

MISSION UND KOLONIALHERSCHAFT

*WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE GERMAN BENEDICTINE MISSIONS IN
SOUTHERN TANZANIA*

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**Paper read to the participants of the Workshop on 100th Anniversary of Maji Maji war,
Wuppertal, November 5, 2005**

The paper will concentrate on the relation between German Colonial machinery and the German Catholic Missionaries of the Benedictine Congregation of St. Ottilien in the southern part of Tanzania before, during and after Maji Maji war. The southern part of Tanzania which is the focus of the paper encompasses today the Catholic Dioceses of Songea, Mbinga., Mtwara, Lindi and Tunduru-Masasi. All these Dioceses were christianised by the German Benedictines of St Ottilien during German colonial reign in the then German East Africa (*Deutschostafrika*)

Let's begin with a citation from W. Bühlman

“ With a few exceptions missionary activity has gone hand in hand with colonization. No matter how we interpret the underlying relation between the two orders it is self evident that political expansion and the Church's expansion in the world have covered the same ground, geographically and chronologically”¹.

German colonization of Tanzania which is conventionally dated in 1885, the date of the publication of the Schutzbrief started a train of events which converted some German missions into vehicles or catalyst of German colonization. In 1885, following official German colonization of Tanganyika a number of German Missionary Societies embarked on missionary venture to East Africa. The **Evangelisch-lutherische Missionsgesellschaft für Ostafrika in Bayern** was founded in 1885, and two missionaries were sent out early the following year. The **Deutschostafrikanische Missionsgesellschaft zu Berlin**, commonly known as **Berlin III**, followed exactly the line of the colonial occupation, starting at Dar es Salaam and spreading into the inland.

In southern Tanzania the catholic missionary activity was carried out mostly by the German Benedictines of St Ottilien. The German Benedictines appeared to have cooperated hand-in-glove with the German colonial officials, so much so that during the Maji Maji (1905-1907) and during the first World War (1914-1926), German Benedictines of St. Ottilien were treated as enemies of the Wangoni and of the British respectively.

Let's first examine the relationship between the German Benedictine Missionaries of St. Ottilien and the German colonial officials in the then German East Africa. The roots of close collaboration between the German Benedictines of St Ottilien and the German colonials officials were set right at the time of the foundation of the congregation.

Origins of the Benedictine Missionary congregation of St. Ottilien and its connection to the German Government

The Benedictine Congregation of St. Ottilien was founded during the 'Kulturkampf' i.e. the struggle between Bismarck's Germany and the Catholic Church. Only in view of future mission work in German colonies now being acquired could Amrheim (the founder of the Benedictine Congregation of St. Ottilien) get the official permission for starting his Society. This point is important because right from the beginning the congregation had strong ties with the German colonial authority in its business of acquiring colonies in East Africa. In 1870 the German Empire was proclaimed after the victory of the Germans over the French. After a short period of time Bismarck launched a campaign against the Roman church, a movement historically known as *Kulturkampf*. Nowhere in Europe was the struggle between Church and state fought as vigorously as in the German Empire of 1870. It was in this atmosphere of Bismarck's hatred towards the Roman church and his systematized campaign to annihilate the Roman Catholic Church from Germany, that the Benedictine congregation of St. Ottilien (a Catholic one) was

¹BÜHLMANN W., The Coming of the Third Church, (E. tr.), liverpool 1976, p.42.

founded. Indeed at first sight is not understandable!. Exactly when Bismarck was suppressing the Roman Catholic Church in Germany, he himself granted Andreas Amrhein a permission to found a Roman Catholic religious congregation. Why?. Amrhein impressed upon the officials of the Kulturkampf that his new missionary society to be established was to operate hand-in-glove with the German colonial officials in the process of colonization and of the boosting of German culture and Nationalism in East Africa.

Zum Schlusse möge den ehrerbietigst Unterzeichneten verstattet sein, auf das Zusammentreffen dieses Unternehmens mit den inzwischen eingetretenen deutschen Kolonialbestrebungen aufmerksam zu machen, was dem ersteren gerade wegen der Bildung von Laien- Missionären zur vorausgehenden Kultivierung des Landes und Erziehung seiner Bewohner für die Arbeit eine besondere Bedeutung gibt.

Haben doch deutsche Afrikaforscher erst kürzlich die Meinung ausgesprochen, das Notwendigste zur Kolonisation jener Gebiete sei, dessen Einwohner zu Arbeitern zu machen (statt zu Sklaven), und sie geistlich und sittlich zu heben.

Möge endlich deutschen Missionären vergönnt sein, eine eigene Gesellschaft zu bilden. Bisher waren sie genötigt, französischen oder englischen oder holländischen oder italienischen Gesellschaften beizutreten und daher fremd nationale Kolonialinteressen fördern zu helfen, weil die Missionen allerorts die Nationalität der Gesellschaft, der sie angehören, zum herrschenden Einfluss bei den Einheimischen bringen.

Stanley fordert für Afrika die Tätigkeit des Handelsmannes und des Missionärs. >> Bei uns wird sich mancher darüber wundern, - bemerkt ein großes Blatt, - aber die Engländer und Amerikaner denken anders und haben längst die Mission der Heiden in Ihrem Wert erkannt. England weiß, dass, das Gelingen seiner Arbeit unter den Heiden ihm nur möglich gemacht wurde durch die vorangehende Wirksamkeit der Missionäre... << (A. Ztg).

Möge durch gnädigste Gewährung des vorliegenden unterthänigsten Gesuches eine Möglichkeit geschaffen werden, dass die zahlreichen deutschen katholischen Missionäre nicht mehr ausländischen Gesellschaften einverleibt werden müssen, sondern in einer eigenen deutschen Missionsgesellschaft an der Hebung und Gewinnung der für die Kulturvölker neueröffneten Länder Afrikas mitarbeiten können, Religion und Kultur und sowohl die damit beglückten, jetzt so armen Volksstämme, als auch Deutschland selbst werden Eurer Exzellenz hiefür zum größten Danke verpflichtet sein.

In tiefst ehrerbietigster Ergebenheit geharrt.

An
Seine des K. Ministerpräsidenten
Für Kirchen – und Schulangelegenheiten pp.
Dr. Freiherrn von Lutz
Exzellenz

Euer Exzellenz
Herr Staatsminister
Diener
J. A. Amrhein
München, 18. Dez. 1884<<

THE COMING OF THE GERMANS TO TANGANYIKA 1884

In the case of Southern Tanzania German colonizers preceded the Missionaries. It was the German colonial authorities who invited the Benedictine missionaries of St. Ottilien to come to Tanganyika and christianise the area. German colonization of Tanganyika was chiefly

undertaken by Karl Peters the Head of the German East Africa Company DOAG (*Deutschostafrikanische Gesellschaft*) who in 1884 landed on the coast opposite Zanzibar and made a number of Treaties with local chiefs on the mainland of Tanganyika. Being a business man he founded the German East Africa Company (*DOAG*) for commercial purposes and political as well. The Manifesto of Karl Peters' Society reads:

The German nation finds itself without a voice in the partition of the World which has been proceeding since the fifteenth century. Every other civilized nation of Europe possesses in other parts of the World territories on which they are able to impose their language and culture. The German emigrant, after he has crossed the frontiers of the Empire becomes a stranger in a foreign land. The German Empire has been rendered great and strong by the unity obtained by the outpouring of German blood. The great stream of German emigration has been lost for many years in foreign countries... To remedy this deplorable state of affairs, a society has been founded in Berlin which will resolutely and energetically undertake the execution of colonial projects and will support the efforts of associations having the same aim.²

Having arrived on the coast opposite Zanzibar, Karl Peters went into the interior and made a number of treaties with the local chiefs. Within three weeks he had already twenty treaties covering an area fifty miles around Morogoro. The Chiefs promised to give their land to Carl Peters and his Society. Some of the treaties implied that the Chief did not recognize the Sultan of Zanzibar as his Ruler.

Here is an example of the treaties made by Carl Peters with Chief Msovero:

"Treaty of eternal friendship :Mangungu, Sultan of Msovero in Usambara, offers all his territory with all its civil and public appurtenances to Dr. Carl Peters as the representative of the society for German colonization for exclusive and universal utilization for German colonization."³

With these treaties in his pocket, Karl Peters took them to Germany and submitted the Treaties to the German government. In March 1885 the German Emperor ordered that the area visited by Karl Peters was to be under his protection. The Emperor did so by issuing the famous *Schutzbrief*.

"Kaiser Wilhelm I. Unterzeichnet der Schutzbrief für die Ostafrikanischen Erwerbungen der Gesellschaft für deutsche Kolonisation 1885, 25, Feb."⁴

The Germans called their colony *Deutsch Ostafrika* German East Africa. The officials of the DOAG were the first colonial Rulers of the Country. They arrived at Dar es Salaam in 1887 and made Bagamoyo their Capital.

DOAG invites the German Benedictines of St. Ottilien to Tanganyika 1887.

The religio-political situation in Tanganyika before the arrival of the Benedictines.

Long before German colonization of Tanganyika, a number of political and religious groups resided in Tanganyika. On the political side there were the Arabs who were in Tanganyika since the 10th C. but now more intensely at the beginning of the 19th C.. On the religious side there were two Catholic Mission societies whose members were mostly of French origin. The Societies were the Holy Ghost Fathers and the White Fathers. In 1886, to ward off a French influence from the mainland Tanganyika, the Germans entered into agreement with the French Government by which the French were given free access to govern the Comoro Islands in the

²G.L. Steere, *The Judgment on German Africa*, London 1939, S 249

³Zoë, M., *The partition of East Africa*, Cambridge 1957 S 105

⁴Kienitz E., *Zeittafel zur Deutschen Kolonialgeschichte*, Fichte-Verlag/München 1941 p.79

Indian Ocean for a period of five years. In return for this the Germans were assured of a free access to Tanganyika as well as connections with the Sultan of Zanzibar⁵

The dislike of the Germans with regard to the French influence in Tanganyika did not stop at the political level only but rather extended to the missionary sphere. Suspicious of the French connections of the two Catholic Missionary Societies already present, the DOAG suggested the replacement of all Catholic Missionaries with German Lutheran Missionaries.

In the spring of 1887, Karl Peters, on coming back from Tanganyika, began to make treaties with a Lutheran Mission Society namely *Die Evangelische Missionsgesellschaft für Deutschostafrika* commonly referred to as the Berliner III, to come and evangelize the newly acquired German colony-German East Africa (DOA). At this stage Freiherr von Gravenreuth, a leading member of the DOAG and a devout Catholic, intervened in order to safeguard Catholic influence in the Country by obtaining German Catholic Missionaries. As he was quite influential in the Company, he went to face the Archbishop of München Anton von Steichele in March 1887, then he had talks with the Bishop of Augsburg Pankratius von Dinkel. What he wanted to achieve through these meetings was a Catholic Congregation for the evangelization of Tanganyika.⁶

Von Gravenreuth then faced Karl Peters the head of the DOAG and persuaded him to invite a newly founded German Missionary Congregation namely the Ottilien Congregation of Bavaria. Karl Peters was finally persuaded, and made up his mind for this Congregation. He then made arrangements to meet the Superior of the Congregation Fr. Amrhein. The meeting took place in München on 12th April 1887.⁷ On the same day Fr. Amrhein and Baron von Gravenreuth met, Msgr. Angelo Agliardi the papal Nuncio in München. The Nuncio was not able to clarify everything and so he referred them to Propaganda Fide in Rome. He gave them a letter to carry with them to Simeon the then prefect of Propaganda Fide. So reads the important section of the letter:

"Ieri mi si presentò il Barone Carlo di Gravenreuth, uno di pochi membri Cattolici della Società tedesca dell'Africa Orientale, insieme col P. Andrea Amrhein (Sic)... il primo mi espose, aver lui ottenuto dalla Società che una missione Cattolica con missionari tedeschi si stabilisce nel vasto territorio occupato dalla stessa società, ed il secondo la sua propensione ad accettare l'offerta di tale fondazione. L'uno e l'altro mi richiesero di consiglio e direzione. Ma l'unico consiglio che io potevo dare in questa circostanza era quello di indirizzare per l'affare di cui si tratta, alla Santa Congregazione di Propaganda. Ambedue pertanto si decisero di recarsi a Roma ed è al P. Amrhein (sic) che consegna questa rispettosa mia lettera. Permetta l'Eminenza vostra...che io lo raccomando alla sua bontà..."⁸

With this letter the three men, Amrhein, Carl Peters and von Gravenreuth journeyed to Rome. In Rome they were met with Kurt von Schlözer, the German Consul to the Holy See. The three discussed the missionary work of the Ottilien Congregation in Tanganyika and its relationship with the DOAG. The end result of the discussions was a Treaty signed by the three men.

The Treaty between Fr. Amrhein and Dr. Carl Peters April 1887

The core of the Treaty was; the **double duty** of the Benedictines, namely **civilizing the nations as well as evangelizing**, which was to take place in specified areas demarcated by the DOAG.

⁵ Politischesarchiv Bonn, Akten 911, Berchem to Schlözer 21st May 1887

⁶ see Märtyrblut, St. Ottilien 1914, p.5

⁷ B.A. Nachlass Palèzieux, A. Leue to Palèzieux 12. 4. 1887

⁸ A.P.F. Scritti referiti nei congressi, Africa dell'Oceano Austral e Capo di Buona Speranza, Vol.7, 1885-1887

The Benedictines were not to found a new mission without the Company's express permission. The Benedictines were to hoist the Company's as well as the Government's flags at the Mission stations. DOAG officials were to have free access to, and free accommodation in the Mission stations when on their duties. DOAG promised to protect the Missionaries as long as both the DOAG and the Benedictines had mutual respect for their work. German language was to be the medium of communication. Commercial activities were forbidden for the Missionaries but they were allowed to produce things for the upkeep of their missions. Should there be an excess then it was to be handed over to the DOAG. It was agreed upon that the Treaty would come in force only when the German Government and the Holy See had given their consent and approval. The Treaty was signed by the three men namely Amrhein who represented the Ottilien Congregation, Karl Peters the head of DOAG and von Gravenreuth an influential catholic member of the DOAG⁹

In Tanganyika, the Missionary work had pushed the Benedictines to relate politically not only with the Germans but also with the Africans, especially African Chiefs. On the part of the German colonial authorities in Tanganyika, there was a tendency to view the Missionaries as their very powerful and effective collaborators in extending and achieving their political ends. In Rome, as we have already seen, when Amrhein, Karl Peters and von Gravenreuth signed the Treaty which defined their relation in Tanganyika, the two parties namely the Ottilien Benedictines and DOAG made an alliance of strong co-operation and collaboration. This collaboration was observed by the Africans in Pugu when the German Colonial officials captured a number of slaves from the Arabs and handed them over to the Benedictines in Pugu.

So in the Ungoni area, often times the German colonial officials would spend nights at Kigonsera Mission on their way to and from Mbinga as Kigonsera lies half way from Mbinga to Songea.

In Tosamaganga Iringa, there was a Saw-mill and a milling machine by which the missionaries could process timber and cereals. The milling machine worked also in order to help the German army. A Brother was also baking bread for the German soldiers. According to the verbal report of Fr. Gerold Rupper, a Swiss Benedictine who worked in Tanzania for over 40 years, there were some Brothers (Benedictine monks) who were fighting for the German army during the first World war in Tanganyika. One of these Brothers was Ephraim.

The first Anti German rule uprising 1889.

Under the Sultan some Arabs on the coast had made a profit out of collecting the customs for him. With the coming of the Germans, they would now lose this profit, also some of the earliest Germans were not very polite in dealing with the Arabs and Swahili of the coast. Karl Peters was generally known by the Africans as *Mkono wa Damu* that is a *man with blood-stained hands* as he had proved to be very cruel in treating the Africans. These then were the main factors and reasons which caused the anti German rule uprising in the year 1889 which was engineered by Bushiri and his fellow Arabs. Bushiri attacked the German Benedictines in Pugu in September 1888 and burnt down the station.

An explanation should be given as to why the Benedictines were attacked by the Arabs, to the extent that some missionaries were killed. To answer it immediately; the Arabs had observed a close relationship and collaboration between the German Colonial authorities and the Benedictines. In 1888 the Benedictines in Pugu had been in receipt of a number of slaves from the German Admiral Denhardt. These slaves had been captured by a German cruiser and taken

⁹ P.A. Akten 911, Kurt von Schlözer to foreign office 21.4.1887

from an Arab dhow while shipping them to an unknown destination.¹⁰ The Arabs were very angry when they learned that their slaves were now with other Europeans who were collecting all the profits obtained from their labour. They therefore decided to recover them. This act of robbing slaves from the Arabs and handing them over to the Benedictines impressed upon the Arabs that the Benedictine Missionaries were the close collaborators of the German Colonial authorities. Grooves attests the same.¹¹ Just some kilometres away from Pugu there was a catholic mission of the Holy Ghost whose staff mostly were of French origin. These were not attacked by Bushiri.

The German administrative machine and the Benedictines on the eve of Maji Maji war

Collecting all evidence there was a strict and pure collaboration between the German colonial officials and the Benedictines. Take an example of Lukuledi in South-East Tanzania. The Benedictines had employed people to work in road construction projects. When they wanted to pay them, and having no money to pay them, they asked for help from the German colonial Government in Lindi. They were given twenty-five tax receipts to be used as payment to the workers.¹² This made the natives understand that the Missionaries and the colonists were one and the same people. That's why Hirj puts it as "Work on mission land was a substitute for tax paying"¹³

The people of Lukuledi once approached the missionaries and asked them whether it was just to demand and pay tax. The Benedictines responded employing the words of Jesus "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what is God's" (Mt. 22:15-22). The people's response to this was quite outrageous:

"Ihr seid doch alle gleich, ihr gehört auch zu denen, die uns bedrücken (Ganz dasselbe wurde den Missionaren in Uhehe gesagt)"¹⁴

In Ungoni area (Peramiho) the German colonial officials were quite good to the Benedictines. But the Benedictines tried hard to distinguish themselves from the German Colonial Officials by setting up their Abbey away from the German colonial headquarters of Ruvumua region. But as days and years went on the Benedictines turned to the colonial officials for a number of services. It is reported that when Bishop Cassian Spiss, then a priest, became sick he asked to be sent to German military station in Songea for treatment and rest.¹⁵ At one time the Benedictines could not buy chicken and eggs from the people around Peramiho because the people boycotted selling to them on the ground that the Benedictines were collaborating with the colonial officials and that they were near the German military camp of Songea.¹⁶

It will be remembered that the DOAG Officials had agreed upon with the Benedictines that the mission stations would be used as resting places for the company officials.¹⁷ Many times German colonial officials are reported to pull over at Kigonsera and take a rest to and from punitive

Schmidt H., Die vorgänge in Ostafrika, in Missionskalender, St. Ottilien 1935 p.173

Grooves, C.P., The planting of Christianity in Africa, Vol.III, London 1955, p.76

¹² MB No. 1 (1900) 72. G.W.e. (1900) 295 on 20th March 1900 „auf Erbitten übersandte das...Bezirksamt Lindi 25 quittierte Steuerzettel @ 3 Rupies, welche an die Neger verteilt werden dürfen, um die Hauptwege der Missionsstation vom hohen Gras zu reinigen.

¹³ Hirj K.F., Colonial Ideological Apparatuses in Tanganyika under German Rule in KANIKI M.H.Y (ed), Tanzania under Colonial Rule, London 1980, p 205

¹⁴ WEHRMEISTER C., Vor dem Sturm, Eine Reise durch Deutsch-Ostafrika vor und bei dem Aufstande 1905, St Ottilien 1906, p 89

¹⁵ MB No. 1 (1900) 72ff

¹⁶ A.C.B.M. Chronik von Kigonsera, 21.10.1901

¹⁷ Aott., Akten: St. Benedictus Missions-Gesellschaft St. Ottilien, 1888-1902, paragraph 6.

expeditions in Umatengo (Mbinga area) On 2nd March 1902, Lieutenant Albinus and his assistant Officer Mr Pitsch, together with some twenty Askaris, on their way to fight the people of Mandawa village, passed through Kigonsera Missions where they ate and proceeded to Mandawa.¹⁸ After the battle which the Wamatengo suffered heavy losses (forty people died), the colonial authorities came back to the mission where they were received and given food. On 8th March, Mr Albinus sent a letter to the missionaries advising them not to work in Mandawa village because he was planning to go there once again and punish the people.¹⁹

It is reported that in one or two mission stations the Benedictines used to flog their faithful who had relapsed to pagan practices. We have a witness from Tosamganga where Fr. Severin Hofbauer thrashed some of his faithful.

“R.P. Severin (Hofbauer) schwang tüchtig den Kiboko auch die Fundi gingen nicht leer aus, und mussten drei Tage kirchenbusse tun (alle sträflinge mussten heraus knien, währen die Allerheiligenlitanei mit Einschaltung den Namenspatrone der Sträflinge gebetet wurde)²⁰

To conclude it is quite clear that on the eve of Maji Maji uprising the Benedictines had impressed upon the natives that they were once thing with the colonists.

German Benedictines of St. Ottilien during the First World War

This strong relationship between the Benedictines and the German Colonial authority came to the knowledge of the British. In the course of the First World War the British treated the German Benedictines of St. Ottilien as National enemies.

In September 1916, Madibira in Usangu became the first Benedictine Mission to be occupied by British forces. The Missionaries were taken away and interned. By 1917 all the Mission stations were deserted and their young Christian communities left to themselves. 131 Benedictine missionaries-26 priests,48 brothers and 57 sisters were repatriated to Germany. In Peramiho on 19, September 1916 there started the evacuation of the missionaries. So writes Fr. Hilarius Kaiser:

"Im laufe des Vormittags brachte uns ein Man von Fussi die Nachricht, die Engländer wären bereits bei Putiri angekommen. Abends gegen 6 Uhr kam eilig ein Bote mit der Nachricht dass die Engländer mit Askari den Weg von der Ziegelei heraufkämen. Rasch ging ich mit P. Eugen ihnen entgegen wir trafen ungefähr 200 m vom Haus entfernt unterhalb des Gartens auf dem Weg der an der alten Ziegelei vorbeiführte. Es waren 4 offiziere (Europäer) mit ca 20 Schwarzen Askari. Er fragte dann "wie viele Christen habt ihr in der Mission. Ich sagte:gut 4000 "was 4000? Das ist eine Gefahr für uns...Er fragte sind noch Deutsche in der Nähe? Nein Niemand".²¹

On September 20,1916, the Sisters, Brothers and Fathers of Peramiho Mission were forced to leave the Mission for Songea. The next morning they left in pouring rain and a thunderstorm, this time in the direction of Lake Nyasa. Three African soldiers walked in front of them and three behind. On September 27 they reached Wiedhafen (Manda) port at Lake Nyasa, there to await a steamer. One Priest and two Sisters were ordered to embark. (Fr. Superior Hilarius Kaiser, Sr. Magdalena Hessing, Sr. Agatha and Sr. Valeria Reischl.)²² The rest waited for the

¹⁸ A.C.B.M. Chronik von Kigonsera, 2.3.1902

¹⁹ Ibid. 6.3.1902

²⁰ A.C.B.M. Chronik von St Gertrud Tosamaganga, 1898-1913, 28.1.1901

²¹ HilK p.94

²² Bernita, W., Vol.II Op. cit. p.241

next steamer. The ship had hardly left when Fr. Cornelius arrived from Lituhi accompanied by an Englishman. On October 7 the Priests from Kigonsera parish and Litembo parish joined the Missionaries who came from Peramiho. On the same day they boarded a ship named *Queen Victoria*. In Nyasaland (Malawi) the Sisters were taken to Zomba into a women's camp, while the Priests were bound for the men's camp in Blantyre. On October 13 the Sisters were transferred to a Mission station of Nankunda and there once again they were able to resume their Monastic life. January 22, 1917 they left Nankunda and were taken to Zomba and then on to Blantyre, from Blantyre they traveled by train to Chiroma, thence by steamer to Beira in Mozambique. On February 1, they were at Salisbury (Harare), and the 4th of January they were in Pretoria South Africa where they were put in Jail. They had a common room for eating and sleeping. Everything surrounded by barbed wire fencing.²³ From South Africa the Missionaries were transported by ship to Alexandria and finally to Germany. A chapter in the history of the Benedictine Mission in Tanganyika had come to an abrupt end and its future seemed bleak.

White Fathers of French Origin take over the work of the German Benedictines

In the mandate of the League of Nations administered by the English there was no near prospect of Germans being allowed to return. Propaganda Fide assigned the Eastern portion of Dar Es Salaam Vicariate to the Swiss Capuchins and separated from it the Western part as new Apostolic Prefecture of Iringa, which was entrusted to Italian Consolata Fathers.

The White Fathers were given the South-Western corner of Tanganyika (Ungoni-Peramiho area). In place of Fr. Willibrod Lay Propaganda appointed Fr. Joseph Laane, a Dutch White Father, as Apostolic Administrator in 1919 to 1922 while some Canadian, French, Belgian and Luxemburger White Fathers took care of the missions in the future diocese of Songea. The Fathers were: Renè Claerhout (Belgian), David Roy (Canadian), Felix Dufays (Luxemburger), Joseph Berder (French). These took care of the Peramiho, Kigonsera, Lituhi and Litembo Missions. At Peramiho was Fr. Ambroise Fauconnier who received a confere Cornelius Smoor in 1920.²⁴

Benedictines of Swiss origin are allowed to remain in Tanganyika.

Right from the beginning, the Ottilien Congregation consisted of some Monks of Swiss origin. Amrhein the founder was a Swiss born monk from Beuron monastery. They had gone to Germany because the Ottilien Congregation in Bavaria was the only Missionary Benedictine congregation in Europe in those days. The then German Government did not demand them to carry with them the Swiss passports should they go to work in German colonies in Africa. Most of them went down to Tanganyika without their Swiss passports. At the time of repatriation of the German missionaries, in Peramiho there were at least three Fathers who were Swiss born. They were Frs. Hilarius Kaiser, Gallus Steiger who later became the Bishop Abbot Nullius of Peramiho and Fr. Stanislaus. In 1916 when the British occupied Peramiho, Fr. Hilarius Kaiser was the first one to be met by them, he told them that he was a Swiss and the British demanded to see his passport. Fr. Hilarius could not produce the passport and instead he showed a document obtained from the German regional Commissioner of Songea bearing witness that he was a Swiss. So wrote Fr. Hilarius:

"Ich gab dem Hauptmann zu verstehen, dass ich Schweizer sei. 'wo haben Sie ihren Pass' Ich konnte ihm ein Schreiben vom damaligen Bezirksamtman von Songea vorzeigen, worin amtlich bestätigt war, dass ich Schweizer sei. Wir brauchten nämlich bei unserer Aussendung nach Afrika damals keinen Pass für die Deutsche Kolonie. Der Colonell verweigerte das Zeugnis auszunehmen.'Wo haben Sie ihren Pass? Sie haben ihm einem

²³Bernita, W., Vol.II, Op. cit. pp.242-246

²⁴MBI January 1920, p.60

anderen gegeben, damit reisen nach der Schweiz kann? Also Sie müssen mit den Deutschen in die Gefangenschaft wandern" ²⁵

Fr. Hilarius and the other Swiss born Benedictines were taken to South Africa with the other German Benedictines on their way to Germany; from South Africa they were to travel by water to Alexandria and finally to Germany. The voyage passed again along the coast of the Indian Ocean, that is along Dar Es Salaam and Tanga. At Tanga it was ascertained that Fr. Hilarius Kaiser and others were not Germans but Swiss born Monks. And because of this they were released and allowed to go to Dar Es Salaam and continue with their Missionary work. So wrote Fr. Hilarius:

"Anfangs Juni 1917 teilte uns der Kommandant des Lagers mit, dass wir 2 Schweizer, P. Stanislaus und meine Wenigkeit nach Dar Es salaam reisen können, dort werden wir frei werden. Unter Begleitung von 2 Eingeb. Askaris brachte man uns per Schiff nach Dar Es Salaam. Am 20.6 erhielt ich als Schweizer Erlaubnis zur Besetzung der Station Kurasini".²⁶

By 1920 all Swiss born Benedictines were back in Peramiho. They were Frs. Gallus Steiger, Hilarius Kasier, Xaver Hasler and Stanislaus.

Well one could argue that the German Benedictines of St. Ottilien were repatriated only because they were Germans and not because they collaborated with the German colonial officials. But collecting all evidence, it is clear that the British had well observed the close collaboration between the Missionaries and the colonial officials. If at all the Benedictines had preoccupied themselves with purely religious matters, and if they had stood aloof from the political drama, definitely the British would have let them stay in Tanganyika and continue with their mission.

Final Remarks

The collaboration and relationship between the German Benedictines of St. Ottilien and the German colonial authorities before and during the Maji Maji War was to a great extent quite obvious. In few occasions harsh treatment from side of the Missionaries made the natives believe that the German missionaries were on the same boat with the German colonial officials. Flogging was to some extent accepted as means of punishing people, however it was not expected to be utilised by missionaries in purely religious matters and especially on girls.

The German colonial conquests of the inland tribes had facilitated and even paved the way for the missionary movement inland. Before these conquests the missionaries were at the mercy of African chiefs and tribes. After their subjugation, the missionaries did not need any longer their Chiefs' protection or good will for their movement in the country. Thus the arrival of the colonial flag in Uhehe in 1891, and in Ungoni in 1897, and in Upogoro in 1901, had facilitated the beginning of the missionary work in those areas. Even along the coast, transport of the Benedictines was greatly facilitated by the colonial authorities who granted free tickets to them.

In the various fields of missionary work, the colonial authorities had proved to be very helpful. The most important among those fields was the fight of the slave trade and slavery. Through the government laws and decrees, this made it easy for the missionaries to buy slaves so that they could set them free and evangelise them. On top of this the government helped in giving subsidies for upkeep of those slaves.

²⁵LHilK p.94

²⁶LHilK pp.99 & 102

The colonial power had served the Benedictines quite considerably before and during the Maji Maji war. It had given all necessary information about the existence of the state of war in the country. Moreover, it even offered them protection or the means to defend themselves in some cases.

This readiness on the part of the colonial power to protect the missionaries had other consequences, unfortunately, negative consequences: the colonists blamed the missionaries mercilessly when any mishap befell the latter, as in the case of Bishop Spiss, and his escort. This blame in its turn produced a whole lot of polemics on the side of the Benedictines. In comparison to the behaviour of the colonial officials during the Bushiri Uprising of 1888/89 in many parts of the country the authorities felt it their duty to help the missionaries in many ways, such as helping in searching out for the missionaries who were victims of the uprising, as they did in the case of Sr. Walburga of Nyangao, or Bishop Spiss in Mukukuyumbu.

The colonial Government officials were the ones to record from the witnesses for the first time the tragedy of the missionaries, thus enabling the missionaries and the modern readers of the story of the war to have at least some official sources from which to begin the writing of its history.

Africans themselves had tended to misunderstand the role of the missionaries in some cases especially in tax problems. Consequently, they considered them as a part of the colonial oppressive element. All in all one could say this: due to various coincidental events such as belonging to the same nationality, and the simultaneous arrival of the colonialists and the Benedictines, and moreover due to the some cooperation with regard to slaves, the Benedictines had made enemies from among the ranks of the Africans in Tanzania and so they shared the same fate as the German colonial official during the Maji Maji war.

On the other hand, the Benedictines had tried their level best in helping to alleviate the problems of the Africans during the war. There were some German Benedictines, who risked getting a bad name or who risked putting their relationship with the colonial power in jeopardy in defence of the Africans. This is to show that although the missionaries and Fr. Johannes Häflinger did suffer from the uprising, they were not blindfolded by those war- disasters suffered and be insensitive to the sufferings of many innocent Africans. Among the first steps taken by Fr. Häflinger, the then Superior of Kigonsera Mission, was request for setting free the Christians imprisoned in Songea. When he came to learn that among those people captured by Askaris in the effort to suppress the Maji Maji uprising there were some Christians as well, he went to the District Commissioner (D.C.) to ask for their release. In doing this he used an expression which made the D.C., Mr. Richter, be very irritated. Fr. Häflinger said he was asking for the release of 'our people' meaning the Christians. On hearing this expression the D.C retorted:

“ Ja, die Missionäre wollen immer ein Bezirksamt im Bezirksamt errichten...”²⁷.

We are not told whether he was successful in his attempt to free them or not. The German army, employed to subdue the people fighting in the Maji Maji war, used the Scorched- earth policy. Consequently people suffered from hunger. Again, Fr. Häflinger appealed to the D.C., Mr. Richter, to try to make him aware of what was happening to the people. Richter's response was without any sense of pity. He said that it was good that the people did suffer that. Much. According to him that did not matter as long as they (the colonialists) did have enough to eat. Moreover, Richter added, that he would have done all he could to prevent people from starving.

²⁷ A.C.B.M., Chronik von Kogonsera, 17.1. 1905.

According to Mr. Richter , the policy was followed to teach the people the hideous lesson of war²⁸. Fr. Häflinger was not put off by such an argument. He only reminded the D.C. that no government was allowed to kill its citizens²⁹.

Despite the cruel methods of repression the Wangoni appeared all the more determined to fight on courageously. Hence a new tactic was invented to induce them to lay down their arms. This consisted of taking women as prisoners instead of the men in war. Again Fr. Johannes Häflinger went back to the D.C to explain the danger of the new system. He argued that there was a great danger for the soldiers to abuse the women. Even in this case, the D.C. answered by stating that he had told the askari not to do such a thing³⁰.

Before the leaders of the Maji Maji uprising were executed Fr. Häflinger made an appeal to the D.C. that he be allowed to see them and make a last attempt to convert them to Christianity. Mr. Richter consented to it. On the day of the Execution, Fr. Häflinger was informed that he had only thirty minutes to see them. Due to this he was able to baptise thirty- one of the chiefs condemned to death. Seventeen of them however, did not want to hear anything about baptism. Among those baptised there was Chief Mputa of Maposeni³¹

“ Villages and crops were ruthlessly destroyed, cattle were carried off, and the German askaris were granted absolute licence to rob, kill or enslave the inhabitants”³².

In Umatengo the brutalities of destroying every thing the askaris could not carry with them met an uncompromising opposition from the side of Fr. Häflinger. He saw that this was not the right behaviour for the Wamatengo who suffered such inhuman acts did not deserve them because they did not take part in the Maji Maji Uprisings³³

The askaris were allowed to behave in that manner because the government officials had allowed them to do so as part of their payment for their participation in the repression of the uprising. Why should the Government allow them to do so? It is stated that the askaris were not going to be paid in cash because the Government has no money³⁴. The results of these brutalities was a general state of suffering, especially deaths resulting from famine. According to the same Fr. Häflinger, out of the 80,000 people in Ungoni, some 60,000 lost their lives³⁵.

Fr. Häflinger had to pay dearly for his boldness in denouncing the atrocities. It is said that some of his denunciations were supported by photographs. Consequently he was declared “persona non grata” in the colony and had to be deported. The sentence was not carried out, probably due to the intervention of the superiors of the Father. (It may have been Bishop Thomas Spreiter). As an alternative he was transferred to Ndanda³⁶. He left for Ndanda on 5th August 1907, together with bishop Thomas Spreiter³⁷.

²⁸ Ibid. 7. 2. 1906.

²⁹ Ibid. 21. 9. 1906.

³⁰ Ibid. 9.2.1906.17.2.1906.

³¹ Ibid. 27.2.1906. HALIMOJA Y., op. cit. p. 19.

³² MOFFETT J. O. (ed.) , Handbook of Tanganyika, Dar. Es. Salaam 1958, P 76.

³³ Ibid. 24.9.1906. 29.9.1906. KM 8 (1905) 187. Says twelve Wamatengo participated in the war.

³⁴ Ibid. 29. 9.1906.

³⁵ Ibid. 30.6.1907. Other authors put it even a higher figure. HALIMOJA Y., op. cit. p. 26. GRÜNDER H., op. Cit. P. 248. He puts the number of Ngoni who starved to be 5,000.

³⁶ ANDERSON W .B., the Church in East Africa 1840- 1974, Dodoma 1977, p. 59. GRÜNDER H., op. 248. A. C. B.M., Chronik von Kigonsera . 16 7. 1907.

MAPUNDA O.B – MPANGALA G. P. , The Maji Maji War in Ungoni, Nairobi 1969, P. 26 ff.

³⁷ A.C.B.M., Chronik von Kigonsera 5.8.1907.

All-in all missionaries did in Tanzania a wonderful job, spiritually, materially and socially. The major factor which tainted the work of the missionaries was that, in most African countries, missionary work has been constrained to go together with the work of explorers, merchants and colonizers, thus bringing about to missionaries much inconveniences. Whatever the intention of the messengers of the faith, missions looked like the other face of colonialism to the native peoples. Soldiers who conquered the territory, merchants who exploited it, missionaries baptizing and founding schools-all the came from the same country, had the same colour of skin, spoke the same language and exchanged hospitality. No one could doubt that they were all part and parcel of the same commodity. Only when the colonial era was over, and the white owners abandoned the country while missionaries remained, did many people realize that the true function of the missionary is independent of colonialism. Beside the church had anticipated decolonisation.

Colonialism has generally been described by many Africans as a serious setback to the political, economical and religious growth of the Africans. Let me just say that, Colonialism was not all bad. Definitely African countries have also benefited from colonial powers. For the spread of Christianity colonialism was a *blessing in disguise*. The *pax colonialis* had facilitated the spread of Christianity just as the *Pax Romana* facilitated the spread of Christianity in the Roman Empire.

Appendix

German Government officials in Southern Tanzania: 1888- 1902. ³⁸

<u>District</u>	<u>German Official</u>	<u>Duration</u>
Dar- es – Salaam	Lieutnant August LEUE	May 1887- 1890. May 1891.
	GUSTAV BOEDER	May 1904- May 1909
Iringa	Lieutnat Ewald von KLEIST	1895.
„	Lieutnat Arthur von STOCKL	1896-1900.
„	Hauptmann Tom von PRINCE	1896-1900.
„	Hauptmann Kurt Frh. Von SCHLEINITZ	Oct.1900-March 1901
„	Lothar von der MRWITZ	March to June 1901.
„	Hauptmann Kurt Frh.von PRINTWITZ and GAFFRON	June.1901-March 1902.
„	Hauptmann Ernst NIGMANN	May 1903- Sep. 1904. May 1905-Febr- 1910.
Kilwa (Kivinje)	Ernst Albrecht FREIHERR Von EBERSTEIN	April 1981
„	Lieutnant August LEUE	1892.
„	Ernst Albrecht Fr. Von EBERSTEIN	1893-1899.
„	Hauptmann a.D. Franz RICHTER	Oct. 1907-June 1912. July- Dec. 1905.

³⁸ National archives of Tanzania, Guide to the German records Vol . I Dar – as – Salaam, marburg 1973, pp 68- 125.

Lindi	Ernst Albrecht Frh. Von EBESTEIN	1888
„	Rochus SCHMIDT	May 1890.
„	Hans RAMSAY	April 1891.
„	Peter von SIVERS	Dec.1891- Oct.1892 (+
Songea	Philipp ENGELHARDT	July 1897.
„	Hauptmann Edwald von KLEIST	1897.
„	„ Georg MERGLER	1898-1899.
„	oberltnt. Willy ALBINUS	1899- 1900.
„	Lieutenant Karl FRANK	1900-1902
„	Oberclnt. Willy ALBINUS	1902-1905
„	Hauptmann Johannes von FIEDLER	March 1902- April 190
„	Oberltnt. Gideon von GRAWERT	April 1903- Decmber 1904
„	Theodor Von HASSEL (Hauptmann)	Dec. 1904- May 1906.
German Governors in Tanzania, 1889- 1918		

Name	Period of Administration
Imperial Commissioner	
Hermann WISSMANN	1889 (Feb). April- April 1891.
Julius Freiherr von SODEN	1891 (Feb.) April- Sept.. 1893.
Friedrich Freiherr Von SCHELE	1893 Sept. – January 1895.
Herman von WISSMANN	1895 (Sep.) July – May (Dec). 1896.

Edward von LIEBERT	(1896 Dec.) 1897 January – Aug. 1900	(March 1901).
Adolf Graf von GÖTZEN Acting Governor	April 1901- April 1906.	
Dr. Franz STUHLMANN	1902 Oct. _ May 1903.	
„	1904 Oct. – April 1905.	

Missionary Fathers mentioned in the course of this work ³⁹

a. From St. Ottilien

Name	Duration of Work
Bonifatius Fleschutz	1888-1891
Thomas Spreiter ⁴⁰	1900-1920
Franziskus Mayr	1890-1891
Xaver Baumann	1891-1894
Maurus Hartmann	1894-1905
Basilus Festl	1894-1897
Leop Lang	1901-1912
Dominikus Enschoff	1892-1895
Alfons Adams	1896-1901
Ambros Mayer	1896-1917
Anton Ruedel	1895-1913
Johanes Häflinger	1895-1955
Bernward Baule	1897-1898

³⁹ RENNEN FR. (ed. .) Op. cit. pp 149- 152.

⁴⁰ Consecrated Bishop in 1906 to Succeed Bishop Cassian Spiss.

Severin Hofbauer	1895-1955
Cassian Spiss	1893-1905
Simon Trossmann	1895-1910
Paulinus Hauser	1902-1909

b. From Beuron

Eustach Fuchs 190	1903-1919
Innocenz Hendle	1897-1906
Franziskus Leuthner	1897-1905

Missionary Brothers in the course of this work

Name	Duration in Mission
Romuald Hofmann	1888-1889
Rupert Hochberger	1888-1889
Fridolin Braun	1888-1891
Benedikt kantweg	1888-1889
Petrus Michel	1888-1889
Michael Forer	1890-1919
Laurenz Brenner	1897-1920
Meinrad Berger	1894-1909
Gabriel Sonntag	1903-1905
Andreas Scholzen	1904-1905
Cyprian Hölz	1904-1916