfully divisive conflict concerning the publication of their pamphlet *Time for Action*, the CMS never managed to recover their momentum or relevance in the colony. Ultimately this would pave the way for the success of the Anglican Church, but it certainly did not feel that way to the leadership in the Home Office or in Kenya. Divine decolonization, when it came, was brutal and swift, leaving a bewildered and stunned organization on the brink of extinction. While colonial officials such as A.J. Dawe preached managed decline and the continued fellowship with independent African nations, religious leaders were left out in the cold. CMS officials such as Bishop Beecher believed that they had something meaningful to contribute to liberal empire and to their African congregants. They felt that could provide a type of Christian British modernity on the cheap for colonial officials, while also affording African Christians protection and benefits. And while episodes such as Jidruf's proved the opposite to be true, the CMS continued to believe in their ability to affect change on the ground in the colony. But the events of January and February would put paid to that idea.

Kenya in 1955 was a colony in turmoil, as evidenced by Young's resignation and the announcement of a new amnesty policy in the early days of January. Baring outlined the details of this new policy on January 18th and it created immediate worry within CMS circles. This new plan called for 'double amnesty' for Mau Mau fighters who surrendered as well as for security forces who may have committed illegal acts in earlier phases of the war. Double amnesty was meant to enhance the current military action in the forest, Operation Hammer, by making

surrender more appealing. At the same time the government disbanded the Home Guard and dispersed their talents and firepower elsewhere.⁵⁸⁵ Ultimately these measure proved successful, but they created much consternation when combined with Young’s resignation. Shortly before Baring announced the new double amnesty plan, Canon Bewes met with Colonel Young in London. It was after this tête-à-tête, that Bewes first put forth the idea of putting something out in print in Britain. He worried that, “I cannot think that these matters can be kept out of the public eye much longer, and the Christian Church out not to be the last to mention them.”⁵⁸⁶ Bewes and other leaders in the Anglican Church worried that the government’s tacit admission of wrongdoing via the granting of amnesty to security forces would also shine a harsh spotlight on the lack of public speech undertaken by the CMS.⁵⁸⁷ Bewes also wanted Bishop Beecher to make some sort of statement which would express his “grave disquiet on these affairs,” but that would prove untenable to the Bishop. His secretary responded that he would only send a letter to the local newspaper, stating, “it is just a direct letter of appreciation and an expression of hope that the reasons for his resignation will be published.”⁵⁸⁸ While the CMS worried that the moment to speak would pass them by, Beecher idly waited for another audience with Governor Baring.

In the face of Beecher’s silence, the CMS was forced to speak. One day later they sent a joint memorandum to Baring, describing the ways in which “certain regulations and procedures seem to many to contravene the elementary concepts of justice and fair-dealing.” These seem to center on the forced repatriation in the protected villages as well as the treatment of local

⁵⁸⁵ Bennett, 28.

⁵⁸⁶ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/7A/5/23, Letter Bewes to Carey, 14 January 1955.

⁵⁸⁷ *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Lords, “The Kenyan Situation,” 10 February 1955, Volume 190, column, 1128—204.

⁵⁸⁸ UBL CMS/G59/Y/A5/7A/5/29, Letter Carey to Bewes, 17 January 1955.

women.⁵⁸⁹ The very next day Baring announced the new amnesty program, and CMS leadership was left in a predicament. They were clearly pushing for more public actions, but Beecher continued to drag his heels. CMS officials in the home office felt like they had to do something publicly, if only to save face in England.

This quandary resolved itself with the public notice shown in Britain to a sermon given by David Steel in Nairobi. On January 9th the Scottish Presbyterian Steel presided over a service at the very Anglican church, All-Saints Cathedral. In this sermon Steel lambasted the churches on multiple counts.

The Church itself is not guiltless. It has too long remained silent in public, though it has made repeated representations on these matters to Government in private. This that I have said tonight is a repentance (sic). We do not underestimate the difficulties of the situation which confronts the government of this Colony, but (it) must be said and said plainly that there can be no confidence in measures that are more indicative of a pogrom (sic) against a people than of a programme to end the emergency and to establish good government.⁵⁹⁰

For Steel the main target of this speech was probably the Bishop of Mombasa, Leonard Beecher. Throughout the Emergency the two had served on an inter-denominational action group together and Steel had continually pushed for greater public action against abuses perpetrated by the government, while Beecher wanted to continue making private deputations to the government, particularly to Governor Baring. The two men butted heads so furiously that the CMS in London was well aware of the tension between the two as well as the fact that the work of the action group was seriously hindered by the conflict between the two men.⁵⁹¹ Thus Steel's sermon was going to begin to drive a greater wedge between the CMS in London on one hand and the Bishop on the other. For the CMS this call by Steel for more public action was the final push they

⁵⁸⁹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/3, Memorandum from the Church Leaders to H.E. The Governor of Kenya, 18 January 1955.

⁵⁹⁰ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/3, Timeline for *Time for Action* by Max Warren, 1955.

⁵⁹¹ Ibid; UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/7A/5/23, Letter Bewes to Carey, 14 January 1955.

needed to go public about their own misgivings, while for Beecher this was a public embarrassment, meant to weaken his leadership within the action group and with the CMS.

Three days later the CMS made its move: the Executive Committee authorized the Africa Secretary, Canon Cecil Bewes and the General Secretary, Max Warren to take action in the manner they saw fit. First they turned to Beecher and asked if he wanted to make a public statement. Beecher declined due to fears that he would lose his personal connection with the Governor, and also that the government as a whole might become less willing to share its funds for CMS projects in the colony.⁵⁹² Warren and Bewes continued to debate the appropriateness of public action, but the events of January 14th and 20th would finally spur them into action. On the 14th they, along with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Geoffrey Fischer met with Colonel Young and discussed his resignation from the head of the Kenya Police Force.⁵⁹³ Six days later, on January 20th the colonial authorities announced the new amnesty program they would put in place in Kenya. This new policy put the CMS in London on high alert for more human rights abuses and they argued that in fact this meant that the government was perhaps not working quite as diligently as they had led Beecher to believe in stamping out problems in the detention centers. Thus the die was cast and the Home Office felt public action was necessary.

Because Bishop Beecher had warned home officials that the position of the CMS in Kenya might be harmed if he spoke out, Bewes and Warren decided on a compromise of sorts. They would publish a document, but claim that it was only for the education of Anglicans in England, not for those in Kenya. The idea was to keep a strict separation between the two, thus allowing the CMS to make the public statement it felt was necessary while not unduly angering

⁵⁹² UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/3, Timeline for *Time for Action* by Max Warren, 1955.

⁵⁹³ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/5/23, Letter Bewes to William Carey, 14 January 1955.

the colonial authorities, the white settler opinion, or Bishop Beecher. They also hoped to placate the Bishop by highlighting the recruitment angle of the pamphlet, but alas this compromise was to prove not very successful, at least from the Beecher standpoint.

Kenya: Time for Action was published soon thereafter along with a press release. It begins with an apology and a call to action,

This pamphlet does not claim to present the whole of the truth about Kenya. What follows has largely been withheld from these publication—perhaps for too long. It comes to you with a constructive purpose—in the belief that we shall command widespread support for insisting that only the highest and best is good enough for Kenya—and that the future would be dark indeed if ever second-rate standards (or second-rate people) were allowed to take command of the situation. It is our hope that by the time you have read to the end you will be convinced that the need for high standards in Kenya cannot be separated from the need for high standards in this country beginning with—YOU.⁵⁹⁴

After this rousing introduction the pamphlet begins with an overview of the situation on the ground in Kenya—the greatness of the Christian witness for those Kikuyu who are persecuted for their faith, coupled with the hard work of missionaries on the ground. As the bulletin argues, these witnesses are willing to suffer for their faith, but they struggle under the double of oppression of Mau Mau and what they call the “Government’s Mau Mau.”⁵⁹⁵ Rebels continually try to force them to oath, and the government automatically assumes they are Mau Mau because they are Kikuyu, leaving them with nowhere safe to turn.

After this introduction, *Time for Action* segued into a discussion of Colonel Young’s hard work in trying to clean up the police force in Kenya and how his resignation has left many people very worried for the future, particularly since “at the time of writing [this pamphlet] no adequate official statement has been made of his reasons for doing so.” Thus all people are left

⁵⁹⁴ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/3, Pamphlet *Kenya: Time for Action* 18 January 1955.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid.

with are rumors concerning the widespread nature of human rights abuses in the colony, and the government's "reluctance" to prosecute those who perpetrated the worst of the abuse. The pamphlet goes on to say that the true number of criminals may never be known, and that they agree with Rev. Steel's sermon that Kenya has taken the first steps on the road towards tyranny.⁵⁹⁶ With this introduction Warren and Bewes have positioned the CMS carefully—they are supportive of the British imperial project and the idea of the civilizing mission, but not of being the puppets of a government that seeks to contravene that higher calling to a Christian civilizing mission. Thus, the civilizing mission is good, but only a Christian version of that mission.

But Bewes and Warren do not want to simply inform the public, they wanted to provide a call to action, thus the second section of *Time to Action* entitled, What Can You Do?. They argued that condemnation is not enough, good Christians must take action or stand condemned themselves. They laid out a four step plan—pray and confess your sins, while also praying for the people of Kenya, write to your MP and tell him you are concerned about "certain aspects of the situation" and would like a full statement concerning the resignation of Colonel Young from the government.⁵⁹⁷ Within this letter you should also call for an "immediate review of the mass of emergency laws and regulations in Kenya, and for searching inquiry into the adequacy or otherwise of present resources of manpower and money to deal with the Colony's current problems."⁵⁹⁸

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid.

For the truly convicted, the pamphlet then calls for recruits to travel to Kenya to work on rehabilitation plans at detention camps and in protected villages. In April of the previous year, the Bishop of Mombasa traveled to England to recruit workers but the number who volunteered for this was very low, and now this pamphlet is calling on you to do God's work in Kenya for the government. Warren is quoted saying:

The Government is encouraging missionary societies and the C.C.K. (Christian Council of Kenya) to appoint as many Christian people as possible to the staffs of camps and prisons, but as you will know at Salisbury Square the response of the Christian churches to these appeals has been *most pitiable*. I (Warren) do not think that is too strong a word. If, therefore, Christian churches in England, having so feebly responded to the desperate need, consider themselves the watch-dogs of right and justice, and must else besides, not so much from the comfort and security of a chair by an England fireside, as in the heat and sweat of the struggle in Kenya for the hearts and minds of the bewildered Kikuyu people.⁵⁹⁹

If that was too much for the pamphlet's audience, step lowers responsibility considerably, merely requesting that the reader provide offerings to their local church and to the CMS.

Kenya: Time for Action started with a bang and ended with a whimper, but the response by Bishop Beecher and the British government was all bang. The pamphlet was moderately successful, as evidenced by its relatively brisk sales numbers, and coverage in the British press, but it was not the clarion call Warren and Bewes hoped it would be. The CMS would continue to struggle for recruits and resources throughout the rest of the Emergency and would eventually be pushed into allowing greater African leadership with the CMS hierarchy in Kenya. But for the British government and Leonard Beecher, this pamphlet would in fact be a call to action. Soon after its publication, the Colonial Secretary decided it would be a good plan to have regular

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid.

meetings with top CMS officials and the pamphlet was briskly debated in Parliament.⁶⁰⁰ The Archbishop of Canterbury tried to moderate the heavy charge of a double Mau Mau, by stressing the government's good intentions in trying to suppress Mau Mau. He began with an apology of sorts, " [i]f I go on in some sense to criticise the Government, I do it not in the least to reproach them but to encourage them to do better what I know is their fundamental principle and purpose."⁶⁰¹ However, in the middle of his speech he slipped in a more serious attack on the government's efforts by laying out clearly that, "what alarms us and the Christian leaders out there is that apparently the Government's efforts have been comparatively unsuccessful. The results remain disturbing up to this present time."⁶⁰² His speech concluded with a promise that the Church stood willing to help:

That work will cost the Christian Churches a great deal, and doubtless there will, in time, be an appeal to the Christian people of this country to enable that work to be done. But perhaps even more necessary will be the supply from this country to the Government and to the Churches of men and women who can bring with them the healing and constructive spirit without which there can be no future at all for Kenya.⁶⁰³

Unfortunately these men and women never appeared and the Church was left with nothing to offer the government.

While those in London focused on maintaining a conciliatory tone in their dealings with the government and press in the aftermath of *Time for Action*, the Bishop of Mombasa took no such care. On January 28th, he sent a letter to the CMS Information Officer, BD Nicholls saying,

⁶⁰⁰ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6, Minutes Meeting with Secretary of State, 28 March 1955; UBL CMS/B/G3/A5/6/3, Field Staff Bulletin 11 February 1955; UBL CMS/B/G3/A5/6/3, Copy of Hansard House of Lords Debate 10 February 1955.

⁶⁰¹ *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Lords, "The Kenyan Situation," 10 February 1955, Volume 190, column, 1146—48.

⁶⁰² *Ibid.*

⁶⁰³ *Ibid.*

I am deeply distressed by the action which has been taken in publishing a document which seems to me to be an injudicious mixture of quotation from a sermon of a very doubtful good taste by the Moderator of the Church of Scotland and of rumour, which seems to me to betray the confidences which Colonel Young reposed in the Society when he came to call on you.⁶⁰⁴

Beecher was not done there, he went to detail the letters he had already written to the *East Africa Standard* and the *Times*. In these letters he stated that was “bewildered and embarrassed” by the pamphlet and wants to assure people that there are no divisions between church and state in Kenya. After discussing these letters, Beecher then threatened to resign from the CMS.

After dropping this bombshell, Beecher continued to berate Nicholls and the team responsible for the pamphlet for not highlighting the positives in Kenya, namely the 9,500 detainees who have been released and the work of the government to make conditions better for detainees.⁶⁰⁵ His secretary, Willoughby Carey, also weighed in on the pamphlet, saying that it will ruin delicate negotiations between the church and government in Kenya.⁶⁰⁶ Both men are extremely upset that the pamphlet was not officially approved by missionaries on the ground in Kenya, namely themselves, before being widely published in England. Thus the Warren and Bewes plan for compromise—namely this is presented as a document for an English only audience, therefore no mission input from Kenya is needed, backfired spectacularly.

It was the responsibility of Canon Bewes and B.D. Nicholls to smooth ruffled feathers and bring the two sides back together, however the breach between Beecher and the CMS home office never really healed. In the end Beecher did not resign, but the relationship between home and field office remained straitened for quite some time afterwards as evidenced by the CMS response to both men. Nicholls response to Beecher was equally fiery—the Bishop threatened to

⁶⁰⁴ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/5/46, Letter Beecher to Nicholls, 28 January 1955.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁶ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/5/50, Letter Carey to Bewes, 28 January 1955.

resign; Nicholls did not accept that resignation but he laid bare Beecher's inability to make positive progress with the government. Beecher had been working with the government, making private pleas for the government to get a handle on the human rights abuses happening in Kenya, but despite repeated reassurances, Beecher's work had a seemingly negligible impact on the malpractices. Therefore the time had come for the CMS to take a stronger, more public stance back in the UK. Nicholls also shot down Beecher's claim that he had not had time to properly review the bulletin. Nicholls claimed that not only did he send a special advance copy of *Time for Action*, he had done all "he can within the limits of human endurance and time" to keep Beecher informed of every action on the homefront.⁶⁰⁷ Despite Nicholl's hard work, it was clear that events on the ground on Kenya were moving too quickly for the old system of memos and personal letters that had to be filtered through multiple levels of employees before making their way up the chain to Archbishop Beecher or General Secretary Warren.

Added to these problems were the difficulties of recruiting—as Carey noted in another letter to Nicholls in February, this conflict might have been avoided altogether had the CMS been able to provide enough recruits for the Government's call for men and women to work on Kikuyu rehabilitation. Had that been successful these recruits could have curbed the worst of the abuses and *Time for Action* would not have been written.

Thus the divisions between CMS in Kenya and London were not just superficial—this was not just a personality clash. The conflict concerning *Time for Action* hinted at many of the deeper cleavages within the Anglican missional community. These problems were emblematic of an organization attempting to carry on with nineteenth century ideals and practices in a twentieth

⁶⁰⁷ UBL, CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/7A/5/50a, Letter Nicholls to Beecher, 29 January 1955.

century empire. Archbishop Beecher would see himself more and more as a white African, as opposed to a British missionary working within a colonial context and *Time for Action* only encouraged him to cleave more closely to the colonial government.⁶⁰⁸ The British Empire was beginning to fade away, and with it went the old style missional relationships. Into the breach came a multitude of African church leaders, called up when Beecher could no longer find English recruits to spread theology, education, and health care.⁶⁰⁹ Although the pamphlet was a relatively minor conflict considering the totality of events of Mau Mau and eventual Kenyan independence, nevertheless it did highlight some of the key conflicts and anxieties that will both hamper the CMS and push forward the creation of the Church of East Africa during the chaotic period of decolonization in Kenya.

The CMS attempted to slowly heal their wounds in the aftermath of *Time for Action* but the pamphlet proved to be a double whammy. Their breach with Bishop Beecher never fully healed, and worse it failed to galvanize the British public into action. Recruits and funds remained difficult to come by and thus the CMS continued its round robin of debate concerning how closely they should associate themselves with the colonial authorities. Beecher lamented that he was pushed out of official circles, and Baring would no longer meet with him. Naturally he blamed the bulletin for this ostracizing.⁶¹⁰ He did not formally with Baring until May, and

⁶⁰⁸ UBL, CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/2A Radio Times of Kenya Address, Archbishop Beecher, June 9, 1960.

⁶⁰⁹ The first such leaders were Festo Olang and Obadiah Karuiki. They were given their new posts in May of 1954, but with little fanfare on either side of the colonial divide. Their new positions were geared more towards boosting Kikuyu morale than CMS desires for a Henry Venn style church. UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/2B, Letter Warren to Beecher, 20 May 1954; UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/Y/A5/2B, Letter Beecher to Warren, 30 October 1953.

⁶¹⁰ CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/3, Letter Beecher to Warren, 10 May 1955.

even then he had to deal with the provoking presence of Reverend Steel.⁶¹¹ Baring continued to carry on with his work but the breach between the two sides never fully healed.

The CMS was left with only one leg to stand on, but alas that leg turned out to be quite unstable. Throughout the summer and fall of 1955, the CMS worked to fill posts in detention camps and protected villages, but they never quite managed to entice young British men and women down to the colony. Individual workers continued to soldier on, despite lack of financial or personnel support from the missionary society, but no long term, sustainable options appeared. In June Colonel Grimshaw wrote to Max Warren in his capacity as the East Africa Regional Secretary to highlight the recruitment needs of Kenya. In order to meet their responsibilities, the CMS needed, two administrative missionaries, five female workers, five educational missionaries, an unspecified number of medical workers, at least one agricultural teacher, a staff member for the urban area of Pumwani, three missionary advisors, and several men to drive mobile vans around the countryside.⁶¹² Privately, Grimshaw seemed well aware that these needs would not be met, but wanted Warren to have the list anyway. The only bright light for the CMS in the midst of this downturn was the increasing number of African workers creeping into the reports. Although officials never commented on this proliferation of new workers, it was clear that they had become an important stop gap measure in the work done by missionaries for the colonial government. In August, the CCK held a conference for rehabilitation workers and two African clergymen were present, Rev. Canon Elijah Gacanja and Rev. Geoffrey Ngare.⁶¹³ These men worked for the CCK, but similar shifts occurred within the ranks of the CMS at this time. The CMS Home Office remained relatively quiet on the issue of African lay and clerical

⁶¹¹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/Y/A5/7A/4, Record of Meeting with Governor Baring, 6 May 1955.

⁶¹² UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/Y/A5/7A/4, Paper on Recruitment, Colonel Grimshaw, 5 June 1955.

⁶¹³ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/6/3, Christian Council of Kenya Report, 2-4 August 1955.

workers, but that does not mean that these changes were not important. Men such as Ngare, along with men like Festo Olang and Obadiah Karuiki would provide a hastily built foundation for the emergence of the Anglican Church of East Africa.

It was not until the end of 1955 that the CMS realized that Kenya was on the verge of independence. In November Max Warren and Bishop Beecher met when Warren traveled to Kenya on a short trip. The voyage was meant to heal the breach between Salisbury Square and Mombasa, but was only moderately successful. Warren apologized for publishing *Time for Action* without consulting Beecher, and he promised “not to trespass on the Kenya situation again without the fullest prior discussion with him.”⁶¹⁴ Beecher expressed his fear that the CMS was too anti-white, but each man agreed to cooperate more fully in the future to avoid any public fallout.⁶¹⁵ While they parted as friends of a sort, it seems clear that the meeting never really solved any problems for the CMS. It did not cure the disease, it merely placed a friendly Band-Aid over the most visible wound. Neither Warren nor Beecher emerged from the meeting with a better sense of how the CMS and diocese could work together more fruitfully, nor did it address the myriad of intellectual and philosophical differences between the two men. Instead each made vague promises to be more communicative and Warren expressed his belief that missionaries could be loyal to both diocese and CMS.⁶¹⁶ But there were no concrete decisions regarding the future of Anglicanism in Kenya, nor were there any conversations about where the lay and pastoral staff would be found to staff such an enterprise.

⁶¹⁴ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/Y/A5/7A/7, Conversation notes by Warren on his meeting with Beecher, 21-23 November 1955.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid.

⁶¹⁶ Ibid.

The only real progress made in the meeting was the creation of a memo entitled “Last Chance in Kenya,” which frankly acknowledged the lack of clear direction for the CMS. The future was uncertain, but the CMS did understand finally that they could not solely rely on their connection to the government in order to maintain their position in the colony. As the memo stated,

The urgency of all this for the church is that there is a very real risk that in the minds of the Africans in Kenya and in East African generally the Church, still led by Europeans, will come to be viewed as an annexe to Government House. Increasingly this will lead to the discrediting of the Church and to the extreme likelihood of rapid proliferation of sects whose driving force will be African nationalism.⁶¹⁷

For the first time the CMS has admitted that independence is on the horizon and changes must be made in order to survive into the next decade. No doubt Bishop Beecher was unhappy by this verbiage, but it was clear that business as usual was no longer a functioning model for the CMS. What would constitute the new CMS template remained uncertain in the eyes of the organization’s leadership. It was a brave new world for the CMS and they were almost wholly unprepared for it.

⁶¹⁷ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/7A/11, Last Chance for Kenya, 24 November 1955.

Conclusion

In the midst of World War II, AJ Dawe wrote of the need to “bind these people to us in such a way that their moral and material sources of strength will continue to be ranged on the side of Great Britain.”⁶¹⁸ The Church Missionary Society desperately wanted to be the organization that would provide that binding agent. They hoped that by supplying the moral foundation for the colonies of the British Empire, they could maintain their function and status in colonial society. Unfortunately they could not do so. In the 1920s the Archbishop of Canterbury saw them as the lynchpin of empire, but by the end of 1955 it was clear that they were merely a sideshow in the grand scheme of independence. Perhaps even more damningly, the CMS did not realize that independence was upon them until the last moment. The Colonial Office began prepping and planning for a world in which the sun did set on the British Empire, but CMS officials did not. Even as late as 1954, they eagerly envisioned a future in which they would march alongside government officials to usher in new eras of peace, prosperity, and progress. Never mind that these marches would need to push through a civil war and fight for independence in Kenya. The violence of Mau Mau, rather than destroying Christianity, would provide a cleansing force for Kikuyu society. Missionaries could separate the true believers from those who merely wanted material benefits, and if the CMS could protect loyal African Christians from guerilla fighters and the colonial state, they could secure their future in the colony. Unfortunately missionaries proved unable to rise to the task in each occasion. In the end they realized that many of their converts only returned to the church when it seemed that Mau Mau had lost the fight, and their grand test to winnow out the true believers became unreliable.

⁶¹⁸ Qtd. in *Britain's Declining Empire*, 88.

Worse still, missionaries were unable to protect their followers from Mau Mau violence or abuse from the state.

Each of these failures created much consternation within CMS circles, but the watershed moment came in early 1955 with the publication of *Time for Action*. CMS officials in London worried that the double amnesty program announced by the state would expose their lack of action in regards to state sponsored abuses, and thus rushed out the publication of a pamphlet which was regrettably too little too late for the British public. *Time for Action* did not inspire recruits to come and work for rehabilitation in Kenya; in fact there was no record of any recruit coming forward because of the pamphlet. Although it did briefly bring the government to attention, their consideration was short lived, and those relationships slipped back into old patterns of neglect very quickly. In the aftermath of publication, the Bishop of Mombasa, Leonard Beecher threatened to resign from the CMS and lamented his loss of influence with the colonial government. Beecher's relationship with both Governor Baring the CMS never fully recovered from this breach, as evidenced by their strained communication for the remainder of the year. However, each of these failures paved the way for future success in the era of independence. In the face of colonial neglect and lack of personnel, the CMS was compelled to make greater use of African lay and pastoral workers. Decolonization was a messy, abrupt process for the CMS, but in the midst of disorder they found the path to success. It was not through their traditional channels of protection for Africans while benefiting the colonial authorities but instead by utilizing the skills and talents of the Africans who had been right in front of them all along.

Epilogue—A New Life?

The relationships of the West to Asia and Africa have changed out of all recognition and the pattern of those relationships involves a new alignment of resources. These facts, quite apart from the economic situation in Britain and its effect on a Missionary Society, means that a Missionary Society today must increasingly see its own role as being [a] more limited one that was formerly the case, and also a much more specialized one.⁶¹⁹

In May 1955 the Archbishop of Canterbury took his fateful trip to Kenya to consecrate the new church at Fort Hall. His visit was meant to soothe troubled African souls while also placating Bishop Beecher in the aftermath of the publication of *Time for Action*. In many ways this visit remains a mystery. Archbishop Fisher's details of the trip focus on the mundane rather than the noteworthy, and few historians have included the trip into their historical narratives. The trip garnered little attention, and focus primarily centered on the creation of the new church and memorial hall, however another aspect of his trip ultimately had the biggest impact. While in Kenya, Fisher consecrated the Rt. Rev. Obadiah Kariuki as Assistant Bishop for the Diocese of Mombasa.⁶²⁰ At the same ceremony Festo Olang' was also consecrated as an Assistant Bishop for western Kenya.⁶²¹ These two men were the first in a long

⁶¹⁹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/2B, Letter from Warren to Beecher, 11 August 1958.

⁶²⁰ There is little in the historical record about this appointment. In late 1953/early 1954 Warren and Beecher exchanged a few letters about the potential for appointing an African Assistant Bishop. At that time Kariuki seemed like a good choice, excepting his political connections. However in their second letter on the subject Beecher stated that Governor Baring was pleased with the idea, and thus a year and half later Kariuki was installed. There are no letters about this appointment in the official CMS correspondence, but there are pictures of the ceremony. For more see: UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/2B, Letter from Beecher to Warren, 30 October 1953; UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/2B, Letter from Warren to Beecher, 20 May 1954; University of Cambridge Library, GBR/0115/CMS/12/2/34.

⁶²¹ In the only batch of letters regarding this appointment, Beecher worried that Olang' was "not sufficiently mature" for the appointment, but seemed to have changed his mind by 1955. For more information on Olang's career see: Festo Olang', *Festo Olang': An Autobiography* (Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1991).

line of new African leadership within the Anglican Church in Kenya. While Africans had served as padres since the 1920s, this was the first time they were given high level church positions. Their appointment also highlights several important ideas concerning the CMS and decolonization. While their selection was a momentous occasion for church members in Kenya, it created only the tiniest of ripples for CMS officials back in London and the colonial authorities. The fallout of *Time for Action* still reverberated across the distance between London and Mombasa and nothing would ever fully heal the breach.

Not only was the Home Office quiet, colonial officials also remained silent on the issue. Baring approved of Kariuki's work in 1953, but said nothing regarding the appointment of Olang'. Traditionally colonial officials had little direct input on the appointment of church officials, but the two positions traditionally worked together closely. For example when Beecher himself was selected as Bishop of Mombasa in 1950 he had just finished work on the Beecher Report on Education for the government.⁶²² Kariuki's connections were quite different from the British-bred Beecher. However, his background worked strongly in his favor in the aftermath of independence. During the Mau Mau conflict Kariuki visited Jomo Kenyatta in prison and the two were related thanks to Kenyatta's marriage to Ngina Kenyatta.⁶²³ In addition to political and personal linkages that would serve him well in an independent Kenya, Kariuki was also a Revivalist.⁶²⁴ This particular strain of theology has become increasingly entrenched within

⁶²² For more on Beecher's work see Chapter 4.

⁶²³ Ben Knighton, *Religion and Politics in Kenya: Essays in Honor of a Meddlesome Priest* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 72; Philip Boobbyer, "Moral Re-Armament in Africa in the Era of Decolonization," in *Missions, Nationalism, and the End of Empire* Brian Stanley, ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2003), 226.

⁶²⁴ The East African Revivalist movement first emerged in Uganda in the 1920s. It focused heavily on the idea of conversion, public confession, and an evangelical style of faith. African leaders within the CMS tended to be Revivalists, but it was an African led movement and many missionaries felt uncomfortable with its tenets. For more on the history of the Revivalist

Anglican theology since independence in 1963, and Kariuki was at the forefront of that movement.⁶²⁵ Kariuki is an excellent example of the shifts that had taken place within the CMS and its relationship with the colonial state. When Beecher was appointed as Bishop of Mombasa his links to the state and to elites within white settler society, i.e. his marriage to Gladys Leakey, helped pave the way for his promotion. Kariuki had few connections to the colonial state or white settler society, but he did have many influential friends in both the Loyalist and nationalist camps. Throughout the war, he preached in detention camps, but his relationship with Kenyatta placed him in a uniquely privileged position in 1963.⁶²⁶

Both Kariuki and Olang' traveled to the United Kingdom in the aftermath of their promotions, Kariuki in 1956 and Olang' in 1958. Unlike Kariuki's visit, Olang' drew little fanfare from CMS officials when he landed in the UK.⁶²⁷ Despite the lack of attention paid to Olang', his trip highlighted another important aspect of shifting nature of CMS work in Kenya. When the society published *Time for Action* they wanted to call attention to government abuses but they also wanted to recruit British men and women to work for the state as part of the rehabilitation efforts. Their siren call proved less than effective however, as they drew in zero new recruits in the months following the pamphlet's publication. Part of the problem for the CMS was not merely their silence in the face of human rights abuses but also the increasingly

movement see: Kevin Ward and Emma Wild-Wood, eds., *The East African Revival: History and Legacy* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2012); Emmanuel Twesigye, *Religion, Politics, and Cults in East Africa: God's Warriors and Mary's Saints* (New York: Peter Lang, 2010); J.E. Church, *Quest for the Highest: An Autobiographical Account of the East African Revival* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1981).

⁶²⁵ Galia Sabar, *Church, State, and Society in Kenya: From Mediation to Opposition* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), 155.

⁶²⁶ Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2005), 173.

⁶²⁷ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/2B, Letter from Warren to K.E. Stovold, 11 March 1958.

secular nature of life in the United Kingdom.⁶²⁸ Although remnants of Anglican life remain important markers in British society, Christian rituals such as weekly church attendance and baptisms are much less common than they were before the war.⁶²⁹ Despite the gloomy outlook of the church in 1945, Arthur Marwick argues that in fact a type of “secular Anglicanism” still exists in England today. Rather than focus on Christological or theological issues, English men and women coalesce around ideas of tolerance and common courtesy still present in English identity thanks to Anglican influence.⁶³⁰ Whatever faint traces of Anglicanism were left on the English psyche, it did not stir them to join the CMS in Kenya. In the short term this created many problems for the Home Office as they struggled to replenish posts left vacant by retiring or dying missionaries. It also meant that they could not fulfill their promise to the colonial state regarding manpower for rehabilitation, but these failures did pave the way for more Africans to stake their claim in the ranks of Anglican leadership.

The one missionary who had taken up the call for work in the detention camp was Howard Church. In the fall of 1953, Church took up his post at the Athi River camp and worked with the Moral Re-armament program to cleanse Kikuyu men and make them fit for release back into society. Initially the CMS was quite excited about this appointment, but Church’s MRA

⁶²⁸ David Edwards calls England in the post-war period one of the most secular countries in the world, “almost a Western China.” David Edwards, “Zeal for Reform as Numbers Slide,” in *Not Angels But Anglicans: A History of Christianity in the British Isles* Henry Chadwick, ed., (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2000), 263. David Bebbington and David Ceri Jones collection of works provides some much needed examination of the ways in which religion changed throughout the United Kingdom in the twentieth century, not just England. David Bebbington and David Ceri Jones, (eds.), *Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism in the United Kingdom During the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁶²⁹ William Safran, *The Secular and the Sacred: Nationalism, Religion, and Politics* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 82—3.

⁶³⁰ Arthur Marwick, *British Society Since 1945: The Penguin Social History of Britain* (London: Penguin, 1982), xi, 120—21. How much ‘secular Anglicanism’ carries over into British rather than English identity and society is a question Marwick leaves unanswered.

leanings worried them. The Home Office needed men who would prove to the state that they were necessary to the reestablishment of civilized life in Kenya, not men who would prove that any program with a Christian sheen could successfully transform devilish Mau Mau detainees back into angels. Throughout the Emergency the Colonial Office sporadically gave lip service to the idea that the Christian churches in Kenya provided valuable services in terms of rehabilitation. For example in late 1955 a Colonial Office report stated,

The Churches are making a major contribution to the rehabilitation of both convicts and detainees. Where camps are situated near Missions the missionaries visit them to arrange services and Christian teaching. In more remote camps resident chaplains are often appointed. The Government gives financial assistance to Missions to enable them to meet travelling expenses and employ chaplains. In some camps churches have been built and it is intended that such shall be provided in all camps as soon as possible. A considerable response has been apparent among convicts and detainees as a result of the work of the Churches.⁶³¹

While statements such as this may have cheered CMS staff, they were too few and far between to be of real use. A better example of the type of rehabilitation document created by the Colonial Office is a family tree sorts, created to show the various programs at work in the detention camps. On this tree, missions are nowhere to be found.⁶³² Indeed as the decades progressed, mission and church activities increasingly faded into the background of the official mind.⁶³³ The CMS had hoped that Howard Church might be an important step in the reversal of this process but that proved not to be the case.

By late 1955 Church and the MRA were both under intense scrutiny by the state for their activities in Athi River and various other detention camps. There was worry in official circles that the MRA was anti-imperialist and too accepting of the idea that many Mau Mau fighters had

⁶³¹ TNA, CO 822/794, Rehabilitation of Mau Mau adherents in Kenya.

⁶³² TNA, CO 822/703, Mau Mau Adherents Rehabilitation.

⁶³³ This is seen throughout this dissertation, as citations from the official archives at Kew decrease in number throughout each chapter.

legitimate grievances against the British state. Howard Church was deeply imbricated in these controversies, particularly in regards to the plays and skits performed by detainees and camp officials. In one such play, Church's wife played the role of abusive white settler.⁶³⁴ After hearing distressing reports concerning these dramas, Thomas Askwith, the Commissioner of Community Development, launched an investigation into the methods and philosophies used at Athi River.⁶³⁵ As a result of his investigation the Athi River Camp was shut down, and Howard Church was reassigned. The Colonial Office described his work as:

Liaison Officer with the Protestant Missions and given a roving commission to visit all the detention camps to see local African padres and to take services for the detainees. He began his work in May, 1956, and immediately complaints were made from different sources about the unorthodox methods he used (e.g. it was claimed that he was abusing his privilege by conducting direct M.R.A. propaganda).⁶³⁶

Due to his continued reliance on MRA tactics and rhetoric, the authorities fired him in July of 1956. Before informing Church, someone from the Community Development office noticed the Bishop of Mombasa, who wholeheartedly supported Church's termination.⁶³⁷ Apparently the Right Reverend Church was a thorn in my many sides. Despite the fact Leonard Beecher knew of Church's termination, no notice was sent to the Home Office in London. Indeed after the early days of his appointment, Church was only mentioned twice in CMS official correspondence once

⁶³⁴ Boobbyer, 225—26.

⁶³⁵ While Boobbyer argues that these skits pushed Askwith to launch his investigation, Robert Edgerton contends that in fact it was the presence of MRA sanctioned prostitutes to service the Home Guard and tempt the detainees that caused Askwith to begin examining MRA methods more closely. Robert Edgerton, *Mau Mau: An African Crucible* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989), 193—94.

⁶³⁶ TNA, CO 533/738, Reorganization of Education Department.

⁶³⁷ Ibid.

in a public statement made in the summer of 1956 and again with the notice of his final retirement from CMS service in 1958.⁶³⁸

Officially Church's dismissal stemmed from his continued adherence to MRA tactics despite state and religious disapproval. The Colonial Office claims that several Presbyterian missionaries and Anglican padres complained about him, as did Leonard Beecher, who claimed that MRA teachings were a "Pelagian heresy."⁶³⁹ If the official record in Britain was clear about Church's activities, Caroline Elkins argues that the situation in Kenya is quite different. She contends that Church's sacking was a direct response to his protests regarding the treatment of Mau Mau detainees in the Pipeline, and fears among Colonial Office officials that Church would go public with his damning insights into camp life.⁶⁴⁰ This was a concern for both the Colonial Office and the CMS, due in part to the public debate sweeping over Britain in the summer of 1956, right in the midst of Church's dismissal. In May a former rehabilitation worker, Eileen Fletcher published a three part series in a Quaker periodical entitled, "Kenya's Concentration Camps." Her accusations damned every aspect of the Pipeline and rehabilitation in the colony and immediately created a firestorm of debate both publically and politically in Britain.⁶⁴¹ Colonial officials worried that Howard Church would add fuel to the fire after his dismissal, however that threat never materialized.

⁶³⁸ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/2/1958, CMS Executive Board of the Kenya Mission notes, 25—28 October 1958; UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/7A/7, Press Release, Statement of Church Leaders in Kenya, 8 July 1956.

⁶³⁹ TNA, CO 533/738. Pelagians believe that humanity is basically good, and deny the concept of original sin.

⁶⁴⁰ *Imperial Reckoning*, 296.

⁶⁴¹ *Ibid*, 287—88.

CMS officials worried less about Howard Church because they were focused on Eileen Fletcher's accusations. Generally speaking Home Office officials paid little heed to the disturbing details of her report because they were more concerned with the political implications of her debate.⁶⁴² In Kenya an interdenominational collection of church leaders released a public statement concerning Fletcher's allegations. While they do acknowledge that abuses happened, they agree with S.A. Morrison that her concerns were outdated and no longer relevant in the colony.⁶⁴³ This document highlighted the good work being done by the churches in Kenya, as well as church state relations in the colony. Additionally, the statement commended the state for its support, "in all this the government has given every facility, in some cases has given generous financial assistance and has asked for more help than it has been possible for us to offer."⁶⁴⁴ Because the document's creation by committee origins it is clear that sections which highlight the good relationship between the two were authored by Leonard Beecher, while statements such as, "in some cases progress has been slow, and the Government has not always agreed to our suggestions to the degree we would have wished," were crafted by David Steel, Beecher's old nemesis.⁶⁴⁵ Perhaps its origins are what led the Archbishop of Canterbury to personally intervene and forbid any CMS official to speak out regarding the public statement; they could only generally support the idea of a delegation.⁶⁴⁶ The CMS Executive Committee did pass a resolution supporting the statement, but that seemed to be the end of the matter on their end.⁶⁴⁷

⁶⁴² UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/Y/A5/7A/7, Memo from BD Nicholls about Miss Fletcher, undated.

⁶⁴³ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/7A/7, Minutes of lunch between BD Nicholls and S.A. Morrison, 13 June 1956. Morrison was the leader of the Christian Council of Kenya.

⁶⁴⁴ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/7A/7, Statement by Church Leaders in Kenya, 8 July 1956.

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁷ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G3/A5/6/1/1956, CMS Executive Committee Press Release, 12 July 1956.

However Beecher could not stand another affront from the Presbyterian Steel. He wrote an angry missive to Max Warren, the General Secretary of the CMS, proposing to release his own public statement, disavowing his support of the press release due to the changes made by Steel. Warren advised him to behave more cautiously and privately. Beecher should lay his case before the Colonial Secretary and be honest about the friction between himself and Steel. But to publicly air grievances would only benefit “the Devil and the Roman Catholic Church.”⁶⁴⁸ Beecher agreed to Warren’s plan, and the whole situation died down in a few weeks.⁶⁴⁹

Indeed, most CMS activities slowly died over the remaining years of empire in Kenya. In a long letter to Beecher, Warren laid out his vision for the CMS’ future. He concluded,

The relationships of the West to Asia and Africa have changed out of all recognition and the pattern of those relationships involves a new alignment of resources. These facts, quite apart from the economic situation in Britain and its effect on a Missionary Society, means that a Missionary Society today must increasingly see its own role as being more limited one than was formerly the case, and also a much more specialized one.⁶⁵⁰

Leadership in both London and Mombasa seemed to agree for the first time since 1954. The scope of missions needed to change in order for any semblance of CMS work to continue in the newly independent countries of Africa. In May of 1960 the East Africa synod promoted Beecher from Bishop of Mombasa to Archbishop of Mombasa, as part of a reorganization and expansion of dioceses in Kenya.⁶⁵¹ Several months later the Archbishop of Canterbury traveled to Kenya to officially install Beecher into his new post. Before he left, Fisher gave a quote to *The Times* regarding the work of the church against the “colour bar” in Africa. His response was,

⁶⁴⁸ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/2B, Letter Warren to Beecher, 14 July 1956.

⁶⁴⁹ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/Y/A5/2A.

⁶⁵⁰ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/2A, Letter Warren to Beecher, 11 August 1958.

⁶⁵¹ *The Times*, “Ecclesiastical News,” 5 May 1960.

It is not making sufficient headway anywhere because this is a very bad world and the counter forces are strong, but it is doing its job and it is up to the world to decide whether or not it will fall in line.⁶⁵²

This is a far cry from the statement made by then Archbishop Randall Davidson in 1920 when he positioned the CMS at the center of a moral compass for the British Empire, which in turn provided leadership and progress for the world.⁶⁵³ Clearly much had changed in the intervening forty years for both the church and the empire. Despite the morose attitude presented by Fisher, the setbacks suffered by the CMS paved the way for the success of the Anglican Church of Kenya. Decolonization was a messy, chaotic affair for the CMS; the first mention of an independent Kenya came in a speech given by the new Archbishop of Mombasa in June of 1960. In this speech Beecher reassured whites and blacks in Kenya that although independence was on the horizon and even though, “the age of the missionary society in the old sense is now past; an indigenous church is now in being with African nationals sharing in the government and ministry of that church at the highest levels.”⁶⁵⁴ For once, Beecher was correct in his assessment of the state of Christianity and empire. In the end, decolonization and the creation of the Anglican Church of Kenya was a failure, right up until it became a success.

⁶⁵² *The Times*, “Dr. Fisher Leaves for East Africa,” 22 July 1960.

⁶⁵³ *Parliamentary Debate (Hansard)*, House of Lords, “East Africa: Status of Indians and Native Labour,” 14 July 1920, Volume, 41, column, 132—33.

⁶⁵⁴ UBL CMS/B/OMS/G59/A5/2A, Beecher speech for Radio Times of Kenya, 9 June 1960.

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