

**Shepherds, Servants, and Strangers: Popular Christianity, Theology,
and Mission among Tanzanian Lutheran Ministers**

by Elaine Christian

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ABSTRACT

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Elaine Christian

This dissertation is an ethnographic description of how pastors (and other ministers) in the Northern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania understand and carry out their ministry: How they reflect, mediate, and influence local Christian practice and identities; how theology and theologizing forms an integral part of their social worlds; and how navigating and maintaining relationships with Christian mission partnerships (including “short-term mission”) becomes an important part of their ministry. Drawing from fieldwork conducted between June 2014 and September 2015, I present an account of Christianity that adds to anthropological scholarship by emphasizing the role of theology as a grounded social practice, and considers the increasingly divergent character of Christian mission and its role in modern Tanzanian Christianity. Additionally, I offer a contribution to existing scholarship on Christianity by focusing on pastors as a central mediating figure in Christianity, showing how, in their work, Christian practice, theology, and mission are experienced in social relationships. I demonstrate how theology and theologizing directly address local negotiations of Christian identity and practice, I examine the articulation between theological debates and Tanzanian experiences of mission, and I describe how mission in Tanzania has been and continues to be contextually understood with reference to the local practice of Christianity.

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Glossary of terms and abbreviations

Swahili terms

<i>Askofu</i>	Bishop
<i>Diakonia</i>	Ministry to the poor, ill, or needy
<i>Kundi</i>	Congregation, group
<i>Mahusiano</i>	Relationships (actual instances)
<i>Mchungaji</i> (pl. <i>wachungaji</i> , title “Mch.”)	Shepherd, pastor
<i>Mgeni</i> (pl. <i>wageni</i>)	Guest, visitor, foreigner, stranger
<i>Mtaa</i> (pl. <i>mitaa</i>)	Neighborhood, street, sub-parish
<i>Mtumishi</i> (pl. <i>watumishi</i>)	Servant, minister
<i>Ndafu</i>	Gilded goat
<i>Shamba</i>	Farm, field
<i>Uchungaji</i>	Pastorate, pastorhood
<i>Uhusiano</i>	Relationship (abstract)
<i>Ushirikiano</i>	Partnership, cooperation, collaboration
<i>Utambulisho</i>	Identity
<i>Utumishi</i>	Service, ministry

Abbreviations

CMS	Church Mission Society
ELCA	Evangelical Lutheran Church of America
ELCNT	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Northern Tanganyika
ELCT (KKKT)	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (<i>Kanisa la Kiinjili la Kiluteri Tanzania</i>)
LMW	Leipzig Missionswerk
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
ND	Northern Diocese
NG	Next Generation
STM	Short Term Mission
TANU	Tanganyika (Tanzania) African National Union
TMW	<i>Tumwabudu Mungu Wetu</i> (ELCT hymnal)
WMY	Worldwide Missions for Youth

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Chapter 1: Introduction

What does theology have to do with social relationships?

I arrived in Tanzania on a Monday. On Tuesday, my host Titus, a lay minister in the Lutheran church who had recently started a primary school for disadvantaged children, went to the airport a second time to pick up Tom, a representative of a British organization that was considering partnering with the school and sponsoring some of the students. On Wednesday, Titus drove me to Wona Parish, where I met the senior pastor, Mch.¹ Kimori, with whom I would be staying for the next while. He was just wrapping up a two-day seminar for youth at the parish. On Thursday, Mch. Kimori and I went to the airport again to pick up four American visitors, in Tanzania for a short-term mission trip – they would be putting on a seminar for Sunday School teachers. Mch. Kimori wasn't sure how the visitors—Pentecostals—would like the parish they'd be attending on Sunday: “They are not Lutherans,” he said, “and we have different theology, doctrine, and things we insist on.”

What does theology have to do with social relationships – such as the relationships between Titus and Tom, between Titus' school and Tom's organization; between Mch. Kimori and the visitors and the district head who assigned him to facilitate their visit and the Sunday school teachers who would be attending the seminar; between the American organization who sent the four visitors and the diocese in which Mch. Kimori is employed; between Lutherans, that they have identifiable “theology, doctrines, and things we insist on”; between Lutherans and Pentecostals, that they might feel strange at each other's Sunday worship services – and me?

My goal in this dissertation is to examine Christianity as a theological enterprise that is implicated in the social lives of Christians. This is a departure from previous anthropological

¹ Mch. is the written title form of *Mchungaji*, pastor (lit. “shepherd”)

scholarship which has analyzed Christianity in terms of meaning and its limits (Geertz 1973; Engelke and Tomlinson 2007), politics and economics (Green 2003), authority (Asad 1983), colonialism (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991), or gender (Hodgson 2005). These are indeed salient aspects; all those things are implicated in local experiences of Christianity around the world. However, Christianity also has a distinct theological orientation, and that is what I explore here as my primary contribution to anthropological scholarship. I do so by examining the lives of people who do quite a lot of theologizing: pastors. This is my secondary contribution to the anthropological literature on Christianity. Focusing on pastors, as central mediating figures in Christianity, allows a discussion of Christianity which includes both elements of the hierarchical ecclesiastical structures and the theological work that shapes much of what pastors do.

My examination of Christianity, as it is experienced by pastors, is located around three poles. I have already mentioned theology; the others are local Christianity and mission.

Christianity is a global religion, but it is always embedded in specific social, historical, and political contexts. The pastors I studied are *specific* people. They are Tanzanian by nationality; ethnically they are mostly Chagga; denominationally, almost all are Lutheran. Their understanding of Christianity and of their role within it is shaped by these and other identities. The first question that I address in this thesis, then, is **“How is Christianity experienced today in northeastern Tanzania, particularly by pastors; and what are some of the major themes of their work as pastors?”** My work, which focuses on Lutheran pastors, adds a richness to current scholarship on African Christianity which tends to focus on Pentecostalism.

Theology is not religion, though it is a major and foundational part of it. It is an academic or scholarly discipline, but also a daily practice for my interlocutors, in official and unofficial contexts. It too has global reach and local specificity; thus theology is not just a way for

Christians to understand Christianity, but for African Christians to understand Africanness. As a mode of reflection of the human condition, theology forms a parallel to anthropology, and therefore I ask, **“What does theology, and the practice of theologizing, offer anthropology in terms of our understanding of the human condition?”** Furthermore, by examining the genre of African theology, what can we learn about how global and local processes reflect and inform each other, and how Christians negotiate these complex encounters between global and local, especially in Africa where these encounters have often been intertwined with colonialism?

Christian mission has been variously understood as a manifestation of colonial domination, an expression of piety, an effort towards building a moral narrative, a religious analogue to secular development (or vice versa) – or a theological imperative. What is meant by “mission” and what is involved in doing mission cannot be taken for granted. Mission is highly diffuse and flexible, it is shot through with anxieties and ambiguities, and as I will demonstrate, it always has been. Mission can mean almost anything or almost nothing, depending on the context, and is a continuing topic of debate within Christianity. Short-term mission has become particularly popular and reflects this diversification of mission. I ask, **“What has been the context of mission, especially in northern Tanzania, how has it changed, and how is mission understood and engaged with by local clergy?”**

1.1. Scope and rationale

I intend for this dissertation to contribute to anthropological knowledge in three areas, corresponding with the three poles I have identified.

First: an ethnographic account of Christianity in Tanzania, with particular emphasis on ministers and ordained clergy. Specifically, I focus on pastors and other ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, Northern Diocese. One particular area where I hope to

make a contribution here is in the discussion of Lutheranism today: Much of the anthropological scholarship on Christianity in Africa in recent years has focused on Pentecostalism. Though it is indeed popular, the liturgical traditions of Lutheranism and Catholicism enjoy an even more prominent position in Tanzania and other African countries, and thus my research provides a much needed dimension. I *do* discuss Pentecostalism in terms of how Lutheran ministers and church leaders position themselves with respect to Pentecostalism. I focus on three aspects of Christianity and particular ordained ministry that emerged as major focuses in my interlocutors' work: *Utambulisho* "identity", *utumishi* "service", and *uhusiano* "relationship". I also intend to contribute to an anthropological understanding of Christianity by focusing on pastors and other ministers. They are important figures in Christianity, yet their social worlds have not been the subject of sustained anthropological enquiry.

I begin to develop this enquiry in my discussion of local Christianity, but I develop it more fully in what I consider my primary contribution to anthropological scholarship: a consideration of theology. This is particularly salient when one's research participants are pastors and theologians, and their daily activities are often concerned with theology and theologizing. Not that they are somehow extraordinary people, existing on a higher spiritual plane than common parishioners; but rather that they occupy a special position. In their daily work, pastors both influence and reflect popular Christian theologies; they mediate global and local theologies; they read works of scholarly theology (and some also write them) and through various means, formal or otherwise, they then teach their parishioners. Their daily work, including their mundane parish administration tasks, exists within the diocese as an ideological apparatus understood theologically. Their social lives are organized theologically, and their theological lives are organized socially. I intend this, too, as a contribution to the anthropology of Christianity, by

focusing on the specific role of pastors in both reflecting and authoritatively producing popular theology and religious practice.

Third: a reconsideration of the nature of mission in a time where it has become flexible, porous, and diverse. Mission is the subject of much debate, including internal debate in Christian communities worldwide; it has become self-consciously critical. “Partnership” has emerged as a major motif in mission, accommodating such divergent orientations. In particular, short-term mission emerges as a nexus of these dynamics, reflecting and reproducing the diverse and diffuse nature of mission. Nevertheless, mission remains as a salient concept in Christianity, and this self-critical internal debate is now an integral part of mission.

1.2. Outline of thesis

I have taken my goals and areas of contribution as organizing themes for the rest of the dissertation, dividing it into three parts. In the rest of the introduction, I will first discuss my theoretical and methodological orientations, and how these evolved throughout my field research; and I will review some anthropological literature on Christianity in Tanzania.

In Part 1, Christianity in Kilimanjaro, I focus on the historical and contemporary context of Christianity in northeastern Tanzania. In Chapter 2, *Utambulisho* (Identity), I examine how my research participants ground their senses of belonging to different identities, ethnic, spiritual, and national, and I evaluate how these efforts at grounding identities are mediated by various situations, actors, and material elements. I highlight the awareness of “others”, particularly the spiritual “other” of Pentecostalism. Chapter 3, *Utumishi* (Service), discusses how *utumishi* forms an identity and a practice for my research participants, who are often known as *watumishi*, servants. *Utumishi* forms an essential lens through which I examine the work of the diocese: What is the context of *utumishi*, and how do *watumishi* experience and practice their *utumishi*?

Utumishi informs the context of encounters with *wageni*, but it also plays a large role in the local practice of Christianity, in that *watumishi* (and particularly *wachungaji* “pastors”, lit. “shepherds”) are central, privileged figures within the diocese who mediate, reflect, and influence popular Christianity. In Chapter 4, I turn to the concept of *Uhusiano* “relationship” and its close conceptual relative, *ushirikiano* “partnership”. I examine how relationship and partnership are experienced; perceived, produced, reproduced, and mobilized. I demonstrate the importance of *uhusiano* in the work of the diocese and of individual *watumishi*, and at an organizational level, I discuss how and why the diocese maintains partnerships, with whom, and what their importance is.

I turn to theology in Part 2, Anthropology with/in Theology, examining the interactions between anthropology and theology. Beginning in Chapter 5, On an Anthro-Theology, I describe engagements and points of contact between disciplines, and identify “potential” as a focus point for theology and anthropology. I examine what the disciplines have to offer each other: not just because “it hasn’t been done”, but because it offers a better interpretation. Specifically, I examine theological understandings of hope with respect to friendship, suggesting that “hopeful acts of friendship” (borrowed from Lash 1996; via Fountain 2013) may offer an improved understanding of social relationships, particularly in global religious partnerships. I discuss the pedagogical nature of theology and theologizing, and I draw together elements of potential, hope, and pedagogy in an examination of theology as an effort at “figuring out” (Varenne 2007), a theme which I continue to develop throughout. In Chapter 6, I discuss the history and current context of African theology. I describe two models of African theology, the first of which emerged during independence-era Africa, drawing on reinterpretations of African Traditional Religion; and I examine a case-study of a formal Lutheran theology based on that tradition.

Subsequently I discuss a paradigm shift in African theology, and how global theological trends towards “social justice theology” are instantiated in the Northern Diocese. I conclude by compare several “practical theologies” to the first case study of formal Lutheran theology.

Part 3 examines Christian mission. I give an overview of the history of mission in Tanzania and Kilimanjaro, particularly Lutheran mission. I examine what it meant to be a missionary at other points in history, what it means now, and what influenced that process of change. Chapter 7, Colonial Missions, describes the history of missionary work in Northern Tanzania, comparing German mission (1893-1940) and American mission (after 1940), and their divergent philosophies and methodologies. I suggest that these mission periods reflected two broader paradigms within mission in general, the second of which also began declining around independence. I continue the history in Chapter 8, Post-Independence Mission, by bringing “partnership” back into the discussion. I examine how partnership has become a major motif of mission work, including in Tanzania. I describe the forms that mission now takes in the Northern Diocese, arguing that “mission” has become highly diverse and even contradictory in its multiple and shifting meanings in different contexts. Mission can mean almost anything, or almost nothing, depending on whom you ask. However, I suggest that this lack of complete coherency does not make it an irrelevant concept; in fact it has its roots in earlier paradigms of mission. Finally, Chapter 9, Short-Term Mission, examines the history of the short-term mission trip, how it has become a salient concept in Christianity, an industry in itself, and an influence on mission in general, particularly in its diversification. Although the engagement between short-term missionaries and Tanzanian ministers was my initial research focus, as I discuss below, I have since had to change the way I viewed what pastors do, and who short-term missionaries are. However, since interactions with self-identified short-term missionaries *are* still part of regular

work for Tanzanian pastors, and since these interactions *are* part of an ongoing history including the colonial and post-colonial mission efforts which helped shape Tanzanian Christianity, I devote the last chapter to examining short-term mission within American evangelicalism. I discuss some of the criticisms of STM, showing how they are also reproduced in certain ways from within. I argue that STM, particularly in its self-conscious critique, both reflects and influences the diversification of mission. I also examine some of the interactions between *watumishi* and *wageni* in short-term mission, discussing what we may gain from looking at the different ways in which *wageni* conceptualize their presence, and the still more different ways in which Tanzanians perceive them. These three chapters together have a more historical character; I have chosen this angle for Part 3 in order to show how the currents which have shaped the current polymorphous character of mission emerge from historical ambiguities on the nature and practice of mission.

I conclude by drawing together some connections between the three main areas of local Christianity, theology, and mission. If they are the primary colors, I discuss the secondary colors in my conclusion, linking together the themes I will have developed throughout.

1.3. Overview of research methodology

My theoretical orientation and my research methodology developed in tandem with each other, and each was tied into situations I found myself in during my research, whether intentionally or not. In this next section, then, I describe my experience in the field, and how my methodological and theoretical approaches evolved as a result. I also introduce some of the main characters and organizations that figured prominently in my research, in the order I encountered them. Names of individuals, organizations, and parishes have been changed, except for known public figures.

a) Initial experience in the field

12 July: We did our first evangelism presentation at 6:00 in a little village out of town about half an hour. We drove there in a truck with no cover, just benches down both sides. It's kind of cramped, but not bad at all. It was dark by the time we started singing, but it gets dark real early here – 6:30 or 7:00. The film was in English. ... The audience seemed to not really be paying attention, but I couldn't really tell. We started handing out tracts too early also, and just in general were not sure of what to do. Still, there has to be a first time for everything. We'll get better.

14 July: Our presentation was at another school today, mainly younger children though, like 8-12 yrs. I don't know how much they understood, but we did have an interpreter for the speaking parts. Nothing very interesting.

I wrote these journal entries as a 17 year old girl. In the summer of 2000, I spent a month in Tanzania's Kilimanjaro region. It was my third short-term mission trip; I'd been to Mongolia and Germany previously. A Presbyterian pastor's kid living in suburban Toronto, Ontario, I felt my destiny in life was to become a Bible translator, and that summer I was intent on delivering the message of salvation to the Tanzanian people. My teammates and I, 26 of us, put on daily evangelism presentations in schools and public open areas. We had songs, puppet shows, dramas (including white mime makeup), our testimonies, thousands of tracts, and a portable film projector and screen with a library of three films: Two produced by the interdenominational organization that was running this mission trip, one in English and one in Swahili; plus the Jesus Film, produced by Campus Crusade and dubbed into Swahili.

We also hiked. We moved to a new home base each week, traveling by foot. We stayed in tents at a women's centre, a secondary school, and two Lutheran parishes. We had no backpacking experience. We struggled with the 80s-vintage backpacks issued to us; they didn't fit us, and we filled them too full and too heavy. When I recall what stands out about that summer in my mind, it's the times we saw as particularly difficult: The hike between Siha Secondary and Londerossi, 23 kilometers as the crow flies; we ran out of water and did not finish until after dark. The occasion when the truck we were in tipped over on a remote track on Shira

Plateau; I got a concussion and had my scalp stitched up by the light of a kerosene hurricane lamp.

I came home and wrote a five page letter to everyone who had contributed funds to my mission trip. I told them, these things happened to us, and God protected us; we were able to make it through those challenges and present the Gospel to upwards of a thousand people. We had “planted seeds”. At the time, I genuinely considered my time in Tanzania to have been a life-changing experience. Indeed it was, although not in the way that I had imagined it.

b) Pilot research

My PhD program requires a summer’s worth of ethnographic fieldwork after the first year of coursework. Since my trip to Tanzania, I’d earned a BA in linguistics, found that I both disliked and was terrible at translation, abandoned my ideas about being a Bible translator, and discovered anthropology. I earned an MA in social anthropology, focusing on East Africa, development, and religion. So as I sat down to write my research proposal during the spring of 2012, I asked myself where I could conduct ethnographic research for two months, that would bring together studies in those areas. My mind went back in time twelve years.

When I came home from Tanzania, I felt I’d had a life-changing experience. Thinking about it as an adult, though, I knew that 17-year-old me had a view that was skewed and woefully incomplete. I’d been thrilled about the thousand people in whose hearts seeds had been planted, but I had no idea who those people were. I didn’t think about any of them after returning home, though not because I didn’t want to: I was literally unable to think of any specific individuals that had attended any of our presentations.

I decided that the “short-term mission trip” deserved closer investigation, especially since I was unable to find any anthropological work on short-term mission. I called up Worldwide

Missions for Youth, the group that organized the team I was on. Their Tanzania team was still running every summer; in fact the team leader was still the same, 12 years on. I negotiated with them to be allowed to accompany the team as an observer for their entire 7-week program of training, project in Tanzania, and debrief.

Worldwide Missions for Youth is an independent, interdenominational, conservative, Evangelical Christian organization. Founded in the 1970s, their flagship programs are teen summer trips. Each year, WMY offers about 25 seven-week trips for teenagers, plus trips for adults and pre-teens, and programs for children as young as four. Participants are recruited through word of mouth, homeschooling conferences, Christian music tours, and online. Their American base hosts the training for summer teams, a conference centre for the rest of the year, and a two-year unaccredited Bible school (the students of which fill some of the summer team leader positions). WMY also maintains bases in more than 25 countries on all continents, which operate similar programs, including STM trips for local teenagers and adults, Bible schools, and outreaches to AIDS orphans. All US teams have two to three weeks of training in the US, about three weeks for their project, and one more week of debrief at the US base. Most years, the teen trips have about 500 total participants including leaders.

The Tanzania teams began as evangelism-only teams, but by the time I started my research, they were also working building WMY's new Bible school. Construction started in about 2009; as of 2015 the roof had been put on but the building remained unfinished when classes began with a student body of seven. Teams also spend about a week doing evangelism door-to-door and at presentations in primary and secondary schools.

During this phase, I studied the team members, not any Tanzanian people they met during their outreaches. I conducted both participant and non-participant observation, staying with the

team 24 hours a day for the entire 52-day program. I attended leader training seminars and the whole training program, which involved nightly gospel rallies, classes in evangelism and construction, Bible studies, and strict physical discipline. In Tanzania, I observed all daily activities, including construction, Bible studies, daily devotional sessions, prayer meetings, evangelism outings, and leaders' meetings. I also attended the debrief sessions. I did not conduct any formal interviews, instead preferring more informal conversations with individuals or small groups. The devotional sessions, I found, were quite like focus groups, albeit run by someone else.

The main limitations during this phase of study were that the team had very few interactions with Tanzanian people: during their three weeks in Tanzania, they stayed in tents on the Worldwide Missions for Youth property and were not allowed to wander around on their own; they did not speak or understand any Swahili; they brought much of their own food which was cooked by the two female leaders. Socially, they kept almost completely to themselves, and the team's spiritual and devotional focus turned inwards. This point was driven home after one of my mentors read a paper I wrote from this data set. I had examined the ways in which team members discussed developing spiritual maturity – how they were “growing in faith”. He remarked that I had been careful to describe the physical setting evocatively, but that after the introduction any shred of Tanzania disappeared completely, and that it seemed these kids “may as well have been on the moon”. Another limitation was the uncertainty and ambiguity surrounding my role with the team. Technically I was an observer and not a leader, but the team often treated me as a leader, and I was given a couple responsibilities normally delegated to leaders. I attended leaders' meetings, and on a few occasions found myself in situations where I was directly responsible for team members' safety.

c) Initial plans and questions

I realized that my mentor had an excellent point, and for the main phase of my dissertation research, I decided to focus on Tanzanian people who work with short-term missionaries. My goal was to identify as many as 10-15 short-term mission trips that would be occurring in northeastern Tanzania, whose Tanzanian facilitators and participants would be willing to participate in my research. I planned on conducting observations in project locations before, during, and after mission trips, in order to discern local perceptions of short-term missionaries and their projects. I had three populations in mind: Short-term missionaries, Tanzanian people who attended their outreaches, and a category of people I was calling “brokers” – people who helped short-term missionaries arrange their visits, projects, accommodations, and so on.

I was able to line up two short-term mission visits to observe, almost back-to-back, starting three days after I arrived in Tanzania. The first group was a non-denominational American organization called Next Generation. They were conducting the second installment of a seminar series for Sunday School teachers, in coordination with the Eastern Kilimanjaro district of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, Northern Diocese. The team agreed to participate, and so did the Tanzanian pastor they were working with, Mch. Kimori.

Next Generation (NG) is a para-church organization based in the Southwest whose mission is to equip ministers to “impact children for Christ” in their own culture. Their rationale is that childhood is the most significant time to be able to teach someone about God; most Christians become Christians as children. Therefore, they argue, more time and resources should be focused on ministering to children. Their main area of work is in equipping children’s ministry leaders (pastors, Sunday School teachers, etc.) with materials, resources, and pedagogical training.

NG have been working with the Northern Diocese since 2010, when they started their seminar series in Hai district. These seminars (which they offer in more than 25 countries)

operate for one week per year, in three successive years. NG advertises on their website for volunteers to join their “mission trips” teaching the seminars. I observed the seminar in the Eastern Kilimanjaro district in 2014, its second year there. The Next Generation team was the smallest of any of the groups I observed in detail, just four people. Sixty-eight Sunday School teachers representing 27 of the district’s 45 parishes were registered for the seminar, 21 of whom had attended the previous year. The sessions included “How do children learn best?”, “Getting your students involved in the lesson”, “How to lead a child to Christ”, “Helping children learn to pray”, “Bring the Bible to life”, and “Discipline: Theology, strategy and tips”. Participants divided into groups for lesson-planning sessions, which they presented to the other groups on the final day. NG team members also visited two local parishes for worship services and Sunday School observation. The seminar itself was carried out under the auspices of the district office and hosted at the district headquarters.

During this week-long seminar, I attended all the sessions for Sunday School teachers. I made recordings, took notes, and watched as Sunday School teachers participated in sessions on lesson plan ideas and demonstrations, lectures on child development and socialization, Bible studies, singing, and group discussions. I also attended Sunday worship services (including the Sunday School lesson) with the seminar team and Mch. Kimori, at two different parishes.

After this seminar wrapped up, I moved on to observe another short-term missions team. They were a group of students associated with Rise, a college-based ministry.² Their outreach program consisted of “life-skills” and evangelism presentations at secondary schools and some colleges around the Arusha area. I adopted a similar observation strategy with this group as I’d used with Worldwide Missions for Youth; I observed and recorded their presentations as well as

² I do not devote much attention to Rise in this thesis, since their project ended up being an outlier both geographically and denominationally, though I do mention them briefly in some areas.

some of their team devotional meetings. However, at the conclusion of their project in August 2014, I was realizing that my plan was inadequate.

d) Wona Parish: Transition to focus on watumishi

I had no further mission trips lined up until February 2015, leaving me to think about how I was going to follow up on these two mission trips for the next six months. I realized that the type of “follow-up” that I had planned—observations and interviews with the “intended beneficiaries” (my initial term) of the mission project—would be difficult. Although I could realistically follow up with several Sunday School teachers who had attended the Next Generation Seminar, I realized that it would be nearly impossible to be in touch with a representative sample of the secondary school students who had attended the Rise presentations. And in either case, there was only so much reminiscing about a presentation or a seminar that could be done.

Since Mch. Kimori was happy for me to continue observations around his parish in Wona, I decided that I would do that until the next group of short-term missionaries I had lined up arrived. Wona Parish will be introduced in more detail in Chapter 3.

I continued to focus on themes that Next Generation had been targeting. Since the seminar had focused on children’s learning in Sunday Schools, I decided to continue observing Sunday Schools and Sunday School teachers. I connected with the diocesan Sunday School coordinator and arranged to go with her on some of her visits to different parishes, I interviewed a few of the seminar participants, and I continued attending Sunday School at Wona Parish. However, this was difficult for two reasons: First, it only takes up about two hours per week, if you include the whole Sunday School, as well as any lesson preparation or meetings. Second, it was obvious that I was a major distraction if I attended Sunday School. Kids would jockey to sit next to me, trying to feel my purse, my hair, my recorder, my pen and notebook *while I was trying to write*. I felt

bad that they weren't paying attention to the lesson because of me. The teachers told me not to feel bad and that the kids would get used to me, but I wasn't convinced.

Additionally, a more basic issue was becoming apparent: I had been categorizing research participants in ways that just didn't make sense. In my proposal, "short-term missionaries" constituted a distinct category; in spite of different backgrounds, motivations, or ministry goals, I considered them a coherent set of people. Conversely, I did *not* have a conceptual category for local Tanzanian people working with short-term missionaries – I didn't know whether to refer to them as brokers, intended beneficiaries, locals, hosts, or what. A colleague jokingly suggested "victims". It became apparent that for many Tanzanians, the conceptualization was the reverse: The former does not constitute a salient category of people, while the latter does.

I began to figure this out after encountering confusion about my research topic. If someone asked what I was studying, I simply translated the phrase "short-term missionary" literally, and said that I was researching *wamisionari wa muda mfupi*.

"Oh, the missionaries," my new acquaintance would tell me. "My grandmother actually knew some of the first missionaries that came to Kilema."

"No, not those – I mean contemporary missionaries, you know when people show up just for a short time? Especially young people?"

"The volunteers? Yes, I remember there was one who was volunteering at Mwika Bible School for a year. Fell in love with the security guard, he didn't tell her he was already married, it was a mess."

"No, not those either. The ones who just come for a week or two."³

"Oh, you mean the *wageni*!"

³ I have somewhat arbitrarily excluded "volunteers" (interns, gap year programs) or so-called "medium-term" missionaries from my focus. This would be a good area for research especially into the dynamics of youth, employment shortages for new graduates, the politics of unpaid work, etc.

I had to admit that I was really concerned with dynamics around *wageni*. The word (sing. *mgeni*) has two valences of meaning: both guests/visitors, and foreigners/strangers. It could be someone from the other side of the world, or your next-door neighbor. I started telling people I was researching how Tanzanians saw *wageni*, how they interacted with them, and what role relationships with *wageni* played in local Christianity. The “short-term missionary” is just not a stable category of people in Tanzanian thought, and *wageni* is a broader category than I’d been imagining. It does include teenagers out to save the world and build orphanages, college students doing presentations in schools, and those putting on seminars for Sunday School teachers. It also includes families sponsoring parish projects, CEOs of faith-based NGOs on business trips, the bishop of Zimbabwe visiting the bishop of Tanzania, a Kenyan gospel choir on tour, all manner of visiting seminar and workshop organizers, and anyone who visits anyone for any reason.

At the same time, as I started focusing more on activities around Wona Parish, I was realizing that thinking of my observations in terms of “follow-up to observations about short-term missionaries” was still privileging the perspective of the short-term missionaries over that of the local people who encountered them; a perspective which I had hoped to depart from. As I mentioned, I did not have a conceptual category for these people when I arrived, but it turns out that one exists locally: *watumishi* (sing. *mtumishi*). Literally meaning “servant”, in business contexts it can mean an employee in general; in religious contexts in its broadest sense, any Christian at all, since all Christians are supposed to serve others. However, one of its chief meanings is people who specifically do Christian ministry in some formal capacity, whether as their employment (pastors, evangelists, parish workers) or on a voluntary or part-time basis (Sunday School teachers, elders, parish council members, choir members).

It was at this time, when I started observing *watumishi* more, as they went about their *utumishi* ‘service’, that I began thinking about theology. I had noticed a few mentions of different theologies right from the very beginning, and during the Next Generation and Rise projects, I had noted different theological understandings evident between *wageni* and seminar/presentation attendees.

During my time at Wona Parish, I decided to broaden my focus to include the parish staff and their ministry. Instead of focusing only on dynamics around short-term missionary projects, I would look at the everyday context of local religious practice⁴ into which those short-term mission trips often appeared. This included how ministers discussed (both informally amongst themselves, and formally during church services) theological understandings.

During my time at Wona Parish, I again concentrated methodologically on observation. Aside from my follow-up with the NG seminar participants, I spent most days at the parish office. I attended morning prayer (conducted daily among the parish staff, this included a hymn, a brief liturgy, a Scripture reading, a short homily which each staff took turns at, and prayers), staff Bible studies, sermon preparation sessions, staff meetings, both Sunday services, Sunday School, and any special events or workshops happening at the parish. I took written notes and made recordings of all of these. I also spent a lot of “down time” around the parish. Every ethnographer encounters plenty of occasions of “nothing’s happening” and I used these occasions to socialize with the staff, or to pitch in where necessary: helping the secretary figure out her new computer, mopping the sanctuary floor with the groundskeeper, washing the altar linens with the parish worker. I became friends with Sia, the cook, and would often sit outside by the hearth with her chatting. I joined the staff for morning tea and for lunch every day, and participated in many

⁴ Given that I am focusing on pastors and other ministers, in some senses this involves the production of religious practice. At the same time, though, *watumishi* reflect religious practice as much as they produce it.

of these informal conversations – occasionally about ministry, but also about politics, farming, personal relationships, and everything else. Again, I used these personal conversations as opportunities to ask questions as they came up in a more contextual manner, rather than conducting formal interviews.

Methodologically, a few limitations presented themselves. My ability to follow up with the NG seminar participants was limited, due to them being dispersed around the district, but this allowed me to focus on parish activities in a way that I could not have done had I been preoccupied with seminar followup. I was living at some distance from the parish and did not go in every day. Some parish business was not available to me; I generally did not observe personal counseling or some financial committee meetings. Finally, I had limited interaction with parishioners. Average Sunday attendance is about 1000, and I found it difficult to get to know anyone personally out of a crowd that size when you're only together for the Sunday service. However, this did allow me to focus more on the parish staff.

At first I conceptualized my observations at Wona as providing context – that is, in my head, the everyday church ministry was the “normal”, and the short-term mission projects were extraordinary events that occasionally punctuated “normal”. As I continued thinking about short-term missionaries as part of the much broader category of *wageni*, I realized that this too was not representative of reality, since hosting *wageni* and fostering partnerships of all kinds was an integral part of what the diocese was doing. This became increasingly apparent as I moved on to the next phase, which began with the Nebraska visit.

e) Northern Diocese: Transition to focus on partnership

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT)⁵ is the third largest Lutheran Church in the world, with 6,341,103 members listed in 2013, the last year for which national statistics

⁵ In Swahili, Kanisa la Kiinjili la Kiluteri Tanzania (KKKT)

are available;⁶ about 13% of the country's population. Evangelical Ethiopian Church Mekane Yesus edges it out with 6,355,838, while Sweden has 6.5 million.⁷ I will introduce the ELCT and the Northern Diocese in Part 1, particularly Chapter 3, but for now I will just mention that the Northern Diocese is one of ELCT's 25 dioceses. It's headquartered in Moshi, which is also the capital of Kilimanjaro Region. Its official partner within the Lutheran Communion is the Nebraska Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA).

While I was identifying groups that would be conducting short-term mission trips in Tanzania, I particularly looked for official diocesan twinning relationships, since I knew that "twinned" churches or dioceses often planned short-term mission trips. ELCA Nebraska were happy for me to observe their "vision trip" to Tanzania in February 2015. Those working with the team were also on board – Ndesario, the diocese treasurer, and Wilson, the tourism manager at the diocese-owned Uhuru Hotel and Conference Centre.

Nebraska and the Northern Diocese have been partners for over 20 years, and a delegation from Nebraska has visited at least once a year since about 2003. They call these "vision trips". The group was large (38 people) and skewed older; many of them were retired. They were from different Lutheran churches all over the state, and a few from other states as well. Unlike other groups, they did not have any particular goal; they weren't putting on seminars or presentations or building anything. A subgroup of four was distributing textbooks to the diocese's secondary schools, and some of the team members were intending to visit students whom they had been sponsoring. Besides that they didn't have any specific goal to accomplish other than visiting, and I accompanied them on all their visits.

⁶ <http://elct.org/news/2014.05.004.html>

⁷ <https://www.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/LWI-Statistics-2013-EN.pdf>. This source counts 5,825,312 for ELCT; still the third largest in that case.

Their schedule was packed, and had them visiting about three locations per day. Each morning after breakfast, three Coaster buses would pick us up from Uhuru Hotel and take us to wherever we were going. Over six days, the group visited: A women's training centre, a primary school for disabled children, a vocational training centre, a house-building project, a hospital, an orphanage, a seminary, a secondary school, an education centre for mentally disabled youth, the centre where the nuns live which is also a Montessori teacher training school, a village parish (they split into smaller groups for weekend village visits, staying with host families), along with village secondary and primary schools – all owned or operated by the diocese, except for the village schools. At each location, we would all file into the chapel or equivalent, and the director would talk about their operations and answer some questions. We'd have a guided tour, look into classrooms/dormitories/dining halls/clinics/barns, ask questions along the way, then repair to the dining hall or equivalent for either tea or lunch, sign the visitor's book, and leave for the next place. The group also attended the retirement service for outgoing bishop Martin Shao.

I had not been familiar with many of the locations the Nebraskans visited, having stayed mostly at one parish until then. So during the visits, I took notes with a view to grasping the diocese's scope. I also paid attention to how the team was talking about their experience amongst themselves, and how they (or we, more accurately) were welcomed as official guests at each location. A couple diocese pastors accompanied us, especially Mch. Nambua, the head of the diocese youth department, who eventually became a close friend and assistant. I accompanied the group on all their visits, taking written notes and recordings of many of the talks at those locations; I stayed at the same hotel and shared mealtimes with them, and participated in many informal conversations. I also conducted two formal interviews, with Nebraska personnel who

now work full-time in Tanzania and who were instrumental in the development of the partnership.

After the Nebraska group left, I began arranging my follow-up research at the diocese office (although as I said, I was realizing that it wasn't accurate to see this as follow-up, at least not as I had been thinking about it). It turns out I was very lucky with my research timing. When I approached the bishop, Dr. Fredrick Shoo,⁸ about observing the Nebraska visit and continuing around the diocese afterwards, he had only been bishop for about three weeks. I'd met him once previously when he came to Wona Parish, so he remembered me when I showed up at the diocese office. He was very agreeable to my conducting observations around the diocese. I met Bishop Shao⁹ a few times, and he was polite but aloof and declined to be interviewed formally. I do not think he would have supported my research the way that Dr. Shoo did, which can only be described as enthusiastic.

Dr. Shoo became an invaluable help to me. When I asked about finding a place to stay in Moshi (commuting by public transit from where I'd been staying near Wona was difficult), he looked into finding a spot for me in the diocese employee housing. Since none was available, he invited me to stay at his home. He and his wife Janet have four daughters; during my research one was already on her own, one away at university, and two in secondary schools, both boarding. I became a member of the family; at one social gathering he explained to his guests, "Mungu ametupa binti mwingine" – God has given us another daughter. Although when he's being introduced formally at an official event, an entire mouthful of honorifics is needed, most people address him colloquially as *Baba Askofu*, Father Bishop. To me he was also just *Baba* (and for her part, *Mama Askofu* also became my *Mama*.)

⁸ Pronounced "Sho". The final 'o' increases the length but does not change the sound.

⁹ If you get mixed up between former bishop Shao and current bishop Shoo, don't worry. Diocese pastors do it too.

Living with Baba Askofu,¹⁰ I was able to join him on his visits to various locations and events around the diocese. I attended weddings, send-off parties, fundraisers, graduations, retirements, dedications and ribbon-cuttings, cornerstone layings, seminars, church festivals, pastor's meetings, and over a dozen funerals (Baba Askofu officiates at the funeral of any pastor's immediate family). On many Sundays he would visit parishes for some of the above reasons; others he would officiate at the *kanisa kuu*, cathedral, in Moshi. During these travels around the diocese, I paid attention to the guest-host interactions, since he (and by extension, I as well) was treated as an honored guest. I made recordings and written notes on dozens of sermons, and on the hospitality arrangements such as tea receptions and lunch ceremonies which invariably accompanied any event big enough to merit the bishop's presence.

I didn't spend all of my time with Baba Askofu. He told me I should feel welcome anywhere in the diocese and its head office, and I spent several days a week conducting observations around the office, which employs about 50 people. Mch. Nambua had a spare desk in his office, and invited me to set up there. I connected with staff in the neighboring offices, particularly Mch. Ikunda, head of Christian education; Mch. Tilya, head of secondary schools and colleges; Mch. Ngalami, head of the women's department, and Bi.¹¹ Nangawe, the Sunday School coordinator.

During my observations at the diocese office, I realized I could not think of visits by *wageni* as extraordinary events puncturing "normal" diocese life. To start with, at the diocese level I could see that *wageni* were visiting regularly enough that these visits *were* part of "normal", at a broader scale. Second, even in the work of individual pastors, the idea of "partnership" was a constant theme. Partnership and showing hospitality to guests were not just

¹⁰ Although any bishop at all, current or retired, is normally addressed as "Baba Askofu" (and Shoo himself addressed his predecessors Shao and Kweka as such), in this thesis I only use it for Shoo.

¹¹ Roughly equivalent to Mrs.

part of hosting short-term mission trips; they emerged in all kinds of collaborations, and are embedded in cultural understandings of relationship more broadly, personal and organizational. These relationships were both understood and negotiated theologically as well as socially.

At the diocese office, I adopted similar observation methodologies, following the office schedule of events. Most days I would attend morning prayer, then write up notes in my office until teatime. Often I would stay in the break area chatting with someone during and after tea. I attended whatever meetings I was able to, for various diocese boards and committees (health and social welfare, Christian education, liturgy, and so on), making written notes and gathering any reports distributed. As the pastors and department heads got used to my presence, they would invite me to events (e.g. seminar for parish workers, planning meeting for an upcoming fundraiser, workshop for retired pastors, interfaith leaders' meeting). I almost always ate lunch with the employees, time that was—like at Wona—often spent discussing religion, politics, relationships, football, family, current events, and all kinds of other topics.

Often I would approach one or more of the diocese pastors with any questions I had, especially during the “nothing's happening” times. I'd ask about diocese ministries, things I'd read about Chagga tradition, politics, or theological concepts, or for their opinions on various projects that *wageni* were getting up to. Our conversations would often wander into other areas. As before, I didn't do very many formal interviews at all, because I found it much more natural to simply ask someone whenever I had a question, and let the conversation go where it would. They often asked me questions too, e.g. about Christianity in North America and the UK.

During my time at the diocese office I was also able to collect archival material, in particular the reports of the semi-annual diocese General Assemblies going back to 1948. The diocese also maintains a *Wageni* file which contains correspondence and schedules for all kinds

of guest visits. I was able to collect data from 2007-2015 from that file. I have also included a number of publications by my interlocutors and other Northern Diocese or ELCT *watumishi* in my secondary sources and analyses. These include Andrew Kyomo (2003), the late Anza Amen Lema (1999), Nehemia Moshi (2016), the late Eliewaha Mshana (1972), Stephen Munga (2009), Joseph Parsalaw (2015), Martin Shao (1990), Thomas Swai (2014), and Aaron Urrio (1990). I also refer to publications authored by the diocese's partner organizations, including the ELCA, the LWF, and its representatives. In this methodological approach, I follow scholars such as Messick (1993) in considering the interpretation of texts to be an important component of anthropological analysis.

I spent several days of observation at three of the diocese's five district offices – Eastern Kilimanjaro, Central Kilimanjaro, and Hai. I conducted some informal interviews with district staff with a view towards understanding the role of the district office as a middle level between diocese and parish (I include a more thorough description of the diocese administrative units in Chapter 4). For example, a lot of *diakonia*, social outreach for the poor, ill, or needy, is conducted at district level; I spent a day with a couple of deacons from the Hai District office visiting some banana garden projects they were promoting in the lowlands to improve food stability. Furthermore several partnerships occur at district level: the visit to the banana gardens was partly in preparation for a visit from the district's official partner, the Rothenburg district of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bavaria. I also attended the General Assembly (a three-day meeting held every two years) for the Eastern Kilimanjaro District, and the 2015 All-Africa Conference of the Lutheran World Federation.

The conference was held to mark the 60th anniversary of the first LWF All-Africa Conference, held in Marangu in 1955. It was held in Moshi Town, at the diocese-owned

Lutheran Uhuru Hotel & Conference Centre, although constant reference was made to “Marangu” as the meeting location. The conference kicked off with a worship service on May 20, 2015, and featured several days of presentations, panel discussions, Bible studies, plenaries, workshops, committee meetings, site visits, and musical entertainment before wrapping up with a huge public worship service on May 24, Pentecost Sunday, at the site of the 1955 conference. The main theme was “From Marangu to Wittenberg: Being a Reforming church in a changing African context,” thus emphasizing a reversal. Whereas Lutheranism (which began in Wittenberg) was brought to Marangu in 1893, that direction is now considered to be the other way round (and in several different directions as well). Sub-themes around which panels were organized were: Creation not for sale, Salvation not for sale, and Human beings not for sale. Panel speakers discussed gender justice, Lutheran identity, African theological education, intergenerational symbolism, and the “journey to 2017” (i.e., the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation). Strategy meetings were held for African participants and for the subregional committees, those subregions being Western, Central & Eastern, and Southern Africa. Delegates (including bishops, pastors, and laypeople) from almost all African Lutheran churches were present, along with LWF council members and representatives from some European Lutheran churches.

Finally, research followed me home. Baba Askofu often received *wageni* – neighbors, groups of seminary students, choirs, partners from Europe or America, diocese pastors or other leaders, and so on. He expected from the start that I would be interested in recording some of these interactions. Once after a group had arrived, unannounced, and not left until after 10 pm, Mama Askofu commiserated with me being kept up late. Laughing, she asked me, “If you weren’t already married do you think you’d be able to marry a pastor? Always having guests

over like this?” Baba Askofu cut in: “Of course she’s happy when guests come over, that’s what she’s researching. And she gets more material this way.”

During all of these observations at diocese events, head office operations, district offices, and elsewhere, I paid close attention to different identities that shape the lives of Christians, ideas of hospitality and receiving guests and the overarching concept of relationship, how *watumishi* go about conducting ministry, including the formation and elucidation of theology, and the conceptual history of mission as it is perceived by diocese ministers today, its relation to modern mission including short-term mission, and the divergent senses of “mission” that result.

One major limitation during the time I was based at the diocese office and living with Baba Askofu was the level of remove from “ordinary circumstances”. Several pastor friends told me, “You know, when you visit a parish for whatever event with Baba Askofu, you won’t have seen how things really are usually. The place will be all cleaned up and specially prepared for him.” In some ways this was obvious – the reason for Baba Askofu’s attendance was a special event like a dedication or fundraiser, and so the parish grounds would have been cleaned and groomed meticulously, decorations strung up, special choirs invited. A detachment of women would be occupied in the kitchen preparing huge quantities of food for lunch: Pilau, *machelare*, *morotsa* (both types of green banana and meat stew), green vegetables, beans, rice, cabbage, potatoes; a whole goat would have been roasting. Dozens of crates of soda would be on hand.

This removal of church leaders from the average parish situation was brought up a few times. Several attendees at a retired pastors’ meeting agreed that the bishop, in general, does not actually know anything about the day-to-day operations on the ground. I believe my research phase at Wona Parish (as well as visits to other average parishes on my own, not as part of a head office entourage) will have mitigated this, in that I was able to get a good sense of day-to-day

parish work. Conducting observations at the diocese level allowed an examination of not just how *watumishi* work within their parishes, but also how they relate to other *watumishi* and to the diocese as a hierarchical structure. And of course being able to attend so many special celebratory events with Baba Askofu allowed for an examination of hospitality and ways of honoring special guests that I would not have been able to do otherwise. Still, my work cannot really discuss the average Tanzanian parishioner or church-goer. It is basically about *watumishi*, those who are engaged in some kind of formal ministry role within the church. And within that, many of the *watumishi* I discuss are ordained clergy.

I experienced some limitations with respect to my own position in the diocese as a foreigner and a white woman at that, though this did not become a serious issue with most of my interlocutors. Many researchers in East Africa will be familiar with the experience of being called *mzungu*,¹² followed by crowds of children asking for gifts, feeling like people are just saying what they think the researcher wants to hear, etc. However, I only occasionally got a sense of being pandered to, or invited to come do my research at a particular location in order to enhance that pastor's image. Most pastors were used to interacting with foreigners and did not see me as anyone very out of the ordinary to begin with, and in any case those I worked with frequently (particularly in the diocese office) soon became used to my presence, and several became close friends.

This aspect was mitigated further by several factors. One was my fluency in Swahili; when I began my research in 2014 I had a professional working proficiency (ILR 3) and by the time I finished I had developed full professional proficiency (ILR 4). I also learned basic greetings and

¹² pl. *wazungu*. The word is said to come from *-zunguka* "go around, go in circles" as a jab at colonial explorers who would get lost and turn around looking for things, though I do not know the accuracy of this etymology. It is commonly used as a metonym for white people or Westerners, though in itself it means neither. The word has become a trope among many visitors; souvenir shops in Moshi sell t-shirts emblazoned both with "mzungu" and "My name is not mzungu." Most diocese pastors simply did not use it in professional contexts, preferring *wageni*, or if race was a salient factor, *weusi* "black people" or *weupe* "white people". I do not use it in this dissertation either.

pleasantries in several dialects of the local language, Kichagga. People saw that I had invested a lot of effort and was in Tanzania for the long haul, and they treated me accordingly (occasionally commenting, *Umejitaahidi* “you have worked hard”). Second, much of my observation was conducted in public or group settings such as meetings, worship services, and seminars where tailoring conversations to my presence was not practical. Finally, anywhere that I went with Baba Askofu or a head office entourage, I was not remotely the most distinguished guest present, and thus my presence would not have made a significant difference. When appearing with short-term mission visitors, I took care to introduce myself to locals in Swahili and explain my research, as a way of differentiating myself.

1.4. Research setting

I will discuss the workings of the diocese and some local contextualization of the history, politics, and economics of the Mt. Kilimanjaro area in more detail beginning in Chapter 1.5, but I will give some broader context here. Tanzania is a presidential constitutional republic. The ruling party is CCM, *Chama cha Mapinduzi*, and has been since independence. Tanzania was a one-party state until 1992. The population in the most recent (2012) census was reported as 44,928,923. Many Tanzanians pride themselves on the country’s political stability, relative to other countries in the area. Economically, Tanzania has typically been considered one of the poorer countries of the world. The World Bank estimated the 2015 gross national income per capita at \$920 per year. National census surveys do not enumerate income; data used to measure economic status are employment, asset ownership, and housing materials.

Religious surveys are also not part of census reports, having been eliminated in 1967. Various sources¹³ estimate Christianity at anywhere between 30 and 60 percent, Islam between 30 and 40 percent, indigenous religions between 2 and 30 percent, and other religions around

¹³ Including the CIA World Fact Book and Pew Forum surveys

2%. The Catholic Church in Tanzania reports 9 million members, the Lutheran Church about 6 million, and the Anglican Church about 2.5 million; while adherents of various Pentecostal and Charismatic churches together make up less than 10% of the population (Pew Research Center 2006). Seventh-Day Adventists, Moravians, and other Protestant denominations also have a minority presence. Many Tanzanians perceive a dichotomy between coastal Islam and up-country Christianity (see Kresse 2007 on a similar dynamic in Kenya); the Muslim population in Zanzibar is often estimated at 90-95%. Tanzania does not have a state religion; political interference in religious matters and religious interference in political matters are both frowned upon. The current (1977) constitution guarantees freedom of religion and prohibits the registration of a political party whose aims are to promote the interests of a religious group, and as I will discuss in Chapter 2.3, religious leaders feel intense pressure to maintain a public face of political neutrality. Still, religion in Tanzania is very public, including in the political sphere. Politicians are invited to and give speeches at religious services; religious leaders are interviewed by news outlets and issue press releases regarding political debates. Christian-Muslim relations are considered relatively good; however this may reflect the relatively privileged position of Christianity in Kilimanjaro, and there is a widespread tension in that many Muslims perceive Tanzania as a Christian state (F. Becker 2006, 591), while many Christians worry about the growing political influence of Islam. The new constitution proposed in 2015 was controversial in its inclusion of Muslim *kadhi* courts as part of the state judicial apparatus. Christian bishops issued a joint statement (Christian Council of Tanzania 2015) urging Christians to vote against the proposed constitution in the referendum scheduled for April 2015, a statement which President Jakaya Kikwete dismissed as being motivated by anger at the government (Yamola, Yakub, and Lazaro 2015). The referendum was eventually postponed; as of April 2017 it still had

not occurred. Tanzania has, since the first president Julius Nyerere, alternated between Christian and Muslim presidents. In 2015, outgoing president Jakaya Kikwete was a Muslim, and all major presidential candidates were Christian. Thus the election, for many, represented a national return to Christianity.

To place the local economy in relation to the national context, Kilimanjaro Region is generally among the better-off in Tanzania. While statistics on regional economies are difficult to find, this is generally received public knowledge, and in my observations the economic situation was considerably better than that portrayed in ethnographic studies of other areas of Tanzania (e.g. F. Becker 2006; Green 2003; Hodgson 2005). In census socio-economic surveys, the Kilimanjaro Region has higher rates of most economic indicators than the national average.¹⁴

Tourism to Mt. Kilimanjaro is economically significant, and coffee has been an important cash crop. The Kilimanjaro Native Cooperative Union, established in 1924 by District Commissioner Charles Dundas, provided a way for smallholders to market coffee themselves, thus limiting the influence of foreign coffee planters who had gained a significant share of the market in Kenya (Moore and Puritt 1977, 17). This coop still controls nearly all the coffee in the region, and helps to keep the cash within the local economy. The area benefits from good soil and growing seasons, and domestic agricultural exports (including bananas and tomatoes) provide regional income. Additionally, as I will discuss in Chapter 1.5, Chagga people have gained a reputation throughout Tanzania as good entrepreneurs.

In terms of religion, Kilimanjaro Region is strongly Christian although again, no official data are available. My interlocutors estimated that about 70% of the population was Christian, and this is consistent with my observations. Within that, the Chagga people are often estimated

¹⁴ See www.dataforall.org/dashboard/tanzania; data from www.nbs.go.tz

by Christian mission organizations at about 90% Christian.¹⁵ Moshi Town also has a Hindu and a Sikh temple as some Indian families remain in the area (see Brennan 2012 for more on Indians in Tanzania).

1.5. Literature review

Here I will discuss only a couple works which specifically address the anthropology of Christianity in Tanzania, although I will discuss other works upon which I've built my argument at relevant points throughout.

Thomas Beidelman (1982) was among the first anthropologists to study Christian missionaries, as part of a view towards understanding colonial administrations which had affected enormously the lives of many Tanzanian people. The missionaries he describes are British, working for the Church Missionary Society, in Ukaguru. This area, named for the Kaguru people, occupies what is now the northern parts of Morogoro and Dodoma Regions. Beidelman discusses traditional Kaguru society and the history and social background of the CMS and their colonial projects in Ukaguru before moving on to a description of the local mission as it existed during his fieldwork in 1957-58.

Beidelman's missionaries seem, to a 21st century reader, almost outrageous; they were almost completely uninterested in learning anything about Kaguru society, how it would be and was affected by their mission efforts, and Beidelman (189, 191) argued that even after a church had been established, the missionaries still did not know how indigenous Christians were interpreting Christian doctrine. Christian personal conduct and comportment became the benchmark.

These missionaries stand in stark contrast to the Leipzig Society working in Northern Tanzania. To begin with, in a straightforward comparison of numbers, Beidelman reports (176)

¹⁵ See for example https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/11289

that the CMS mission in Ukaguru, which began in 1876, had in 1957 six parishes and 8,024 parishioners. The Northern Diocese, where the Leipzig Mission arrived in 1893, reported 32 parishes and 12,2861 members in 1957.¹⁶ However, there were more profound differences. The CMS missionaries came from a different religious tradition than the Leipzigers; they emphasized individual piety and conversion. Class, education, and nationality were also influential in how the missionaries approached their work in divergent ways. Beidelman (9) insists on the importance of these contextual factors in discussing colonial evangelism. While I am unable to address issues of class and education in my dissertation in detail, I do note the different ways in which Christians from different backgrounds (Tanzanian, American, European, Lutheran, Evangelical, etc.), experience their perceived ministry, and how theological understandings form a context for their work.

Furthermore, Beidelman shows how the CMS missionaries experienced a deep anxiety about the very nature of mission work. What does it mean to be a missionary? Is it to preach the gospel? Teach primary school? Provide medical care? In my research, I discuss some of the ways that this anxiety in mission appears today. Although the activities within the realm of possibility have diversified, grappling with this question—what does it mean to be a missionary?—along with the internal anxieties and debates that accompany it, are still defining characteristics of mission.

Maya Green (2003) addresses the political relationships between rural communities and the institutional church, arguing that “colonial mission” cannot be understood as just a “religious” project in a narrow Western sense of religion; it is just as much political and economic (11). She discusses how her research area in Ulanga (part of Morogoro district in south-central Tanzania), first laying out the history of the district during colonialism and *ujamaa*, and how it became

¹⁶ Of course, at that time, the Northern Diocese was much larger than it is now. See p. 86.

relatively marginalized within Tanzania. She also discusses the history of Catholic mission in Ulanga, and the ways in which the church was able to consolidate economic power in the post-colonial period, before moving on to an ethnographic examination of popular Christianity, kinship, gender, and witchcraft eradication movements. She views all of these through a lens towards understanding power, economically, politically, and materially. She concludes that the appeal of Christianity (and particularly Catholicism) in Ulanga stemmed from local political relations of patronage, and that contemporary Catholic practice “plays on the ambiguity of the relationship between an imported Christianity which has become an accepted part of local identities and between political constructions of ethnically based traditional practice” (12). For her research participants, the gap between formal or institutional Christianity and popular practice of Christianity was large, and growing (142).

One dynamic Green’s work points to, but does not examine in detail, is the ambiguity of “mission”. The book is subtitled “Popular Christianity after mission in Southern Tanzania”, and she concludes that the Catholic diocese she studies is “genuinely independent of mission” (143). Yet she also writes, “On the face of it the church [in Ulanga] is no longer a missionary church. This is not in fact the case.” Since the diocese was heavily dependent on funds from Rome and the Swiss Capuchins, she says, “the institutional presence of mission remains strong” (46). Green does not address the apparent contradiction of these statements, nor the shift from colonial to post-colonial models and the resulting ambiguity about what mission even *is*, nor any dynamics of current relationships with other churches or mission organizations. My work, in examining the partnerships that the Northern Diocese maintains with various partners and the diffuse nature of what may or may not be considered mission, is able to directly address these questions.

Furthermore, Green sums up her work, writing, “Christian clergy are social actors engaged in local and national political processes, as well as wider international agendas over which they have little control. Understanding the Church, in Africa or anywhere, means understanding these relationships” (144). However, in this work she does not examine Christian clergy, but rather the laity; average Catholic parishioners and their experience of Catholicism, which is juxtaposed against a formalized and institutionalized Christianity, represented by the clergy.

I agree with Green that the relationships between Christian clergy and broader social and political processes are important to an understanding of Christianity. My work, drawing on close observation of pastors, addresses these relationships directly; a task that Green was unable to do. Green presents a sharp distinction between “institutional Christianity” and “everyday Christianity”, but in my work no such distinction can exist, since for pastors, the diocese and the church as an institution is inseparable from their everyday experience of Christianity.

Päivi Hasu’s monograph (1999) examines how Chagga people experience Christianity during a specific historical event, the AIDS epidemic and a time of economic decline. Through a detailed historical and ethnographic account, she explores how they live Christian, traditional, and modern lives through ritual practice and forms of discourse (13). In the first part of the book, she discusses pre-colonial life-cycle rituals, and in the second part, she discusses “historical processes of conversion of the Chagga to Christianity”, particularly with reference to the monetization of Chagga society and the categorization of practices as *kikristo* “Christian”, *kienyeji* “traditional”, *kizungu* “European”, *kishenzi* “heathen”, *kiafrika* “African”, and *kisasa* “modern”. In Part 3, she describes in detail how these “ways of being” were experienced, particularly with respect to ritual practice and marriage and other sexual relationships; and how participating in the market economy and gift-exchange became objects of moral commentary.

Much of Hasu's work centered around the context of AIDS which directly engaged Christian moral discourses on her titular topics, desire and death. Being fluent in German, she is able to present a historical context through careful analysis of Leipzig Mission archives. In her observations of ritual practice (including weddings, funerals, and sacrifices) and her historical analysis, Hasu presents a level of detail that I am simply unable to match; she describes numerous of these events (which occurred in her inner circle of interlocutors) as wholes, having intimate access to the lead-up and the aftermath, whereas in my fieldwork I merely swooped in with the *watumishi*, ate, and left. However, like Green, Hasu does not address the point of view of the clergy, only of the average parishioners (many of them Lutheran). The activity of the clergy (and their interactions with parishioners) are mainly presented as attempts to impose a moral order (see pp. 387, 394, 404ff). This may well be the case; but my work builds on this by offering a more complete perspective of the work of pastors. They are also people who have a moral order imposed upon them in certain ways, and in addition, their work is broader than attempting to impose, as I describe in Chapters 5 and 6 how pastors work at "figuring things out".

Amy Stambach's (2009) work on Christianity in Tanzania has a much wider focus than the other literature I have reviewed here, in that she presents a broad view of American missionaries in East Africa in a context where global political attention to religion is growing (1). She examines the relationship between mission, religion, the state, and education by describing the efforts of American non-denominational missionaries, and East African Christian organizations, at a specific type of religious education; efforts which are at times both collaborative and at cross purposes. Her work is multi-sited, examining how religion and education have been presented in non-denominational churches in America and how religious studies professors draw on

anthropology to inform their work; how religion and education are thought about in the places where these non-denominational American missionaries work and how mission is therefore reconceptualized; and how some of these educational programs are implemented in Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda. She explores how these educational programs and policies play on an ambiguity between the ideals of Christianity and secular-modern education.

Though I do not examine formal education in detail as Stambach has done, my work does build on some of her conclusions about the nature of Christian mission. She suggests that the educational programs she studied highlighted mismatched understandings of mission, in that Americans saw Tanzanians as “waiting recipients” and Tanzanian facilitators saw American youth that were actually “lacking Christ” (129). “Both the missionaries and the Tanzanians,” she observes, “brought different, active frameworks to their interactions, and ... both groups framed their starting points differently.” My research with the Northern Diocese and the people who visit in mission contexts is able to pick up on these dynamics, to frame these divergent and sometimes even contradictory understandings of mission within a historical trajectory, and to examine how “mission” continues to be a salient concept even as it becomes both almost anything and almost nothing. My work is also able to consider the nuances of a specific place in detail, which Stambach’s multi-sited work was unable to do, thus resulting in discussions of “East African Christians” which are often extremely general. Additionally, I take some inspiration from Stambach’s analysis of religious organizations as “social service providers” (2) to discuss the development of short-term mission in the context of neoliberalism.

Part One: Christianity in Kilimanjaro

Preface to Part One

In the first three chapters, I will discuss Christianity, particularly as it is experienced and enacted by pastors, in Kilimanjaro Region, particularly its northern half which comprises the ELCT's Northern Diocese and the homeland of the Chagga people. I begin with Christianity as it is *currently* experienced in the Kilimanjaro region, particularly by Lutheran ministers, both ordained and lay. This is intentional, since Christianity is now perceived in Kilimanjaro as a genuinely African religion and I want to reflect that by not beginning with the story of colonial missionaries.

To frame the discussion of Christianity, I use three Swahili-language concepts: *utambulisho* “identity”, *utumishi* “service”, and *uhusiano* “relationship”.¹⁷ All of these have currency in the daily discourses of my interlocutors. They are not the only important concepts in local Christianity, but in my observations these elements often came to the fore. They underlie local understandings of what Christianity is, they are the sites of debates and negotiations on the practice of Christianity, and they are arenas for theological discussions. Using local concepts like these to “think with” anthropologically therefore allows a more nuanced analysis. In this, I follow Garriott and O'Neill (2008, 381) who argue that focusing on problems posed by Christianity to Christians (rather than those posed by Christianity to anthropologists) allows a window into what is at stake in the lives of Christians themselves, and a non-essentializing viewpoint.

¹⁷ Swahili, like many Bantu languages, has several noun classes. Abstract or conceptual nouns almost always belong to the U- class, beginning with u-.

Chapter 2: *Utambulisho* (Identity)

In August 2015, the ELCT held its 19th General Assembly. Alex Malasusa (Bishop of Eastern and Coastal Diocese) was finishing his term as Presiding Bishop¹⁸ and a successor was being elected. I was unable to attend the Assembly, and my plans took me instead to the diocese-owned Uhuru Hotel in Moshi, where I stayed on the last night of the Assembly. In the morning I came down for breakfast, and greeted the man who works the front desk, since we had become well acquainted when I was staying there with the Nebraska *wageni*.

“Congratulations,” he said.

“For what?”

“Your father’s been elected Presiding Bishop.”

“He’s done *what?*”

Baba Askofu had indeed been elected Presiding Bishop of the ELCT, which was a surprise, because he’d only been installed as ND bishop 7 months previously, and was still the newest bishop in the country. Mch. Saria, assistant to the bishop, and Mch. Ngapori, head of the Central Kilimanjaro district, were there eating breakfast. They were all very happy; Saria informed me that Shoo would be arriving for a celebration soon, although the election had only finished at 3:00 a.m. and he hadn’t even slept.

The celebration had been hastily prepended to an existing event; former bishop Martin Shao was inaugurating his foundation for children with heart disease. By 9 am, diocese office staff and a number of pastors had started showing up, with many of the women wearing coordinating outfits. A brass band had been hired and were tuning up in the parking lot. Former bishop Erasto Kweka¹⁹ and Mch. Saria changed into red vestments, the liturgical color for

¹⁸ i.e. of the ELCT. He is still the diocesan bishop of Eastern and Coastal Diocese.

¹⁹ Martin Shao’s predecessor; Kweka was ND bishop 1976-2004.

celebration. Milling around outside the conference hall, people were excitedly chatting. Usually most of my research participants were quick to credit Julius Nyerere²⁰ with promoting Tanzanian unity, but I never heard so much bad-mouthing Nyerere as I did that morning.

Former Bishop Shao said, “There used to be a Chagga nation (*taifa la Kichagga*). We had a flag, an anthem, and everything. There were stories about a king from the north.” Other people agreed:

“Nyerere didn’t want a president from the north. History has repeated itself, first Moshi²¹ and now it’s come around again. Well, he can keep his presidents, we have our bishop.”

“Our diocese has become the church, it has been uplifted.”

“We’ve had work added to us. It’s work, but it has its blessings.”

A few people greeted each other, “*Hongereni, na pole*” – “Congratulations, and my condolences.”²²

Shoo’s arrival was greeted with a huge commotion, ululations, and jubilant music from the brass band. His election was seen as an honor for all Chagga people, and all members of the Northern Diocese. Former bishop Erasto Kweka (who was assistant to the late Bishop Moshi) prayed at the celebration service, “God, you do great things. You have given us again a leader from this diocese.”²³ He compared the small diocese to the small tribe of Israel that God chose.

Chagga pride was at an all-time high. At other parishes, such as the majority Maasai parish of Rongai that I attended the next Sunday, they were elated about it as well, being fellow Northern Diocese people. But it was not just a victory for the diocese within the ELCT, though,

²⁰ First president of Tanzania (1962-1985), often known as Mwalimu “Teacher” Nyerere or *Baba wa taifa* “Father of the nation”. See Section 2.3.b below.

²¹ Stefano Moshi, the first bishop of the Northern Diocese and of the ELCT, also Chagga

²² This ambiguity forms a theme in other ways, as does work/blessing – particularly with respect to guests

²³ “*Mungu, unatenda mambo makubwa. Umetupa tena mkuu toka dayosisi hii.*”

as was obvious at the celebrations at Uhuru Hotel. It was a victory for Chagga people within the Tanzanian nation, and an event which brought the complex interplay between ethnic, spiritual, and national identities into sharp focus.

The root of *utambulisho* is the verb *-tambua* “realize, recognize”, with the causative suffix *-sh-*, nominalized using the instrumental *-o* into the abstract U- class of nouns: The abstract instrument which performs the causation of recognition. In this chapter, I discuss the complex ways in which Christians in Kilimanjaro work at a causation of recognition, that is, how they ground their senses of belonging in different identities: as Chagga people, as Lutherans, and as Tanzanians, and how these efforts are mediated. I also highlight the perception of other identities, particularly the Lutheran perception of Pentecostalism.

2.1. As Chagga people

In this section, I describe how Chagga ethnic identity is locally worked out or even reified in different aspects of everyday life. I demonstrate how ethnic identity is a meeting point of multiple forces and histories, and memories of cultural representations. Finally, I discuss how Chagga identity forms an important aspect of local Christianity.

It’s difficult to enumerate the Chagga people, since recording religion or ethnicity in official censuses has been illegal in Tanzania since 1967 (Malipula 2014, 53). In 2012, Afrobarometer estimated the Chagga population at 5%;²⁴ compared to the national census which reported 44,928,923 people in 2012, this figure would represent just under 2.25 million Chagga people.²⁵ Otiso (Otiso 2013, 4) includes the Chagga people in the most populous ethnic groups, along with the Sukuma,²⁶ Haya, and Nyamwezi people.

²⁴ [http://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Summary of results/tan_r5_sor_revised_29102015.pdf](http://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Summary%20of%20results/tan_r5_sor_revised_29102015.pdf)

²⁵ The same census reported the population of Kilimanjaro Region as 1,640,087. Kilimanjaro Region includes the Chagga homeland along with other areas, particularly Mwangi and Same. Many Chagga have moved to other areas of the country as well.

²⁶ Sukuma are undoubtedly the largest ethnic group in Tanzania. Afrobarometer puts them at 14% of the population.

One Chagga²⁷ person is *Mchagga*, several of them are *Wachagga*. The language is *Kichagga* and the homeland is *Uchaggani*.²⁸ This is centered around Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania's far northeast. The Chagga are patrilineal agriculturalists whose traditional homeland is the "banana belt" on Mt. Kilimanjaro's southern, eastern, and western slopes – the area between about 1000 and 1800 meters where bananas grow well.

a) Historical overview of Chagga society

Historically the Chagga were composed of many different clan groups and chiefdoms, each with its own myth of origin. Although a discernible "Chagga" identity has now consolidated, Bender (2013) argues that this was initially a homogenizing colonial description borrowed from coastal Swahili, which was not adopted widely by Chagga people until the 1940s, in response to debates over natural resources and chiefly authority. In fact, many of my interlocutors told me, "The Chagga are a mixed people." This is evident in the Kichagga language (which Ethnologue describes rather as a "dialect continuum"), the historical chiefdoms (see Figure 1), and the multiplicity of origin myths.

Myths of origin

Each clan has its story of where they came from. Stahl's (1964) history recounts the stories for some prominent clans, describing how elders, in 1959, remembered between five and fifteen (except one clan, which enumerated an astounding 46) generations since the "first named ancestor". These myths recount where the first ancestor came from, and why.

Babu Edward runs the Chagga Live Museum in Marangu, where he narrates to visitors how around 1400 AD, people of Kamba and Taita origin (just to the north in Kenya) fled due to war. Though the north side of Mt. Kilimanjaro is dry and arid, the south is lush with plenty of

²⁷ In other accounts, this has been rendered Chaga, Jagga, Dschagga, and a few other ways. I use only "Chagga" throughout, along with the various prefixes to denote singular or plural people, language, etc.

²⁸ U- denotes an abstract concept and -ni a locative, thus literally "the place of Chagga-ness".

from whom descended all the clans of Machame (Swai 2014, 1). Stahl (1964, 91) recounts three other versions of the origin of the Machame Chagga, and their political significance for the clans who espouse each version.

Clans in Siha (Kibong'oto) narrate how their ancestors came down from the Shira Plateau, above the treeline to the west of Kilimanjaro's Kibo summit (Stahl 1964, 60ff). Some clans throughout Kilimanjaro tell of their ancestors coming down the mountain from the forest or even from Kibo itself; the Kulaya clan history has the first ancestor being dropped from the sky. Other accounts exist of Maasai origins; the Urio/Orio clans are often described as Maasai in origin, though these accounts are not uncontested (Stahl 1964, 290f).

Stahl's description of early Chagga history argues that Kilimanjaro has always been a grouping of small units (*mitaa* "neighborhoods", sing. *mtaa*), emerging from clan headship to petty chiefdoms, many of which were submerged into progressively larger chiefdoms; she estimates that at the beginning of the 19th century "the Chagga were divided into not less than 100 individual political units each under its own petty ruler" (Stahl 1964, 13).

The mentions of ancestors coming "from Kibo" or "from the mountain" emphasize the importance of Mt. Kilimanjaro in the Chagga conscience. Stahl (1964, 19–20) argues evocatively that one distinguishing characteristic of the Chagga is an "old precise deep-rooted sense of place" located in the mountain itself, its streams, ravines, hills, and forests. Chagga identity, then, takes its shape from both multiplicity and singularity; the many origins and stories which brought ancestors to a single place, to Mt. Kilimanjaro.

Emergence of chiefs

Historians have explained the emergence of chiefs and consolidation of power in various ways. Dundas (1924, 50ff) locates the shift from rule by clan elders to rule by chiefs in the

provision of services: Certain more powerful men offered protection from anarchy and crime, and they demanded payment, labour, or loyalty in return. They then gradually began to expand their influence. Stahl, perhaps oddly given the thoroughness of her history, does not seem to hit upon a reason, other than individual desire for increased power. Marealle (1963, 67) puts it down to fighting. One clan would fight against another for whatever reason, and the loser would be ruled by the winner. Nearby clan groups, seeing this, began to join voluntarily to counter these more powerful and larger political units.

Moore (1977, 8) locates the emergence of chiefly rule in trade. Orombo was the first to consolidate Rombo (and it took its name from him) in the late 18th and early 19th century. He ruled all of Rombo, moving north from his home place in Keni to Usseri; later he conquered westwards as far as Kilema. He needed to do this in order to control the ivory trade, via the Kamba region (to the north) towards Mombasa. Later in his life, he needed to consolidate power to the west because the road up to Kilema via Himo had become an important trade route as well.

The central chiefdoms of Moshi, Kibosho, and Machame started to consolidate after Orombo had died, around the mid 19th century. Moore (1977, 11ff) suggests this is because Mazrui rule in Mombasa ended in 1837, leaving the coast controlled by the Sultan of Oman in Zanzibar. Trade caravans thus approached from the south, not the east; and with routes toward Lake Victoria developing they carried on as well. This meant that caravans would stop in Kilimanjaro for re-provisioning, adding to the trade in slaves and ivory another element, that of political negotiation for safe passage and provisions. Powerful men needed to expand their influence in order to show their largesse to Swahili traders (by having a larger area to extract wealth from) and to offer them safety in encampments.

The main chiefdoms had therefore largely stabilized (as in the map above) by the start of German colonial rule, although sub-chiefdoms still existed within them, ruled by puppets or vassals of the more powerful chief. I will pick up this thread again below.

Colonialism and consolidation

As in many places in Africa, early descriptions of Chagga society focused around life-cycle rituals – birth, coming of age, marriage, parenthood, the coming of age of one’s children, and death. The earliest documentation of Chagga society comes from German missionaries, such as Bruno Gutmann (1909, 1925, 1926 and others) and colonialists like Charles Dundas (1924). Gutmann alone authored over 500 publications on the Chagga. One of his motivations was to preserve elements of Chagga culture; he was profoundly influenced by the German Romantic philosophy of the 19th century, which will be discussed in detail later. It was, in part, through these missionary and colonial ethnographic works that a more unitary Chagga identity (especially in terms of cosmology) began to be produced.

I do not think it necessary to reprise here descriptions of these life-cycle rituals; these are available in the above mentioned writings by Gutmann³⁰ and Dundas (1924), as well as in the work of Raum (1940), Moore (1977), Urio (1990), and Hasu (1999), who includes a thorough ethnographic analysis of some of these life-cycle rituals as experienced in the mid-1990s.

Of the Chagga cosmology, however, I will include a brief overview, drawing mainly from Moore’s chapter on cosmology (1977, 46ff) since her descriptions are the more easily readable. Her main sources are accounts by Gutmann and Raum (the son of another early Leipzig missionary, Johannes Raum). According to her, Chagga cosmology traditionally revolved around life, death, sex, and food. There was no separation between what Europeans classified as the

³⁰ English translations of Gutmann (1926, 1935) are available through the eHRAF world cultures database; these are extremely detailed.

natural and the supernatural. The Chagga acknowledge one supreme God Ruwa,³¹ but the spirits of ancestors who had passed away were much more active in the daily lives of the living than the remote Ruwa. Relationships with these ancestral spirits formed the basis of much cosmology; prayers were directed towards them, divinations discovered their opinions, sacrifices and libations fed and propitiated them, and all of the above perpetuated their memory. To the Chagga, immortality consisted in procreating. This was the corollary to the veneration of ancestors and the perpetuation of their memory in the form of prayers, divinations, and sacrifices: Your children would one day perpetuate your memory, and you would continue to live. To die without offspring was the greatest danger in life; it would mean a permanent end where there should have been perpetuity. Those who died childless were not even buried, but simply thrown in the bushes in an uninhabited area.

Sex and food were intricately intertwined with conceptions of life and death. Sexual reproductivity, the proper combination of male and female, was one of the most powerful forces in existence, since it could create life. However, improper combinations could bring death, and therefore keeping procreative power in the proper place was an important aspect of life-controlling forces. Moore writes, “The cyclic renewal of men and women, of animals and plants, of day and night, and of the seasons had to be actively continued by keeping everything about the life of man in its orderly place” (1977, 47). She identifies three themes of cosmology: The “denial of ultimate death” in the ongoing chain of ancestors and descendants; the “mysterious sexual-procreative process” that kept it going; and “magical properties” of food producing, eating, and sacrifice that kept men and spirits alive.

³¹ Still the term used in Kichagga liturgy; Ruwa also means “sun” but it is generally agreed that these two were not conflated into a single identity; rather they had the same qualities (Urio 1990, 24).

Food was the means of communicating with the ancestors, since the slaughtered animal's spirit joined them quickly, and provided food for both the living and the ancestors. Moore particularly emphasizes symbolic links, e.g. between reproduction and feeding, in the symbolic pair of milk and blood. In one case, the vagina is fed with milk (semen), together with blood (in the womb) this creates life. In the other, milk and blood are eaten and sustain life. Ritual symbols were drawn from everyday life, including the body, its products, processes, emotions, and parts; food and food producing activities; domestic objects; flora and fauna. According to Moore, most of these symbols had positive and negative (or life-producing and life-destroying) capacities, an ambivalence that is reflected in myth, taboos, and ritualized behavior, including around food.

For my purposes in this dissertation, the themes that are most salient are the focus on proper order and the perpetual chain of ancestors and descendants, being continually linked to one another. For the most part, the life-cycle rituals as described in colonial ethnographies do not seem to be practiced anymore. Some (such as the bush initiation schools and female circumcision) have fallen out of use entirely. Others have changed drastically (Hasu 2009 describes these at length), or are done in secret; elsewhere elements of "traditional" ritual remain in current practice, and I do make note of these as they come up throughout the dissertation.

What I want to highlight, though, is that it was through these writings (principally Gutmann's, but also Dundas') that "Chagga religion"³² coalesced into a discrete entity. When Chagga theologians such as Shao (1990), Urio (1990) and Lema (1999) discuss "Chagga religion", they too refer to these colonial-era works, as well as to post-independence theological works inspired by African Traditional Religion, such as Mbiti (1969, 1971) – who *also* relies on colonial mission ethnography for much of his research. I had not read these early ethnographic

³² And, by extension, "Chagga" as a discrete tribal unit. Bender (2013, 207) specifically implicates Gutmann in the propagation of a perceived ethnic unity across the whole of Kilimanjaro.

works before I did my research, but when I did, I found much that was familiar to me from my questioning Chagga pastors about *dini ya asili ya Kichagga*, traditional (lit. “natural, original”) Chagga religion.

Contemporary economy

Although many Chagga today consider themselves to be firmly part of the larger trajectory of the Chagga people, what it means to be a Chagga person is different today compared to the perception of what Chagga tradition used to be. If you ask a Chagga person, “What are Chagga people like, what is their defining characteristic?” he or she will likely answer, they are very enterprising. Whether through business and entrepreneurship, or education, many Chagga people pride themselves on this. They have a reputation in wider Tanzanian circles (Otiso 2013, 4; Vavrus 2005, 186), including expats. At a party in Arusha, the capital of the neighboring region, I was talking to a British businessman, and mentioned that a lot of my interlocutors were very busy – one of them, a pastor, also taught at seminary, he had 3 farms with 300 acres between them, and he owned an auto body shop and half of a tourism business. “Jesus,” said my friend. “Is he Chagga?” The most well-known Chagga people in the country are businessmen: Michael Shirima, the founder of Precision Air, or Reginald Mengi, one of Africa’s 50 richest individuals and the chair of the IPP group of companies which includes media, soft drinks, and mining empires.³³

Most Chagga, though, maintain at least some reliance on agriculture. Many have moved to the lowlands (the area below about 1000 meters, where maize and sunflower are grown more than bananas), of those, some (depending on their wealth) maintain a property in their “home place” on the mountain. Others live in their home place, and own farms in the lowland. Either way, many people grow bananas and coffee at higher altitudes, maize and sunflower at lower

³³ See <https://www.forbes.com/profile/reginald-mengi/>

altitudes, and beans and vegetables in both. Domestic animals are also commonly kept, generally chickens, goats, and maybe a few cows, although some keep pigs, rabbits, or other kinds of fowl.

b) Spiritual Chagga identity

Being Chagga is primarily an ethnic identity. If your father was Mchagga, so are you. But it's also a spiritual heritage. People weave together their traditional religious roots, the missionary legacy, and their own perceived Christian heritage. I will return to this in more detail below (Lutheran Identity) but here, I want to stress that spiritual heritage is a key part of *Chagga* identity. Although (anecdotally) there are now more Chagga Muslims than 20 years ago, Hasu was confident enough to write, "To be Chagga is to be Christian" (1999, 42).

Shoo and the trees

Baba Askofu was the principal at Mwika Lutheran Bible School between 1995 and 2003. The first principal of the school was an American missionary, Walden Hedman, who worked in Mwika from 1946-1956. He died in 2000, but Baba and Mama Askofu are still close with the family. In April 2015, two of Hedman's children had dinner at the Shoo's house. They'd been to Mwika that day, and mentioned that some of the trees planted by Hedman had been cut down. Baba Askofu was incredulous. During his tenure, the school council had broached the idea of cutting down trees to add more classrooms, and he'd been dead set against it. "Those trees were sacred," he said, adding that he'd have to ask the principal, Dr. Maanga, about it. The next day, at church, Shoo accosted an older man who teaches music at Mwika. "Kitu gani hicho!?" he asked; "what sort of thing is this?" He was indignant, waving his finger in the air and insisting that God would not stand for his trees being cut down. The music teacher was not in the loop though, so Baba Askofu left unsatisfied.

Three weeks later, some recent Mwika graduates visited Dr. Shoo, and again the matter was brought up. Everyone tutted and tsked, and one suggested the diocese establish guidelines that historical trees should not be cut down except in extenuating circumstances. Shoo nodded, saying that the diocese has been discussing that. “Those trees were part of the school’s history,” he said, “They were planted by our fathers.”

Now we have to go back in time. In Chagga religion, trees were special sites. Many rituals involved banana trees (umbilical cords are buried there, funerary sacrifices also; in fact Hasu argues that Chagga come from and are eventually returned to bananas (1999, 452, 472ff)). Most people are still buried in their *kihamba*, hereditary banana garden. Other trees besides bananas were also important, such as *miti ya ukoo*, clan trees. Weishaupt, one of the Leipzig missionaries, describes visiting Ndemasi, chief of Mwika, in 1910. “Do you want to see the skulls of my ancestors?” Ndemasi asked, and Weishaupt agreed. He took him to a dracaena tree (*D. fragrans*, better known in Kichagga as *isale*³⁴) and said, “Here rests my father Tengio,” showing him a clay pot with his father’s skull inside. Next to it under the tree lay another clay pot, with his grandfather Kyasimba’s skull inside (Hasu 1999, 52f). *Miti ya ukoo* are still easily identifiable in some places. During the early 20th century though, clan trees became a source of debate between missionaries, new Chagga converts, and their families (1999, 150f).

The German missionaries were opposed to sacrifices, including those done as part of funerary rites (Hasu 1999, 180). They also misunderstood Chagga religion, according to Lema (1999, 52ff) and many of my interlocutors, thinking that the Chagga worshipped their ancestors, when in fact they *revered* their ancestors, who were now closer to Ruwa than they were. The missionaries forbade participation in clan sacrifices. However the practice didn’t end as quickly

³⁴ *Isale* was also used for reconciling; if someone wrongs another, he or she may come with an *isale* leaf to ask forgiveness.

as that: Research participants told me that although they didn't know anyone that still did sacrifices, it's possible that a few people did. Others said I probably wouldn't hear about it anyway, since it was known that I went around with the bishop. However, I've heard it mentioned in sermons that Christians shouldn't be involved, indicating that it does still occur. Hasu in 1995 was able to personally attend two sacrifices (Hasu 1999, 495ff).

But Chagga Christians haven't severed their connection with the trees, never mind the trees themselves. Baba Askofu's statement, "They were planted by our fathers", is important. Lutheran missionaries wanted to prevent Christians from remembering their ancestors at trees. Not only did they fail in that, but they actually *became* the (spiritual) ancestors remembered at trees. Baba Askofu and the recent graduates understood the trees to be spiritually important (thus God not standing for his trees being cut down) to their heritage as Chagga people (by drawing tree-planting into the Chagga history of ancestor veneration). Chagga Christians continue to shape their identity as Chagga people by combining their perceived Christian and ethnic heritages. Christians negotiate their ethnic heritage through Christian practice at the same time as they express Christian theological ideals through Chagga rituals.

Shoo never did get a satisfactory answer from Maanga, and several months later when Mwika hosted the General Assembly of the Eastern Kilimanjaro District, those tree trunks were still lying on the ground (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Trees at Mwika. Photo by the author, 2015.

Chagga identity through Lutheran practice

Baba Askofu's attitude toward the trees at Mwika shows how Chagga identity and spiritual heritage come together in discussions around everyday items which mediate spiritual heritage. Chagga Christians also find their ethnic heritage mediated in formal religious practice, particularly liturgy and song.

Swahili is the language of everyday life, in church circles and more widely, and though most Chagga people do speak Kichagga fluently, it is not often used in everyday conversations, at least not in the areas where I conducted my research.³⁵ Often people will greet each other in Kichagga, and then shift to Swahili (this may have been partially out of politeness to me, though I cannot say for sure). However, most mountain parishes have a Kichagga language service; they

³⁵ *ki-* in Swahili indicates, among other things, a language. I use "Swahili" rather than "Kiswahili" here since that is the English translation. I do use "Kichagga" to distinguish the language from other ethnic descriptors.

are explicitly encouraged to do so by the diocese. It may be held weekly or monthly, but usually at the second service of the day. This is significant because confirmation students generally attend the second service. Thus it's a way to help the youth learn the language. In addition, funerals are often conducted in Kichagga. I attended many services around the diocese with Baba Askofu, including twelve funerals. I had purchased my own copy of the ELCT liturgy and hymn book, *Tumwabudu Mungu Wetu*, very early in my research, but I soon learned that if going to a funeral, I better bring one of Baba Askofu's Kichagga songbooks. Odds were, even if the liturgy was in Kiswahili, the songs would be sung in Kichagga.

The first few funerals I attended, I tried in vain to borrow a Kichagga songbook once I arrived, but that proved to be unworkable – not because everyone was using theirs, but because people hadn't brought them. And, I quickly realized, *they didn't need to*. They knew the liturgy and songs from memory. All adult Lutherans that I knew were able to sing dozens (if not hundreds, in the case of many pastors) of hymns from memory in both Swahili and Kichagga. A few were even able to produce all four vocal parts.

Some pastors particularly see themselves or the church as guardians of Chagga identity. Pastors often mentioned Kichagga proverbs in their (Swahili) sermons to illustrate their points, or restated important points in Kichagga for emphasis. One pastor, in a sermon preparation meeting, discussed how the four Gospels each reflected the culture of the author and the intended audience, adding, "We're baptized as Christians, but we're also Wachagga". Discussions among pastors of song and liturgy during worship services often prompt discussions of Kichagga language use. In a diocese-wide pastor's meeting in March 2015, Mch. Saria encouraged all pastors to have a clear schedule so parishioners know which language or book is being used at which service. Several pastors raised their hands to comment: One said, "This isn't a problem.

Some parishes have the first service Kichagga, some Swahili, some do it the last Sunday of the month, but it's not a problem. People aren't confused there." Another pitched in: "It's a problem because of Nyerere,³⁶ our language is in trouble. And some people want to make the children learn Kichagga. Can we teach them in confirmation classes? It's not being spoken at home." Saria responded, "I think both of those can go together. Let's not get to a point of letting our language die." Baba Askofu interjected, speaking passionately and to much applause and table-pounding in agreement: "Our languages are a very great inheritance, and it is a grave error [to use the church as an instrument for eradicating them]. Let's take both of these opportunities you mention, but truly, we should not leave [our language]. I ask earnestly that we insist on this."³⁷

Enacting Christianity through Chagga rituals

Just as Chagga heritage is enacted through Christian practice (specifically liturgy and song), Christian ideals are enacted through Chagga rituals. Here, I describe how two particular Chagga rituals highlight ideas of hospitality and relationships, which are highly salient in encounters with *wageni*. One is the *ndafu*. I've seen several goats slaughtered, roasted, and presented, but the first time I understood what was being said about it was when I went to a send-off for Mch. Shio's daughter.

A send-off is a party held for a bride-to-be, where her family bids her farewell. It is generally scheduled a couple days before the wedding, and includes a short service officiated by the local pastor, followed by a reception (which is often a bigger affair than the wedding reception). This send-off was held at home, and officiated by Mch. Kimori and Dr. Shoo (then assistant to Bishop Shao, and bishop-elect). To start off the reception, a caterer wheeled in an *ndafu* on a cart – a whole roasted male goat, head, tail, and everything in between. It had a

³⁶ I discuss ethnic and national politics below.

³⁷ "Lugha zetu ni urithi kubwa sana ... hilo liko kosa kubwa sana [kutumia ibada kama chombo kuulia lugha]. Tuchukue zote mbili, lakini, kwa kweli, tusiache. ... Naomba sana tusingitize."

banana leaf in its mouth. The caterer sliced a piece off the rump and cut it into small pieces, which he put on a plate and stuck toothpicks in before handing it to Mch. Shio, who thanked Dr. Shoo for coming, and asked Mch. Kimori to help him present this little bit of food (*chakula hiki kidogo*). Mch. Kimori took the plate from *him*, took a piece by its toothpick, and asked Dr. Shoo to receive this banana. Shoo thanked him solemnly for the banana, took the plate, and picked a piece off it. He and Mch. Kimori both ate, and the plate was passed around to Mch. Shio and family.

Later I asked Mch. Kimori why he referred to the goat as bananas. He said, “For us Wachagga, in the past when you went to the chief or someone important, you couldn’t make yourself out as too important, you wanted to be humble. So you said you were bringing bananas.” Another pastor explained that bananas are the archetypal Chagga food; you’re feeding your important guest with the ideal food.

I attended dozens of formal events with Baba Askofu and saw many *ndafu* presented. There’s even a joke: If a goat sees the bishop coming, it better run. Hospitality for guests is an important Christian theological principle, and showing deference to guests of honor is a frequent practice in Tanzanian Christianity. The ritual presentation also incorporates elements from Chagga sacrificial rites: The animal would be apportioned to certain relatives depending on its provenance and the occasion, but the most honorable part was the *kidari*, breastbone, and was always allocated to the senior elder of the lineage (Dundas 1924, 184–85; Moore and Puritt 1977, 53). During presentations of *ndafu* today, the *kidari* is still given to an elder, although following a looser formula: The host presents it to the guest of honor, who chooses any elder he wishes from those present. Thus, the *ndafu* presentation uses a ritual which is identifiably Chagga to enact Christian ideals of hospitality and honor.

The second ritual is *kuvunja matanga*, “to break the mourning”; a part of a funeral.³⁸ Immediately after the burial, a deceased man’s oldest son will be presented to the mourners by the clan chairman. He’s sat down in a chair, and his father’s hat, coat, and walking stick will be brought out.³⁹ The chairman tells him, “Your father wore this hat while he was out working in his garden to protect him from the elements, and similarly the coat. And he took this stick with him while he was out and about. We’re giving this to you, since you’re now the head of the family. This is not a stick to beat people with. It is to help you along, to guide you, and to lead the family, especially as you take care of your mother.”⁴⁰

The clan chairman sits down, and the pastor officiating says a few words as well. He calls over the other children – the other sons and their wives, and these days often the daughters (even though married daughters belong to a different clan) and their husbands. He tells them that it is their responsibility to care for their widowed mother now – not just the oldest son, all of them are to help him in this responsibility. They are not just to provide for her basic needs, but care for her spiritually. In fact, their biggest responsibility is not to fight with each other. Nothing is further from taking care of their mother than fighting with siblings, and so there is to be peace between them in all circumstances.

Both of these rituals enact, in a specifically Chagga way, the Christian ideals of hospitality for guests and maintaining peaceful relationships.⁴¹ Thus the spiritual aspect of Chagga heritage is emphasized.

³⁸ In the past, the funeral, burial, and *kuvunja matanga* were held on separate days, but were collapsed into a single event under the church’s encouragement in the mid-1990s, since the many AIDS-related deaths meant people were at times unable to go to work due to funerary obligations (Hasu 1999, 453).

³⁹ Some variation is possible if the deceased didn’t like to wear a hat or carry a walking stick (though he may have had one inherited from his father). However, articles of clothing seem to be a constant.

⁴⁰ At all but one of the funerals for men that I attended, the deceased’s wife was still alive.

⁴¹ I am unable to comment on the significance of these rituals in non-Lutheran contexts, as I did not attend any Pentecostal or Catholic events where they were called for.

2.2. As Lutherans

As Green (2003, 7) notes, colonial policies around mission and “native administration”, and the institution of the tribe as a basic unit, meant that ethnicity came to be associated with particular denominations. Chagga ethnicity is often associated with Lutheranism (although within Uchaggani, Kibosho and Rombo remain strongly Catholic).

a) Heritages

Lutheranism is seen as a spiritual heritage, being traced from different events – from the Reformation in 1517, from colonial-era missionaries (especially the Leipzig Mission, beginning in 1893), and from the independence of the church. Therefore it forms a parallel to Chagga identity, in that it draws on many different sources at the same time as it emphasizes a conceptual unity.

Colonial mission heritage

My research participants often estimated that at least 70% of Kilimanjaro Region’s population was Christian, with the two major denominations being Lutheran and Catholic, while Pentecostal churches (including Assemblies of God, Free Pentecostal Church, and smaller groups and independent churches) together came in third. There is a smaller but active Seventh Day Adventist population, and a few Baptist, Methodist, Anglican, or Presbyterian churches.

Though the British Church Missionary Society did send missionaries to Uchagga between 1848-1892, the main Protestant mission effort was Lutheran, organized by the Leipzig Mission Society. The Leipzigers, upon their arrival in 1893, built mission stations in several locations around Mt. Kilimanjaro. The earliest parishes were Machame, Mamba, Mwika, Old Moshi, and Siha; today all those parishes are still operating. Lutherans in the Northern Diocese count these Leipzig missionaries as part of their heritage. Visiting Ashira Parish (originally called Mamba) one notices that the kindergarten is named after Leipzig missionary Gerhard Althaus (1896-

1946), and in the parish office are photos of Althaus (labelled *Mlyisi wa Wachagga*, “pastor of the Chagga people”), his wife, and his granddaughter, herself a Lutheran pastor who has maintained a relationship with Ashira Parish.

In early 2015, I discovered that over a thousand of Leipzig Mission’s historical photos are available for download.⁴² When I mentioned this to some of the pastors I worked with, they were delighted to see them. Mch. Marenga, the District Head for East Kilimanjaro, was especially thrilled to see the pictures of Mamba/Ashira, his home parish, established in 1894 (see Figures 3-6). He insisted I give him copies of the photos so that parishioners of the district (not just the parish) could learn about their history.



Figure 3: Mamba [Ashira] Parish, ca. 1910. Photo: *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Missionswerk Leipzig e.V.*



Figure 4: Ashira Parish, 2015. Photo by the author.

⁴² See <http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15799coll123> under “Leipzig Mission” and “Emil Müller”



Figure 5: Mamba [Ashira] Parish, ca. 1904. Photo: Evangelisch-Lutherisches Missionswerk Leipzig e.V.

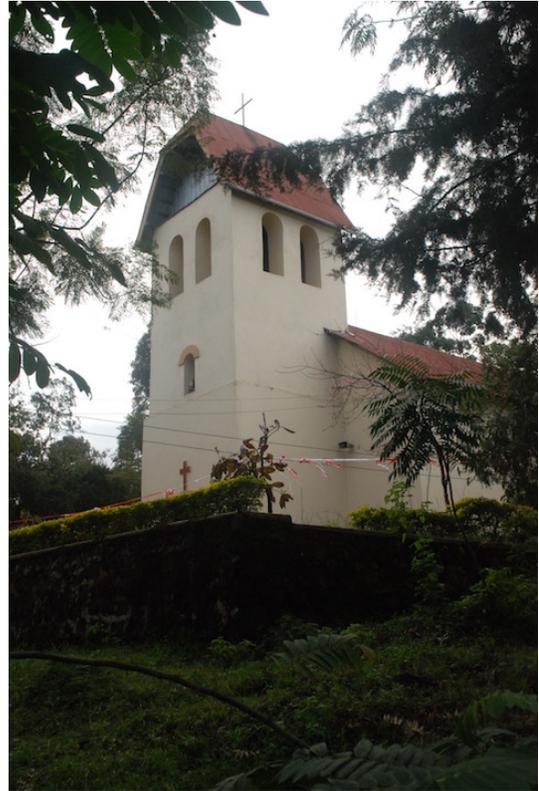


Figure 6: Ashira Parish, 2015. Photo by the author.

Reformation Heritage

Lutheran heritage is also located in the 1517 Reformation. At church on Reformation Sunday (the closest to 1st November) in 2014, the pastor asked the congregation (specifically the confirmation students) why they thought the liturgical colors were red this week, instead of green as they had been. No one ventured to raise a hand. “Aren’t you Lutherans?” he asked jokingly. “Where are the Lutherans around here?” Later during the sermon the preacher continued, “Today we celebrate the birth of our church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, and in the rest of the world.” He gave a brief history of Martin Luther’s work, particularly how Luther saw the church as going contrary to the plans of God and changed its direction, and he connected

current issues of corruption to those Martin Luther preached against, and insisted that the task of Reformation is ongoing.

Lutheran heritage and the Reformation was a major theme of the 2015 LWF conference. Some of the agenda discussed the upcoming LWF General Assembly to be held in 2017 in Namibia, which would also celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. The meeting in Moshi was explicitly positioned as a the kick-off to that journey, “from Marangu to Wittenberg”⁴³. It was a matter of pride for everyone that this prestigious celebration would be held in Africa. Delegates talked about embarking upon reformation again and seemed to see it as a touchstone of both their history, and of their future direction in looking for political and social change as 21st century African Lutherans. So the ELCT traces its history to Martin Luther, and considers itself to join all other Lutheran churches in the world in doing so.

Independence Heritage

Although parishes celebrate “the birth of our church” on Reformation Sunday, the ELCT didn’t actually come into existence until 1963, when the seven former Lutheran churches of then Tanganyika united. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Northern Tanganyika became the Northern Diocese in the ELCT, and its bishop, Stefano Moshi, became the diocesan bishop, and at the same time, the presiding bishop of the ELCT. This is celebrated every year on 19th June or the closest Sunday to it. And in the Northern Diocese they still talk about Stefano Moshi’s legacy in uniting Tanzanian Lutherans as a matter of Chagga pride, as discussed above.

So historically, Lutheranism is traced to three points – Martin Luther and the Reformation, the arrival of German missionaries, and the formation of the ELCT.

⁴³ Wittenberg is often located as the site of the Lutheran Reformation, as that is where Luther posted his famous theses.

b) What is a Lutheran?

Being a Lutheran, diocese pastors told me, is a matter of both *mafundisho* (teachings, doctrine) and *mapokeo* (convention). It's also defined against what it isn't – and for Chagga Lutherans, that is usually Pentecostalism. I discuss these categories in the next two sections, although I point out that I do not wish to put forward a monolithic understanding of Lutheranism, nor to suggest a homogeneity of belief or practice amongst Lutherans. Rather, I describe a set of tendencies which characterize Lutheranism as a whole, along with specific churches, dioceses, and parishes; and which are overlaid on individuals and activities within popular Lutheranism.

Doctrine

In the most simple sense, Lutherans are Christians who identify particularly with the teachings of Martin Luther (1483-1546), a German monk and a central figure in the Protestant Reformation. Lutheranism maintains distinctive theological or doctrinal positions. The one identified as central by most Lutherans is the doctrine of *justification by faith alone*, as described in Article IV of the Augsburg Confession, the primary Lutheran confession of faith:

It is taught that we cannot obtain forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God through our merit, work, or satisfactions, but that we receive forgiveness of sin and become righteous before God out of grace for Christ's sake through faith when we believe that Christ has suffered for us and that for his sake our sin is forgiven and righteousness and eternal life are given to us. For God will regard and reckon this faith as righteousness in his sight. (Kolb, Wengert, and Arand 2000, 38–40; translation from German)

This position (and others held by Luther, e.g. rejection of indulgences) was classified as anathema by the Roman Catholic Church at the Council of Trent,⁴⁴ and though it became a defining element of Protestantism in general, it is held particularly specially by Lutherans.

Lutheranism also expounds a distinct sacramental theology, following Article XIII of Melancthon's Apology of the Augsburg Confession, in which he stated that sacraments are

⁴⁴ e.g. Session 7, "On the Sacraments in General", Canon VIII; Session 25, "Decree Concerning Indulgences". See <http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent.html>

“rites which have the command of God and to which the promise of grace has been added” (Kolb, Wengert, and Arand 2000, 219). Perhaps Gräbner is of more use to the layperson; according to him, sacraments are “sacred acts of divine institution” where, when a physical component (water in baptism, or bread and wine in the Eucharist) together with the divine words of institution are properly administered together, God is present and offers grace, forgiveness of sins, and eternal salvation to recipients; and at the same time, moves their hearts to accept this grace in faith (Gräbner 1898, 161–63). Thus, Lutheranism teaches that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist: not merely symbolized as in other Protestant traditions, nor literally physically present as in Roman Catholic doctrine. Similarly, Lutheran doctrine insists that baptism confers grace upon the baptized, and moves him or her to accept this grace and to proceed in faith. Thus it is available to all people including infants, and is not primarily conceptualized as commitment on behalf of the parents (although it is that too). Baptism, many Tanzanian pastors told me, is what makes a person a Christian and is how one joins the *kundi* (“congregation”, see page 117) in the first instance.

These doctrines are taught to 12-14 year olds in confirmation classes across Tanzania; the class quiz that I took at Wona Parish included the following: “The Lutheran Church believes in the presence of ____ after the bread and wine have been blessed” (*uwepo wa ____ baada mkate na mvinyo zimebarikiwa*), the blank to be filled in with *Yesu Kristo*, Jesus Christ. The quiz also asked students to choose from a list of denominations which baptize infants.

In this way, formal doctrines become instantiated in the lives of individual church members, unfamiliar though they may be with the scholarly writings upon which they are based. Eventually, they become markers of social difference. Not just in theory (as with a confirmation class student taking a quiz), but in practice – as was the case with some groups of *wageni*, whose

evangelism presentations were based on an underlying theological understanding of a person becoming a Christian by making a decision and praying to accept Jesus into one's heart. This is another area where Tanzanian Lutherans differentiate themselves from Pentecostals, telling me that one characteristic of the latter is *wanakata shauri*, "they make a decision". This salvation-by-decision is at odds with both the theoretical Lutheran position that faith *receives* salvation rather than causes it (Engelder 1934, 57), and the common Lutheran practical understanding that one becomes a Christian by being baptized. In other words, doctrines become social markers of Lutheran identity, as I explore in the next section.

Convention

Many pastors, describing what constitutes Lutheranism, referred to convention (*mapokeo*, literally "what is received") in addition to matters of doctrine. I do not see these as mutually exclusive; convention may not necessarily be doctrinal in the sense of being explicitly or formally taught, but it is no less theological. It proceeds from doctrinal positions, and furthermore, as I argue later, theology is what one *does*.

I offer two examples here of convention: *Diakonia* and song, which I discuss in more detail. Lutheran churches, including the ELCT, emphasize *diakonia* (ministry to the poor, ill, or needy). *Diakonia* was distinctly and frequently emphasized as an important part of the life of a Christian at all levels of my research; in parish, diocese, ELCT, and LWF contexts. Diaconal work is supported by and discussed in theological terms; the Africa Theological Journal (published by the ELCT-owned Tuzi University Makumira) frequently runs articles discussing approaches to *diakonia*. It is not uniquely Lutheran; *diakonia* also figures prominently in Catholicism. Neither is *diakonia* a hard requirement, a Lutheran who does not habitually do diaconic work does not cease to become a Lutheran. Nevertheless, a strong affinity remains

whereby *diakonia* is a central characteristic identified by many Lutherans as important to their life as Christians. It is one of the four core values of the LWF which “derive from our Lutheran identity”,⁴⁵ a fact mentioned several times at the 2015 LWF conference in Moshi.

Singing is implicated in identity as Chagga people, but it is also positioned as an important part of Lutheranism, and in Tanzania, is particularly contrastive with Pentecostalism. Martin Luther was a great proponent of congregational singing, a departure from his contemporaries both Catholic and Reformist (including Zwingli and Calvin). He agreed with Augustine that hymns were “songs of praise to God”, but argued further that they are “bearers of God’s word to us”, in a sense of “the word” that goes beyond Scriptures to include the living message of the gospel (Felde 1995, 26). Song, especially congregational singing, was believed to engage the emotions, the memory (thus having pedagogical value), and a sense of community. Luther saw song as a “natural and highly effective medium for the proclamation of the Word, and therefore became an ardent proponent for the extension of its use”, and congregational singing became immensely important in Lutheran churches (Felde 1995, 30f).

The most immediate musical marker of Tanzanian Lutheranism is the use of *Tumwabudu Mungu Wetu* (TMW), the ELCT’s liturgy and hymn book.⁴⁶ A good number of hymns composed by Tanzanian or other African musicians are included, along with hymns from British (Anglican) and American sources, but the majority are translations of German Lutheran hymns. In Tanzania, singing features very prominently in discussions of Lutheran identity; clergy talk about being people that sing. A new pastor is given a number of things during the ordination process,

⁴⁵ See <https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/our-core-values>

⁴⁶ It also contains the Athanasian Creed (similar to the Apostle’s and the Nicene Creed; it expounds upon the doctrine of the Trinity, is rather longer and rarely used in worship) and Martin Luther’s Small Catechism in typical question-and-answer format which includes line-by-line interpretations of the Ten Commandments, the Apostle’s Creed, and the Lord’s Prayer; and explanations of the Sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist, confession, daily devotions and prayers, and duties of Christians towards each other.

including a stole, a Bible, the ELCT constitution – and a copy of TMW. At one ordination service I attended in September 2015, Baba Askofu told the ordinand as he gave him the songbook, “A Lutheran pastor should teach parishioners to sing; song is our heritage.”⁴⁷

Similarly, at a retirement service in Rongai the week after his election as Presiding Bishop, Baba Askofu said that following discussions at the General Assembly,

We call for all ELCT members to care for unity, and for our identity as Lutherans, faithfully. Unity, identity, and heritage as Lutherans. Let us return to the word of God to learn diligently, ... to preach, and teach correctly – this is one sign of Lutheranism. But Lutherans are also people of prayer. Let us return to prayers, not *paparapapara* [imitating the rapid Pentecostal prayer style], but prayers as we have been taught, to stand humbly and quietly before God and to bring our problems to him. The Lutheran Church should care for our heritage of song. The Lutheran church is a church that sings. ... We have our book, *Tumwabudu Mungu Wetu*. It contains songs for us to sing at home ... these songs build and teach; this too is our heritage.⁴⁸

Later at home, Baba Askofu complained that a lot of churches in Dar es Salaam have lost their Lutheran flavor, using Pentecostal-style singing instead. And in the presiding bishop’s own diocese! He shook his head. Song is a specific area which is an immediate, visible and audible contrast between Lutheran and Pentecostal. Debates over singing style happen frequently, and highlight the way in which Lutherans contrast their own identity to Pentecostalism.

At Wona Parish, the 7 am service includes hymns selected from TMW. From about 6:30, though, there’s a “worship time” with more of a Pentecostal style – the songs are shorter and more repetitive, sung responsively between a song leader (who, ideally, exhibits a certain level of charisma and prowess at improvisational melisma and prancing around the stage) and the congregation, sometimes interspersed with spontaneous individual prayers. Most pastors whom I

⁴⁷ “*Mchungaji wa kilutheri awafundishe washarika wake kuimba. Nyimbo ni urithi wetu.*”

⁴⁸ “*Tunatoa wito kwa wanaKKT wote ... kutunza kwa uaminifi ... umoja, na ... ule utambulisho wetu kama waluteri. Umoja, utambulisho, na urithi wetu kama waluteri. Turejee katika neno la Mungu kujifunza kwa bidii ... kulihubiri, na kulifundisha kwa usahihi wote. Hio ni alama mojawapo wa Waluteri. Lakini Waluteri pia ni watu wa maombi. Turudi katika maombi, sio yale ya paparapapara, maombi kama tulivyofundishwa. Kukaa kwa unyenyekevu na utulivu mbele za Mungu wetu na kumwambia mambo yetu. Kanisa la Kiluteri tutunze urithi wetu wa nyimbo. Kanisa la Kiluteri ni kanisa linaloimba. ... Tuna kitabu chetu, Tumwabudu Mungu Wetu. Kina nyimbo ambazo tunahitaji kuziimba katika nyumba zetu. ... Nyimbo hizi zinajenga, zinafundisha. Huo pia ni urithi wetu.*”

asked about different styles of worship answered that these days, it was necessary to attract people who would otherwise go to the Pentecostal church. On this matter, many clergy experience anxiety about the loss of a distinct Lutheran identity. One pastor commented during a seminar for all retired pastors:

These days, if you go to a worship service, you can't tell if it's really Lutheran. From the start, they're following different stuff altogether. They dance around, do whatever, sit. Until noon, the pastor closes the service, they just go. Our church is missing that identity. I have this book, TMW, which serves [us]. I went to a baptism, [the pastor] didn't even read the lesson. I said, "What's this you've done?" The worship service hasn't laid a foundation of the Word of God. ... I said, my God. I saw Baba Askofu, I said, I need to tell him.⁴⁹

Some conservative figures within the church take a harder line on "maintaining Lutheran identity" against Pentecostal erosion. Parsalaw echoes the concern that Lutheran worship is no longer audibly and visibly identifiable, through song, liturgy, and vestments, *as Lutheran*, and continues:

Nowadays new and cheap meaningless choruses and chants mock and ridicule our own Lutheran traditions, cultural melody, and hymns which have been universally shared by Lutherans regardless of language, time and place. All this breaking away by the so called "spirit groups" influence and renewals has been done at the expense of the Lutheran Church's unity in norms, values and beliefs. (Parsalaw 2015, 3)

Singing is thus positioned as particularly Lutheran both in its prominence and in its style, especially as opposed to Pentecostals. It's not always a relationship of contrast *between* denominations; between pastors it can even be a matter for joking about tendencies within themselves. For example, when the Pentecostals sing from songbooks, they usually use books like *Tenzi za Rohoni* (Spiritual Songs), which is mostly translated from English and American revival-period hymns. At a district-level pastor's meeting, when one of the pastors began passing

⁴⁹ "Siku hizi, ukiingia ibadani ... huwezi kujua kwamba kweli ni kiluteri. Mwanzo wanafuata mambo tofauti kabisa. Wanaweza kucheza, kufanya nini, kukaa. Mpaka saa sita, mchungaji anafunga ibada, wanatoka tu. ... Kanisa letu linakosa ile identity. Nina kitabu hiki, TMW, kinachotumika. Nilikwenda ubatizo, hakusoma neno hata. Nikasema, umefanya kitu gani? Ibada haijaweka msingi juu ya neno la Mungu. ... Nikasema, Mungu wangu. Nikaona Baba Askofu, nikasema, lazima nimwambie."

out copies of Tenzi so we could start the meeting with a few songs, I heard one pastor joke to him, “You’re more spiritual [*kiroho*, often used to mean Pentecostal-y] than me, of course you’d be using Tenzi.”

2.3. As Tanzanians

In this section, I discuss the articulation between national identity, and Chagga or Lutheran identities. I do not give a comprehensive overview of Tanzanian history, but rather I highlight a few historical occasions (in colonial, *ujamaa*, and current political contexts) that were particularly salient in terms of ethnic and spiritual identity.⁵⁰

a) Colonial period

The nation state that we know as the United Republic of Tanzania⁵¹ first started to coalesce with the formation of the German East Africa Company, which included Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi. Zanzibar was not part of that arrangement, having been ruled by the Sultanate of Oman since 1698. East Africa was divided up at the Berlin Conference in 1885, and in 1891, the German Government formally assumed control over the territory from the German East Africa Company.

The German colonial period technically lasted only 34 years, from 1885-1919. During this time, they built a number of military outposts, including one at Moshi, and while German rule was opposed fiercely elsewhere (e.g. by the Hehe people, and in the Maji-Maji uprising) this did

⁵⁰ For more on Tanzanian history in general, see Iliffe (1979). See also Kelsall (2004) on national politics and Brennan (2012) on nationalism and race. Munson (2005) discusses German colonial engagement in northern Tanzania, particularly in terms of the landscape. For more on the articulation between Chagga people and the state, Moore (1977) gives a good summary of Chagga engagement with both German and British colonial states, and with Tanzanian *ujamaa* politics. Bender (2013) gives a history of the emergence of a Chagga political identity in the 1940s and its engagements with the late colonial state. Fisher (2012) discusses the role of younger Chagga elites (many of whom were Lutheran and not necessarily from chiefly clans) in post-colonial Tanzanian nation-building during and after *ujamaa*, and the evolution of Chagga identity within the Tanzanian nation.

⁵¹ I follow convention by using “Tanzania” even when referring to periods where the nation-state was not yet existing.

not occur to such a degree in Kilimanjaro, although as I describe, there were a few violent clashes.

Between about 1890-1900, several Chagga chiefs (*wamangi*, sing. *mangi*) emerged as particularly powerful: Sina of Kibosho (ruled early 1870s-1897), his vassal Shangali of Machame (ruled 1890-1901, 1918-1923), Rindi of Moshi (ca. 1860-1865, 1870-1891), and Melyari (Marealle) of Marangu (ruled 1880-1912), also installed by Sina of Kibosho. These four men, in 1891, directly or indirectly controlled the vast majority of Kilimanjaro. Dozens of other petty chiefs ruled smaller areas both within and around the area under their control, many as puppets or vassals. The Germans both formed alliances with *and* conducted armed campaigns against them.

When Karl Jühlke went to secure Kilimanjaro for Germany in 1885, he was directed towards Rindi (aka Mandara), who had established a reputation among Europeans as the chief of all Kilimanjaro, a move which Stahl attributes to his wish to distract from the fact that Sina of Kibosho was in reality far more powerful (1964, 176–77). This resulted in Kilimanjaro's incorporation into German East Africa and the establishment of the outpost at Moshi.

Sina at first was amicable to Germans, but at the end of 1890, he refused to acknowledge German rule. In response, Reich Commissar von Wissman decided to undertake a military campaign against him (Stahl 1964, 178). On Feb. 11, 1891, German forces accompanied by Chagga warriors from Moshi and several Sudanese and Zulu companies, 300 men total, embarked on a 3-day offensive. At least two hundred men of Kibosho were killed, and Sina surrendered and was forced to cede some of his lands to chiefs he had formerly conquered. Sina's wings were clipped, and German rule had been definitively established, though Kibosho maintained a considerably powerful position (Stahl 1964, 180ff).

Karl Peters arrived in Kilimanjaro in 1891 as provisional Reich Commissar, and moved the German headquarters to Marangu, since he got along well with Marealle. Peters was succeeded by von Bülow, who became the catalyst for another German military effort, this time against Mangi Meli of Moshi, son of Rindi, who died in 1891. One of von Bülow's messengers, en route from Marangu to Moshi, was shot and killed. In response, von Bülow, another German officer and several *askaris* (African soldiers), set out on June 10, 1892, to Moshi. Both officers and many soldiers were killed by Moshi warriors who thought their intentions were to capture Rindi's old palace and Meli's fortress. The Germans fled, and did not return until July 31st, when they mounted a military offensive to quell "the Chagga revolt". By mid-August, they had mustered five companies comprising 23 German officers, 566 *askaris*, and some 800 men of Kibosho. Moshi was utterly outmatched, and Meli surrendered within hours. Thus, writes Stahl, "by curious irony the Kibosho assisted the Germans in their conquest of Moshi as only 18 months earlier the Moshi had assisted the Germans in their conquest of Kibosho". As an upshot, the German government insisted that the British Church Missionary Society missionaries leave; they were thought to have undermined the Germans through their support of Meli. Thus from 1892, Protestantism on Kilimanjaro was entrusted solely to the Lutheran Leipzig Mission (Stahl 1964, 262ff; see also A. Becker 1961).

In 1900, another supposed plot between Sina's heir Molelia, Rindi's heir Meli, and other Chagga chiefs and leading men was put down. Rumors had been circulating that these chiefs were conspiring to overthrow the German government. Captain Kurt Johannes had Molelia, Meli, and their alleged co-conspirators, 19 men, hanged in Moshi on March 2, 1900 (Stahl 1964, 196).

This was the what the Germans knew of the stories. In reality, the conquest of Moshi and the hanging of the chiefs was engineered entirely by Marealle to crush his two great rivals, Kibosho and Moshi. It is quite possible that he also had a hand in the conquest of Kibosho (Stahl 1964, 330–31).

Stahl points out that Sina began opposing German rule because he had been ordered to place himself under the sovereignty of the chief of Uru, a territory which he had already made his vassal. von Eltz, who handed down this order, had been deliberately misinformed about the relative positions of Kibosho and Uru, by Rindi and other chiefs possibly including Marealle, who knew that this order would enrage Sina and provoke him against the Germans (Stahl 1964, 179). Similarly, the conquest against Moshi was engineered by Marealle. It was his right-hand man, Mawalla, who shot von Bülow's messenger and blamed warriors from Moshi; it was Marealle's spies in Moshi who put it about that von Bülow intended to capture Meli's fortress, thus provoking the men of Moshi to kill von Bülow's detachment (Stahl 1964, 263); Marealle who urged the Germans to return and quell the uprising in Moshi (Stahl 1964, 265). Finally, it was Marealle who wove the intricate rumors in the years leading up to the hangings of 1900 that the chiefs of Kibosho and Moshi were conspiring against the Germans (Stahl 1964, 331).

The alliances that Chagga chiefs made with German colonialists, then, should not be seen only as attempts to gain the friendship of the Germans. The colonialists also provided a tool which allowed the Chagga chiefs to play for much higher stakes in their jockeying for power between themselves. In these games, Marealle emerged the clear winner.

The changeover to British rule (which began as early as 1916, when the UK administered the territory as an occupying power, but not finalized until 1919) offered another opportunity for politically ambitious Chagga to assert themselves, and they did, much in the same way as in

1900: by reporting to British officers that other chiefs were conspiring against them. Several chiefs were deported to Kismayu and Bagamoyo, including Ngulelo of Machame (Shangali had resigned in fear following the hangings of 1900 in which he had assisted Marealle's rumor-mongering), Malamya of Kibosho (Sina's nephew), and Salema of Moshi (Meli's brother). They were allowed to return when it was realized the rumors had been false, and some were reinstated – although this allowed for yet another power play, this time by the Chagga interpreter for the British officers who were charged with evaluating each chief's case for reinstatement, the commoner Joseph Merinyo. Merinyo's careful filtering of information allowed him to install his favorites in both Machame and Moshi; Shangali's son Abdiel by a junior wife, and Salema's son Abraham (Stahl 1964, 143, 276).

The territory of German East Africa was formally dissolved in 1919, and became the British protectorate of Tanganyika in 1920 under a League of Nations mandate. In 1946, Tanganyika became a United Nations Trust Territory, administered again by the UK, which continued its policy of indirect rule. The same year, the British administration undertook a reorganization of the Chagga chiefdoms, consolidating them into the 15 which remained upon their dissolution in 1964.

Tanganyika became independent 9 December 1961, though it remained a Commonwealth Realm with the queen as head of state, whose constitutional roles were delegated to a (British) governor-general. On 9 December 1962, the monarchy was abolished and Tanganyika became a sovereign nation.

b) Independence & *Ujamaa*

Tanzanians began forming civil society organizations in the 1920s, an activity encouraged by the British administration. One such group was the Tanganyika African Association, formed

in 1929. Julius Nyerere, a teacher who had studied at University of Edinburgh, was elected TAA president in 1953, and transformed it into the more politically oriented Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) in 1954. TANU's aim was national sovereignty, and after a year of campaigning, had become the most popular political organization in the country. In the first Colonial Legislative Council elections in 1958-59, all elected seats were won by TANU, and when the UK agreed to establish internal self-government and another election was held in 1960, Nyerere was elected Chief Minister and TANU emerged holding all 71 seats.

Upon independence, TANU became the ruling party and was declared the only legal party. Upon the unification of Tanganyika and Zanzibar in 1964 to form the *Jamhuri Muungano wa Tanzania*, United Republic of Tanzania, TANU changed its name to reflect this, and in 1977 changed its name to *Chama cha Mapinduzi*, Revolutionary Party. CCM has been in power ever since.

National politics underwent a significant change in 1967 with the Arusha Declaration, which begins unambiguously: "The policy of TANU is to build a socialist state." In this document, Nyerere outlined his plan for African socialism, which he called *ujamaa*, "family-hood". Parts of the text are still quoted in political discussions today, particularly this famous passage:

Tumeonewa kiasi cha kutosha, tumenyonywa kiasi cha kutosha, tumepuuzwa kiasi cha kutosha. Unyonge wetu ndio uliotufanya tuonewe, tunyonywe na kupuuzwa. Sasa tunataka mapinduzi, mapinduzi ya kuondoa unyonge ili tusionewe tena, tusinyonywe tena na tusipuuzwe tena.

We have been oppressed enough, we have been exploited enough, we have been disregarded enough. Our weakness is what has made us be oppressed, exploited, and disregarded. Now we want revolution, revolution to remove this weakness so that we shall not be oppressed again, we shall not be exploited again, and we shall not be disregarded again. (TANU and Nyerere 1967)⁵²

⁵² This is my translation. I have departed from the standard of translating *kiasi cha kutosha* as "a great deal". Of course it can mean this, and I have heard it used this way in natural speech. However, it lacks the primary meaning

Nyerere insisted that Africa was inherently and characteristically socialist, writing that “the traditional African family lived according to the basic principles of *ujamaa*. Its members did this unconsciously, and without any conception of what they were doing in political terms. They lived together and worked together because that was how they understood life” (Nyerere 1968, 106).

Thus there was no need of artificially installing socialism; for Nyerere it was something that already existed: “We in Africa have no more need of being ‘converted’ to socialism than we have of being ‘taught’ democracy. Both are rooted in our past – in the traditional society that produced us” (Nyerere 1967, 107; quoted in Stöger-Eising 2000, 138).

With respect to agriculture, Nyerere insisted that it was everyone’s responsibility to model self-reliance at a personal level as well as national, and to be responsible with their *shamba*, “farm” (Scott 1998, 242). He inaugurated an aggressive villagization campaign which was disastrous in many other areas (Green 2003, 29), but whose effect was tempered in Kilimanjaro, where the old *mitaa* were simply reclassified (Moore and Puritt 1977, 1). In education, Nyerere’s goal was to improve access for all children, and to standardize the language and curriculum. He particularly pushed for the use of the Swahili language rather than other vernaculars, seeking to eliminate tribalism and forge a new unity as a Tanzanian people (see Whiteley 1969). To a large extent this was successful, in that Swahili is now the sole national language, and the vast majority of Tanzanians speak it competently.⁵³ Furthermore there is relatively little ethnic tension in the country, and people are very quick to credit this to Nyerere.

of “enough” in *kutosha*, a meaning which is central here as it expresses that the patient submission to colonial domination is coming to an overdue end.

⁵³ I have met several monolingual Kimaasai speakers, and only one monolingual Chagga man, who was very old.

Still, of all the ethnic groups which specifically challenge Nyerere's insistence that egalitarianism was the default for all Africans (Nyerere 1967, 195), the Chagga are most often cited. Stahl describes the old Chagga chiefs thus:

The chief was an autocrat with the habit of authority. He liked flattery and disliked opposition. He had nimble wits which were particularly needed against treachery in his own family. By numerous sanctions he elicited respect from his people, an attitude which was based upon their fear. He had only to point to any man's possession, whether his wife, his goat or his bunch of bananas, and woe betide if those were not immediately his. (Stahl 1964, 357)

Stahl describes the despotic rule of many a Chagga chief; how Ndesserua indulged in "killing in peace-time", despatching many of his rivals including half-brothers and their mothers, his own son, and many of his leading men; how Sina—remembered as one of the greatest chiefs—was "cruel like all Chagga chiefs, but unlike many, once he had established his authority he ceased to concern himself with killing his own people" (Stahl 1964, 174).

Ujamaa officially ended in 1985, when Nyerere retired. Under the second president, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, privatization (*ubinafsishaji*) started going ahead. Multiple political parties were also allowed starting with the 1985 election.

c) Current Tanzanian politics

Today, politics are a popular conversation topic all over Tanzania, especially during the lead up to the October 2015 election, which occurred about six weeks after my fieldwork ended. Even before the campaign officially started it was a hot topic. People talk about politics the way they talk about football: not always in a partisan way, people will be just as likely to discuss the strategizing of any party or political figure. During the election campaign, people also watch politics the way they watch football, stopping to crowd around a shop TV blaring election coverage out the door.

Chagga people negotiate a complex relationship between national politics, religion or denomination, and ethnic identity. The Kilimanjaro Region and particularly Uchaggani has historically been very strong with the opposition, particularly Chadema (*Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo*, “Democracy and Development Party” – see Figures 7 and 8). This historical antagonism may stem from the fact that one of Nyerere’s first acts in office was to abolish the Chagga chiefdom.⁵⁴ However, people will still sing Nyerere’s praises in the same breath; many of my research participants credited Tanzania’s stability, relatively good democratic record, and lack of tribalism to Nyerere’s efforts.

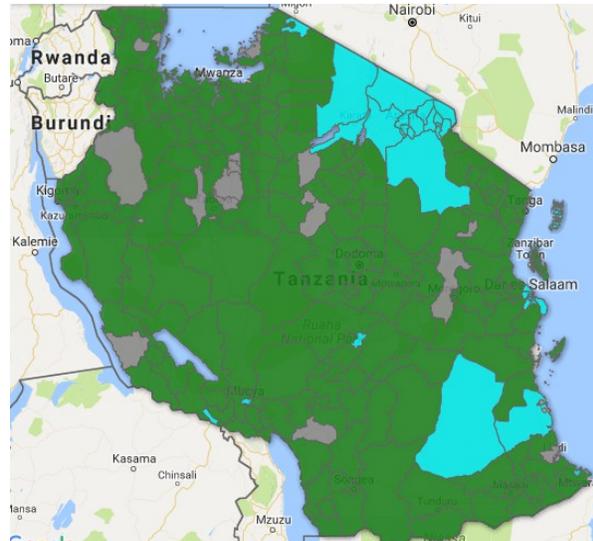
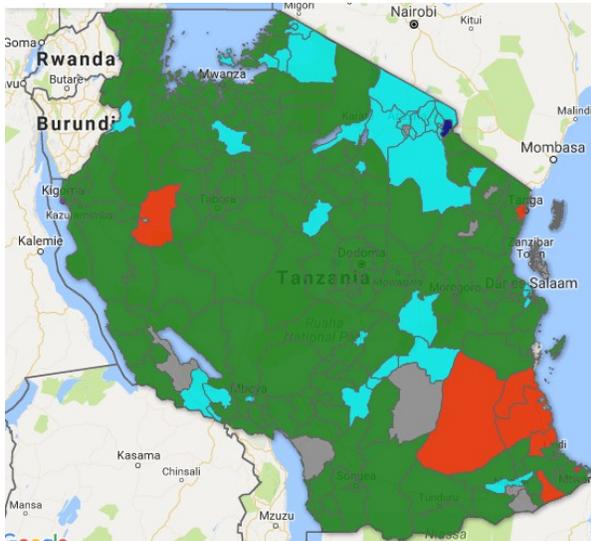


Figure 7: 2015 Parliamentary election results. CCM green, Chadema cyan, NCCR navy, CUF red. Figure 8: 2015 Presidential election results. Data visualisations by Ben Taylor (uchaguzitz.co.tz).

The Kilimanjaro Region has *also* historically been very Lutheran. Although national politics articulates in many ways with Christian and Chagga identity (see particularly Fisher 2012; Bender 2013), here I focus on how this emerged during the 2015 election campaign.

In the weeks leading up to the election, national politics became denominationalized, and sermons were interpreted in terms of partisan politics. CCM has often been associated with Catholicism; the founding president Nyerere was Catholic, as was the 2015 presidential

⁵⁴ And others, but this is how it is narrated to me by Chagga friends. I discuss this more below.

candidate and eventual winner, John Magufuli. Edward Lowassa is Lutheran, from Meru which borders Kilimanjaro to the west.

In July 2015, Lowassa was the expected favorite to win the CCM nomination for Presidential candidate; he had previously been the Prime Minister and was fairly popular.⁵⁵ Thus it came as a surprise when John Magufuli was nominated. On July 12, the day after the CCM General Assembly which nominated Magufuli, I was attending worship at Sagana Parish. The pastor had been up late watching the televised coverage, and consequently had slept in that morning, only just arriving on time for the service. The parish staff couldn't talk about anything else either at tea between services, or at lunch. "In the assembly," said Mch. Maricha, "People were singing 'We believe in Lowassa (*tunaamini katika Lowassa*)' – not in CCM, in Lowassa! Even *inside the meeting hall* they were singing this way." Mch. Marenga nodded. "Yesterday I saw on TV people chanting, 'Lo-wass-a! Lo-wass-a!'" Both were stunned at the result. Mch. Maricha shook his head. "Even Mwalimu Nyerere said, 'The party will reach a point where it will cry, and nobody will dry its tears.'" He pulled out his phone and found a video clip of the speech he was referring to,⁵⁶ and played it for the rest of the staff.

Lowassa crossed the floor and ran on the Ukawa⁵⁷ ticket, putting up the only serious challenge the CCM has ever seen. Many people in Kilimanjaro felt that CCM was in crisis and change was in the air. One of Chadema's slogans became "M4C", Movement for Change. This was also referring to Nyerere's 1995 speech, where he famously said: "Tanzanians want changes.

⁵⁵ Although there had been some scandals, which in fact forced him to resign in 2008. As a side note, he was present at Dr. Shoo's installation as diocesan bishop in January 2015 (before the election campaign) and as presiding bishop in January 2016 (after the election).

⁵⁶ It was his speech at the CCM General Assembly in 1995, coincidentally in the same election cycle where Lowassa's first bid for the presidential nomination was rejected. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GAEpisZ3Cuk> although I have not been able to locate an English translation.

⁵⁷ Ukawa (*Umoja wa Katiba ya Wananchi*, Union for the People's Constitution) is a coalition of four opposition parties: Chadema, National League for Democracy, NCCR-Mageuzi, and the Civic United Front.

If they don't see them, if they don't find them in CCM, they will look for them outside CCM.”⁵⁸
Many northern Tanzanians found in Lowassa's campaign exactly that motivation.

As the campaign progressed, interactions became polarized along party and denominational lines. After Baba Askofu's election as Presiding Bishop, members of the community threw a party at his home to congratulate him. One was Danstan Mallya, the CCM parliamentary candidate for Hai (where Baba Askofu is a constituent). Until then, speeches had been short and non-political. Mallya spoke at greater length and encouraged guests to vote for him, since he was a Lutheran and had been born and raised in the area. The other guests began laughing at him, drowning him out, and holding up “Chadema fingers” (Figure 9).



Figure 9: Chadema logo

The intersection of church and politics became quite sensitive. Lutheran, Catholic, Pentecostal, and Muslim bodies put on an interfaith all-candidates meeting in Moshi Town with a keynote, introductions for each candidate, prayers, and a discussion period. Philemoni Ndesamburo, the outgoing Chadema MP for Moshi Town, suggested a resolution that speeches made at the meeting be made publicly available. However, some of the candidates were not satisfied that these were non-partisan. Davis Mosha, the CCM candidate for Moshi Town who had identified himself as Catholic, broke in, arguing that the keynote (given by Erasto Kweka) was biased towards Chadema, and shouldn't be distributed as the statement of the church or of this seminar. Hands flew up into the air; some meeting members stood up and shouted. Julius Mosi, the general secretary of the Northern Diocese, exclaimed that the speaker had a right to say what he has said. Kweka motioned for the microphone as Mosha and two others stormed out,

⁵⁸ “*Watanzania wanataka mabadaliko. Wasipoyaona, wasipoyapata ndani ya CCM, watayatafuta nje ya CCM.*”

Kweka saying, “This paper was my thoughts alone. If someone asks for it, I’ll give it to him; if he doesn’t, I don’t need to take it to him.” The rest of the meeting applauded, but Mosha was already gone. At lunch, I sat with Mch. Siwa, the diocesan head of *diakonia*. He shook his head at the CCM candidates’ behavior. “They know their position is slipping,” he said, “and they are being defensive. None of the other candidates were upset, just CCM.”

Two days later, I attended a *harambee* (fundraiser) in adjacent Meru diocese, at the home parish of Bishop Paulo Akyoo. It was clear that people wanted to be careful around politics. As usual, local politicians were invited, including current candidates. Normally at *harambees* each contributor will go up front, hand an envelope to the official guest, and his name and the amount will be announced. It’s important for politicians to be seen supporting causes, and churches use this to their advantage. However, this time, the parliamentary candidate demurred, though still maintaining his largesse: he stood up to applause and ululation, congratulated Baba Askofu for his recent election, and handed an envelope to the two bishops, saying, “I won’t read the amount since it’s during the election, but it’s not a small amount.”

The last item for the *harambee* was auctioning off a gift: a framed photo of Bishop Akyoo with outgoing President Jakaya Kikwete. It’s a common format, where the MC goads two sides (here, Northern Diocese guests and Meru Diocese hosts) into competition. Congregants’ bids drive up a cumulative total. The “stay in Meru” side eventually won, and the photo alone raised Tsh 1,360,000 (about \$630). The Northern Diocese representatives played along, but on the way home their smiles rapidly vanished. Mosi was irritated. “What was the MC thinking?” he said. “He might not have had Kikwete’s permission to take the photo. And using it for a *harambee* during an election?” Baba Askofu agreed. “If I’d known what it was, I wouldn’t have opened it. I was not going take it back to Moshi [i.e. have the auction won by the Northern Diocese] by any

means.” In later weeks, Baba Askofu found he had to be even more careful. In his sermon at the 2015 Mikaeli na Watoto (St. Michael & Children) celebration, held on September 27, Baba Askofu said, “As Christians we have a responsibility to pray for a peaceful election and good leaders who can see what people need, and bring change.” However, on the way home, Mama Askofu cautioned him – saying *Tunahitaji mabadiliko* like that, “We need change,” could be taken as support for Chadema.

2.4. Epilogue: Bishops are the new chiefs

I have suggested in this chapter that Chagga Christians negotiate several identities which come together in complex ways. I began by describing an occasion (Baba Askofu’s election) where these identities, and their relation to each other, came into sharp focus. I will conclude by highlighting one historical process which brought together ethnic heritage, Lutheranism, and national politics: the emergence of the episcopacy⁵⁹ and its connection to Chagga ideals of *umangi*, chieftainship.

Though Stahl highlights the authoritarian, and at times cruel nature of Chagga chiefs, she also points out how people identified with him – partly out of flattery, of course, but “partly it sprang from a more obscure and deeply ingrained habit. By extolling the chief and building him up, people enjoyed a reflected pride in his high status. When by royal stratagem or military defeat he was brought down, they also identified themselves with his fall” (Stahl 1964, 357). In this hierarchical context, people are subordinated to an authority, and also motivated to identify personally with it. Dundas (1924, 344f) records several Kichagga proverbs on the nature of the relationship between chief and people which demonstrate the identification of the common people with the chief, in both his successes and failures; his responsibility to provide for them and their theoretical grounds for making demands on that basis.

⁵⁹ Church governance by bishops

Stefano Moshi (1906-1976) was from Kotela Parish in Mamba, born into one of the first Christian families; his father had been one of the boys sent to help the Leipzigers establishing Mamba mission station (Moshi 2016, 143).⁶⁰ He attended Marangu Teacher's Training College before enrolling for theological training at Lwandai in Tanga Region, was ordained in 1949, and in 1952-1953, studied at Luther Seminary in Minneapolis, MN. Returning to Tanzania, he became the head of Marangu TTC. In 1955, he was elected vice president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Northern Tanganyika (ELCNT).

That same year, the first All-Africa Conference of the Lutheran World Federation was held at Marangu TTC (the ELCNT being one of only two African member churches of the LWF). Thomas Lenana Marealle II O.B.E., grandson of Marealle, who had been for four years ruling as *Mangi Mkuu* "Paramount Chief",⁶¹ gave one of the opening speeches, and later in a panel discussion on "The Episcopal Order in Lutheran Africa?", he said:

I would like to commend very seriously the ... idea that the Lutheran Church here be given the opportunity of having bishops. The matter may sound revolutionary and perhaps un-Protestant to some of you. But I believe it would strengthen the voice of the church in its negotiations with both local and central government beyond what it now has through its presidents and superintendents. The title of superintendent actually bears very little weight here. We have superintendents of prisons, forestry and all these people are in lower rungs of the ladder. I am in government myself – chairman of the Education committee, Land Board etc. When the Roman Catholic bishops introduce anything to these boards or committees, they bear more weight than proposals presented by our superintendents. (Lutheran World Federation 1956, 74)

Marealle's proposal was discussed, and the conference resolved that it should be studied so that "any possible changes in terminology or organization might be prompted by the guidance of God, be biblical, and serve the best interests of the church" (Lutheran World Federation 1956,

⁶⁰ The author Nehemia Moshi is Stefano Moshi's grandson, although in Chagga reckoning father's brothers are also fathers, and mother's sisters are also mothers. Therefore one may have rather more than two grandfathers; it also includes great-uncles.

⁶¹ By that time, the chiefdoms numbered 15. Three "divisional chiefdoms" were organized from 1946 at the next larger hierarchical level, and in 1951, a Paramount Chief umbrella was added.

183). Though it was disregarded by American and German missionaries, who suggested it originated from sources outside the church, that it was motivated politically, not theologically, or that it would alienate laypeople, it already had significant support. Moshi agreed, “This is the position not only of the Paramount Chief, but of all Christians in Tanzania” (Ludwig 1999, 48).

Moshi was elected President of the ELCNT in 1958, and installed in 1959. This title was changed to Bishop in 1960 (Ludwig 1999, 50; Smedjebacka 1973, 263; M/Mkuu 1960, 68), though he was not actually consecrated as such until 1964. In the interim, the ELCNT joined the other Lutheran churches in Tanzania to form the ELCT, Moshi was elected its *Askofu Mkuu*, Presiding Bishop, and the former ELCNT became its Northern Diocese – where Moshi retained his leadership. He is therefore seen as the founder of the church.

On December 9, 1961, Tanganyika became an independent Commonwealth realm, and exactly one year later, a democratic republic. On both occasions, immediate steps were taken to abolish the Native Authorities established by British rule, and with them, the chiefs. In February 1962 the African Chiefs (Special Powers) Ordinance was repealed (Tanganyika 1962); the fourth piece of legislation authored by the commonwealth realm.⁶² Chiefs were stripped of all statutory powers when the African Chiefs Ordinance was repealed in February 1963 (Republic of Tanganyika 1963a), barely two months after Tanganyika became a republic. Furthermore, the Chiefs (Abolition of Office: Consequential Provisions) Act of December 1963 (Republic of Tanganyika 1963b) prevented former chiefs from suing any local authority for damages related to the abolition of their offices, an Act possibly intended to thwart Thomas Marealle specifically, since he had been planning on bringing suit against the Chagga Council (Nolte 1962).

Eventually, the African Chiefs Act of 1969 (United Republic of Tanzania 1969) made it illegal

⁶² So my interlocutors are not quite right when they tell me Nyerere’s first act in office was to abolish the Chagga chiefdom, but close.

for any former chiefs to exercise any function that had been authorized by the African Chiefs Ordinance of 1953 prior to its repeal. None of these acts came as very much surprise (see Fisher 2012). The political climate had been changing and although the 1950s were seen as a golden age for the Chagga Chiefdom, Thomas Marealle had been losing his influence for some time, due in part to the efforts of Solomon Eliufoo, an influential Lutheran from Machame (Moore and Puritt 1977, 19; see also Cameron and Dodd 1970, 97 on the pre-independence intra-Chagga power struggles between Machame and Marangu and debates about the role of new educated political elites, particularly from non-chiefly clans).

Moshi's accession to *Askofu Mkuu* and consolidation as diocesan bishop of the Northern Diocese, on 19 June 1963, happened only six months after full independence, and four months after Marealle and all other Chagga chiefs had been stripped of the last of their authority. I suggest that conceptually, Moshi was Marealle's successor. Several bishops recalled that during the transition from presidents to bishops, comparisons were made to chieftaincy: Samson Mushemba (1984-2000 Bishop of Bukoba, and 1992-2007 ELCT Presiding Bishop) said, "People are used to this system of leadership. The chiefs were also leaders of the traditional religion. Therefore, introducing episcopacy was easy." Similarly, Erasto Kweka said, "The bishop in the eyes of his people is almost equivalent to a chief in a type of clan" (Ludwig 1999, 50). Pastors of the Northern Diocese recall how chiefs used to be called *Mshumbue*, "The anointed one" (see also Shao 1990, 22), and drew a comparison to bishops on that basis. The connection between the episcopacy and the chieftaincy was obvious that morning in August 2015 when people started arriving at Uhuru Hotel to celebrate Shoo's election, comparing Shoo to Moshi and verbally kicking sand in the late Nyerere's face over his abolishment of the Chagga chiefdom.

Chapter 3: *Utumishi* (Service)

It is essential to mention from the outset the ambiguity inherent in *utumishi*, “service” and *watumishi* (lit. “servants”).⁶³ In one sense of popular usage, *watumishi* are ministers by profession: pastors, evangelists, or other church workers (or, outside of ecclesiastical contexts, *watumishi* can mean “employee” in general). But there is a much wider connotation; *watumishi* includes other workers such as parish elders and council members, choir singers, Sunday School teachers, and so on – extending in its broadest application to everyone, since all Christians are supposed to serve God. Participants told me, *Mtumishi ni anayetumika*, “a servant is one who serves”. That verb, *-tumika*, is applied on an almost daily basis to all Christians. In fact, many of my interlocutors considered my research to be in the service of God (and, I think, would have done so independently of any intentions of mine). Therefore I was an *mtumishi*. When I went to visit Erasto Kweka, his wife served me tea and bananas, and closed her eyes to pray and bless the food: *Baba, tunakushukuru kwa ajili ya mtumishi wako Nuru* – “Father, we thank you for your servant Nuru.”⁶⁴

Yet *utumishi* does delineate professional ministry. Reports of Diocese General Assemblies enumerate only certain classes of people under the section heading *Watumishi*. At formal events, MCs and signs specify places for *watumishi* to sit, or buffet lines for them to go through; I never saw a layperson test the boundaries with a “but we are all *watumishi!*” logic. This special status for *watumishi* is connected to concepts of guesthood and hospitality, since *watumishi* and

⁶³ The root is *-tuma*, “send” via its stative form *-tumika* “serve” (lit. be in a state of being sent). Nominalized into the abstract U- class (where a phonological process makes *-k-* into *-sh-*), it indicates “the abstract concept of the action that is expressed by the verb” – that is, “service”. *-tumika* can also be nominalized into the M-/WA- class of nouns, indicating the person performing the action expressed by the verb – thus *mtumishi* (pl. *watumishi*) “servant” (Mohammed 2001, 24, 31).

⁶⁴ My name in Swahili – “Elaine” is a Greek name meaning “light”, and a difficult one for many Swahili speakers to pronounce. I simply translated it into Swahili; Nuru is a common women’s name.

especially pastors both receive and are received; serve and are served as guests, often in equal measure.

Watumishi are treated as honored guests at all kinds of ceremonial functions. At most funerals, attendees eat lunch outside where buffet lines will have been set up and caterers hired.⁶⁵ Meanwhile, another buffet will have been prepared for the *watumishi* – often inside the house, where the *watumishi* eat separate from other mourners, including even the family. Only occasionally did a family member eat in the house, and even then he was himself an *mtumishi*.

Pastors often receive guests as well. Baba Askofu does perhaps more than most: While I was staying at his house, people would often come by whether they had an appointment or not, sometimes as early as 7 am or as late as 10 pm. In any case, they had to be given tea or food. His sitting room is about the size of a decent one-bedroom apartment in Manhattan, with couch space for 15. *Watumishi* often occupy both sides of the guest/host dynamic.

Mtumishi, as an identity, is also ambiguous in meaning both a certain privileged person and almost anyone at all.⁶⁶ Therefore, it is a concept which holds the diocese as a hierarchical structure in a constant tension. *Utumishi*, in its professional sense of ministers employed by the diocese and (particularly for pastors) endowed with divine authority, reinforces the diocesan hierarchy. In its universal sense, *utumishi* undoes that hierarchy, as all Christians have equal standing before God. It is in this state of tension that *utumishi* forms a central concept in Christian practice, and *watumishi* become central figures in the mediation of local Christianity. Though in the rest of the dissertation, I use *watumishi* in reference to professional ministers, it is essential to acknowledge this ambiguity.

⁶⁵ This is changing however, since it is perceived as a disproportionate burden on the family of the deceased, especially when many people attend. Some *kandas* of Hai District have agreed that food will no longer be served at funerals, and the issue has been discussed, although no binding resolutions made, at district-level General Assemblies.

⁶⁶ Compare the ambiguous position of *mgeni* meaning both visitor/guest and stranger/foreigner.

This is also a process of making something concrete. There is no *utumishi* without an *mtumishi*, therefore the concept becomes embodied in a physical person. I will examine the embodied social practice of *utumishi* below, but first, I describe the diocese as a set of parallel hierarchical structures: geographic, institutional, and personal – an “ideological apparatus” (Lester 2005, 17) which influences those embodied.

3.1. Organizational hierarchy: Geography and infrastructure

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania during my research comprised 24 dioceses. My work was primarily in the Northern Diocese, which covers the northern “bubble” of Kilimanjaro Region. Upon its creation in 1963 the Northern Diocese was very large, including most of Kilimanjaro and Arusha regions, and a small part of Manyara Region. Gradually parts of it broke away – most of Arusha Region became the North Central Diocese in 1972; the Pare diocese formed in 1975 comprising the Mwanga and Same districts of Kilimanjaro Region.⁶⁷ The Meru diocese was formed in 1992 after a long and even violent struggle (Williams 2009). Consequently, the diocese (apart from Karatu District, see below) is roughly equivalent with the area around Mt. Kilimanjaro. It includes about equal parts highlands and lowlands – to generalize, in the highlands they grow bananas and coffee; in the lowlands maize and sunflowers. On a satellite map the highlands look green and the lowlands yellowish brown. In this chapter, I discuss the diocese in terms of both a geographical area, and an organizational structure – including various forms of infrastructure and hierarchical authority structures.

Next, I describe the constituent parts of the diocese, from largest to smallest.

⁶⁷ On 6 November 2016, Mwanga was elevated to its own diocese, bringing the total in the ELCT to 25.

a) Diocese

The diocese headquarters are in central Moshi (Kilimanjaro Region's capital), directly across from the bus station, and next to the cathedral. Together the two occupy a very prominent piece of real estate. The office is a three story white building in two split-level wings. The south wing is partially occupied by the diocese-owned Uchumi Commercial Bank, and part is leased to an insurance company. The north wing is mainly occupied by the diocese. On the ground floor is:

- Reception
- BCC "Building Caring Communities" office (they run programs for physically and mentally disabled young people, in partnership with Mosaic International, a faith-based organization headquartered in Nebraska)
- Office of the pastor in charge of Diakonia
- The sewing workshop, where three women sew vestments and altar linens which are sold to Lutheran pastors and churches nationwide
- The chapel
- Archives
- Offices rented out to other organizations

On the first floor:

- Accounting and administration; parish secretaries are often seen waiting around on a bench near the cashier's window
- Offices of the treasurer, general secretary, bishop, assistant to the bishop, their secretary, and the boardroom

Second floor:

- Conference room
- Offices for various departments: health and social welfare, Christian education, infrastructure, youth, auditors, news and communication, and women. This is where I had my office, which I shared with Mch. Nambua, the pastor for students and youth.

Outside to the rear of the building is a covered kitchen and dining area, where the office employees have tea and lunch breaks. A parking lot provides spaces for about 20 vehicles, including five covered spaces for senior administration (all church officials nationwide drive white Toyota Land Cruisers), and a car washing area. The head office employs about 50 people.

b) Districts

The Northern Diocese includes five districts: Kilimanjaro Mashariki (Eastern Kilimanjaro), Kilimanjaro Kati (Central Kilimanjaro), Hai, Siha, and Karatu. Karatu, with 15 parishes, is an exclave to the west of North Central Diocese, about five hours' drive from the headquarters. When North Central Diocese became independent, Karatu District decided to remain with the ND rather than joining North Central or the neighboring Mbulu Diocese. Some Karatu pastors have since been pushing for its independence as a diocese. There has been no significant development on this, but the district does have some greater degree of autonomy than the other four. Administratively most parishes are in Kilimanjaro Region; 18 are in Arusha Region and four in Manyara Region. 102 parishes are "mountain" parishes, 61 are in the lowlands.

Siha is the smallest of the Kilimanjaro districts, with 21 parishes. The head office is just to the north of Sanya Juu, a small market town; the building is fairly small and includes only a few office rooms and a meeting hall. In my research, Siha was the site of WMY's evangelism efforts that I observed in 2012 and 2015, as well as my own first visit to Tanzania in 2000. Otherwise I spent less time in Siha than in the other three Kilimanjaro districts.

Hai District has 49 parishes, the most of any district in Tanzania. The headquarters are in Boma Ng'ombe, a town 25 km west of Moshi. The complex includes offices for the head pastor, deputy, secretary, accountant, two deacons, and a Christian Education coordinator, a chapel/prayer room and a meeting/conference room, an outdoor kitchen, and a 26-room guest house under construction. The property backs onto the northeast corner of the main junction in Boma Ng'ombe, of the Arusha-Himo road and the Boma-Sanya road. The district owns several of the buildings facing outwards towards the street, and leases them to shopkeepers. Several grain silos store maize for times of food shortage.

Kilimanjaro Kati (Central Kilimanjaro) has 34 parishes. The headquarters are in Majengo, a neighborhood in Moshi's eastern suburbs. The building has several offices and a meeting room/chapel. They are in the middle stages of building a large circular multi-purpose centre, which, when finished, will function as a conference centre and guesthouse. Like all other districts, it is presided over by a head pastor and a deputy head (both themselves senior parish pastors; one at a mountain parish, and one at a suburban church in Moshi), plus a general secretary/accountant, a parish worker (who coordinates the district women's department), and other administrative staff. Between Hai to the west and Kilimanjaro Mashariki to the east, there are large areas (Kibosho and Kilema/Kirua respectively) without Lutheran parishes, easily visible on the map above. Catholics established mission stations in those areas in the late 19th century, and they are still Catholic strongholds.

Kilimanjaro Mashariki (Eastern Kilimanjaro) has 45 parishes, almost all mountain parishes. The head office is in Himo, a town 29km east of Moshi Town and 15km west of the Kenyan border. In addition to the usual staff, it employs two sisters (nuns). The office block is of a 60s vintage, and like many buildings of that era, it sports yellow walls and light blue trim with jalousie windows. It also has a large conference hall (which was the site of the Next Generation seminars in 2013-2015, including the one I attended in 2014) and a new office block under construction during my research.

The sub-district administrative unit is the *kanda*, a group of about 5-10 parishes. I do not use it as a unit of analysis, but some relationships which I discuss below are organized at *kanda* level; I mention it so the reader is familiar with the term.

c) Vituo

The diocese owns and operates a number of educational, health, social welfare, and commercial enterprises, known as *vituo*, centers or stations. These are:

- Secondary schools (14)
- Hospitals (3) and their constituent dispensaries; one also has a school for clinical officers and nurses
- Faraja School, a primary school for physically disabled children
- *Ushirika wa Diakonia* Sabuko, a deacon's community for male diaconic workers (attached to Faraja School)
- Hai Vocational Training Centre
- *Ushirika wa Neema*, "Congregation of Grace" which houses the diocese's nuns and includes a Montessori Teachers Training Centre
- Lyamungo Retreat Centre
- Angaza Women's Centre, which provides vocational training programs and daycare services for women
- Uhuru Hotel & Conference Centre
- Other hostels (one each in Karatu, Moshi, and Rombo)
- Moshi Lutheran Printing Press
- Uchumi Commercial Bank
- Moshi Christian Bookshop, and several other bookshops
- Stefano Moshi Memorial University College, a constituent college of the ELCT-owned Tumaini University Makumira, with three campuses: Moshi Town, Masoka (formerly Masoka Management Training Institute), and Mwika Bible School (the diocesan seminary, founded 1953).

Besides these, which are organized at diocese level, districts and parishes operate Montessori kindergartens, primary schools, vocational schools, guesthouses, dispensaries, and other ministries and business ventures. Between these levels of operation, the number of *vituo* runs easily into the hundreds. I do not discuss them in detail, though I mention them to emphasize the way in which the church infrastructure expands beyond houses of worship to include educational, health, and commercial ventures as an integral part of its work. Many diocese employees see these ventures as aspects of both Christian identity, working hard to bring about a certain vision for the world; and Chagga identity, being resourceful and enterprising.

d) Parishes

The principal unit of diocese ministry is the parish. There are 164, each of which is served by at least one pastor and at least one evangelist (different roles within the church will be described later). Depending on their size and means, parishes may also employ a “parish worker”, cook, janitor, secretary, and/or security staff. They may also have pastoral interns – the Bachelor of Divinity program at the seminary includes a mandatory 10-month parish internship.

District	Parishes	Parish pastors	Parishioners			
			Women	Men	Children	Total
Karatu	15	17	7016	3362	15752	31,391 ⁶⁸
Siha	21	23	10065	5993	17035	33,093
Hai	49	58	31718	22167	39321	93,206 ⁶⁹
Kilimanjaro Kati	34	43	18848	10895	34789	64,532
Kilimanjaro Mashariki	45	49	27538	18895	35845	87,011
Total	164	190	95185	61312	142742	309,233

Parishes are really the nerve centers of the diocese. They are the locus of much of *watumishi*’s work: Sunday worship services, confirmation classes, choir practices, Sunday School teachers’ meetings, Bible Studies, counseling sessions, and the day-to-day bureaucracy and upkeep of paying bills, writing announcements, reading mail, sending reports to the diocese, landscaping, maintenance and cleaning, not to mention meal and tea breaks and the sitting around, chatting idly during down times.

Several sub-parish administrative groupings exist. Most parishes have at least one *mtaa* (pl. *mitaa*) “sub-parish”, and parishes in larger, less dense areas may have as many as 10. Each *mtaa* has its own house of worship; services are presided over by an evangelist (see below). Each

⁶⁸ Numbers for Karatu and Kilimanjaro Mashariki (and thus the grand total) do not add up because some parishes reported total attendance only.

⁶⁹ In 2015. 2014 numbers were not available.

parish has several *jumuiyas*, communities or house groups of about 10-12 families each, which meet weekly for prayer and Bible studies, rotating around each member household.

3.2. Organizational hierarchy: People

a) Pastors

Pastors (*wachungaji*, sing. *mchungaji*, as a written title “Mch.”) are the central personal figures of the diocese. The diocese counted 328 living pastors on its rolls in January 2015, which

I’ve broken down in a few ways as follows:

All pastors:

Active	253	77%
Retired	58	18%
Studying	11	3%
<i>Likizo Maalum</i>	5	2%
“Special leave”		

Active pastors by main place of work:⁷⁰

Head office	9	4%
District offices	7	3%
ELCT office	2	1%
Mission	6	2%
Parishes	183	72%
Schools	31	12%
Centers	6	2%
Other institutions	9	4%

Active pastors by gender:⁷¹

Male	227	90%
Female	26	10% ⁷²

Parish pastors by gender:

Male	171	93%
Female	12	7%

Non-parish pastors by gender:

Male	56	80%
Female	14	20%

⁷⁰ These aren’t exclusive, e.g. district pastors are also parish pastors, but I count them in district.

⁷¹ No female pastors have reached retirement age yet

⁷² Of these, most (all but perhaps seven) are married to pastors.

Parish pastors by role:

Senior pastor	152	83%
Assistant pastor	31	17%

Pastors are better-educated than average; they all have the equivalent of bachelor's degrees,⁷³ the vast majority from Tumaini University Makumira (TUMA) or Mwika Lutheran Bible School. Many pastors have master's degrees (in any given year, about 5-10 are in a Master's program); eight have doctorates. Parish pastors enjoy a particularly privileged status, and they are, in part, the main decision-makers within the diocese. General Assemblies at both diocese and district level are held semi-annually (alternating years), with voting delegates being one pastor plus 1-3 lay representatives (depending on population) from each parish. Non-parish pastors attend General Assemblies but do not vote. Voting is not the only decision-making made at General Assemblies; a significant portion of the agenda is dedicated to making resolutions, which are done by group discussion. The delegates split into groups, each takes a section of the report, and they start making resolutions (e.g., "The Meeting directs that...") In the discussion groups that I attended during the 2015 Eastern Kilimanjaro Assembly, these discussions occurred mostly between pastors without much input from the lay delegates present.

This tends to disenfranchise female pastors, though it is not necessarily intentional. Only parish pastors vote, and each parish only sends its senior pastor. Of 26 female pastors, only 12 are in parishes, and nine are senior pastors. Thus, 35% of female pastors have voting rights, while 62% of male pastors do. General Assemblies *are* encouraged to have a proportional representation of women and youth as their lay delegates, although as I mentioned they might not get involved much in resolution-making.

⁷³ Some older pastors without degrees were grandfathered in.

The diocese exercises a greater degree of control over its pastors than other Lutheran churches (e.g. the ELCA). The bishop is of course a pastor, and the authority that he exercises upon pastors is not, in theory, any different from that which they exercise on parishioners, since he is their pastor. Pastors are posted by the diocese, and are reassigned about every five to ten years. Prospective pastors are selected by application. Tuition is paid for by the diocese, and upon graduation and ordination, the diocese is obligated to employ the new pastor.⁷⁴ Parish pastors are employed (and paid) by the parish on behalf of the diocese; other pastors are employed directly by the diocese.

It is difficult to gauge the relationship between ordinary parishioners and pastors, or how the former perceive the latter. I did not have any research participants who were not themselves *watumishi* (even if on a part-time or voluntary basis, such as Sunday School teachers) or who were not close relatives of pastors. If I had tried to discuss perceptions of the clergy with average parishioners, I believe I would have had a difficult time getting a complete picture. Many pastors themselves feel as though parishioners perceive them with no small amount of ambiguity.⁷⁵ While they are respected and seen as spiritual role models, they are also the subject of scrutiny with respect to their personal lives. Pastors feel that parishioners often hold them to a higher standard, and that in some situations, they cannot win – for example, if their standard of living is seen as too high, they may be accused of lining their own pockets with parish funds; too low, and they may be accused of not representing the church well.

⁷⁴ Others can study on the same course if self-supported; the diocese is then under no obligation to employ them.

⁷⁵ I will discuss ambiguity in social relationships below, since it becomes important in several interactions, including between *watumishi* and *wageni*, and as Stambach (2009, 124f) argues, ambiguity is a “dominant and socially prevailing backdrop” in Chagga society. A commonly received bit of wisdom is “*Elewa yote unayozungumza lakini usizungumze yote unayoyajua*” (“Understand everything that you talk about, but do not talk about everything that you know.”)

Mandatory pastor's events and meetings are scheduled several times per year, and during these, unity is strongly emphasized. This is consistently a main focus of the diocese in its dealings with pastors; unity-building work also manifests in the regular workshops and seminars which pastors are expected to attend at district and *kanda* levels, along with events at nearby parishes. I discuss the task of building unity below, but first I introduce the other *watumishi* that populate the diocese.

b) Evangelists

Evangelists (*wainjilisti*, sing. *mwinjilisti*; as a written title, "Mwj.") carry out a great deal of pastoral work. Evangelists have four-year degrees. They oversee *mitaa*, "sub-parishes". They teach confirmation and baptism classes, and religion classes in local public⁷⁶ and private schools. They visit *jumuiyas* and parishioners, teach in Sunday School or consult with the teachers, provide counseling, and may lead or preach at Sunday worship (whether at the parish centre or a sub-parish). They oversee certain events (e.g. during bereavements, often an evangelist will oversee the grave-digging, liaise with the family of the deceased, etc.) but are not authorized to administer the sacraments (communion and baptism, although the latter is permitted in emergent situations). They occupy a marginal position, in that they are placed below pastors in the church hierarchy, both in terms of prestige and pay. A common short song goes "Let father be the bishop, let mother be the pastor, let the child be the evangelist."⁷⁷ At the same time, it is widely recognized that they are doing the work of pastors, and in many cases, even *more* work than pastors.

⁷⁶ Religion period in public schools is about one hour per week. Depending on the religious demography, several local pastors, priests, *shehes*, or imams may teach concurrently, and especially at secondary schools, pupils are free to attend whichever they choose.

⁷⁷ "Baba awe Askofu, Mama awe mchungaji, mtoto awe mwinjilisti"

c) Parish Workers

The diocese constitution requires every parish to have a Parish Worker, who oversees the parish departments for women, children, and *diakonia*. In practice, about half of parishes do. Parish Workers may teach Confirmation, Sunday School, and public school religion classes, they are to be given a slot in the preaching rota, and they are in charge of the material setup for worship: maintaining vestments, altar linens, eucharist materials, and so on. Depending on parish facilities, they may also teach kindergarten⁷⁸ or oversee other tasks as needed. Prospective Parish Workers must complete a four-year course, offered at Mwika Lutheran Bible School.

Like evangelists, Parish Workers also occupy a marginal role (Moshi 2016, 177). They are widely acknowledged to have tough job descriptions: at a seminar for Kilimanjaro Kati Parish Workers, the district head told them, “Parish Workers have many jobs – they are preachers of the word, ministers, people who get things done at the grassroots level. They can go more places than I can. My work is to teach, to preach, to baptize, to administer the sacrament, to bury the dead, but yours is more.”⁷⁹ Nevertheless, they too occupy a diminished status within the organizational hierarchy of the diocese.

During my research, the position presented a particular challenge, in that many within the church perceive that a lot of women don’t want to become Parish Workers anymore. They complain that pastors don’t value their work and use them as the parish cook, janitor, or secretary when that is not their role. One of the district-level Parish Workers explained that part of the shortage is due to the fact that some women who would have become Parish Workers in the past may now prefer to become evangelists or pastors.

⁷⁸ A significant number of parishes operate Montessori kindergartens; the diocese intends to expand this to all parishes and operates an in-house Montessori Teachers Training Centre

⁷⁹ “*Kazi za parish worker ziko nyingi – mhubiri wa neno, mhudumu, mtendaji, mpaka pale chini, wanaweza kwenda zaidi ya mimi. Kazi yangu ni kufundisha, kuhubiri, kubatiza, kutoa sakramenti, kuzika, lakini yenu ni zaidi.*”

d) Others

Sunday School teachers are largely women (at the Next Generation seminar I attended, about 50 of 70 attendees were female), who teach on a volunteer basis. This involves a commitment of about two hours per week, two to four weeks per month. Sunday School is typically held between the two services, from 8:30 to about 9:45. The average number of children per parish is 892; I never attended a Sunday School with less than 150 children present. Sunday School takes the form of a modified Lutheran liturgy, generally conducted with all children together in the sanctuary. A few more well-resourced parishes with areas like a meeting hall or balcony may split into groups for the lesson and memory verse sections, joining for the main liturgy including songs, prayers, and the recitation of psalms, collects, confession, and creed. Sunday School teachers ideally meet weekly plan their lesson, and are supposed to meet with the parish pastor and/or evangelists about monthly.

Choir members have a prominent presence during Sunday worship; every parish I have ever attended has at *least* two choirs which both perform one or two numbers per service. Weekly practices last an hour or two; in addition to singing in four-part harmony, choir members also have to get the choreography down, as each song is accompanied by a dance with steps and hand motions, and a separate bridge sequence.

Wadiakonia (sing. *mdiakonia*, as a written title “Md.”) are men whose full-time job is *diakonia*. This often includes social welfare programs or advocacy on a broader scale for those identified as “needy” – the poor, ill, disabled, widowed, elderly, etc. The diocese department for *diakonia* includes two educational centres for disabled children; other *wadiakonia* at district level may be involved with projects such agricultural programs to improve food security.

Masista (sing. *sista*, as a written title “Sr.”) are nuns. They are similar to male *wadiakonia* except that the position requires celibacy and—after a 10 year initiation—a lifetime

commitment. Most *masista* live at *Ushirika wa Neema*, which includes a number of income-generating projects. They make communion wafers, clerical robes and stoles, and altar linens which are sold nationwide. Nuns are famous for making money. Many of them are managers of *vituo* throughout the diocese; Uhuru Hotel, Lyamungo Retreat Centre, Moshi Christian Bookshop, and several of the other guesthouses and secondary schools are headed by *masista*. The diocese also has a voluntary women's *diakonia* order called Tabitha, which does not require any serious lifelong commitment.

3.3. Uchungaji

Wachungaji, “pastors”, make up a large percentage of my research participants, so in this section I examine in more detail what is involved in the social practice of *uchungaji*, pastoring. As I've said, *mchungaji* means “shepherd”, not in any archaic sense like “pastor” does, but in the current literal sense. The root verb is *chunga* “herd”. As with most words it can be nominalized into the U- class of abstract nouns, making *uchungaji*, pastorate, which has two senses: First, the pastor's office or vocation, conceptualized as a state of existence. It's what they're ordained to (and what a few eventually leave). Second, the everyday work, everything that a pastor does that constitutes pastor-work. In order to examine in depth the ethnographic details of how *watumishi* go about their *utumishi* and the different ways they embody what it means to “serve God”, I will discuss three aspects of pastorhood: Running an organization, serving the community and its members, and competing for resources.

For the first two, I will take as case studies two parishes and their pastors, Mch. Kimori of Wona Parish, and Mch. Kiwera of Maene Parish. They are similar in many ways: Both are in their mid-30s, and were ordained in the same year. In addition to their duties as parish pastors, both have responsibilities at diocese or district levels, and regular interactions with *wageni* as

part of these roles. Both are married with two young children; both of their wives are also Lutheran pastors. Their parishes have about the same number of members, but differ in setting. My observations of each are also different: I was at Wona Parish conducting observations for several months, and staying with Mch. Kimori during that time. As a result, I did not follow him closely, since that would have become needlessly tiresome. Rather, my observations were oriented towards the daily happenings around the parish, which is often busy, having a staff of about ten. Conversely, I only stayed at Maene Parish (which has a staff of two) for a few days at a time, and adopted more of an individual shadowing strategy.

I will discuss the third aspect, competing for resources, in more general terms.

a) Wona: Running an organization

Wona Parish is located in a small town in the lowlands, 860 metres above sea level, about 26 km west of Moshi Town, and 15 km east of the border town of Holili. The town is centred around the junctions of the east-west road running between Moshi and Holili, and the north-south roads towards Marangu and Dar es Salaam. It is served by four mini-bus routes with constant service to and from Moshi, and several coach lines with frequent daily service between Moshi and Mombasa or Dar es Salaam. There is a large market just south of the town centre, a small bus stand, and numerous shops, cafes, and bars. The town has one Catholic parish, one Lutheran, one Seventh Day Adventist, and several Pentecostal of various flavors. There are five primary and three secondary schools in the parish area (including a private boarding primary-secondary school). Once outside the main part of the town, one quickly finds oneself surrounded by larger plots of maize, with some beans and some sunflower as well. The River Wona⁸⁰ which gives the parish its name and forms the historical border between Marangu and Kilema chiefdoms flows through the western part of the town.

⁸⁰ Also Ghona, /gh/ being a softly voiced velar fricative.

The Lutheran parish was the main site of my observations for about six months in 2014. It was incorporated in 1967, and is currently in its second location (since about 1995). It is set in about two blocks from the main road leading north, on about 2.5 acres; between the parish and the district head office is about a 10 minute walk. There are three buildings: the sanctuary, the office block, and the parish house (for most of my research period, used as a common area for staff meetings, prayer services, Bible studies, sermon preparation, etc.) The office block is quite new, with offices, a classroom, and a small library. It is decorated with tile floors and mirror glass windows and doors, in contrast to the older style of the parish house with cement floors and jalousie windows. The sanctuary is a large octagonal building with one pillar in the middle and stained-glass windows on all sides, and a large wooden cross set in with blue fluorescent lights on the wall behind the altar. There is one sub-parish, Riata. The parish employs two pastors, three evangelists, one Parish Worker, one secretary, and a cook, along with some security and groundskeeping staff, and at different points in my research, 0-2 pastoral interns. In 2014, the reported membership was 409 women, 345 men, and 350 children (total 1104). This total was fairly consistent with the attendance announced at the Sunday services I attended. Like almost all parishes, Wona has Sunday services at 7 and 10 a.m, with the Sunday School in between. All services are conducted in Kiswahili.

Mch. Kimori is the senior pastor of Wona Parish. He has a Bachelor of Divinity from Tumaini University Makumira, and a master's degree in theology from an American Lutheran seminary. He is also the East Kilimanjaro District Christian Education coordinator. Additionally, he teaches at Mwika Lutheran Bible School. Outside of his church-related responsibilities, he owns an auto body shop, part of a tour company, and some 300 acres, mostly in maize in 2014.

Wona has a number of affluent parishioners who have successful in business, owning inns or guesthouses, bus lines, etc. Sunday offerings usually totaled 1.5-2 million shillings (about \$800-1200). At auctions,⁸¹ parishioners competed lightheartedly, buying stuff for others and pushing up prices beyond market value. Hence, the parish is able to support a greater number of employees, Mch. Kimori is able to delegate more tasks, and his own work tends to be more administrative. On any given day, his parish responsibilities might include counseling parishioners either on an ad-hoc basis for personal or relationship matters, or in more programmatic settings (e.g. someone who wants their child to be baptized, or who wants to join the church formally); writing announcements or reports for parish council meetings; leading morning prayer for the staff; teaching Religion classes at the local schools; visiting parishioners who have had a death in the family; meeting with Sunday School teachers; attending and speaking at one of the 16 *jumuiyas* on a rotating basis; or returning parishioners to the *kundi* (discussed more in Chapter 4.1.c).

On Sundays, of course, the senior pastor should generally be present at worship. Mch. Kimori did not often preach: Although there was a preaching rota posted in his office with a five-week cycle rotating between the two pastors, two evangelists, and the parish worker, this was often ignored and the sermons assigned to an intern. He did usually officiate at both services, leading the liturgy and the prayers, and administering the Eucharist on appointed Sundays. Mondays are designated diocese-wide as pastors' day off. However, in practice, this applies to parish business only. Mch. Kimori often had a full day of seminary teaching on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Evenings were regularly spent grading papers while watching football – Mch. Kimori is a dedicated Arsenal supporter, though he does not discriminate with his

⁸¹ Parishioners bring goods and cash for the offering. Any goods (produce, milk, eggs, sugar cane; sometimes domestic animals or household items) are auctioned immediately after the service on the front steps.

viewing habits, watching as many matches as he could in order to get the most out of his DSTV subscription. On Tuesdays, there was an afternoon Bible study for the parish staff.

Thursdays were busy, since that was sermon preparation day. After morning prayer, the pastors, evangelists, and interns would gather for several hours to discuss the readings for the coming Sunday. This is mandated by the diocese as a specific pastoral responsibility. At Wona, they were led by Mch. Kimori, or in his absence, the assistant pastor, who would assign the sermon to someone. This was not the actual sermon *writing*; that was up to the preacher. Rather, the goal is for the pastor to ensure that the rest of the *watumishi* understand and are able to teach the lesson appropriately. In fact, the sermon preparation was still held even if there was a guest preacher scheduled for the coming Sunday, who would attend the preparation session on Thursday at his or her own parish.

Saturdays, most parishes have their *kipaimara* “confirmation” classes for 12-14 year olds. The classes were usually taught by one or more of the evangelists or interns, and Mch. Kimori sometimes taught as well. He put on occasional seminars for secondary school students, participated in fundraiser meetings (although not in any official capacity; most parishes do not want the pastor to be the one dealing with the finances and in fact when counting offerings, the pastor is *never* present), and generally acted as the CEO of the parish.

One of a pastor’s more important duties is to officiate at funerals, but Mch. Kimori had relatively few of these. Most of his parishioners at Wona are not originally from there, he explained, so they usually go to their “home place” to be buried, and the funeral is officiated by the pastor there (although sometimes he was invited to officiate funerals at neighboring parishes). He also officiated at weddings and send-offs.

b) Maene: Serving the community

Maene is a village in Siha District. It is more rural than Wona, lying 50 km northwest of Moshi Town, and roughly eight km from the paved Boma-Sanya road. It is in the highlands, about 1642 metres above sea level and only about 1.3 km from where the dirt road dead-ends at the *msitu* “forest”, i.e. Kilimanjaro National Park. It’s not served by any regular public transit, although most mornings a *daladala*⁸² will come up to collect people who commute to lower areas or even to the town of Sanya Juu, from whose outskirts the dirt road to Maene starts climbing.

As with most parts of the Chagga homeland, the village is not so differentiated from the surrounding areas. Though rural, it’s quite densely populated. Kilimanjaro’s slopes are furrowed with a multitude of river valleys; roads travel along the ridges, with occasional valley roads switchbacking down to a small bridge and back up to the next ridge. These roads are lined with smallholdings comprising a house, outbuildings for domestic animals, and a *kihamba* with bananas, coffee, cane, maize, or vegetables. The village centre of Maene is marked by a slight increase in house density; some houses also have small shops adjacent to the road. There is also the parish building and the village office, with a large white sign with red lettering: *Karibuni kijiji cha Maene. Tanzania bila UKIMWI inawezekana*. “Welcome to the village of Maene. A Tanzania without AIDS is possible.”

Maene Parish occupies about .77 acres. It has three buildings; the sanctuary, a parish house, and a small office block under construction during my research.⁸³ The office was a single room in the parish house, with two desks (one each for the pastor and evangelist), some bookshelves and filing cabinets, and a sitting area demarcated by two couches and a coffee table.

⁸² A minibus, almost always a Toyota HiAce, privately owned but publicly licensed. Technically they seat 15 but in practice up to 30 including the driver and conductor.

⁸³ This was completed and dedicated in mid-2016.

The rest of the house was occupied by the evangelist and his family. The new office building had about five rooms plus a reception area. The parish was inaugurated in 1995.

The sanctuary has a classic layout seen at dozens of parishes: Rectangular, with an altar at the east end, the wall behind it decorated with large colored cloths pinned up in a sunburst design, a lectern on one side and a pulpit on the other, separated from the rows of pews by an altar rail. There is one sub-parish, Mese, on the next ridge to the southeast. In 2014 the reported membership was 200 women, 573 men, and 384 children; 1157 total.⁸⁴ Sunday attendance on the day I attended in 2015 was reported as 318 adults, and the regular offering Tsh. 425,000 (about \$235), plus a special offering of Tsh. 2.3 million (\$1275) for the fund to extend the sanctuary at Mese. One service per month is held in Kisiha, the local dialect of Kichagga.

Mch. Kiwera is the pastor of Maene Parish. He also has a Bachelor's degree in divinity, and in addition to the parish responsibilities, he is the manager of the diocese youth camp, which is located in a large field, donated by the village to the diocese. The property occupies 17 acres almost adjacent to the Kilimanjaro National Park border, and comprises the manager's house (where Mch. Kiwera lives with his family), the youth centre (under construction during my research period), a toilet and shower block, a football field, some garden plots in cabbages in 2015, and open grassy area. I spent two and a half weeks total at Maene, divided over three years; once on my own, and on the occasions of the 2012 and 2015 WMY visits.

Mch. Kiwera, having a staff of only one evangelist, had a considerably larger amount of parish work to do himself. He did a lot of counseling, both scheduled and impromptu; the evening that I arrived at the Kiwera house in 2014, he received a phone call from a quarreling

⁸⁴ These are the statistics as reported; upon noting the unusually high male population I asked Mch. Kiwera if this was really correct. He said it is definitely an error, but did not think it was a case of reversal. In 2013, the parish reported 374 women and 404 men.

couple who wanted to talk to both pastors. Although he and his wife had changed out of their clerical outfits and were getting ready for dinner, they got dressed and went out again promptly.

In the next few days, he was all over the place. Thursday, we went into the town of Sanya Juu (giving some girls a lift to school along the way) and picked up an electrician who was repairing the youth centre wiring. After breakfast, we went to a nearby parish for a meeting to revise the Kisiha language hymnal. Following a lunchtime jaunt into town to repair the car, which had been stalling unnecessarily, we returned towards Maene, stopping at Siha Secondary School, where Mama Mch. Kiwera⁸⁵ is a teacher and chaplain. Mch. Kiwera took pictures of the school, since some European partners had recently sponsored renovations and wanted to see them. Mama Mchungaji joined us in going to an *msiba*, a pre-funeral gathering for the bereaved family. The two pastors opened the meeting by leading a hymn, reading a psalm, and praying for the family. On the way home, we stopped at another parishioner's house, whose resident mother was ill. After visiting briefly, drinking soda and eating fried cassava, Mama Mchungaji and I went to pray for the woman. She was very old, and did not want to be prayed for; in fact she said she wanted to hit Mama Mchungaji, and she tried several times. The reason was not clear to any of us, except perhaps Grandma. Mama Mchungaji persevered, and prayed for her health and strength. We headed home; Mch. Kiwera stopped at the parish office, and Mama Mchungaji and I continued on foot.

Friday morning, Mch. Kiwera had a meeting; after lunch, he stopped by a neighboring parish to discuss setting up three-phase electricity. We carried on into Moshi, where Mch. Kiwera was to help mediate a dispute between one of his parishioners and her fiancé from Moshi. Not being invited, I went to visit Mch. Kimori's father in the hospital. Mch. Kiwera joined us there, since he knows the Kimoris well. After praying for Mzee Kimori and his roommates, we

⁸⁵ "Mama Mchungaji" is a common way to refer to either a female pastor, or a pastor's wife. Mrs. Kiwera is both.

returned towards Maene. The old woman Mama Mchungaji had prayed for had died, so we stopped first to visit the family. We drank tea and soda and discussed cheerfully how Grandma had finished her journey; Mch. Kiwera addressed the family, prayed for them and pronounced a benediction.

On Saturday, Mch. Kiwera and I went to the parish for confirmation classes. On the way though, a group of kids was returning home, and told Mch. Kiwera that that they had been to the parish, but the evangelist told them there was no class. Irritated, Mch. Kiwera continued on to the parish to find the evangelist and all the kids gone. He spent a while writing announcements instead, and praying for an old man who came in for help, but refused to say for what. Another group of students showed up late, but he sent them home, telling me that to teach them would not be fair to the first students. We headed into Sanya Juu, stopping to visit a parishioner who had recently been injured in a construction accident. He and his wife served us tea while Mch. Kiwera discussed the accident, then prayed for him. In town, he got stuck in at the copy shop, designing invitation cards for the upcoming fundraiser for the office building. After that, we went to the district-owned Sanya Juu health clinic, which was hoping to purchase an ultrasound machine with help from a partner in Germany. Mch. Kiwera met with a doctor, discussing the costs and income potential. After another stint at the copy shop, we headed home, stopping at the parish again first. Two *wageni* were there; a couple from Arusha who were conducting a marriage seminar at church the following day. We sat in the evangelist's living room visiting and drinking sweet black tea before returning to the Kiwera's home – for *lunch*. I decided to take the afternoon off. Mch. Kiwera joked, “Aren't you coming back into town to help me? I thought you were my assistant.”

c) **Church politics: Hierarchy, unity, and discord**

I have described ethnographically the ways in which two pastors work at “serving God”, and how *utumishi* becomes personified in them. I emphasize that both aspects of running a parish, serving the members and keeping the administrative side going, involve working within the hierarchical structure of the diocese, and liaising with other pastors, parishes, and institutions. This necessarily becomes political as diocesan resources are limited. Pastors must both support other pastors and look for ways to keep themselves and their parishes running.

At pastor’s meetings and seminars, a common theme was strengthening or firming. *Tuimarishe utumishi wetu*, “Let us firm up our *utumishi*” was a phrase I heard often. These events were scheduled on a regular basis at all levels—diocese, district, and *kanda*—for both active and retired pastors. In the weeks before Easter 2015, each district held a communion service for all district pastors and their spouses. The goal was to take care of the pastors’ spiritual needs; they cannot nurture their parishioners if they haven’t been nurtured themselves. Pastors are expected to get together regularly: At a parish fundraiser, certainly all parishes from the *kanda* and several others from around the diocese will send a pastor to represent them. If an evangelist is retiring, numerous evangelists from neighbor parishes will participate in the service; the same for a Parish Worker. Similarly, at a funeral for an immediate family member of a pastor, many other pastors from the district will attend, and at a funeral for a pastor, the obligation will be greater. More pastors will be expected to attend, and they may get dressed in robes and stoles instead of just clerical collars. At some events, all pastors will be expected to attend. Events of this magnitude included the retirement of Bishop Shao, the installation of Bishop Shoo, and the annual ordination service. At the parish level, *watumishi* are expected to attend the daily morning prayer and the weekly sermon preparation unless their duties require them to be elsewhere. *Watumishi* are expected to support each other.

At the same time, there is competition, disagreement, gossiping, and even fighting between pastors. Moshi, a Northern Diocese pastor, describes this dynamic in the very first paragraph (and refers to it in the title) of his dissertation on power relations in the Northern Diocese:

A Kiswahili saying goes, *kila mwamba ngoma, ngozi huivutia kwake*, literally, “everyone who stretches a skin on a drum pulls the skin to his/her own side”. This saying is a portrayal of what happens in a competitive environment; everyone favours her/his side. The saying tends to suggest that the desire by one side or person to outsmart the other is widespread in personal relationships. The history of Christianity has not been an exception to this. (Moshi 2016, 11)

Much of this probably happened below my level of perception, although I did see glimpses of it. While I was wrapping up my research at Wona, I was looking for a place to stay since I hadn't lined up accommodation for my second phase. I made inquiries of acquaintances – did they know anyone with a spare room I could use for a couple weeks? A couple days later, I heard from another acquaintance that one *mtumishi* had been spreading rumors about why I needed to move, telling others that Mch. Kimori must have made advances at me, which were taken to be unsuccessful as evidenced by my moving out. Occasionally pastors told me about the scheming and rumor-spreading that goes on behind the scenes: For example, how Pastor A did not like Pastor B and wanted him posted further away, so he told the bishop that Pastor B's mother who lived near a distant parish was chronically ill. Pastor B was sent to that parish; when the bishop visited later he asked Pastor B about his mother, and both were surprised when it came out that Mama B was well and living elsewhere anyway, and that this was the reason for Pastor B's posting. Pastor A claimed he had heard about Mama B from Pastor C. I heard several stories like this, and was reminded of the time-honored political techniques employed by the chiefs of old. Of course, some chiefs consolidated their power through physical intimidation, but often these chiefs were seen as otherwise weak – see Stahl's (1964, 112–13) description of Ndesserua's reign, for example. Sina was remembered as a great warrior. But Marealle brought him and all

his other rivals to ruin using nothing but rumor, and today he is remembered as one of the greatest chiefs of all time. His ability to play rival chiefs, Swahili traders, German colonial officers, and missionaries both Catholic and Lutheran off each other for his own benefit was never eclipsed. Stahl (1964, 359) argued that major social and political changes (including those associated with Arab trade, German and British colonialism, and national independence which was being realized during her research) did not drastically change “the game” of Chagga politics; they only provided new rules. It would seem that pastors are still playing a version of that game.

I am not suggesting that pastors are calculating opportunists looking to ruin other pastors. The balance between unity and discord I describe here is *not* teetering on the edge of chaos; my observations do not lead me to believe that the work of building unity was a carefully orchestrated hypocrisy rather than a deeply held value. At the same time, I do not wish to downplay the negative aspects of politicking either, since for the pastors I worked with, it had the potential to be very painful. One told me of his disillusionment: “I’m getting tired of being a pastor. I enjoy my work, but when I first became a pastor I thought we would be a group that would support each other. Instead people are talking behind each other’s backs and looking for ways to take advantage.” He complained that other pastors, including his administrative superiors, were jealous at times and would have liked to see him fail. However, in terms of political efforts, building unity and sowing discord appeared to be part and parcel with the practice of *uchungaji*; two aspects of an ongoing social relationship between pastors. These dynamics in *utumishi* and *uchungaji* take place within the context of the diocesan hierarchy, which is itself informed by ideals of spiritual and ethnic heritage.

Chapter 4: *Uhusiano* and *Ushirikiano* (Relationship and Partnership)

Since *uhusiano* and *ushirikiano* are key terms which I use throughout this chapter, I will begin by explaining them in more depth. *Uhusiano* “relationship” derives from the verb *-husu*, “concern, relate to, appertain”. *Uhusiano* uses the reciprocal form *-ana*; *-husiana* is to be related to one another, to interdepend, to liaise. *Ushirikiano* “cooperation, collaboration” is derived the same way; an abstract noun made out of a reciprocal verb – in this case the root is *-shiriki*, “participate”. It’s also often rendered “partnership” which does not have an immediate equivalent in Swahili. As with *utambulisho*, the connotation is of the abstract thing that performs the verbal actions.

As is common in Swahili, these terms may take many different forms due to the flexible verb morphology and types of nominal derivation. I will point these out in footnotes where it assists in understanding the meaning of Swahili quotations.

4.1. Conceptual basis for *uhusiano*

Popular conceptions of *uhusiano* within the diocese are often framed in terms of cultural and ethnic heritage, Christian theology, and economic necessity. These are closely related, and come into tension at times. Sometimes, the importance of *uhusiano* is even discussed as a taken-for-granted point of departure, or as an end in itself.

a) *Uhusiano* as a natural state

In many of my observations, *watumishi* discussed church business in relation to *uhusiano*. Sometimes this was so implicit that it was difficult to pick out; pastors did not necessarily dwell on a rationale. It was simply a given. Additionally, *watumishi* often mentioned either *uhusiano* or *ushirikiano* as ends in themselves.

Prof. John Shao, former director of Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre,⁸⁶ spoke at a team-building day for diocese office employees. He presented lessons from his tenure at KCMC “which were ways to build unity and to find success, so that we may cooperate together.”⁸⁷ After his presentation and a subsequent exercise where employees listed a positive quality for each member of their department, Baba Askofu thanked everyone for their participation, saying that the exercise had “contributed to our goal of building relationships, encouraging and strengthening each other.”⁸⁸

Similarly, at a workshop for Parish Workers held at the Kilimanjaro Kati district office, participants often framed *uhusiano* or *ushirikiano* not only as ways to reach a goal (for example, in making the most out of limited parish resources), but as goals in themselves. Mch. Ngalami, the head of the diocese women’s department, told them, “In every challenge, develop strategies to cooperate with people. Pray earnestly to God so that you can cooperate with whom? *People*.”⁸⁹

b) Argument from heritage

It’s a common trope to discuss “African society” as more relational than “Western society”. This does often fall prey to essentialism or romanticism, but many pastors were quick to identify the concept of relationship as central to their lives as Chagga people, as Christians, or even just as Africans. These identities shape how people perceive the importance of relationships, their nature, and methods for their maintenance and repair.

The idea that a more holistic type of relationality is common to African people was a popular one amongst my research participants, and was expressed particularly often at

⁸⁶ KCMC is the large ELCT-owned referral hospital in Moshi, serving a population of 15 million, with 630 inpatient beds, numerous outpatient clinics, 1000 staff, and almost 2000 students at the attached medical school.

⁸⁷ “... *kujenga umoja, kuelekea mafanikiyo, ili tuweze kushirikiana kwa pamoja.*”

⁸⁸ “... *lengo la kujenga uhusiano, kutiana moyo na nguvu.*”

⁸⁹ “*Katika kila changamoto, weka mikakati ya kushirikiana na watu. Omba sana Mungu uweze kushirikiana na nani? Shirikisha watu.*” -*shirikisha* is the causative of the root -*shiriki* “participate”; -*shirikiana* its reciprocal. This rhetorical method of breaking up a statement, asking a question which she immediately answers, is very common.

international meetings, such as the LWF All-Africa conference. Throughout the conference, delegates from all over the continent spoke of the importance of developing relationships, both within and outside Africa (in Chapter 8.2, I examine how the conference reflected and enacted a theological formulation of partnership and mission). I even got a dressing-down on this theme once; asking a research participant why he stayed friends with someone who had been spreading rumors about him, he shook his head at me. “You’ve been here how long now, and you still don’t understand Africans? We’re not like you. Look at that spider web over there. Can I take out a section of it?”

Chagga scholars, writing about their own ethnic heritage, devote much attention to social relationships (Urio 1990, 123; Shao 1990, 22ff; Lema 1999). These writings may use as source material the author’s personal experience, primary research (e.g. interviews with elders), or secondary research (much of it sourced from German missionaries, particularly Gutmann.) As I have argued in Chapter 1.5, even if these accounts of Chagga society represented a reification of a dynamic situation, they are nevertheless valued, referenced, and mobilized by Chagga theologians. Their writings often portray an idyllic view of Chagga life, especially pre-colonialism, where everyone is tied to everyone else, and to live life alone is—to the extent that it is even thinkable—not to live at all (Mbiti 1969, 108). In this section, I describe how *uhusiano* is instantiated in terms of heritage as Chagga people.

Chagga naming conventions

Chagga scholars discuss how living persons are tied to their ancestors by various methods of remembrance, including naming (Urio 1990, 53–53); but this also serves to tie them to other living persons. It took me a while to grasp this concept: Early on in my research, Mch. Kimori told me, “Usually children are given their father’s name, so I am Mbuyekwi just like my father.”

I was confused, since neither Mch. Kimori nor his father were called Mbuyekwi. He continued, “That is why when my grandmother saw me, she used to say, ‘Ah, my husband.’ I’m not really her husband, it’s just how she calls me.” I was even more confused, but unfortunately for me, the televised Arsenal match kicked off at that moment, and so Mch. Kimori was not taking any more questions.

Several months later, I was attending a funeral with Baba Askofu; the deceased was his cousin’s husband. During his greetings to the congregation, he joked about how he and the deceased had the same wife. I asked him to explain later. Baba Askofu laughed. “I don’t think you’d understand,” he said, and he was correct. I realized that drawing a diagram would be necessary, so at home, I asked him to help me sketch it out (see Figure 11).

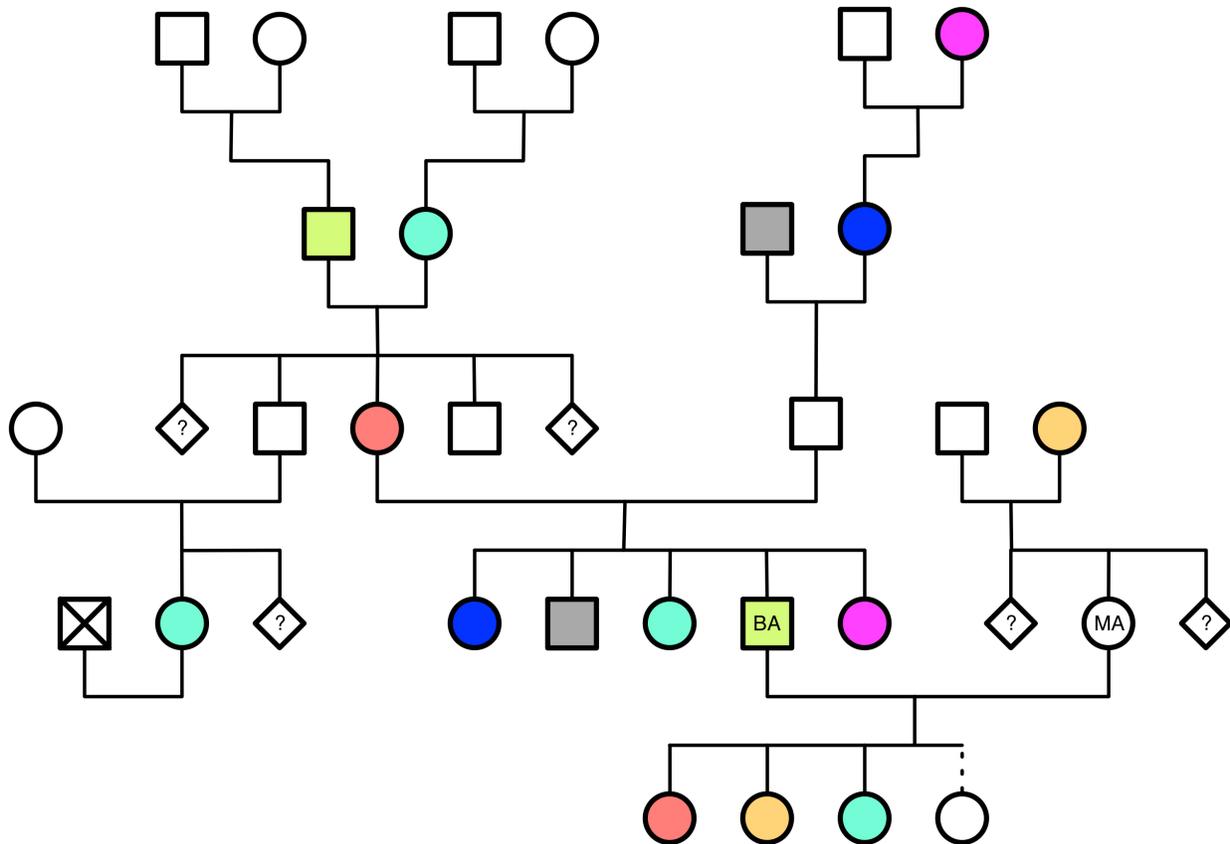


Figure 11: Baba Askofu's family tree and name-carrying patterns. Squares male, circles female, diamonds unknown or irrelevant. Baba Askofu marked "BA" and deceased at the funeral marked X. Matching colors indicate carrying the same name.

A person has their given name, and the name they carry. They may be the same, but this is unusual. In both examples above, Baba Askofu and Mch. Kimori were talking about the name they carry. A firstborn son will carry the name of his paternal grandfather, the second born his maternal grandfather, the third his paternal great-grandfather, the fourth his maternal great-grandfather, and so on. For daughters, substitute “grandmother”.

Baba Askofu, the second son in his family, carries his maternal grandfather’s name. His cousin, the oldest daughter in her family, carries her paternal grandmother’s name. Since those two names—represented by green and teal—were husband and wife two generations prior, Baba Askofu can joke that his cousin (along with his grandmother, his second sister, and his third daughter) are his wife.⁹⁰ This explains why Mch. Kimori, the oldest son, could be called “husband” by his paternal grandmother. The same relationship is represented in this diagram by grey. He and his father *were* both Mbuyekwi: his father had it as his middle name, inherited from *his* father; and he carried it. This type of relationship was given as the reason Baba Askofu had to go to an engagement party: The bride-to-be was his daughter, that is, she carried the name as one of his maternal aunts (who are classified as “mothers”), so the names that he and the girl carried had been in a father-daughter relationship. Through this system of formal and informal naming, individuals maintain a set of connections not only to their ancestors but to other living relatives.

Reconciliation in Chagga thought

Chagga scholars also stress the communitarian nature of Chagga society in terms of relationships. Urio (1990, 123) and Shao (1990, 22ff) go into great detail about this, insisting that for Chagga people to live alone was unthinkable. Great care is given to maintaining relationships between individuals, and when people have a conflict it’s very important for them to be restored to a proper state of relationship. Mch. Kimori was on the committee to plan his cousin’s

⁹⁰ The relationship is limited to joking; this cousin would specifically be excluded from marriageability.

wedding;⁹¹ at one of the meetings, two other cousins began arguing, even coming to blows. The next day, the two combatants gathered at their father's⁹² house, with several other fathers and uncles (about 10-12 in total), in order to reconcile the two. I was not invited to this meeting, but being next door, I could see that earnest discussions were ongoing for a couple hours.

Often, pastoral counseling revolves around restoring relationships to a proper state. I was invited to accompany one of my friends to counseling visits with two separate pastors. She had had an affair with a married man which had ended quite badly, and they were no longer on civil speaking terms. Neither pastor thought it necessary or even beneficial for them to sever ties, which would have been standard advice in North America for recovery from an affair. Rather, both thought that the two should work towards restoring the correct relationship that they should have had from the beginning.⁹³ Although forgiving each other and parting ways was an available option, both pastors considered this an inferior concession. A few weeks later, I was with my friend in town when one of the pastors passed by us on his way to the office, and we greeted each other. "By the way," she told him, "I talked to my friend, and -" He smiled and interjected, "I'm glad to hear you say 'friend'." Even having heard only her side of the story on how the other man had behaved hurtfully, he considered that for them to be friends again was the ideal outcome rather than parting ways, even amicably.

c) Argument from theology

The last example blurs the line between conceptualizations of relationship as mediated by Chagga heritage vs. as a theological concept. In some ways there is no clear line; many African theologians argue that there is no separation for most Africans between religion and the rest of

⁹¹ Yes. Weddings are planned (and funded) by committee.

⁹² Not necessarily birth father; father's brothers are also counted as fathers. Therefore, though I have called them "cousins" here that is not the emic term; they were in fact brothers.

⁹³ Compare to the importance of a correct relationship in Chagga cosmology in Chapter 2.1.a.

their life, so the idea that one can differentiate ethnic and religious dimensions of relationship is a non-starter.⁹⁴ However, formulations of Christian theology are salient in conceptions of relationship. My research participants, particularly those who are scholars in their own right, explicitly connect Chagga heritage to contemporary Christian theology, and argue that this is the only way to produce a theology that will be of any use to African people.⁹⁵ This results in contemporary Christian understandings of relationship (and reconciliation) which are informed by understandings of Chagga heritage. In theological discussions of relationship, the importance of balancing relationships between individuals, social groups, and God comes to the fore.

Kundi

One example of theological relationship-balancing, which is part of the ELCT's formal ecclesiastical theology, is that of the *kundi*. Strictly speaking, *kundi* just means group. It can be a flock of birds or a herd of cattle. Applied to Lutheran parishes, it denotes those who are in a good relationship with the congregation.⁹⁶ Those outside the *kundi* can't receive communion, have their children baptized,⁹⁷ or get married in the church; should one die in that state, a different liturgy will be used. It has no bearing on whether one is considered a Christian, and many people outside the *kundi* come to church every Sunday. In practice, it doesn't seem to be a big deal, though that doesn't mean it's not taken seriously. Communion is only celebrated quarterly in most parishes, and they announce the dates a week or two before, sometimes saying something like "Next week is communion, so those outside the *kundi* should [see the pastor to] get their

⁹⁴ This is indeed generalized, but it is the argument of Mbiti (1969), Fossouo (2010), Ng'weshemi (2014), Nkemnkia (2002), along with Chagga theologians Shao (1990), Urio (1990), Lema (1999), and Kyomo (2003).

⁹⁵ I develop this theme more in Chapter 6.

⁹⁶ In theory, one joins the *kundi* at baptism. However, in practice children aren't put out of the *kundi* – younger ones because they are not responsible yet, and older children or younger teenagers because it would be needlessly harsh.

⁹⁷ Nor baptize anyone if an emergent situation requires lay baptism.

things in order.”⁹⁸ Returning to the *kundi* is a fairly quick and easy process; the liturgy is included in TMW and it is usually done at Sunday worship, but can be done individually. The most common reasons to be put outside the *kundi* are problem drinking and adultery, including being in common-law marriages, or as the church constitution puts it, *wanaojioza*, “those who marry themselves”. I mentioned to Baba Askofu once that my husband and I lived together before marriage, and the priest who officiated at our wedding had told us that really, we were already married; we just wanted a wedding. Baba Askofu nodded. “Many people do the same here, then later have a ceremony at church – in that case it’s not called a wedding, it’s ‘blessing a marriage.’” That ceremony also suffices to return the couple to the *kundi*.

When I first heard about the *kundi*, Mch. Kimori phrased it as a practice that some churches have of making unwed mothers apologize to the congregation. “They received it from the missionaries, and the practice is still around even though the missionaries are gone. And now the missionaries who come ask why they embarrass women that way.” He laughed. “They got it from the missionaries!” The concept of the *kundi* is, on the surface, quite similar. A lot of the time it does look like a woman apologizing to the congregation, and pastors fully admit that it is unfair because women bear the burden of *zinaa*, adultery, while men do not. Mch. Tilya once joked with me that this is why you don’t see as many men in heaven as women – they haven’t had their sins found out and had the chance to confess. However, it’s discussed not in terms of punishment, but relation to a community. A person outside the *kundi* is considered to have separated himself from the community.⁹⁹ The operative element is whether the wrongdoers are causing discord. I pressed Mch. Tilya on this.

E: Why does someone returning to the *kundi* have to confess to everyone?

⁹⁸ “Nje ya *kundi*, watengeneze mambo yao.”

⁹⁹ Baba Askofu emphasized this when I was talking with him about cohabiting couples; he began to say *wametengwa* “they have been separated” but corrected himself to *walijitenga* “they separated themselves”.

T: Because he's wronged the *kundi*, it's a people of people who love and obey God, so if he has wronged them, he confesses in front of them.

E: But what if it's some other thing that affects the community, but isn't one of the 'typical' sins? Theft, for example.

T: Well, that depends on the type of theft. If it's between two people and they take care of it, there's no need to throw anyone out of the *kundi*. And there's no reason why it shouldn't be the same with adultery. If the offended parties work it out between themselves, you know, if the husband finds out and he talks with his wife and the other man and they reconcile among themselves, there's no need to bring it to the congregation. But if they're fighting, if it's causing trouble, whether it's theft or adultery or anything else, then the whole congregation is concerned.

When missionaries first arrived, one difference between their religion and traditional religion was that for them, individual sin was possible. There was a relationship between God and a person independent of anyone else. In Chagga thought, all relationships with God were corporate in nature and so individual sin was not possible (Lema 1999, 59). Today we still see the emphasis on sin being something that is done in relation to others, meaning one doesn't sin just against God but against everyone else. However we can see some changes, in that now many things *are* considered individual enough to not involve the whole community (although of course reconciliation among the directly involved is still heavily emphasized). And in any case, all pastors agree that someone outside the *kundi* is not outside the church; they are still a Christian. So there's a relationship with God that is distinct from the relationship with the group. Importantly, though, this relationship with God is considered to be started at baptism – which involves the whole congregation.

Reconciliation redux: Christian theology

The concept of the *kundi* also brings in theological ideals of reconciliation, in Swahili *upatanisho*. Pastors consider reconciliation a crucial facet of the relationship between man and God, accomplished through Jesus Christ. This is really seen as the central tenet of the faith: Man

is separated from God by sin, and is reconciled to God by the death and resurrection of Jesus. For my participants, Jesus' work is understood to return man to the original relationship that we should have had, or used to have with God, before it was upset.¹⁰⁰

But like the concept of the *kundi*, this doesn't just operate at the individual level; it should work between people as well. This is theologically important because it is a metaphor for salvation. In one sermon preparation session Mch. Kimori explicitly connected relationship, freedom, and salvation. Quoting from an English-language gospel commentary on the passage for the coming Sunday, from John 8:31-44, he said: "It is freedom to be what God intends humanity to be.' What are God's purposes? To have relationship. Freedom is salvation. ... Understanding and relationship with God will set you free. Think, what are God's purposes in [my] business, life, work, marriage?"¹⁰¹

Similarly, Baba Askofu said in his Maundy Thursday¹⁰² sermon:

Kwa mateso yake na kifo chake, tunakumbushwa kwamba dhambi zote zimesamehewa. Ndiyo maana ya upatanisho. ... Haijalishi na dhambi kubwa kiasi gani, msamaha wa Yesu unatosha. ... Tunapata kweli kuunganishwa na yeye. ... Kwa kuwa Yesu ... alijitoa, basi sisi nasi, tukishapatanishwa ... tunaitwa kuwa tayari kupatana ya wenzetu, kuwasamehe hata waliotukosea. ...

Tuishe maisha ya upatanisho. Inasikitisha sana kwamba wakristo, watu ambao wanashiriki meza ya Bwana [hawapo] tayari kumsamehe [mwenzao]. Shetani anatumia mbinu nyingi. ... [Anachochea] moto wa vinyongo, wa chuki. Hata katika jamii yetu na dunia yetu ambapo magomvi ni mengi sana ... tuwe tayari kushuhudia upatanisho huo ambao Yesu ameweka. ... A[me]tufanya kuwa vyombo vya upatanisho.

Through [Jesus'] sufferings and death, we are reminded that all sins have been forgiven. this is the meaning of reconciliation. It doesn't matter how big a sin it is, Jesus' forgiveness is enough. We are truly able to join with him. Since Jesus gave

¹⁰⁰ Compare the idea of restoring the "right" relationship among quarreling friends, or generally within Chagga cosmology (Chapter 2.1.a).

¹⁰¹ "Makusudi ya Mungu ni nini? Kuwa na uhusiano. Uhuru ni uokovu. ... Ufahamu na mahusiano na Mungu itakuweka huru. Tafakari, makusudi ya Mungu ni nini katika shughuli, maisha, kazi, ndoa?"

¹⁰² The commemoration of the Last Supper and of Jesus' arrest and trial.

himself, so we ourselves, having been reconciled, we are called to be ready to be reconciled to each other, to forgive each other, even those who have wronged us.

Let's live lives of reconciliation. It's very sad that Christians who participate in the Lord's Supper are not ready to forgive their neighbor. Satan uses lots of strategies. He incites the fire of grudges, of hate. Even in our society and our world where there are many conflicts, let us be ready to witness to this reconciliation that Jesus puts in place. He has made us into instruments of reconciliation.

Pastors teach explicitly that Jesus' death brings reconciliation – between us and God, and between us and other people. In other words, since salvation is found in reconciliation, proper relationship with other people is an experience of salvation. It's a powerful message; as I sat in my pew that evening, I thought of one of my own friends whom I had fallen out with. I was touched by Baba Askofu's words, and began reflecting on how I could work towards reconciliation myself. Through this, and through observing pastoral counseling sessions, I learned something about how Tanzanian Lutherans thought about relationship. They're indispensable to have, they are a manifestation of humanity's relationship with God, and when they're broken, they should be reinstated if at all possible.

Until now I have focused on individual or interpersonal relationships. In the next section, I will begin to shift to a discussion of how these framings of *uhusiano* and *upatanisho* emerge in organizational relationships, including the partnerships between the diocese and other groups which occasion visits by *wageni* from all over the world.

d) Argument from necessity: “economic” relationships

Several of my pastor friends discussed relationships, even personal relationships, in economic terms. I once went with Mch. Kimori to visit his larger *shamba*, which he only does a few times per year. We'd been talking in the car about relationships, with respect to the WMY groups and their evangelism efforts. On the way out of his *shamba* we passed one of his neighbors, an elderly Maasai man. Mch. Kimori stopped to chat, gave him Tsh 3,000 and told

him to buy some soda (that amount would buy 5 glass bottles). We continued on, and after a few minutes, he turned to me. “You see how I built a relationship there? I just gave him some money. Christianity is not just about Jesus, it’s also about human needs. I show up to talk to my employees but I have to pay them too. That also keeps up our relationship.”

Economic dynamics in relationships are not always thought of positively. I asked Mch. Nambua about the church’s position on sex education, and how he would compare it to when he was a teenager in the 1990s:

It’s different and the same. Now there’s a lot more awareness, teenagers know about contraception and STIs, they have access to information online. But lots of teenagers still get involved in sexual relationships when they’re not ready. Some are pressured, and some do it for economic reasons (*kwa sababu za uchumi*). You know, men give them gifts.

But *uchumi* “economics” comes up more often when talking about organizational relationships. The diocese itself is independently solvent, with semi-annual reports and external auditor’s statements showing a balanced budget each year. Nevertheless, they receive a lot of money for various projects. In 2012-2013 the diocese received US\$977,815 from the Nebraska Synod alone, about 1.5 billion shillings, which was slightly above their annual operating budget. Here is how the 2014 general assembly report discusses the state of their partnerships:

MAHUSIANO NA MARAFIKI (PARTNERSHIP)

Dayosisi imeendelea kudumisha mahusiano yake na marafiki wa nje ya nchi yetu. Mahusiano haya yameleta baraka nyingi kwa Dayosisi, Majimbo na Sharika.

Tumepokea ugeni wa Askofu Brian Maas toka Sinodi ya Nebraska ambaye ametutembelea kwa mara ya kwanza tangu achaguliwe. Vikundi toka Nebraska vimeendelea kutembelea dayosisi yetu mara moja kila mwaka. Kwa kipindi cha miaka miwili kiasi cha \$977,815 sawa na wastani wa Tsh. 1.5 bil. kilipokelewa toka Nebraska kusaidia miradi ya sharika, vitabu na ada za wanafunzi katika shule na vyuo. Huu ni msaada mkubwa unaopaswa kupokelewa kwa shukrani nyingi.

Marafiki zetu wa Ujerumani nao wameendelea vema katika kudumisha mahusiano yetu. Kama inavyojulikana Majimbo yetu yote yana marafiki toka Ujerumani. Viongozi wa Majimbo kwa nyakati tofauti wameshiriki katika ziara ya kutembeleana.

Uhusiano wetu na Kanisa la Anglikana Embu Kenya nao unaendelea vizuri. Patano letu ni kuwa Kamati ya mahusiano hayo inafanya vikao viwili kwa mwaka.

Ni imani yangu kuwa tutatunza na kuendeleza mahusiano haya kwa faida ya Kanisa na jamii kwa ujumla.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH FRIENDS (PARTNERSHIP)

The Diocese has continued to maintain its relationships with friends outside of our country. These relationships have brought many blessings to the Diocese, the Districts, and the Parishes.

We received the visit of Bishop Brian Maas from Nebraska Synod, who visited us for the first time since being elected. Groups from Nebraska have continued to visit our diocese once every year. In a period of two years, the amount of \$977,815, equal to an average of 1.5 billion Tsh,¹⁰³ was received from Nebraska to help with projects in parishes, books, and fees for students in schools and colleges. This is a great help which should be received with many thanks.

Our friends in Germany have been doing well in maintaining our relationship. As is known, all of our Districts have friends from Germany. The leaders of the Districts, at different times, have participated in tours to visit each other.

Our relationship with the Anglican Church of Kenya, Embu, is continuing well. Our agreement is that the Committee for the relationship will have two meetings per year.

I trust that we will foster and continue these relationships for the benefit of the Church and society as a whole.¹⁰⁴

The general assembly of Kilimanjaro Mashariki District brought up partnerships during the 2015 meeting, in both the report and the discussion, which indicated that the situation needs to be handled delicately. Mch. Marenga, the district head, told the pastors and delegates:

Partnership is a difficult issue, especially now. There are parishes that have a partnership, and parishes that don't. I've tried talking with our partners in Germany,

¹⁰³ By comparison, the diocese budgets for 2012 and 2013 were Tsh 1.25 and 1.36 billion respectively (M/Mkuu 2014, p. 129). This apparent between the diocese's financial independence and the level of aid (from Nebraska alone) is due to the diocese and its various ministries (hospitals, orphanages, parishes etc.) being incorporated separately.

¹⁰⁴ M/Mkuu 2014, p. 66

but haven't gotten a parish that ... is ready to have a partnership for now. For example, Lyasongoro Parish [Marenga's]. We had one, but our partners decided to leave because of their economic state. When you have guests at your parish ... talk to them respectfully so they receive [the idea] well. It's possible something good will come from there. But it's not easy now to find partnerships for a parish.¹⁰⁵

One delegate raised his hand to ask how a balance could be achieved, since some parishes' operating costs are covered by their partnership, making their work easier, while others are without. He suggested parishes could pair up amongst themselves, and asked if the committee would be willing to give concessions to parishes without a partnership. Marenga replied,

We've received your thoughts, and they'll be considered as to what can be done. But for right now, ... let's get the names of those without a partnership, because sometimes people write to the diocese office. If those names get to the assistant to the bishop, it will be easier. Or sometimes one or two people show up and say, we'd like a friendship with a parish in the diocese.¹⁰⁶

It's interesting to note here the way that Marenga plays off different kinds of *ushirikiano* – we can look for them in Germany, “carry together” with each other, and pitch the idea to any other *wageni* that happen into our parishes. With that in mind, I begin to focus more on the sense of *ushirikiano* as a formalized partnership.

4.2. From *Uhusiano* to *Ushirikiano*

What is the relationship between *uhusiano* and *ushirikiano*? I have been using these terms somewhat interchangeably, and here I'll discuss in more detail how *ushirikiano* in the sense of a partnership between organizations emerges from ideas of *uhusiano*. However, I do not necessarily differentiate the two or define them in specific terms. This reflects their flexibility

¹⁰⁵ “*Jambo la partnership, na hasa kwa sasa hivi, ni jambo ambalo ni gumu. Kuna sharika ambazo zina partnership na nyingine ambazo hazina partnership. ... Nilijaribu sana kuongea na wenzetu Ujerumani ... lakini hatujapata usharia ambao ... wapo tayari kuwa na uhusiano kwa sasa. ... mfano usharia wa Lyasongoro, tulikuwa na partnership, lakini wale mapartners wetu, waliamua kuacha kwa sababu ya hali ya uchumi. ... Unapopata wageni wanaofika kule usharia wako, ... uzungumze nao kwa hekima wapokee vizuri. Inawezekana patatokea kitu chema. Lakini si jambo lililo rahisi sana sasa hivi, kutafutia sharika partnership.*”

¹⁰⁶ “*Mawazo haya umeyasema, tumeyapokea. Yatafikiriwa kwamba ni nini kufanyika. Lakini kwa wakati huo huo, wale ambao hawana partnership, ... hebu tupate majina yao, kwa sababu, kuna wakati ... watu wanaandika kwenye ofisi ya dayosisi. Yakifika kwenye ofisi msaidizi, itakuwa ni rahisi. Pengine ametokeza mtu mmoja au wawili, wakasema, tunataka urafiki na usharia katika dayosisi.*”

within the diocese, and the difficulty in rendering them in other languages. Many pastors used them almost interchangeably themselves. In the report quoted above, the section is headed, “*Mahusiano*¹⁰⁷ *na Marafiki (Partnership)*”, thus giving a sense of the ambiguity within the diocese about *uhusiano* and *ushirikiano*. Diocese staff may refer to partners as *washiriki* “partners, cooperators”, *marafiki* “friends”, *wenzetu* “fellows, comrades”, or just “partners” in English. As I have argued elsewhere,

The concept of partnership is closely tied to cooperation, not least in that *ushirikiano* covers both, and can describe both the active work of cooperating, and the state that cooperating parties are in relative to each other. Thus, diocese personnel are fairly quick to call others “partners”, since anyone who cooperates on anything is included under that umbrella. (Christian 2016, 771)

The conceptual overlap between “relationship” and “partnership” is not restricted to the diocese, or even Tanzania. At the LWF All-Africa Conference, the last evening was devoted to drafting the “Marangu Message”, a set of resolutions. After a comment about emphasising resources both financial and otherwise vis-a-vis church self-sufficiency, the moderator commented (in English), “Thank you. Something that’s emerging ... is international relationships – or partnerships, or whatever you call it.” Thus, if my usage of *uhusiano*, *ushirikiano*, relationship, and partnership looks quite loose, this is meant to reflect the lack of complete coherency that exists for many of my interlocutors. Nevertheless, I do describe how actual instances of forming partnerships, particularly between the diocese and other organizations, emerge out of the concept of *uhusiano*.

a) Practicality

Organizational partnerships often have practical rationales; many of my pastor friends, when asked why they had partnerships, replied that you can do more together than apart. Of course, this has a financial subtext, as I have discussed above. However, pastors mention similar

¹⁰⁷ The *ma-* prefix indicates the ultimate result of the action, in this case actual relationships rather than the concept.

motivations for partnerships where no money changes hands. Here I quote Mch. Kiwera at length, from a conversation where I was attempting to untangle the concepts of *uhusiano*, *ushirikiano*, and *urafiki* “friendship”:

E: Watu wanamaanisha nini wakisema “Hawa ni marafiki” au “Tuna uhusiano au ushirikiano na fulani”? Mfano nyie na Fürth au Worldwide Missions for Youth.

K: Marafiki ni watu wanaoshirikiana na wenye mtizamo wa pamoja. Kwanza Fürth ni Jimbo la Kilutheri kama Jimbo la Siha, kwa kuwa walutheri yapo mambo tunayofanana na twaweza kushirikiana.

E: Ungesema kwamba wote ni uhusiano?

K: Marafiki ni lazima wahusiane, hakuwezi kuwa na urafiki bila uhusiano. Ikiwa hakuna kuhusiana, urafiki utakufa.

E: Tuseme na Worldwide Missions for Youth, vijana wakija, wao ni nani kwenu? Ni marafiki, washiriki, wageni, kitu tofauti?

K: Worldwide Missions for Youth, wanpokuja kwangu ni marafiki, na urafiki wetu umetokana na kuhusiana kwetu katika huduma ya vijana. Huwezi kutenga urafiki na uhusiano. Uhusiano ukikosa urafiki, hautaimarika.

E: Na Worldwide Missions for Youth je? Kama shirika, badala ya watu kipekee.

K: Worldwide Missions for Youth kama shirika, wametafuta makanisa ambayo wanaweza kufanya nao kazi, maana unafahamu hawa wapo Amerika, ili waweze kufanya kazi katika mazingira yetu ni lazima wapate watu au shirika, au kanisa la kufanya nao. Na wakaanza uhusiano nao.

...

E: Na jambo la “ushirikiano” je? Linalinganaje na “uhusiano” na “urafiki”?

K: Ushirikiano ni kufanya pamoja, hivyo, na mnaweza kushirikiana kwa pamoja katika maeneo mtakayopata. Mf. Sisi na Fürth kuna wakati tumeshirikiana kwa kubadilishana wachungaji. Kwa wao kusaidia ujenzi wa kituo cha afya kwa kusaidiana nasi. Nafikiri unalijua vizuri neno la Kiingereza “cooperation”.

E: Ndiyo.

K: Ndilo linalobeba hasa neno ushirikiano. Na mkiwa na uhusiano wa kirafiki ndiyo mnaweza kushirikiana. “Partnership” ni ile hali ya kuwa na uhusiano. A state of having relationship.

E: *Alaa. Je Worldwide Missions for Youth ni mfano wa ushirikiano pia?*

K: *Ndiyo, maana kuna wakati tunafanya pamoja. Mf. hawawezi wakaja Usharikani kwangu wakaingia mtaani na kufanya uinjilisti pekee yao, lazima wafanye na mwenyeji. Hivyo tunashirikiana.*

E: What do people mean when they say, “These are friends” or “We have a relationship or partnership with so-and-so”? For example, with you and Fürth or with Worldwide Missions for Youth.¹⁰⁸

K: Friends are people that cooperate (*wanaoshirikiana*), and who have a common outlook. First, Fürth is a Lutheran district like Siha, because with Lutherans, there are issues where we are similar and we can cooperate.

E: Would you say that both are relationships (*uhusiano*)?

K: Friends have to relate, you can't have a friendship without a relationship. If there's no relating, the friendship will die.¹⁰⁹

E: Let's say with Worldwide Missions for Youth, when the teenagers come, who are they to you? Friends, partners, guests, something else?

K: Worldwide Missions for Youth, when they come here they're friends, and our friendship comes from our relating together in youth ministry. You can't separate friendship and relationship. If relationship lacks friendship, it won't be strong.

E: And what about Worldwide Missions for Youth, as an organization rather than individual people?

K: Worldwide Missions for Youth as an organization, they've looked for churches where they can do work together, because you know they're in America. In order for them to be able to do work in our context, they have to find people or partners, or a church to work with. And they started relationships with those.

...

E: And what about the issue of *ushirikiano*? How does it compare to *uhusiano* and *urafiki*?

¹⁰⁸ To differentiate these two partnerships, Fürth is a district of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bavaria, twinned with Siha District. They conduct visits and pastor exchanges in both directions, and Fürth does provide financial aid (e.g. in purchasing the ultrasound machine I mentioned in Chapter 3.3.b.) Worldwide Missions for Youth (WMY) is a less formal partnership; they send teams once a year for unrelated construction projects, and evangelism presentations conducted around Maene. They do not donate financially.

¹⁰⁹ Recall the root verb *-husu* means to relate in the sense of to appertain or be relevant

K: *Ushirikiano* is to work together, like that, and you can partner (*kushirikiana*) together in areas that you will get along in. E.g. Us and Fürth, there are times we've cooperated by exchanging pastors. For them, helping with the construction of the health centre is mutually helping with us. I think you know the English word "cooperation".

E: Yes.

K: It's that word that carries exactly the word *ushirikiano*. And if you have a friendly relationship you can cooperate. "Partnership" is that state of having *uhusiano*. A state of having relationship.

E: I see. So Worldwide Missions for Youth is an example of *ushirikiano* as well?

K: Yes, because there are times we work together. e.g. They can't come to my parish, go around the neighborhood, and do evangelism by themselves. They have to do it with a local. So we cooperate.

b) Theology

Partnerships between organizations are also negotiated theologically. In Chapter 8 I analyze in more detail partnership as a methodological model for mission, and its historical and theological contexts, but here I lay the groundwork for the concept of partnership at all.

On the last day of meetings of the LWF All-Africa Conference, Baba Askofu as the host bishop gave the morning devotional. Speaking on the theme for the day, "Liberated to live the abundant life," he expounded a relational theology which moved deftly from the individual to the corporate.

Through his death and resurrection, Jesus restored the broken relationship between us and our creator, who is the ultimate source of all life. Through faith in Jesus, by his grace and the grace of God, we are made partakers and promoters of abundant life. We are therefore called to respect, to honor and protect life, all life. ...

The world today is full of voices which tell us we could live our own lives without being connected to God, the giver and source of life. ... The world ... promises happiness, power, contentment, prosperity, and abundance. But genuine abundance is not a byproduct of possessions or status, but of ... your relationship with God.

The world's promises, dear brothers and sisters, are incomplete and deceptive. ... The spirit of materialism, greed, and excessive individualism is a threat to life. ...

Jesus, the good shepherd, teaches us that abundant life is possible only if we are ready to share first what we are, to share what God made us to be, and what we have, what God has given to us. Life in communion and true partnership, to which we are called, is the key to ensuring that all human beings enjoy and partake in the abundant life which Jesus has given to the world.¹¹⁰

Baba Askofu uses an implicit parallel in the concept of “communion”, which refers to both the Eucharist and an intimate spiritual relationship. This is reinforced by the term “partake”, often used for participation in the Eucharist. Its equivalent in Swahili, *-shiriki*, is of course the root of *ushirikiano*. Salvation is imagined primarily as *reconciliation*; being made to participate in, partake and promote life – not just present bodily life, but a transcendent, eternal and abundant life. A threat to life anywhere is a threat to our life; thus we must be mutually concerned with the life of others, a state which is the stuff of *uhusiano* (as Mch. Kiwera made clear above). Furthermore, he says, the task of Christians is to enable all people to participate in this life. This, he says, necessitates “true partnership”. Speaking to representatives of dozens of Lutheran churches, it was clear that he meant that these organizations must develop meaningful partnerships between themselves as part of their constituent members’ calling as Christians.

Between conceptualizations of relationship in general, and various motivations (whether practical, financial, or theological) for collaborating with others, we see how *ushirikiano*, partnerships, emerge as an important part of the diocese’s work.

c) Tensions between theological and economic motivations

Relationships are never easy, though. The uneven articulation between various motivations towards relationship can lead to tense situations, particularly with foreign partners. Economic motivations are often portrayed as particularly troublesome. At the Eastern Kilimanjaro district

¹¹⁰ I should admit my role in this speech. Nervous about giving a speech in English, Baba Askofu had asked me for comments. I said I’d edit the grammar and leave the theology to him; he replied that that would be disingenuous of me. My suggestion, then, was that “materialism, greed, and excessive individualism” are not just outside threatening Christianity, but within all people, so that we struggle against them both elsewhere and within ourselves.

General Assembly, after Marenga talked about the partnerships, the general secretary, Mrae, chimed in, “Partnerships aren’t just economic. A relationship shouldn’t be built on projects first. Because we’ve seen, many partnerships die because if funds sent for projects are used poorly the partnership dies. ... Projects are just fruit.”¹¹¹ He reiterated that the main goal for partnerships should be simply knowing and understanding each other (*kufahamiana*).

Here I describe one occasion where both partners had to downplay “economics”, lest things get uncomfortable. As part of the 2015 Nebraska visit, a couple *wageni* from St. John's Lutheran Church in Nebraska were visiting their partner parish, Sango. They were coming up on 10 years of partnership, and the projects they’d sponsored at Sango included a milk collection program which purchased from smallholders, made cheese and sold it to expat cafés in Moshi. St. John's also sponsors school fees and uniforms for the parish orphans, and partially funded the construction of the parsonage and the preschool building, and the purchase of some audiovisual equipment. Altogether, St. John's had contributed some \$65,000 to Sango to date. Several Sango parishioners had also visited St. John's.

The partnership chairman is called Alex. A recently retired architect, he has been involved with the partnership since the beginning. He is very jovial and always coming up with ideas. At teatime, he started pitching these to Dave, St. John’s representative (and at the time, the coordinator of the Nebraska vision trips).

We could have activities for the retired people during the day, or for the youth during school holidays. We could have *two* kindergarten sessions going, one morning and one afternoon. We could attract kids from surrounding villages even. We’re expanding the building here and could add a small apartment for volunteers. Dave, when you come next year bring two volunteers. One male and one female, they can each marry locally and stay here. We should try to install three-phase electricity as

¹¹¹ “*Partnership si tu kiuchumi. ... Mahusiano yasijengwe juu ya miradi kwanza. Kwa sababu tumeona, partnership nyingi zinakufa kwa sababu fedha iliyotumwa na miradi ikitumiwa vibaya, partnership inakufa. ... Miradi ni matunda tu.*”

well, solar can power the lights but not the chiller tank or agitator for the milk. The generators to run that are expensive, you know.¹¹²

I don't doubt that Dave got all these hints, but he did not make any specific responses.

The next day, Sunday, the partnership committee met after the church service for lunch and the annual committee meeting. Throughout the meeting, it seemed clear that Dave felt he had to keep a lid on financial requests. Alex acknowledged the two guests from Nebraska (and me): "You are guests (*wageni*) of the parish, and these (indicating the *wazee*, "elders") are some of the owners." On behalf of the congregation, he thanked them for the partnership, and for their material and financial contributions to the parish. "This is a two-way exchange," continued Alex:

St. John's also benefits from us, Dave was telling me that people have a spiritual gain from the relationship, the partnership that we have. And we got material gain. I think we should both of us get spiritual gain. We also thank you because it's not one way, also that some people are coming from here and going to there, and I think it's not going to be the last time that people from Sango will visit St. John's. We hope this kind of exchange visits will continue.

Dave responded: "It's a two-way partnership, because when people visit here, they are transformed, [they] want to come back and experience that same spiritual experience." Dave went on to say that St. John's will continue with the visits and the monetary support; other Nebraska-Northern Diocese parish partnerships are bigger and can send more money, but St. John's is very happy. He added that he's thrilled that orphans are enabled to go to school through this partnership – but he does need a written report on how many orphans, and how they're progressing. Similarly, he said, it's heartwarming that some Tsh. 9 million (about \$4500) have been paid to the community through the milk collection project that otherwise would not have happened – but he still needs a written report on the cost to complete the project. "For me, the volunteer house is a lower priority than the orphans and milk." Alex interjected: "I think they are the same priority." Dave changed the subject, and started asking about the women's department.

¹¹² This is paraphrased; not a monologue quoted verbatim.

On that topic, he said, “The women at St. John's are proud to have you as partners,” then joked, “as long as you don’t come up with another great big project.” “Not yet,” said Alex. “Soon though.”

A few minutes later, the discussion had moved on to the choirs, including the brass ensemble. Could St. John's donate some more instruments? Dave figured it depended on the size, and the committee started discussing the different types of brass instruments. There are four, and actually they’d like a pair of each. And cases? Dave was hesitant: “Those cost a lot more.”

Alex moved the discussion on, asking if the representatives from any other departments had contributions. One of the representatives from the *diakonia* department asked, “Can we increase the amount of support if possible? The number of orphans is increasing.” “I know that. We all know that,” said Dave. “We’ll try.”

The women’s department at Sango makes batiks, to sell as fabric and to sew shirts for sale also. Dave looked at a few fabric samples, and agreed to take them home so that parishioners at St. John's could put in some orders for more batiks or clothes if they wished.

“How much did they want for these?”

“You can pay us later,” said Alex, “100,000 shillings.”¹¹³

“What?”

“No, he’s joking,” said Adeline, the women’s department chair. “They’re 20,000 shillings.”¹¹⁴

“Okay, that’s fine. Then I can show the people at home, and if they like it, I’ll buy some more.”

“Yeah, for 20,000 *dollars*,” said Alex, laughing.

¹¹³ About \$50

¹¹⁴ About \$10

“Don’t do that,” said Dave.

“Right. \$20.”

Dave laughed; Alex’s persistence in fudging the math was not lost on him. He turned to Adeline again. “Can you make a shirt out of this? Do you want to measure me now, or should I leave one of my shirts for comparison? I’m just worried that if I leave a shirt here, Alex will wear it and I’ll never see it again.”

There was one more agenda item, the parish *mtingo* band. Traditional Chagga *mtingo* bands use long thin log-drums, held on one shoulder; the leader plays a kudu horn. It’s a highly repetitive style played in conjunction with a circular dance. Traditionally band members wear colobus monkey headdresses. They used to be common, but now there are only a few professional bands and Sango’s is one of them. And they wanted new shirts. The parish committee floated a number of ideas – we could make a number of sizes, so each band member (16 of them) could have one. Maybe with a logo? Dave was again non-committal: “Maybe. Maybe. It’s an idea, that’s for sure. It’s a good idea.” On that note the meeting ended, with the parish pastor asking them to come back next year with more people.

I want to point out how both sides were *supposed* to downplay the financial aspect of the partnership. Dave mentioned several times the ways in which St. John's benefitted from the partnership, although they didn’t receive any money. In other words, the partnership benefits aren’t just about money. Remember the talk about the two-way partnership – this is also emphasizing the partnership’s “spiritual benefits” because they can more naturally be mutual than can monetary benefits. A “two-way” partnership can’t be about money; if St. John's and Sango both just gave each other money there would be no point. Alex also mentions that Sango should also have spiritual benefits, not just material, underscoring that the mutuality must be in

the “spiritual” category – if St. John's benefits spiritually and Sango materially, there is the implication that St. John's is buying Sango’s spirituality – something I have heard Tanzanian pastors hint at jokingly, but a prospect that would be deeply uncomfortable to *wageni*. Dave’s discomfort at Alex’s optimistic financial requests is obvious: answering “maybe”, “that’s an idea”, or “We’ll try”; wanting written reports; or reminding the committee that St. John's itself was only a small church, with 300 members and only 150 of them active (Sango, meanwhile, had 1217 adult members in 2014).

This example concerns a formal partnership where financial support was expected to be part of the relationship. However, similar efforts at suppressing monetary requests were made by other groups with more informal partnerships that didn’t necessarily include financial support as part of the explicit arrangement. It’s not just the Americans that have to do this; some Tanzanian pastors say they have to tone down their parishioner’s expectations. Pastors have told me that *wageni* might come and do some project or seminar, and so the parishioners think they’ve donated money to the parish, when they haven’t; there might be rumors that the pastor is just pocketing the money. Some *wageni* are hesitant to donate money because they think it will create dependency (and some hosts are hesitant to accept money, for the same reason). Perhaps they feel it would reduce the relationship to a mere transactional one, when the relationship should be more spiritual.

4.3. Organizational relationships

Several types of partnerships are maintained by the diocese, both internal and external. I make an in-depth analysis of some of these in Part 3 but for now I just describe them briefly in order to lay some groundwork.

a) Uhusiano within the diocese

Uhusiano within the diocese is important, not just outside partnerships, as Mrae mentioned in the previous section. Here I'll discuss how the diocese fosters internal relationships.

The diocese uses its organizational hierarchy to encourage relationships between pastors and parishes. This is part of the emphasis on unity I discussed in Chapter 3.3.c. Pastors are expected to meet with each other regularly, maintain friendly connections with other parishes, attend events in the lives of other pastors, and participate in fundraisers for parish and diocese projects.

As Mrae mentioned at the Eastern District General Assembly, inside partner parishes are something that they are starting to work on. There are already a few of these in other districts; they are specifically seen as a way of reducing dependence on foreign partners. During a visit to the Kilimanjaro Kati District headquarters, I met with Mch. Ngapori, the head pastor of the district. On the wall, there was a bulletin board with a lot of pictures pinned up on it, of people unloading food and clothes from the white Toyota Land Cruisers that are the vehicle of choice for church and NGO staff country-wide. "This is because of the recent floods in the southern area," he said, "particularly TPC¹¹⁵ and Msitu wa Tembo. We helped them collect corn, bananas, clothes, etc." Mch. Ngapori smiled proudly. "In the past, for a situation like this we would write to Leipzig Mission or to America or whatever, and eventually they would send us some contributions. But now we are handling it ourselves."

b) Official twin partnerships

Formal "twin" partnerships are negotiated at all levels. The main diocesan partner during the time I did my research was Nebraska Synod of ELCA. They were also negotiating a new partnership with the Stockholm Diocese of the Church of Sweden, which was formalized in

¹¹⁵ Tanganyika Planting Company, a sugar company which owns a very large plantation area south of Moshi, around 9000 hectares perhaps. The neighborhood including the town contained within is also known as TPC.

January 2016. Each of the five districts also has a district partner in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bavaria. Some *kandas* also have *kanda* partners – for example, one of the *kandas* of Central Kilimanjaro district is partnered with a pair of churches in Hanover and Leipzig, and many parishes also have *sharika rafiki*, “friend parishes” in either Nebraska, Bavaria, or both.

c) Mission groups

Many partnerships are negotiated with mission-oriented parachurch organizations. Some are tied into the long history of colonial mission, particularly Leipzig Mission (LMW). Today representatives from Leipzig still visit; the diocese *wageni* file records eight official visits from Leipzig Mission personnel since 2007, attending conferences, seminars, and big celebratory events.

Mission EineWelt, a department of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bavaria, took over some responsibility for mission from Leipzig after World War II.¹¹⁶ It operates the Augustana Seminary in Neuendettelsau; several diocese pastors have studied there, including Baba Askofu. The diocese records show seven official visits between 2007 and 2015. MEW is particularly involved in diaconic work; the directors of the diocesan diaconic centre (Faraja) are both from MEW.

Most American mission groups represented tend to differ in that they don't seem to be attached to a specific church or denomination like the German groups are, and do not tend to come from colonial mission relationships. Next Generation and Worldwide Missions for Youth are two of these non- or inter-denominational evangelical protestant organizations who have operations in many countries. Numerous other organizations in this category work with the diocese: Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) runs Sunday School seminars; Rafiki Foundation

¹¹⁶ see <http://afrikanistik.gko.uni-leipzig.de/index.php/en/home-en/24-forschung?start=15>

has “training villages” to support orphans and widows; and many others. It would be impossible to list them all.

d) Families and Individuals

The ease and relative affordability of international communication and travel makes it possible for individuals, or small self-organized groups of people, to create cooperative relationships with the diocese and other similar entities. The diocese has several of these families that they work with frequently. One affluent Virginia family supports the diocese’s Faraja School, a primary school for children with physical disabilities; other entities connected to the family including their parishes and businesses have also visited the diocese in similar capacities. Another individual, a Lutheran pastor, began leading “vision trips” to the Northern Diocese in 2007, and continued doing so after moving to a new parish in 2012. Some of those have resulted in huge donations to the diocese; according to the *Wageni* file, after the 2012 trip one family was moved to donate \$175,000 to Machame Hospital; \$125,000 for the construction of a new wing of the nursing school, and \$50,000 for the construction of a guesthouse and cafeteria. As of 2015 these buildings were completed, as evidenced by shiny new brass dedication plaques. Another couple became involved with the diocese after meeting one of the pastors when he visited their parish in Colorado; they visit regularly to facilitate seminars for parish workers on Sexual Health, working in conjunction with Mch. Ngalami and the diocesan women’s department..

Throughout my stay in the Northern Diocese, I met many of these individuals who were visiting independently – at Uhuru Hotel, attending diocese events, visiting the head office, invited to dinner at the Shoo’s home. I did not plan to include them in my research, nor could I have, their travel plans having been made with pastors I was not in frequent contact with; they simply floated through my observations.

e) Civil Society organizations

Finally, many civil society organizations have a presence in the diocese; these have varying degrees of religiosity. The Rotary Club of Rothenberg, Germany has contributed significantly to the diocese's vocational school in Hai. Some non-religious college groups (e.g. from University of Wisconsin) have also visited the diocese for volunteering purposes. The diocese hospitals always have groups visiting, or medical student interns who come for a couple months at a time. Occasionally dignitaries visit on behalf of these organizations; in 2011, Prince Charles and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, visited Tanzania where they planted a tree as part of the Northern Diocese's reforestation project, launched in 2010 by Dr. Shoo.

4.4. Conclusion

In the daily work of pastors, *uhusiano* and *ushirikiano* are key concepts. They are central to the experience of Christianity, but specific partnerships with other churches (elsewhere in Tanzania and Africa as well as in Europe and America) are also a major aspect of the work of the diocese pastors. This is so despite the lack of an exact and easily definable meaning. In fact, as I will demonstrate in Part 3, *ushirikiano* takes on a particular significance in international church partnerships *because* of its flexible and loose connotations. Both concepts are valued in an abstract sense, and become instantiated as key areas of diocese business, and as such, as part of the work that pastors do.

Part Two: Anthropology with/in Theology

Preface to Part 2

In Part 1 I have already referred to some of the roles of theology in the lives of my interlocutors. The study of Christianity and Christian mission (the topics of Part 1 and 3, respectively) is well established in anthropology, while the study of theology is not as yet. Therefore I include this short preface to address the questions, Why should anthropology be concerned with theology, and what do I mean by “theology”? I will tackle the second question first, although I do not offer a definition of theology. One should ask, what purpose would a definition serve? Certainly defining it so broadly as to be “pretty much anything religious people do” (Robbins 2013, 330) could be seen as intellectual laziness – and how would this thesis then be any different than any other anthropology of religion? But the fact remains that for many of my interlocutors, the concept of theology *is* very broad, while remaining distinct (yet closely related) to “religion”. I offer as an example Kant’s famous four questions: What can I know? What should I do? What may I hope for? What is a human being? He proposed efforts to answer those questions as the disciplines of epistemology, ethics, theology, and anthropology respectively. Most of my research participants would put at *least* 2 and 3 down as theology, and would consider that 1 and 4 could be as well (for example, the question, “How can I know God?” is a theological one; as is “How should we consider our human nature?”) Furthermore, “anthropology” has a certain meaning *within* theology: when theologians write about Martin Luther’s anthropology, they mean his conception of human nature, which is an essential part of his theological system of thought.

So, for many theologians, theology actually *is* that broad. It used to be known as the “Queen of Sciences”, the field of inquiry which gave meaning to all others. That makes it

exceptionally hard to define. If I attempted some kind of convoluted paragraph-length definition like Geertz (1973, 90) did for religion, it would certainly have a lot of holes poked in it just as soon as I'd written it. I cannot rely on a definition that necessarily involves "religion" (witness anthropology's debates around defining that), or God (because where does that leave Buddhists, "progressive Christians" (King 2012), or other non-theist traditions?) Furthermore, I agree with Fountain & Lau that

ahistorical and transcultural definitions of theology inhibit research insofar as they seek to identify essences when we should be trying to explore particular historical relations and processes. Understandings of what theology is and how it should be done differ between groups of theologians. Rather than imposing a blanket framework on top of these differences we instead seek to pay attention to various intonations that operate in different contexts. (2013, 230)

I can *describe* theology, the forms it takes, and the causes it is mobilized for; the "particular historical relations and processes" that frame theology (particularly in the Northern Diocese) – and that is what I do in Part II. In so doing, I pay attention to a "wide range of places one can find either implicit or explicit expressions of well developed religious ways of thinking that demand to be taken seriously as intellectual positions" (Robbins 2013, 330).

This "demand to be taken seriously" also begins to answer my second question above – why theology? I suggest two reasons. First, it is not religion, either in its scholarly forms (as academic disciplines, "Religious Studies" and "Theology" are usually separate departments), or its informal incarnations – but it *is* often an essential aspect of religion. If anthropologists are to take their interlocutors seriously, they must examine what is locally important. My interlocutors are mainly ordained clergy, and while pastors are not the only people who theologize, quite a lot of what they do is organized theologically. Theology plays a major role in their social worlds, both implicitly and explicitly, and they both reflect and influence popular contemporary theology amongst the general population. Therefore it must be taken seriously as an indispensable part of

their experience. Second, as I explain more below, theology forms a very interesting parallel with anthropology, as a sustained, reflexive, and critical meditation on the human condition (which I see as another distinction between “theology” and “religion”). This is why I suggest that anthropologists may find engagement with theology in the form of theoretical interventions, methodological innovations, or in terms of creative and collaborative interdisciplinary scholarship.

Chapter 5: On an Anthro-Theology

In this chapter, I describe the engagement and points of contact between the disciplines of anthropology and theology, and discusses what they may have to offer each other. I identify three parallels between anthropology and theology, and three areas in which anthropology may use theological concepts to further an understanding of social relationships. The idea of “anthro-theology” is inspired by two articles by Joel Robbins (2006, 2013) and one by Philip Fountain (2013). Robbins was occupied with questions of otherness and alterity; his foray into theology was motivated by first a concern about how to take Christianity seriously, and second a worry that anthropology was losing its interest in and ability to deploy understandings of otherness (Robbins 2006, 287). He asks, since theology seems to be able to make a critical intervention with some hope of transforming lives, and anthropology has not yet been able to do so, what can anthropology learn from theology? Can anthropology be open to the possibility of being transformed by theology, thus developing new ways to critically deploy otherness (Robbins 2006, 288)? That is, “find real otherness at the fundamental level of social ontology” and ground those ontologies “by finding people who live in their terms and describing how they do so” (Robbins 2006, 292).

Although otherness and alterity were main concerns of Robbins’, I hesitate to dwell on real and fundamental ontological difference.¹¹⁷ Still, Robbins’ concern with anthropology being open to the possibility of being transformed, and learning how to offer that same possibility to its readers, is salient even without a focus on fundamental alterity. I suggest that studying theology

¹¹⁷ I do find this compelling, as my research does concern others and otherness – and not just “others”, but the concept of others, and how groups who are “other” to each other navigate those relationships. In my work, this appears as diocese pastors and groups of visiting short term missionaries. Robbins mentions ecumenism, and models of moving through situations where “two or more parties find it difficult to agree on fundamental issues” (Robbins 2013, 335). However, many ecumenical efforts, including the diocesan partnerships which I studied, intentionally focus on “fundamental issues” which they do agree on. Even in the case of minor differences (and Freudian narcissism) they may not even be aware of these “minor differences” or might purposefully ignore them.

and theologizing can open up possibilities for anthropology, not just because it hasn't been done yet, but because it offers a better model for understanding social and religious worlds than what anthropology currently has to work with (Robbins 2006, 287, thanks also to Naomi Haynes for making this point).

5.1. Engagements and Parallels

In this section, my description of theology, its forms and uses, will begin to take shape as I examine existing relationships between theology and anthropology; how the scholarly disciplines have engaged with or involved each other, and how the two disciplines at times show distinct parallels – that is, being concerned with the same subject matter, though perhaps from different points of view.

a) Modes of engagement

Anthropology does have some history of dabbling in theology, and the reverse is true as well. I begin with anthropology; Robbins identifies several ways in which anthropology has adopted, incorporated, studied, or otherwise referred to theology. I discuss these briefly, and add a few more.

History

First, anthropology has used theology as a mode of self-examination, to look at the history of anthropology (Robbins 2006, 286). Talal Asad's work (1993) is offered as a good example here, particularly his argument that anthropology is set within a particularly Christian history and its relation to the concept of discipline. Timothy Larsen (2016) has detailed how early anthropology in the United Kingdom was related to Christian activist organizations such as the Ethnological Society of London, and addressed Victorian understandings of race and ethnicity. Against rivals such as the Anthropological Society of London, which rejected both Darwinism as

“too Christian” and faith in a common origin in favor of “enlightened racism”, the ESL (which later became the RAI) was instrumental in the widespread adoption of the “doctrine of psychic unity of mankind”.

Data

Second, Robbins says that anthropology has used theology as data, making theology into the object of study the same as any other object of study (Robbins 2006, 286). He mentions that rather less work has been done here, but gives a few examples such as Susan Harding (2000) and Vincent Crapanzano (2001) on fundamentalist Christianity.

I will not reprise Robbins’ overview of these works, though I will describe a few more briefly by way of literature review. Erica Bornstein (2002) has discussed “theologies of economic development” in Zimbabwean religious NGOs. Though she does not identify it explicitly as such, Luhrmann’s (2012) study of Evangelical Christians takes a psychological-anthropological approach to Evangelical theology. Jenkins (2013, 371) makes the important point that while Luhrmann expands the resources available to anthropologists by including theological writings, one should not imagine that these sources are direct transcriptions of belief and practice. The relation between theological reflection and Christian practice is oblique, but it is a “function of a pastoral relationship, that is, an embodied relationship that seeks to identify the limitations and even insufficiencies of certain local practices and to repair them. Theological texts are not primarily descriptions of native categories, but rather active interventions into specific kinds of situations.” I agree with Jenkins, and in Chapter 6 I will describe ethnographically some of these active interventions.

Rebekka King’s (2012) work on the popular theologies of Canadian “progressive Christians”, including the idea of Christian atheism, has expanded the conception of what

theology can be. Steve Pavey (2011) examines how Christians in Hong Kong responded in theological terms to the perceived crisis around the 1997 handover, and how their theological ideas and subsequent actions were embedded in processes of structural power. More recently, as Robbins' article seemed to have gained traction with Fountain and Lau's (2013) special issue of *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, other anthropologists have made ethnographic examinations of theology as distinct from religion.

Here the question comes up again: what makes this an ethnography of *theology* and not just of religion? Robbins connects "theology" with "scholarly elites" (Robbins 2006, 286) – however, I don't think this is entirely correct. "Folk theology" and "popular theology" are common topics, including among the Northern Diocese pastors, and most pastors are fairly solidly middle class, not "elite" by any means. Still, there is something to be said about theology *as an intellectual pursuit* (see also Kresse 2007) – although it's not exclusively intellectual, as I'll get into later.

Inspiration

Third, Robbins says, anthropology can draw productive and transformational inspiration from theology, for example in terms of theories or models. Allowing theology to transform anthropology would require anthropologists to accept the possibility that theology may get things right or be effective where anthropology has got things wrong or been ineffective (Robbins 2006, 287). This in itself is not so strange; there is a long history of drawing anthropological theory from our ethnographic engagements, and from other disciplines. Robbins observes that this is one area where very little work has been done, though that has changed since the publication of his paper. In recent seminars, Naomi Haynes (2016) has discussed how Pentecostal theologies, particularly eschatological and soteriological themes of immediacy, can point to an understanding of religious time oriented to a "conscious expansive present" rather than ideas of

“rupture”; Joseph Webster (2016) examines Exclusive Brethren theologies of separation, which he identifies as foundational to their concept of relationship. What if, he asks, separation rather than unity was the starting point for society? An interesting prospect, since I have arrived at precisely the opposite conclusion about my research participants as he did about his.

This type of engagement-as-inspiration leads us to ask, what do theological formulations (such as the participatory and relational theologies of salvation I have described in Chapter 3) offer us in terms of how we can think about the human experience? What can we learn not just from theologies, but from *theologizing*? I return to this theme in more ethnographic detail below, but here I take a brief methodological diversion to suggest that theology could inspire a more engaged anthropology (or “activist anthropology” as some put it). This sub-discipline has taken upon itself to advocate along with research participants for their concerns, such as human rights issues. What would this look like in the case of anthropology and theology? What are people’s theological concerns, and how would an anthropologist advocate for them? Or, by way of taking theory from theology and applying it elsewhere, what could theological approaches offer to engaged anthropology in other areas? Perhaps the theological concept of “accompaniment” which I describe in Chapters 6 and 8 may be fruitful. Activist anthropology has been vulnerable to criticisms of neo-imperialism (Low and Merry 2010). Lutherans use “accompaniment theology” to avoid this trap. To what degree does it work and could anthropologists use it? These and other questions all offer intriguing prospects for future anthropological research.

Robbins discusses anthropology engaging with theology, but the reverse exists as well.

Science of the human

Classic scholarly theology includes anthropology as a kind of sub-genre, and although it refers to a general science of the human rather than a fieldwork-based discipline, there is ample

room for dialogue. Karl Barth, a prominent 20th century German theologian, discusses Martin Leberecht De Wette's theological project which he called both "critical anthropology" and "theology of faith" (1962, 204), as well as Ludwig Feuerbach's response to that. Here anthropology is understood as a crucial part of theology; if one is writing about how humans may relate to God, then they first want to discuss what "human" means anyway. For example, Barth summarizes Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity*:

... In Part I [of *Essence of Christianity*], the true meaning of theology is presented wholly without polemic as the identity of all predicates of the divine and of the human subject, and the consequent identity of the subjects themselves. Part II moves over to the attack and eliminates as non-existent and as meaningless the distinction between theological and anthropological predicates, and therefore makes an end of theology in the false sense. ... "Theology is anthropology, that is to say in the object of religion, in what we call *Theos* in Greek and *Gott* in German, nothing is specified except the essence of man." (Barth 1962, 222–23)

Thus, for many theologians, the study of God and man cannot be separated; or even if a distinction can be made, they are necessarily related. Although many of my research participants would reject Feuerbach's argument that there is no abstract entity "God" distinct from human nature, they would nevertheless agree that the disciplines now known as "theology" and "anthropology" often have the same concern (a theme I discuss further below).

Mission methodology

Some branches of theology use anthropology as a methodology, particularly in mission studies. This has resulted in the sub-field of "Christian anthropology", which some see as missiology by another name, or anthropology "by Christians, for Christians". In order to preach the gospel effectively, it is argued, one must to understand the people one is preaching to, and their culture (which then takes on a certain definition; see Conn 2000, 252). In this model, mission is assumed to be an "attempt at cultural change" (Higson 2017). Christian colleges are a major locus of anthropology-as-missiology; institutes such Eastern University offer

baccalaureate and magisterial programs in “Anthropology and Missions”; other colleges and universities offer Intercultural Studies programs which include both, and many colleges list cultural anthropology courses as required components of Mission Studies degrees, using texts such as Luzbetak (1988) and Kraft (1994). Kraft himself credits Eugene Nida, a linguist and Bible translator, with the inclusion of anthropology in mission studies. Through the influence of Nida, the journal *Practical Anthropology*, published by Wheaton College (a private Christian institution), became “formative for a generation of anthropologically oriented missionaries” (Kraft 2000, 66). Meanwhile, Fuller Seminary’s School of World Mission was also being staffed with anthropologists, thus validating the sub-discipline of missiological anthropology (Kraft 2000, 67). Amy Stambach (2009, particularly Chapter 3) discusses this trend in her ethnographic analysis of American Christian colleges and anthropological efforts toward conversion, describing how anthropology becomes a conceptual scheme by which missionaries organize and shape the work of preparing for the second coming of Jesus, and how this results in particular definitions of “culture” (2009, 71, 77). She concludes that this is one way in which Christianity “acts as a mobile and shifting signifier that structures and valorizes divergent perspectives of what it means to belong to a global community” (2009, 99).

Inculturation

Christian anthropology has another name for its efforts to make the gospel more relevant, and that is “inculturation.” Though outside Africa it is often associated with Catholicism, it is a popular topic among African theologians of all denominations. My pastor friends in Tanzania talk a good deal about inculturation (including in their publications; see Shao 1990 and; Urio 1990), as do other scholars on African theology including Lugazia (2010) and Anthony (2012). Paul Gifford (2008) provides a comprehensive overview which I will not recreate here, except to

note the rise of inculturation theology in the 1990s (for example, it was one of the main themes of the 1994 Catholic African Synod of Bishops), and the subsequent withdrawal from its study by Western theologians, leaving it mainly to Africans. Thus, in contrast with missiology, inculturation is for African theologians a reflexive pursuit – how do you make Christianity more relevant to your own context? Many Tanzanian pastors have told me that German missionaries did *try* to understand Chagga people and to bring *Christianity* and not a European idea of it (applying their modern-day understanding of “inculturation” to German missionary philosophies; it was of course not a term in use by the Leipzigers). They had more success than other missionaries, and of course many didn’t even try (Beidelman 1982). But even the Leipzigers fell short; they left a lot of “European dress” on Christianity. Today, pastors see it as fortunate that they were able to identify that European dress, remove it, and express Christianity in a way that is relevant to Chagga people. This is what they mean by inculturation – the Germans tried with limited success, so it fell to the Tanzanians to do it; a process which is ongoing and which I examine further below.

b) Parallels

Theology’s borrowings from anthropology highlight that it is a mode of reflection on the human condition, and a parallel to anthropology. During my fieldwork, my participants and I noticed several similarities between our daily work: for example, reflecting on how Christianity engages with local realities was a shared focus between us. I had considered it an anthropological issue, but for my pastor friends, it was a matter of theological importance. Both disciplines probe the articulation between the global and the local; both can take the form of a reflection on the human condition, an intellectual exercise that is equally concerned with the realities of everyday

life. Finally, I suggest, both may be equally concerned with the idea of *potential*; an orientation which may provide new avenues of exploration for both disciplines.

Arena for social critique and intellectual discourse

Anthropology has often studied how global currents (including in religion) engage with local realities, but it is not alone in this; pastors have always discussed and debated in theological terms how Christian belief should shape local practice, and vice versa. Theology, then, forms a reflexive and critical meditation on sociocultural and historical phenomena, and offers an arena for intellectual discourse on identity, spirituality, heritage, and ways of being. I have already described how clergy negotiate identities as Lutherans and as Chagga people: they debate what role these identities play in daily life and what is involved in their maintenance, and how they have been framed by historical events including the Lutheran Reformation, the arrival of colonial missionaries, and the independence of the church and the nation. The ideological apparatus of the ELCT promotes a specifically Lutheran identity and liturgical style against practices it associates with Pentecostalism. At the same time, clergy negotiate the place of Chagga tradition in current Lutheran practice, working toward a balance between promoting Chagga heritage and trying to keep a lid on *ushirikina*, harmful superstition, or between commemorating colonial missionaries and advocating for theological independence.

Even from the early days of the church in Kilimanjaro, Tanzanian church leaders put forward social-theological critiques, debating how Christianity should affect local practices. In the 1930s, circumcision became very controversial as some indigenous leaders argued, against the missionaries, that it should be banned (see Chapter 7.1). In the 1990s, the AIDS crisis forced pastors to debate the role of Christian morality within Chagga society, and the place of sexuality in the life of a Christian. Hasu's (1999) monograph portrays a moral panic; she shows clearly

how the moral outrage of the church was directed squarely at promiscuity. The tenor of the discourse Hasu portrays seemed so different to what I was experiencing during my fieldwork 20 years later, although the diocese is still just as engaged in social critique as it always has been.

Currently, the Church's moral outrage is now focused less on sex and more on social justice, environmental concerns and climate change, areas of critique which I examine in more detail below, and on the intentional continuation of ethnic spiritual heritage. Though the Chagga have never been a marginalized people, they are now perceiving a concern for their ethnic identity. Thus the reflection on engagement between Christianity and local reality is evolving. During the colonial mission era, the question was "How should Christianity affect indigenous religious practices?"; post-independence-era church leaders focused more on "How can Christianity be contextualized to be more locally authentic?".¹¹⁸ Today, a more common approach is, "How can the church contribute towards the intentional continuation of our spiritual heritage as Chagga people?"

This can be seen as an anthropological focus for pastors. Reflecting on our own human experience is at the core of much pastoral work. Recall the last of Kant's questions, "What is a human being?" – what he called anthropology. But this question is immensely relevant to theologians and pastors, who in their daily work are constantly concerned not just with their own human experience, but that of their parishioners, whose well-being—social and physical as well as spiritual—they are obligated to advocate for.

Concern for potential

Pastors focus much of their energy on what they see as theological concerns. Robbins (2006, 288) discussed theologians' ability (against anthropologists' inability, as yet) to expect

¹¹⁸ I examine one example of this type of theology in Chapter 6.1.c.

that readers of their work may be moved to change something about their own lives. This gives theology a normative aspect, which it does have – but I suggest this should be expanded.

Let us for a moment return to Kant's questions: His third question, "what can I hope for?" was what he called theology; and the second, "what should I do?", he called ethics. However, my participants would not hesitate to label it theology; in fact, one pastor specifically told me, "Theology is what you *do*."

Considering the theological concern for "what should we do?", it would be easy to conclude that asking a descriptive question, "How *does* Christianity engage with local reality?" constitutes an anthropological focus, while making it a normative question, "How *should* Christianity engage with local reality?" changes it to a theological focus. But the current concern with Chagga spiritual heritage doesn't quite fit with that, nor do the pastors' constant and delicate negotiations between identities as Chagga people, as Lutherans, or as Tanzanian citizens. Though earlier I expanded "theology" to include answers to all four questions, I focus again on the second question, "What can I hope for?" It's a question of potential; it asks: "What relationship is there between Christianity, the Tanzanian nation state, the Lutheran church as an organization, and us as Chagga people with our spiritual heritage; and what relationship *could* there be?" *This* is what I see as particularly distinctive about theology, against the larger field of religion: It forms an arena for an intellectual discourse on potential.

At a worship service at Kahe Parish to celebrate the opening of a new kindergarten, Baba Askofu addressed the concept of potential. The Gospel reading for that day was Luke 9:10-17, the Feeding of the Five Thousand. Baba Askofu compared Jesus' disciples, who thought the place where they were was just *nyika tupu*, an empty wilderness, with those who thought the same about the parish during its early days. Even the pastor, Mch. Kimaina, had been

discouraged. “But,” Baba Askofu said, “because you had faith in what God could do, look at how things are now. Do you think we only have just enough for us? No. We have potential. Here in Tanzania, there are ideas that we can’t change or bring development, that there’s nobody intelligent, that we depend on outside aid because here is just a *nyika tupu!*?” His voice rose in indignation. “Don’t believe that this place is a *nyika tupu*, or that you or your house are *nyika tupu*.”¹¹⁹ He reiterated that such unbelief could even close us off to God’s blessings – or in other words, stifle a potential.

The orientation toward potential is actually implicit in the concept of *utumishi*. Recall that the verb, *-tumika* “serve” is stative meaning to be in a state of being sent. However, the construction *-ika* also expresses potentiality, particularly in the present tense (Mohammed 2001, 212; compare e.g. *-fanya* ‘do’ and *-fanyika* ‘be doable’). Sometimes this is made explicit; at a fundraiser at Tsudunyi Parish, the pastor said, “We thank God for the grace he has given us, the opportunity to serve, and the abilities [to do his work].”¹²⁰ Even those potentials can serve; at another fundraiser at Magdarisha Parish in the neighboring Meru Diocese, Baba Askofu told parishioners to think of their *vipawa* “potentials, talents, abilities” and how they could use (*tumia*)¹²¹ them for God.

However, potential is not limited to theology (nor, for that matter, grammar). For my pastor friends, their concern for potential is at once anthropological and theological. They address different ways of being: How to be African, Tanzanian, Chagga, Christian, Lutheran? In environmental theology (which I discuss in Chapter 6.3.c), pastors emphasize “care for the

¹¹⁹ Baba Askofu preached the same sermon at each of the two services; this quote is a composite.

¹²⁰ “*Tunamshukuru Mungu kwa neema ametupa nafasi ya kumtumikia na kwa vipawa.*”

¹²¹ *-tumia* is used because the subject is the parishioners, not the potentials; were Baba Askofu to word it “how the potentials could be used” he would have used *-tumika*.

environment” an essential part of being Christian and being Chagga, and one which is deeply concerned with the potential they have to address climate change.

The orientation to *potential* is where I see the greatest possibility for engagement between anthropology and theology. Considering both disciplines through a view towards potential, rather than normativity, description, or critique, can be an avenue towards a more productive disciplinary engagement, a greater degree of creativity in scholarship, and a way for anthropology to rise to Robbins’ challenge for anthropologists to expect some real change in the world.

5.2. Theological possibilities for anthropology

With “potential” now in mind, I now shift to another discussion of possibilities and potentials. What are the possibilities that the study of theology offers to anthropology?

a) Reflecting on hope

One area I see as particularly fruitful—and particularly oriented towards potential, which I’ve identified as a key area for the anthropological study of theology moving forward—is hope. I’m inspired by anthropologist Philip Fountain, who concludes his article by appealing to hope, with reference to theologian Nicholas Lash’s (1996) work:

Lash is adamant that theology must resist claims to theoretical finality by acknowledging the provisionality and incompleteness of our understanding. For Lash this is necessarily so because ‘God’ cannot be fixed within our categories but remains always beyond our grasp. ... But Lash passionately rejects the nihilism of closure, in which nothing is to be seen and no purposes are to be discerned. ... Lash poignantly invites the cultivation of practices of friendship as anticipatory parables of coherence and fulfillment. ... [An] anticipatory ethic grounded in hopeful acts of friendship is arguably indispensable for an anthropology that aspires to more than mere observation or critique. As such, theology speaks to central concerns about anthropology’s continuing viability and vibrancy. (Fountain 2013, 322–23)

I find the idea of “hopeful acts of friendship” striking. Fountain meant it in terms of a disciplinary orientation, an “anticipatory ethic”. Furthermore, he finds in Graham Ward’s

theological reflections on hope the “possibility of a reflexive, critical, yet also proactive interventionist platform for social justice”, offering “possible avenues of engagement for anthropologists interested both in exploring a hopeful politics for an engaged anthropology and pursuing innovative ways of reflecting on the human condition” (2013, 318–19). Certainly there are methodological and epistemological implications. I suggested above that theologies (such as Lutheran “accompaniment theology”) could offer new methods for engaged (or activist) anthropology. Our methodology of participant observation and ethnography could often be described as “hopeful acts of friendship”. Does this concept have the potential to address the methodological anxiety among anthropologists that ethnographic fieldwork asks and does not give in return? Or can theologies of hope address another perennial anxiety in anthropology about ways of knowing, objectively vs. subjectively? Perhaps theological reflections on the paradoxical “already/not-yet” nature of salvation may be useful.¹²² Ethnographic methodology and epistemology have been discussed in terms of iterations, or of improvisation (Cerwonka and Malkki 2008). Can anthropology exist in a hopeful already/not-yet space? In Fountain’s terms, what would an “anticipatory” anthropology anticipate, and what ground could it find in hope? Though with my present research I am unable to answer these questions, I point them out as avenues for further research.

Hopeful acts of friendship

Having left these questions on methodological and epistemological implications open, I do want to offer at least one (theoretical) answer to the question of what “hopeful acts of friendship” can offer anthropology. I suggest that the nexus of hope and friendship can offer a framework for

¹²² To generalize, these reflections consider New Testament passages about having been saved against other passages which discuss being saved; compare Ephesians 2:8 “By grace you have been saved”; 1 Corinthians 1:18 “to us who are being saved”. Since a liminal state exists between Christ’s first and second comings, a paradox emerges about the salvation that was definitely accomplished with Christ’s death and resurrection, and the salvation that is continually ongoing in everyday experiences of forgiveness and reconciliation (see also discussions in Chapter 4 on reconciliation as a metaphor for salvation).

understanding transnational partnerships such as those cultivated by the Northern Diocese. Hope is important in Christian life, both in terms of spiritual hope and more practical concerns. Friends are also important, as we have seen in Chapter 4. Much of what the diocese does, including its partnerships with *wageni*, could be classed as “hopeful acts of friendship”.

The description is particularly apt for the new partnership between the Northern Diocese and the Diocese of Stockholm, whose bishop, Eva Brunne, was the first out lesbian to be elected bishop in any mainstream church in the world, and the first homosexual bishop elected in any Lutheran Church.¹²³ At a reception dinner after Baba Askofu’s installation as ELCT Presiding Bishop in January 2016, I sat with a number of delegates from the Church of Sweden, and I asked Rev. Bergstrand (Bishop Brunne’s assistant) about the new partnership. Knowing that the ELCT, like the vast majority of African churches, does not support homosexuality, was this an issue in the discussion between the two dioceses? She told me candidly that at first they did not think the Northern Diocese would be interested, but that the topic did not come up, at least in any of the formal discussions (although she is sure that Bishops Shoo and Brunne must have talked about it privately). She got the feeling that while Dr. Shoo would not be willing to support LGBT clergy (or parishioners, for that matter), he is not willing to make it into an issue that would separate them from other churches. This is consistent with the LWF’s position, which is that they *don’t* take a position, other than that it is “not to be a communion–dividing issue” – although unfortunately this doesn’t work in all cases, as evident in the ongoing “rupture” between three LWF member churches, ELCA, Evangelical Ethiopian Church Mekane Yesus, and Church of Sweden (Lutheran World Federation 2013). So the Northern Diocese and the Diocese of Stockholm have created a hopeful friendship. Both dioceses are aware that homosexuality is an

¹²³ Since Brunne’s election, ELCA Southwest California elected Guy Erwin in 2013 and Church of Sweden Diocese of Västerås elected Mikael Mogren in 2015, both gay men.

area of difference for them, and that it has caused breakdowns in other relationships within their federation; they forge a friendship anyway.

Ideas of hope and friendship come out very frequently in diocese partnerships. As seen in Chapter 4 in the discussion of *uhusiano* “relationship” and *ushirikiano* “partnership”, and particularly the interactions at Sango Parish, there definitely are a lot of hopes, including financial ones. Diocese parishes hope that their partners—or their “friends”, to use another common term—will be able to contribute.

Hope in Christian theology

Hope (*tumaini*; also *matazamio*, “anticipations, things looked for”) is a common theme in Christianity. In my research it was often mentioned in sermons, it comes up several times in the funeral liturgy, and is consistently sung about in hymns. Hope has two aspects to it. In the funeral liturgy, it is clear that in some sense *tumaini* is something that you already have, and part of the Christian life is directing it correctly, i.e., towards God:

Tunawaomba wote waliohuzunishwa na kifo chake, hasa tunawakumbuka (taja jamaa) uwatulize kwa neno lako takatifu, uwasaidie ili waweke tumaini lao kwako na kuzitegemea ahadi zako.

We pray for all those who have been grieved by his/her death; particularly we pray for (*mention the family*) that you give them calm through your holy word, that you help them to put their hope in you and depend on your promises. (Kanisa la Kiinjili la Kilutheri Tanzania (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania) 2012, 639)

In another sense, hope is something a Christian receives from God. Part of a pastor’s job is to help parishioners have that hope, as retired Bishop Martin Shao addressed the delegates at the 2015 Eastern Kilimanjaro District general assembly:

Napenda kukaza ... kwamba kanisa ikiwa ni chombo cha Mungu hapa duniani, kanisa hili ni mfereji. ... Hii ndiyo nafasi ya Mkristo katika kumtumikia Mungu. ... Mungu anatuwezesha kuwa baraka kwa wengine. ... Ni kwa lengo la kuwasaidia watu waweze kuacha maovu na waweze kutenda haki na kutenda mema. Na waone kwamba Mungu ni mwenye upendo, waishi kwa matumaini. Hivyo ... jumuiya

yoyote, ione kwamba ni kijito, ni mfereji, ni bomba ... kuwafikishia wengine baraka hizi za Mungu na huu ndio wajibu wetu, na ndio wajibu wangu kama mchungaji, kama Mkristo.

I want to emphasize ... that if the church is a tool of God here in the world, this church is a furrow.¹²⁴ ... This is an opportunity for a Christian in serving God. God enables us to be blessings to others ... for the goal of helping people be able to leave evil and do what is just and good, so they can live in hope. Thus, every community is a stream, furrow, a pipe ... to deliver to people these blessings of God, and this is our responsibility, it's my responsibility as a pastor, as a Christian.

For my participants, hope is a constant theological concept. It is a critical part of the life of a Christian in that it comes from God (and pastors should help Christians to have it). It's also a property of people, and part of the Christian life is putting it in God, that is, to trust that the things you hope for will be provided by God. But it's also an environment, a space that is lived in. Therefore people have hope for other things as well as for salvation and eternal life and it has relevance for other situations – including partnerships.

Hope within friendships

In 2007, the parishes of Stötteritz, Leipzig and Marienwerder, Hanover were planning a visit to their partners in the Northern Diocese, a *kanda* of five lowlands parishes in the Central Kilimanjaro district. The chairman, Mch. Mnyike, wrote to the rest of the *kanda* to inform them of the schedule. The Germans would be visiting each parish, a kindergarten building under construction, the district and diocese offices, and the seminary; they would also be holding a meeting of the partnership steering committee as well as going on safari to Tarangire National Park and Ngorongoro Conservation Area. Mch. Mnyike concludes: “The relationship committee has great expectations [that you will] give your cooperation to maintain the relationship of love, friendship, experience of faith, mutual prayer, announcing the gospel, and strengthening as God

¹²⁴ An *mfereji* (“furrow”, pl. *mifereji*, Kichagga *mfongo*) is a small irrigation canal, an immense network of which covers Mt. Kilimanjaro, delivering water to nearly every house. In a common Kichagga saying for a guest taking his leave, *Rema seri ya mfongo*, “farm on the downhill side of the furrow”, water is analogous to blessing. For more on furrows, furrow societies, water use associations, their history and modern-democratic implications, see Vavrus (2003); on the political dimensions of water as a natural resource and Chagga ethnicity, see Bender (2006).

grants us.”¹²⁵ This is talking about hopes or expectations for the future, but when enumerating existing partner accomplishments, let’s look at Mch. Kombo’s description of partnership activities: He writes to the diocese office to inform them that his parish will be having a visit from their *usharika rafiki* “friend parish” in Dortmund, and that to date their *rafiki* has helped them to build houses for widows, maintain their vocational school, pay orphans’ school fees, start chicken, goat, and pig projects, install solar power in the parish house, and purchase a sunflower oil mill.¹²⁶

Friends allow for a hope of material benefit, as two examples from fundraising meetings show. At a meeting to plan a fundraiser for the diocese youth centre, the board members were discussing whom they should invite as “official guest” – who would be likely to contribute the most money personally or via his personal networks, and draw the most attendees, who would also contribute more money?

“Maybe Lowassa?”

“Probably not, because of the election.”¹²⁷

“It’s a religious thing, it doesn’t depend on a politician.”

“Well, it’s too late for this year anyway.”

“But when a guest [like that] comes, they talk a lot and people give.”

“What about Felix?”¹²⁸ The bishop could ask him. Or Kimei.¹²⁹ He could give 5 million.”

¹²⁵ “*Kamati ya uhusiano ina matazamia makubwa kutoa ushirikiano wako kudumisha uhusiano wa upendo, urafiki, uzoefu wa imani, kuombeana, kutangaza injili, na kuimarisha kwa kadri Mungu atakavyotujalia.*” Wageni vol. 10.

¹²⁶ Wageni vol. 11.

¹²⁷ This meeting was occurring in March, after the fundraiser date had been set as 4th October, and the national election date set as 25 October, but before presidential candidate nominations had begun. It was expected at the time of the meeting that Edward Lowassa, the former prime minister and a Lutheran, would get the CCM (Chama cha Mapinduzi, the ruling party) nomination.

¹²⁸ Possibly Felix Moshia, chairman of the East African Business Council, or Felix Mrema, MP for Arusha.

¹²⁹ Dr. Charles Kimei, President and CEO of CRDB Bank, one of the largest in Tanzania.

“Lema¹³⁰ has sent a lot of good friends.”

Here, having good friends—i.e. those who can donate a lot of money, such as these prominent Chagga businessmen and politicians (apart from Lowassa, who is Meru)—is a desirable characteristic in deciding on an *mgeni rasmi*, “official guest”.

At the annual meeting of the main cathedral choir, the chairman read a number of accomplishments over the previous year, and plans for the coming year. One of them, he said, was that they hope to purchase a minibus for the choir (so they can do guest spots at other parishes more easily). “We’re looking for friends, and we’ve started to contribute,” he said. Here “friends” are an obvious euphemism for donors.

I have already described in Chapter 4 how diverse motivations for relationship (including between the diocese and its partners) co-exist: The belief that it has inherent value or is part of being African; theological, practical, and financial motivations. Some frameworks by which American counterparts understand these motivations put them in tension with each other, particularly financial motivations:

The powerful and wealthy move out into the world to rescue it from all its ills in the name of Christ, who lived as a pauper. Less scrupulous people in the developing world see the movement as a “gravy train” that they try to flag down so it will make a brief stop at their station. We say “brief” because the recipients of short-term missions’ largesse are not looking for in-depth relationships. (Reese 2016, 6)

In this view, financial expectations are incommensurable with a desire for in-depth relationship. And although many of the diocese’s partners would reject this position, we have nevertheless seen how a perceived disconnect in motivations caused an air of awkwardness at Sango Parish.

Other frameworks for understanding the relationship between African and Western Christians look to themes of bureaucracy, where Western Christians occupy administrative roles

¹³⁰ Possibly Godbless Lema, CHADEMA party member and MP for Arusha City.

in churches, schools, and healthcare institutions; managing cadres of African middle-management types, including pastors and evangelists (Beidelman 1974, 246ff). As I shall demonstrate in Part 3, this paradigm has ended, and as such I suggest that inter-church partnerships should not be seen as African Christians responding to what Western Christians impose, or attempt to impose on them – although that is *part* of some partnership dynamics. Among scholars who study short-term mission specifically (the subject of Chapter 9 of this thesis), yet another framework views international religious partnerships, for better or worse, as primarily affecting the spiritual development of the “goers”, i.e. the Western Christians, thus making the relationship one of teaching. Many of my interlocutors, both Tanzanian and American, mentioned this dynamic; Tanzanian pastors told me that they wanted to help *wageni* learn about Tanzania, and Americans mentioned just how much they had learned. Still, I suggest, this is incomplete. In my research, relationships between the diocese and other organizations made many things possible: teaching and learning, griping at inconveniences and appreciating opportunities, enacting a genuinely held value of collaborative work and shared faith, receiving financial or material assistance, and—a potential that subsumes all of these—developing friendships.

This view towards using theological reflections on “hopeful acts of friendship” may still be partial, but I think it an important avenue to open up. I had not read Fountain’s article until I had already finished my fieldwork, and thus was unable to investigate the concepts of hope and friendship in enough depth to put forward a detailed and thorough analysis of its theological underpinnings and implications for anthropological understanding of social relationships. However, I suggest it is significant enough that the value of “hopeful acts of friendship” for my interlocutors was as obvious as it was in my research, without my even searching it out.

b) Theology as pedagogy

In this section, I explore how theology can provide insight on learning. I take as a prior assumption that learning, or education, is a facet of all human activity not limited to formal institutions (although learning sometimes happens there too). Lave & Wenger's approach is frequently cited here: In their sense, learning is moving toward fuller participation in a "community of practice" (1991, 29). This definition does have purchase in my research: for example, pastors work towards bringing their parishioners towards fuller participation in the church as a "community of practice"), though there are some differences in this ethnographic situation compared to Lave & Wenger's examples. The "community of practice" I studied is not the parish nor even the broader community of Christians, but *watumishi*. Their main job is not to bring others into that community, although they themselves learn to be an *mtumishi* through "legitimate peripheral participation" (Lave and Wenger 1991, 29). A large part of pastors' work, though, is concerned with the parish, which I take as another community of practice. Again, though, there are some departures from Lave & Wenger's model. Although pastors would say that there are people who participate more fully (joining the choir, teaching Sunday school) and those who just come to church, they would reject attempts to distinguish one as more of a parishioner than the other. Furthermore, the concept of the *kundi* complicates matters as one may be in and out of it by turns, and this may or may not occasion a diminished participation in the parish.

Nevertheless, *watumishi* both teach and learn in overlapping communities of practice (within the parish, amongst other *watumishi*, in the diocese as a whole, at seminaries). I argue that theology includes both *what* is taught, and *how* it is taught. In other words, we can see it in

formal-education terms as both the curriculum and the pedagogy. I take “pedagogy” to be a methodology for teaching, whether formally or informally, intentional or not (see Cremin 1978, 567 on intended and unintended education). One thing that theology does is to teach oneself or others about God, self, and society. It’s not enough to say “about God” because some theologies see finding God as secondary to finding others.¹³¹ Winston Halapua, the Anglican Archbishop of Polynesia, describes his *theomoana* theology, which refers to how water flows between and connects islands:

Theomoana theology is about relationship, relationship and relationship. There's nothing else but relationship. And because the ocean, the rhythm of the ocean is what makes it alive, because it flows ... It is a departure from trying to figure out God. It is a point of saying, when you relate to others, you'll find God there. (Morgain 2014, 78)

I would not be the least surprised if my Tanzanian pastor friends found this statement very agreeable, given the emphasis they place on relationship. Morgain mentions several jobs of theology, including to open up “spaces for different kinds of configurations and connections between people” (2014, 70).¹³² This is, I suggest, also a property of pedagogy, that it similarly opens up spaces for “configurations and connections”, since learning is predicated on connections.

But, as Morgain demonstrates in her description of the role of theology in mediating ethnic divisions in Fijian Christianity, theology both inflects and attempts to move beyond; it reflects and influences those public discourses (2014, 70). Morgain compares two theologies of water: Pentecostal baptism theology, and *theomoana* theology described above. They both teach something about the nature of water: The Pentecostal theology teaches about its purpose and its

¹³¹ And, for that matter, theologies in traditions that downplay or even reject the idea of “God”.

¹³² This occasions an interesting meta-discussion when talking about theologies of partnership, and in turn makes those particularly fruitful to study – though I add the caveat that “configurations and connections” don’t necessarily have to be positive.

action in baptism; the *theomoana* theology teaches that it is alive and it flows, mediates, and transforms (Morgain 2014, 73, 77). But both (particularly the second) also make water into a teacher. Something about the nature of water, itself understood in culturally specific ways, teaches us about our relation to others and the nature of God. In these two examples, we see that both theology and pedagogy, ways of teaching, are culturally inflected; they reflect popular cultural understandings.

Theology is perhaps unique, though, because it occupies two roles, as the two theologies in Morgain's article get at; teaching us about water, and making water into a teacher. In the ELCT, in terms of theology-as-curriculum, there is set of knowledge that pastors are supposed to teach their parishioners. One may take the confirmation class curriculum as an example. I took one of the confirmation quizzes at Wona Parish once: It asks questions about general Bible knowledge (what two commandments did God give to Adam and Eve?), church history (What did Martin Luther's 95 theses concern?), diocese organization (Who is the head of Siha district?), Lutheran practice (What are some things that can bar you from participation at the sacrament?), and Christian behavior (What are some ways to avoid adultery?).¹³³ Beyond this kind of quiz-knowledge, pastors consider their job to be teaching theology on a more conceptual level. At Wona Parish, during a sermon preparation discussing Romans 8:1-4, the parish *watumishi* went back and forth for a while on Paul's dualistic philosophy. Here's the passage, in the Bible Society version and the ESV:

Sasa, basi, hakuna hukumu ya adhabu juu yao walio katika Kristo Yesu. Kwa sababu sheria ya Roho wa uzima ule ulio katika Kristo Yesu imeniacha huru, mbali na sheria ya dhambi na mauti. Maana yale yasiyowezekana kwa sheria, kwa vile ilivyokuwa dhaidu kwa sababu ya mwili, Mungu, kwa kumtuma Mwanawe mwenyewe katika mfano wa mwili ulio wa dhambi, na kwa sababu ya dhambi, aliihukumu dhambi katika mwili; ili maagizo ya torati yatimizwe ndani yetu sisi, tusioenenda kwa kufuata mambo ya mwili, bali mambo ya roho.

¹³³ I wrote "stay home at all times" jokingly and was gently reprimanded for it

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Mch. Kimori explained that Paul sees two things here, the body and the spirit, and he's comparing them. The body is dead and the spirit is alive; sin is dead and Christ is alive; a philosophy which is difficult to understand. "How would you explain this to children?" asked Mch. Kimori. One of the interns suggested explaining the creation story, in Genesis chapter 3, about sin – "if you start here though, in Romans?" He shook his head. Mch. Kimori replied that Genesis is fine, but doesn't get into the points that Paul is making here. "Death, sin, cross – how do small children understand these? How are you going to teach Christian theology?"

Thus theology has one sense of a type of thing to be taught (for example, what sin means, or what the importance of Jesus' death is), but it's also a way of teaching, since the project of how to know God and why it matters proceeds from a theological underpinning. As I have described in Chapter 4, Tanzanian pastors teach their congregations that reconciliation with others is one area in which God becomes known to us. They teach parishioners *about* reconciliation, and they make reconciliation into a teacher; one which teaches parishioners about the nature of salvation. Pastors are taught that the collective knowledge of God creates a spiritual richness that all Christians may participate cooperatively in, a richness which then animates their work as pastors and in fact the whole church as a community. In this way, theology becomes a method, a viewpoint from which to consider and shape social and spiritual relations. I suggest that this dual nature of theology allows for a certain flexibility in adapting theological discourse to different situations. We have already seen this dynamic in how church leaders debate aspects of the articulation between Christianity, envisioned as a global concept, and their own realities;

in how they discuss “partnership” is a highly flexible and adaptable way, and we will see more of this in the next chapter when I examine case studies of “practical theology”. I will also continue to build on the application of theology in highly flexible concepts in Part III. However, I still have several matters which I must draw together in a brief conclusion.

c) Figuring out and cultural change

I have left several strings hanging: Pedagogy and learning, *potential* as an avenue for a more engaged anthropology, the possibilities that “hope” may afford as a theoretical lens. I hope to tie them together through a discussion of education, cultural change, and “figuring out”.

According to Varenne, education is continually “figuring out” what to do, through “collective deliberations” which can be difficult at times (2007, 1562). The result, though, is cultural change: In any given situation you lack the necessary information from your prior experience to know what to do, so you figure it out, and this creates new cultural forms (Varenne 2008, 363). I see this as comparable to Jenkins’ view of theology as “active interventions” (Jenkins 2013, 371). Varenne draws on Bateson’s 1972 illustration of the croquet game in *Alice in Wonderland*:

In this game, the (cultural) facts of croquet have not changed; neither have the (biological) facts of life. Both must be taken into account when they become related at any particular moment. But neither set of facts, however well known, is much of a guide to Alice as she wonders how to hold flamingoes in order to hit hedge-hogs. It is tempting to think of Alice’s confusion as if it concerned only a moment of personal “deliberation” as she seeks to learn how to handle a new situation. But Bateson is not primarily interested in the psychology of the learner; he is interested in the interaction of all those who place Alice in the situation of having to develop a particularly implausible skill (and then makes the learning irrelevant). (Varenne 2007, 1568)

I mentioned above the “already/not-yet” paradox of salvation. I want to return to this briefly, and draw a parallel between old and new information in Varenne’s concept of education, as pictured in Alice’s absurd game (Figure 12).

You know that a sport called croquet has been invented and is playable and in fact you have played it before; if you're a Tanzanian Lutheran, you know that salvation has been accomplished and can be experienced as freedom, and you have experienced it on previous occasions. But, in the same way that Alice is trying to figure out how to play *this* game of croquet, you are wondering in some particular situation how you will experience freedom, grace, reconciliation, or any other theological concepts. And how will you work these out with your “consociates” who contributed to your being in this



Figure 12: Alice's croquet game, Illustration by Sir John Tenniel.

situation and who will be involved in your moving on from it? For my research participants this happens at a personal level, and at higher organizational levels, as pastors discuss how they can best continue to shepherd their flocks through new situations that crop up. In the 1930s pressing situations might have included the role of circumcision in the life of Christians; in the 1940s the price of coffee and rising bridewealth expectations; in the 1960s decolonization and the Arusha Declaration; in the 1990s, AIDS. Today there are plenty of “new situations” that Christians and specifically pastors are trying to “figure out”: Teenagers dealing with internet addictions, urbanization, climate change’s palpable effect on people’s livelihoods, the cost of funeral food becoming a burden on the family of the deceased, and so on. *Watumishi* actively and collectively deliberate—both with their parishioners, and amongst themselves at meetings, seminars, conferences, office Bible studies, sermon preparations, and parish tea-time—how they will navigate these situations, promote Christian teachings in a relevant way, and how the ideals of grace, freedom, peace, and knowledge of God will continue to be achieved. In the discussions of

theology which follow in Chapter 6, I will continue to highlight ways of “figuring out”: for example, how African theologians and pastors figure out a balance between freedom and unity, challenges posed by climate change, and what they see as rapid cultural change and new types of family dynamics.

I have argued that in the Northern Diocese, theology takes the form of a social commentary, an intellectual debate, a dialogue on the articulation between global and local. It is, in Varenne’s terms, “figuring out”; an activity which is simultaneously oriented towards learning and cultural change. I stress that theological “figuring out” is also a discussion which is concerned with *potential*, with the relationship between belief, local reality, and practice – what it is, what it should be, what it *could* be. In pastors’ theological efforts, as we shall see in the next chapter, they are often not out to dictate a specific course of action, but to explore potential ways of dealing with change. In its capacity as a reflexive and self-critical meditation on the nature of human existence, theology forms a clear parallel to anthropology, and each discipline has much to offer the other.

Chapter 6: African theology

In this chapter, I discuss the history and current context of African Theology.¹³⁴ I demonstrate how, early in its history, African Theology took a representation of African Traditional Religion and pointed it in new directions. I describe some of these representations of African Traditional Religion, and the development of modern-day African theology, which—though it does not *reject* ATR—now draws from many other inspirations. I suggest that one salient feature of African theology has been a constant (and productive) tension between African theological and ecclesiastical independence, and the Christian ideal of complete unity. I examine some ethnographic instances of this tension in the settings of international conferences and theological education.

I include analyses of two kinds of African theology. The first is an historical example of scholarly African theology, which explicitly draws on representations of African Traditional Religion; the second is what I call “practical theology” – that is, less formal theological discussions that emerged in my observations. I conclude with a brief comparison of these two theological genres.

6.1. African theology after independence

African theology picked up speed following national and ecclesiastical independence in many African countries, including Tanzania. A paradigm shift had occurred; instead of trying to “Christianize elements of African culture”, theologians began to “embrace the Africanization of Christianity” (Young 1993, 3; quoted in Magesa 2004, 10). During this era of African theology, from the 1960s to about the 1990s, several trends emerged.

¹³⁴ Loosely defined (particularly since I have declined to offer a definition of theology) as theology by African people

a) Liberation and independence

As may be expected, independence was a major theme. Latin American Liberation Theology inspired new incarnations American and South African Black Theology, and became an inspiration for many African theologians. At conferences such as the 1971 Conference of Black Churchmen in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and the 1972 Theological Consultation on African Theology and Church Life at Makerere University, Uganda, Martin Luther King Jr's efforts in the civil rights struggle were widely praised (Mshana 1972, 23). Buzzwords such as inculturation, acculturation, contextualization, localization, indigenization, adaptation, and decolonization circulated freely (Mshana 1972, 26).

In these theological efforts, salvation was reinterpreted not just as remission of sins and everlasting life with God, but as an explicitly political, economic, and social phenomenon. Kwame Nkrumah's statement, "Seek first political independence and the rest will be given unto you", and the liberation of Israel from bondage in Egypt were immediately juxtaposed (Mutiso-Mbinda 1979, 44).

Jesus Christ, as savior, was recontextualized as someone who "identifies with the African to the extent of becoming an African himself", who has "entered into the very texture of our culture and society to be our liberator from everything that oppresses and dehumanizes us" (Mutiso-Mbinda 1979, 53). Similarly, Mshana interprets the gospel thus:

The Christian Gospel is the Good News of Liberation. This liberation is the liberation of the oppressed wherever they may be. They are liberated to be a new people. Wherever there are people whose destiny is controlled by others, whose rights and privileges of a community have been denied, people who are powerless, who are the victims of slavery, colonialism, neo-colonialism, and imperialism ... they will settle for nothing less than complete independence of complete liberation. (1972, 24)

Scholars discussed theologies of liberation from oppression, political, economic, social, or otherwise, *and* ways of liberating theology itself:

One of the major tasks of the Christian Churches in Africa is to deliver every Christian from theological oppression by Western theologians. The myth that there is only one way of theologizing must be destroyed. The African must be left to become himself and theologize for himself. ... Liberation from such theological oppression must aim at enabling people to start from their own religious experience and beliefs. ... We have our own African philosophy hidden in our oral literature. ... In order to have a relevant and authentic theology, it must be rooted in African cultures and African traditional religions. (Mutiso-Mbinda 1979, 52)

Mutiso-Mbinda's statement points to perhaps the most distinctive element of late 20th century African theology: the intentional mobilization of African Traditional Religion.

b) African Traditional Religion

I start by pointing out that I discuss African Traditional Religion at a level of abstraction. I do not analyze ATR as a distinct entity in itself; rather in terms of how a certain representation of it became an analytic category and a point of departure for a generation of African theologians, who mobilized these representations for Christian theology.

Perhaps the watershed moment for the incorporation of African Traditional Religion into Christian theology was the publication in 1969 of *African Religions & Philosophy* by Kenyan Anglican theologian John Mbiti; the first major work in theology to challenge the assumption that traditional African religion was incompatible with Christianity (Mbiti 1980). Mbiti inspired—and still inspires—Christian theologians from all parts of Africa. For many African theologians trained between 1970 and 1990 (including many of my interlocutors), ATR was a major focus of theological effort. Eliewaha Mshana, the late bishop of ELCT-Northeastern Diocese, wrote that in order to produce African theology,

We have to look for the ways in which the Christian faith is being implanted in African art forms, music, drama, traditional *ngomas* or dances, stories, proverbs, wise sayings, analogies, metaphors, modern literature etc. There are so many unwritten sources to draw from. We have to go to our African Traditional religion and hear our people as they sing and dance and learn what theology is communicated in their songs and music. (1972, 21)

Mbiti (1969) undertakes a broad religious survey, where he discusses ideas on the nature of God, spirits and spiritual beings, kinship, life-cycle rituals, “specialists”, and mystical power. On these topics he draws out comparisons from dozens of different African ethnic groups. These topics have since been reproduced, rediscussed, and debated by African theologians, so that several common characteristics of “African Traditional Religion” emerged. Since this informed much African theology of this era, I will take some time to describe what is held out to be African Traditional Religion.

Universality

First and foremost is often an aspect of universality. Mbiti begins his discussion by giving “religion” a very wide purview. He declines to define religion, stating only that for African people, it is an “ontological phenomenon” that it is intimately bound up with one’s own existence; individuals are “immersed in religious participation” for the whole length of their existence, before they are born and after they die, and thus to live is to be “caught up in a religious drama” (Mbiti 1969, 15). In a now-famous and often quoted passage, Mbiti describes how religion permeates everyday life:

Wherever the African is, there is his religion: he carries it to the fields where he is sowing seeds or harvesting a new crop, he takes it with him to the beer party or to attend a funeral ceremony; and if he is educated, he takes religion with him to the examination room at school or in the university; if he is a politician he takes it to the house of parliament. Although many African languages do not have a word for religion as such, it nevertheless accompanies the individual from long before his birth to long after his physical death. (Mbiti 1969, 2)

Urio concurs, citing the above passage, and adding that Kichagga does not have a word that defines religion as such,¹³⁵ but that religion for Chagga people means “the totality of their life without discrimination” (1990, 21). African Traditional Religion is often discussed not just in terms of pertaining to all aspects of human life, but absolutely *everything*, as Fossouo (2010, 95)

¹³⁵ Machame dialect uses *imanya Iruva* “knowing God”.

argues, “The African spiritual worldview comprised the invisible and the visible, in heaven and on earth. Everything within Africa, from nature to culture, is religious and spiritual. . . . The African spiritual field takes history, geography, vegetation and heroes of the community into consideration.” Community also features frequently in descriptions of ATR. Since religion encompasses all, including all people, it follows that all people are tied together (in a way that is often contrasted to Western perceptions of religion) such that religion is necessarily corporate in nature, and life apart from participation in a community is not life (Nkemnkia 2002, 86; Ng’weshemi 2014, 8).

Centrality of God and role of spirits

The centrality of a single God and the role of different kinds of spirits are frequently referenced. Mbiti is unequivocal on this:

I have collected all the information available to me concerning the traditional concepts of God. The study covers nearly 300 peoples from all over Africa outside the traditionally Christian and Muslim communities. In all these societies, without a single exception, people have a notion of God as the Supreme Being. This is the most minimal and fundamental idea about God, found in all African societies. (1969, 29)

Fossouo (Fossouo 2010, 99) and Mutiso-Mbinda (1979, 52) emphasize that ATR is monotheistic. In addition to God, though, there are also spirits, whether of ancestors or of other beings (Fossouo 2010, 103, 107). Mbiti is careful to distinguish the two categories, calling the former the “living-dead” (1969, 1978ff). Many African traditions venerate these “living-dead” ancestors; they don’t consider them divine, just their elders who happen to be dead, and thus in closer touch with God – or, as Mbiti puts it, they are disappearing into *Zamani*, the past, and will eventually sink into it as they draw nearer to God, ontologically (Mbiti 1969, 83; see also Kopytoff 1971). In ancestor veneration graves and skulls become important elements (Fossouo 2010, 97); a dynamic we have seen in Chapter 2.1.a where Chagga people historically placed the

skulls of their ancestors at clan trees or *isale* trees (Hasu 1999, 105), and where graves are located in the *kihamba*, the hereditary banana garden.

Life

Life-cycle rituals are an important component in discussions of ATR, and many theologians (in addition to Mbiti, who devotes over 50 pages to the topic) discuss these rituals at length, often focusing on their own ethnic traditions. Urio, for example, goes into great detail on the concept of life in the Chagga tradition, particularly through the concept of memory and life-cycle rituals. He identifies, for example, the rituals and beliefs surrounding marriage and child-bearing as efforts to sustain “a stream of life here and hereafter” (Urio 1990, 77). Nkemnkia identifies among the absolutely indispensable elements of African Traditional Religion rites and the concept of life (2002, 130f). As I have demonstrated in Chapter 1.5, early missionary-ethnography work became reified into a perception of what “Chagga tradition” was, and this process was replicated all over the continent so that, by the 1960s and 1970s, scholars such as Mbiti would look mainly to such life-cycle rituals to develop a framework for understanding “African Traditional Religion” as a coherent entity.

Other topics identified as elements of African traditional religion include the absence of sacred texts, whose role is filled by sacred places (Nkemnkia 2002, 98); the lack of a “Satan” character above ordinary evil spirits (Fossouo 2010, 105); and the belief in mystical powers such as magic and witchcraft (Mbiti 1969, 197).

c) Urio's Eucharistic Theology: A case study in inculturation theology

In this case study, I will demonstrate one way in which African Traditional Religion is mobilized for Christian theology. Inculturation (which I introduced in Chapter 5) is a popular theme in African theology, especially so from about 1970-1990. It is argued that the Christian

gospel has to be relevant to African people and it has to address their spiritual needs, or else they will be “torn between two worlds” as Urio (1990, 147) puts it.

Drawing on Mbiti’s popularity beginning from the 1970s, African theologians began to look to African Traditional Religion for ways to contextualize Christian theology, so that ordinary Christians would feel like Christianity really belongs to them, and be able to commit to it fully. This is what Aaron Urio, one of the Northern Diocese pastors,¹³⁶ did in his 1985 MA thesis at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa.¹³⁷ In order to demonstrate one way in which Christian theology explicitly draws on conceptualizations of African Traditional Religion, I describe in more detail Urio’s efforts towards an inculturation theology of Christian Eucharistic traditions, in relation to traditional Chagga religion.

Urio’s thesis titled “The concept of memory in the Chagga life cycle in relation to Christian eucharistic traditions” starts with what he sees as an impasse. A majority of Chagga people are Christian, and Chagga spiritual heritage remains important to many people. A central element of pre-Christian Chagga religion was veneration of ancestors and perpetuation of their memory; along with producing offspring to perpetuate one’s own memory, thus achieving a kind of immortality. This became a difficult issue for Chagga clergy, who must negotiate between maintain their heritage as Chagga people, and their duty to discourage some practices of ancestor veneration, including animal sacrifice and divination. This duty is impressed upon them doctrinally, as they believe it indicates a weak faith, and by global discourses of modernization which label certain practices superstitious or backwards. The ELCT and the Northern Diocese had long been doing battle with practices of animal sacrifice (*tambiko*) and divination

¹³⁶ During my research period, he was semi-retired and working as the manager of the Ushirika wa Neema nuns’ centre.

¹³⁷ Later republished by Erlangen Verlag as part of the World Mission Scripts series.

(*kupigaramli*). But in Urio's view, the church was fighting a losing battle (1990, 186), and this is the situation to which he addresses himself.

Urio proposes a recontextualized Eucharistic theology and an updated practice. In the first chapters, he discusses in detail the Chagga concepts of childbearing as efforts towards immortality, and ancestor veneration as a form of continual remembrance which perpetuates holistic social ties (drawing largely from missionary ethnography such as Gutmann's; see Chapter 2.1.a). Subsequently he discusses memory in Jewish and early Christian liturgical traditions, before moving on to a description of how the church, in the 1980s, had struggled unsuccessfully for years against the practice of sacrificing to ancestors and was, in addition, preparing to do battle with a trend of lavish funerary feasts.

Urio writes that the Chagga tradition of venerating ancestors is a deeply-held value which is obviously difficult to suppress, as evidenced by its continued existence after nearly a hundred years of attempts (Urio 1990, 7). Furthermore, he says, it *should* not be suppressed, since memory (including of ancestors) is both intrinsic to identity as Chagga people, *and* a regular theme in Christianity (Urio 1990, 198ff). Urio argues that Christianity's failure to embrace the "total social situation" (1990, 207) has caused Chagga to feel as though they are divided between allegiances. While Christianity *has* been able to embrace Chagga childbirth and initiation customs, at least in part, in its practice of baptism and confirmation, he argues that the church's current funerary practice has not been sufficient (Urio 1990, 149).

Therefore, Urio proposes that the sacrament of the Eucharist be given greater importance, especially at funeral situations. The Chagga custom of remembering finds an appropriate expression in the words of Jesus to his disciples at the Last Supper: "Do this in remembrance of me." In both memorials, the Christian memorial of Jesus and Chagga memorial for ancestors,

one is not simply recollecting idly, but enacting a full participation in each other's lives (Urio 1990, 168). And in fact, Urio argues, the practice of sacrifice is not foreign to Christian Eucharistic traditions either: It is the commemoration of Christ as a sacrifice, itself understood as a recontextualization of the Jewish Passover sacrifice (1990, 160). Neither is the idea of commemorating those who have gone before us foreign or incompatible with Christianity; Urio (1990, 194) compares the Chagga conception of ancestors to the Christian doctrine of the "communion of saints" as a body including both "the church militant" (those who are presently struggling in this world) and "the church triumphant" (those already in heaven). In practical terms, Urio particularly recommend that the Eucharist should be celebrated either at funerals or at the family's private *msiba* gatherings (Urio 1990, 183).

According to Urio, a further benefit of a recontextualized Eucharistic theology and practice would be to focus more towards the future. Citing Mbiti, he argues that African beliefs about afterlife do not typically include concepts of "hope for a future and better life"; thus Christianity represents an improvement, in that a robust Eucharistic theology is able to help Chagga "focus their attention on events in the future in a way in which their traditional religious beliefs had not" (Urio 1990, 195).

Urio's thesis could be viewed as an effort at "figuring out"; observing how the Northern Diocese was struggling unsuccessfully (and, he argues, needlessly) against practices judged to be unsuitable for Christians, he figures out a different approach that he felt would be more beneficial for the diocese and its parishioners. His work, though, was perhaps unfortunately timed (in addition to being a victim of poor distribution networks). I happened upon it after I had finished my fieldwork. Urio's recommendations had not been implemented in the Northern

Diocese; Eucharist is still celebrated only quarterly, and never at funerals. When I mentioned the thesis to my research participants, they had not heard of it.

6.2. African Theology in the 21st Century

In this section, I examine how African pastors work towards a more authentically African theology. Although they do include reinterpretations of “African Traditional Religion” (or specific instances thereof, e.g. Chagga religion), other inspirations have now become more common, and I examine this shift in orientation. I also discuss the productive tension which emerges from a simultaneous concern for African theological independence, and global Christian unity. I conclude by examining several cases of what I call “practical theology”, highlighting the ways in which they are conceptually located in relation to Chagga spiritual heritage, at the same time as they draw on global ideologies of social justice and environmentalism; and comparing these theologies to Urio’s eucharistic theology.

a) A second paradigm shift

Laurenti Magesa, a Tanzanian Catholic priest, writes:

African Theology seems to have hit a dead end. ... Contemporary African theological output fades in terms of innovation when compared with published reflections on the themes of liberation and inculturation during the decades of the seventies and earlier eighties of the century just ended. ... Particularly since the 1990s, African theological thought [has] become rather repetitive and staid. (2004, 4-5)

Magesa (2004, 9–10) describes the independence-era African theologizing as a paradigm shift, quoting Young’s (1993, 3) description of a theological “old guard” and “new guard”. The new guard (i.e., those of the 70s and 80s, including Urio) was committed to social and not just “religio-cultural” analysis, and insisted that liberation was integral and not epiphenomenal to Christianity. They focused on Africanizing Christianity rather than vice versa. Still, Magesa

(2004, 10) asserts that “Yet today, further daring steps are needed.” The new guard was becoming an old guard.

Magesa argues that theologians should find creative inspiration, as always, in the Bible, but through a lens of contextual history. Drawing on German theologian Rudolf Bultmann’s distinction between *Historie* as a series of events and *Geschichte* as “history imbued with meaning and significance for a particular society” (2004, 18),¹³⁸ Magesa argues that Biblical authors were engaged in writing a “theologized history”: For example, the writers of the gospels interpreted the life of Jesus in response to the needs and expectations of their various audiences, while the Priestly-source author(s) of Genesis creation accounts, writing during or after exile in Babylon, sought to counter Babylonian myths of origin (2004, 19ff). Though he does not use these terms, Magesa in essence rejects fundamentalist theology, and reasserts the need for a liberal theology¹³⁹ which appreciates the “intricate relationship between history and myth and myth and history, and between fact and interpretation of fact in theological construction” (2004, 23). Therefore, Magesa argues, the way forward for African theology is to situate itself historically, in the same way that the Old Testament shows both God speaking to the Jews, and the Jews understanding God, with reference to their history (Magesa 2004, 30–31).

Magesa’s argument—that a meaningful, productive and creative theology is one that takes local historical realities into consideration—parallels how I have described theology above as “figuring out”. Magesa concludes with reference to the Biblical story of Job, and the civic patriot theology in the establishment of the United States, asking whether their mobilization of their

¹³⁸ Perhaps ironically, Magesa (a Catholic) references Bultmann (a Lutheran) as quoted by Nichols (a Catholic), who adds: “The distinction between *Historie* and *Geschichte* rests on a questionable division of reality into facts and values. Bultmann’s dichotomy, with its foundation in a Lutheran anthropology that we have already had cause to reject, should be of interest to Catholic theology only in encouraging us to find a better account of the relation between history and faith than his.” (Nichols 1991, 86) It appears that Magesa is siding with the Lutherans here.

¹³⁹ I discuss these more in the context of American evangelicalism in Chapter 9.

own history could provide a way forward for African theology (Magesa 2004, 34ff). Both Job, and the American colonialists, were also “figuring things out”; their experience in history could *inform* what they were to do now, but it was not adequate in itself, and thus new directions had to be worked out. I suggest it is fair to interpret Magesa’s argument in a similar way: That African theology, if it is to avoid being an empty ideology, must be engaged in people’s history, their lives and their religious experiences – it must figure things out.

b) The importance of *African theology*

Magesa’s article seems to have been timely. Indeed I did notice a difference in the theologizing that I observed, compared to late 20th century works by African theologians. ATR, though still popular, is no longer the most common motif. The theme of “figuring out” (though not in those words) was a major one at the LWF All-Africa Conference, as delegates discussed the history of the African Lutheran Church, and its current direction. Whether the delegates had read Magesa’s article or not, the 1955 LWF conference in Marangu (of which this conference marked the 60th anniversary) was made into a *Geschichte* on its own. Nobody present had actually attended the 1955 conference,¹⁴⁰ but the 2015 proceedings were replete with references to the “spirit of Marangu”, how Mangi Marealle had insisted that African churches should be led by bishops, how the 1955 conference had constituted a turning point in African Christianity,¹⁴¹ and how this conference would also be such a turning point.¹⁴² “Marangu” became conceptualized in itself as a stock-taking look at the past, the present, and the future.

¹⁴⁰ Retired ND bishop Erasto Kweka had, but he was ill and did not attend. His wife, who had attended the worship services during the conference which were open to the public, spoke on his behalf.

¹⁴¹ e.g. South African delegate Rev. Dr. Ishmael Noko: “At Marangu [1955], the Africans understood their purpose as to move out of isolation, to come into a vision of a Christian church in Africa. It happened, here we are.”

¹⁴² e.g. South African delegate Rev. Bafana Khumalo: “If we want to talk about transformation, we need to start with ourselves, so that when we come to Marangu 60 years from now, we can look back and say, that was the turning point.”

In a discussion session drafting the “Marangu Message” joint statement, one of the delegates commented, “We should note some of the very challenging presentations that we have heard ... linking what we are doing today to Marangu 60 years ago, and the question that they were grappling with then was, ‘Whither Africa today?’ and we are still working with that today.” Similarly, in a panel session on Renewal, Rev. Dr. Faith Lugazia, an ELCT pastor and theologian whom I have cited above, pressed the speakers on the issue of relevance in theology, particularly in seminary teaching:

I feel the problem of both addressing our theological identity, or heritage, but also [of] contextualizing our theology. And on this I [suggest] that this Marangu should be a forum for us to go with a concrete and practical resolution that the time has reached today for our bishops and theological lecturers to meet with scholars who have done research in our community, to sit together and to see the issues which are facing our communities, and then create the models, or the teachings, which really come to our society instead of how the situation is today as we continue to talk about Karl Barth, Bonhoeffer and so on and so forth. Why don’t we talk about Tutu, Kibira, and others?

Independence, including in theological education, was discussed frequently throughout the conference. This points to a widespread desire to emphasize African theology specifically. Delegates discussed how theology could provide a common language for building a prosperous post-colonial Africa. However, this emphasis on independence reveals a tension, particularly when one considers the Christian ideal of unity as “children of God”. What is essentially important about *African* theology, and what is the value of non-African theology for African people? Certainly this is an issue which reveals a global imbalance of power; many of the delegates would no doubt be aware that asking “What is an appropriate balance between African and Western theology?” was an important consideration at this conference, while delegates at an All-Europe Conference would not be similarly burdened. Many discussions at the conference were oriented toward navigating this tension between unity and freedom. This is a process which is by no means uncontested. Some theologians would argue that “African theology” is not a

distinction that should be made. For example, Mch. Msanga, retired head of Kilimanjaro Mashariki district, told me that he does not believe there is such a thing as African Christianity or American Christianity, nor African or American theology. “We have one Bible and one God,” he said. “Maybe there are different ways of explaining things, and of course there is theology written by Africans, but there is no such thing as African theology.”

Others, such as Mutiso-Mbinda (1979, 52) quoted above, would insist that African theology *must* be liberated from Western theology. Transnational and ecumenical efforts to find a balance are a constant theme, and Varenne’s concept of “difficult collective deliberations” is particularly apt. These deliberations are done collectively at parish meetings, workshops, seminars, and conferences like the one held in Moshi in 2015, and they can be difficult at times. However, this is often a productive tension, resulting in theological meditations on ecclesiastical independence and interdependence, on relevance to African history, and on the nature of membership in a global community of Christians. I suggest that these meditations are further examples of “figuring out” a balance between freedom and unity.

The Lutheran World Federation, at a formal level, negotiates the tension between freedom and unity through theological understandings of *communion* and *accompaniment*.

“Communion”, in Lutheranism, has a broad set of meanings. It can refer to the Eucharist or the Lord’s Supper; to a deep sense of relationship as fellow Christians (which is itself nurtured by participation in the Eucharist); or to an organization such as the LWF, which describes itself as “a communion of 145 member churches”. These connotations are mutually constructed: the sense of relationship is nurtured by common participation in the Eucharist, while the organization is conceptualized as an “expression and instrument of this communion” (Mau 1985, 176). In his sermon at the conference-closing worship service, LWF President Munib Younan paid his

respects to Bishop Josiah Kibira (1925-1988, sometime Bishop of ELCT Bukoba Diocese, and 1977-1984 LWF President), a man who was himself known for his staunch advocacy for African freedom in theology and ecclesiology, and simultaneously his emphasis on global Lutheran unity.

Younan said:

Kibira understood very well that churches in Africa must be set free to lead their believers, as appropriate to the local context. But Kibira also understood that African churches, and churches everywhere, need a communion that will coordinate and together have the world Lutheranism in a spirit of community. This communion is what sends us to the world with a common holistic vision.

“Accompaniment” is a closely related concept, which is mobilized in several ways by the LWF and its member churches. Since this is a key concept which I discuss in detail here and in Chapter 8, and which relies on a specifically selected and reinterpreted passage of Scripture, I quote that passage, Luke 24:13-35, in its entirety:

That very day two of [Jesus’ disciples] were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?” And he said to them, “What things?” And they said to him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.” And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, but they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward

evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?” And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Churches (and individuals) are conceptualized not as one coming to the aid of the other, but accompanying each other as the two disciples were doing and experiencing the presence of God together. A common application of Accompaniment theology is in mission, which I discuss in Chapter 8.2.b. However, accompaniment can be applied to many situations: During the LWF conference, delegates spoke about accompanying each other during the Ebola crisis, accompanying new churches into the federation, and accompaniment as a mode of conflict resolution and consensus building. African and Western theology are able to be understood as accompanying each other. Accompaniment specifically addresses the tension between independence and interdependence, as Younan suggested in his keynote address:

“Let me emphasize,” said Kibira in 1965, “that as long as the African church is depending upon Western churches, it cannot obtain real freedom of mind. Are we allowed to criticize and think independently without the threat and consequent fear of losing our traditional and universal connection, or our financial aid?” This was Kibira in 1965. And I believe maybe today it’s the same thing. But we have to address it frankly, to address it in love with our partners. ... In churches that are part of the result of modern missionary activity, theological thinking is often linked up with financial aid. ... This is history is not far from many of us. Some ... would consider them wounds from missionary heritage, an example of neocolonialism. But these wounds must not cripple us, either as individual churches or as the Lutheran communion. The process of indigenization must involve [forgiveness]. We must together affirm our confidence in our global Lutheran communion, seeing it as a vital means for us all to participate fully in God’s holistic mission. I remind you of our mission strategy of LWF ... which emphasizes that mission is in accompaniment, and only in accompaniment.

For his part, Magesa also identifies reconciliation as a key theological concept for negotiating this tension, writing that a “theological recreation of history” should promote two recognitions: of the “identity and self-confidence of the African person as a child of God [and] the identity of other peoples as similarly graced” (Magesa 2004, 32)

Throughout the conference delegates emphasized the importance of working together, with other churches all over the world, and with other denominations and faiths.¹⁴³ But at the same time many delegates were giving a lot of emphasis to the importance of establishing their identity and theology as African churches, and as Lutheran churches. The discourses of needing independence and needing each other are constantly mutually negotiated and figured out – a process which itself is a fertile theological ground.

6.3. Practical theology

In this section, I will argue that theology is (also) what you *do*. I examine what *watumishi* are doing they they do theology, and its role in their lives; an examination that touches on prior discussions of hope, potential, figuring out, and pedagogy and how they are involved in modern applied theologies. I examine the difference between these theologies and formal ATR-based theologies such as Urio’s, even as they share a concern for spiritual heritage as Chagga people.

Whereas Urio’s theology was an example of a formal treatise, the theologies I examine here are informal, articulated orally in parishes, seminar halls, and boardrooms around the diocese. In many cases, they reflect globally circulating ideals of Christian social justice, *and* the daily realities of Tanzanian life as it appears in the work of pastors. Theology, then, is not *only* an intellectual discussion. In fact, as Mch. Ngalami told me directly, “Theology is what you do.” Of

¹⁴³ This was not an ecumenical conference as such, but there were discussions the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (Lutheran World Federation and Roman Catholic Church 2000) which, at least formally, resolved the dispute resulting in the 1517 Reformation; additionally a representative of PROCMURA, Program for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa, was giving workshops on interfaith ventures.

course, what pastors do is itself informed partly by the formal theologies they study in seminary. The daily work of *uchungaji* “pastorate”—teaching, visiting, counseling, and even administrative tasks—involves putting into practice understandings of what should be taught, to whom and by whom; and what a church is or should be. However, for most pastors, putting understanding into practice is *also* theology. In the next section I’ll discuss two particular examples of practical theology and what that looks like: First, theologies around social justice and rights, particularly how globalized ideals are articulated locally, and second (and in greater detail), contemporary environmental theology.

a) Social Justice

A phrase that I heard often in international Lutheran gatherings like the LWF conference, was that the church should have a “prophetic voice”.¹⁴⁴ They don’t mean prophetic in the sense of prescience, but rather in the sense of the Old Testament prophets who were critical of the political figures of the day; the kings who were unjust and not following God’s commandments. *Diakonia* or social work was also described by LWF personnel as prophetic. LWF President Munib Younan, in his keynote speech, said:

There is no doubt that we are called to a purpose of fundamentally changing the ... world. ... How can we ensure that the prophetic diakonia we seek to offer can transform hatred into love, animosity into friendship, violation of human rights into respect of all rights, poverty into equal opportunity, injustice for women into gender justice? This prophetic witness cannot be realized among Lutherans alone. We must work together with other churches and ecumenical bodies to realize God’s will of life abundant for every human being, wherever they are. This is our prophetic goal in our Lutheran communion today. ... This is the spirit of Marangu of 1955. ... As Lutherans we do not pretend to think that we can single-handedly transform the world. [But] we are called to a robust engagement with different expressions of worldly power, including governments and other systems that affect the lives of individuals and communities. Even if they are ... dictators, we have to raise our voice and not keep quiet, in order to ensure that the values we hold are implemented for the good of every human being.

¹⁴⁴ See [http://www.lutheranworld.org/search/node/“prophetic voice”](http://www.lutheranworld.org/search/node/“prophetic+voice”)

Younan presents two closely connected concepts of the church as a prophetic social institution. First, the church is to speak back to government, denouncing abuses of power that threaten the ideal of justice, itself understood theologically with a heavy reliance on the writings of the Old Testament prophets. Second, the work of *diakonia* is also described as prophetic. So the twin prophetic functions of the church are to say to the government “you are not doing this thing which you should do”, and actually doing that same thing (albeit on a more immediate individual level, rather than total social level). Younan’s comments on prophecy and *diakonia* were deeply influenced by accompaniment theology; elsewhere he speaks of accompanying the poor (Lutheran World Information 2013), and of Elijah the prophet “accompanying” the oppressed through his messages to King Ahab (Younan 2005, 26). His words no doubt influenced conference delegates, and may have been reproduced in their home places, but I suggest that his comments also *reflect* common concerns within many churches. Other speakers at the conference, active in areas including social welfare, women’s advocacy, and theological education voiced similar sentiments. This may reflect the trend that Magesa was identifying in 2004: That the perceived way forward for African theology is to mobilize history, and understand Christianity in terms of a historicized context. Thus, social justice comes to the forefront in inspiring theology. Africa, of course, is not the only continent that deals with poverty, food insecurity, violence, or corruption. But these have been part of Africa’s experience, and African theologians are grappling with how to figure them out.

Baba Askofu preached very many sermons about social justice. He has a different situation than most parish pastors, in that most weeks he is at a different parish. I attended 14 Sunday services with him, 4 at his “home” parish, the cathedral in Moshi, and 10 at other parishes. He does not have to worry about boring parishioners if he preaches on the same topic frequently. So,

it seems that social justice is what he wants to emphasize for the entire diocese, given that he preaches about it often. However, “social justice” is not a term which translates into Swahili. The term most often used is *haki*, and that makes for a good transition into my first example of practical theology, because *haki* also means “rights”.

b) Rights-based theological discourse

One morning Mch. Ngalami told me she and several other pastors were going to be meeting about the upcoming *unyumba* month. She invited me along, saying it would be good for my research. I hadn’t heard the term *unyumba* before, but knowing *nyumba* “house” I wondered what “houseness” might be. It actually means domesticity, family life, or just marriage in general. Every August, the diocese has an *unyumba*-themed study series. The task for this meeting was to design sermon guidelines for 5 successive sermons; these guidelines would be distributed to each parish to be used in sermon preparation. This year’s theme was *haki*, rights. *Haki* is an interesting term, in that it has three interrelated spheres of meaning: moral or ethical right, constitutional or human rights, and theological righteousness. These are not homonyms, but rather aspects of a broad meaning.

The pastors in this meeting identified two provenances for *haki*: some are granted by the state and some by God. Or as one pastor put it, some are in the constitution and some are in here (tapping a Bible lying on the table). The ones given by God, though, are more durable, because the constitution can be amended and the government can be corrupt, but God can’t. And the *haki* considered to be granted by God were quite broad; when brainstorming what *haki* a person had within his or her family, the following were listed:¹⁴⁵

- *Kupenda na kupendwa*

¹⁴⁵ These are from my fieldnotes, which I summarized and sent to Mch. Ngalami at her request; they saw that I was taking such thorough notes that they did not bother to take minutes themselves. So their guidelines were filtered through me, at least partly.

- *Kuheshimiwa*
 - *Kusikilizwa*
 - *Kushirikishwa*
 - *Kutunza watoto, na watoto kutunzwa*
 - *Kujua ndugu*
 - *Kuchukua mwenzi*
 - *Kufanya kazi*
 - *Watoto wana haki kulindwa, kuelekezwa kumpenda Mungu, kufundishwa juu ya imani yao*
-
- To love and be loved
 - To be respected
 - To be listened to
 - To be involved
 - To take care of children, and children to be taken care of
 - To know one's family
 - To take a spouse
 - To do work
 - Children have a right to be protected, to be led to love God, to be taught about their faith

Subsequently, the pastors devised discussion points (ideally, during this study series, the preacher would use a discussion style rather than a typical sermon). These included:

1. *Mambo gani yanajenga haya mazingira ya kuheshimiana, kufahamu na kutendeana haki?*
2. *Mnashirikishaje kila mtu kwenye familia?*
3. *Chanzo cha haki ya familia kiko wapi?*
4. *Ti watendeaje wamama single? Wana haki gani? Watoto wao je?*
5. *Wanandoa wana haki na wajibu gani kuwasiliana kuhusu mapato na matumizi ya fedha?*
6. *Mabadiliko ya utamaduni (k.m. kwenye biashara, kazi za shamba, mambo ya urithi) yanaleta changamoto na nafasi gani kwenye familia?*
7. *Vijana wanatendewaje ibadani?*

1. What things build an environment of mutual respect, understanding, and doing right by each other?¹⁴⁶
2. How do you involve each family member?
3. Where is the source of rights in the family?
4. How should we act towards single mothers? What rights do they have? What about their children?

¹⁴⁶ *Kutendeana haki* (which I have rendered “do right by each other”) is difficult to translate; it can be read in both a constitutional and theological sense of justice and right, which would be clear to the meeting members, of course, and not so separate as English speakers would think of it.

5. What are the rights and responsibilities of spouses to communicate about income and use of money?
6. What challenges and opportunities are presented by changes in culture (e.g. in business, agricultural work, and inheritance issues)?
7. How are youth treated in worship services?

Week 4 of the series was to be devoted to responsibilities, which were seen as inseparable from rights. They are particularly mentioned in point 5, and (along with point 6, changes in culture) is a particularly good example of applied theology, in that a theological understanding of rights is being applied to get parishioners to think about a specific issue in family life, especially in terms of its relation to ethnic heritage. Traditionally in Chagga society, husbands and wives did not necessarily have to know that much about each other, and there is still a much larger degree of spousal independence than you might find in Europe or North America. Spouses don't have to be soulmates, although that's not to say that love isn't important. It's uncommon for spouses to sit with together in church, as in most parishes the "men on the left, women on the right" model is loosely followed. I very rarely saw spouses socializing together. This is also reflected in the general attitude towards income – spouses don't need to know about the other's financial details. Mch. Kimori told me that this derives from the historical division of labour. "Most Chagga women do all the cooking, but you shouldn't think this is sexist," he told me. "In the old days, if a man tried to go in the kitchen and cook anything, his wife would call the elders, telling them, 'My husband is interfering in my business.' They would come to judge the issue and the husband would have to pay them beer in restitution. Same if he tried to take bananas to market, that is her job." Although things are diversifying these days, most people would agree that milk, eggs, and bananas are women's business, while meat and coffee are men's; and it's not generally necessary to keep the other informed.

However, at the *unyumba* studies meeting, the pastors present brought up a recent court case where one spouse had defaulted on a number of debts, and the family home had to be sold

in order to pay them. So they suggested discussing, what rights do spouses have to know about each other? They were not out to make a specific change; it is not listed in the “rights” section, but as a question for discussion. This highlights the role of potential within theology; given a certain understanding of rights, the pastors wanted to promote discussion on open-ended questions; discussions which would also be efforts at “figuring out”.

I point out that the rights (and responsibilities attached to them in the discussion) were explicitly understood theologically: when discussing where rights came from, divine source was considered more important, particularly in its permanency. Mch. Tilya said, as we were setting the agenda for the meeting, “I wouldn’t like to focus too much on the constitution. What if it’s taken away? The Bible is more important.”¹⁴⁷ When discussing rights, the pastors were careful to find scripture to justify their positions, including 1 Cor. 7:3,¹⁴⁸ Eph. 6:1–4,¹⁴⁹ and 1 Tim. 4:12,¹⁵⁰ The 1 Corinthians reading was interpreted as granting the right to love and to be loved (and the corollary, if your spouse has the right to be loved, you have a responsibility to love). Similarly the 1 Timothy reading; the youth’s responsibility to set an example in love is to give others their rights to be loved. This is another situation where social relationships (including *kutendeana haki*, to mutually do right by each other; and the resulting applications, e.g. in family finances) are worked out theologically, in a context which is informed by an understanding of spiritual heritage as Chagga people, and Christian teachings about who people are in relation to God.

¹⁴⁷ “*Nisingependa kukaza sana katiba. Ikiondolewa je? Biblia ni muhimu zaidi.*”

¹⁴⁸ “The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband.”

¹⁴⁹ “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother’ (this is the first commandment with a promise), ‘that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.’ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

¹⁵⁰ “Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.”

c) Environmental theology

Globally circulating theologies of the environment also become locally theologized in Tanzania. These theologies are often related to elements of social justice, in that climate change is linked in environmental theology to poverty, food insecurity, and loss of livelihood.

In the Northern Diocese, environmental discourse often focuses on trees and tree-planting schemes. Baba Askofu is the founder of the Lutheran Movement for the Environment in Africa, which prioritizes tree-planting. One of its schemes requires each confirmation student in the diocese to plant at least 10 trees. Many parishioners hear exhortations to “care for the environment” every Sunday in church, as clergy draw on environmental theologies. At the same time, environmental discourse reflects cultural concepts of domesticity and connection to the land, particularly trees – concepts which are grounded in contemporary understandings of Chagga spiritual heritage, as I have demonstrated in Chapter 1.5. Environmental discourses also reflect contemporary political issues, including household energy consumption, the engagement between church and government, and locally understood ideas of modernity and development. Here, I discuss how environmental theologies reflect cultural understandings of domesticity, land, and order; contemporary political debates; and moral understandings of spiritual heritage.

Moral Dimensions: Environmental theologies and spiritual heritage

Care for the environment, including planting trees, is often rationalized theologically as a Christian obligation. I discuss this further by examining two sermons.

March 1, 2015, was *Siku ya Mazingira*, “Environment Day”.¹⁵¹ I was at Wona Parish, where the seminary intern, Rafaeli, was preaching. He started with the reading for the day, Nehemiah 9:6:

¹⁵¹ I use *mazingira* (from *-zingira* “surround, envelop”) often, since I discuss several of its connotations which are broader than “environment” in English.

Ezra akasema, Wewe ndiwe BWANA, wewe peke yako; wewe ulifanya mbingu, mbingu za mbingu, pamoja na jeshi lake lote, dunia na vyote vilivyomo, bahari na vitu vyote vilivyomo, nawe unavihifadhi vitu hivi vyote, na jeshi la mbinguni lakusujudu wewe.

Ezra said: You are the Lord, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and you preserve all of them; and the host of heaven worships you.

Rafaeli continued:

In the Nehemiah reading, Ezra wanted to remind Israel that God created everything. They had sinned and needed to repent and be reminded. It's that same time for us now. We are reminded to take care of the *mazingira*, because otherwise we can't even live. Quit cutting trees. We've sinned against God, and now the coffee has finished. Everyone should plant trees. We're thankful to Mch. Kimori for how he's arranged the *mazingira*¹⁵² here. Why should we dry up? The ozone layer has gone because of smoke. People have skin cancer. Why? Because we haven't taking care of the *mazingira*.¹⁵³

Rafaeli was doing some spontaneous reinterpretation of the Nehemiah passage, in which the Israelites, recently returned from exile in Babylon, had declared a day of repentance. The priests read a national history; verse 6 is the first part, and it goes on to describe God's promise to Abraham, slavery and exodus from Egypt, wandering in the desert, etc. Nehemiah emphasizes Israel's repeated disobedience and God's blamelessness, and how this episode is another instance of asking forgiveness. The Israelites were not repenting for neglecting creation, but for disregarding God's commandments, which they were obligated to obey by virtue of God having created everything. Rafaeli's sermon collapses this into one step; the *mazingira* become not only a justification for obedience, but a direct arena where obedience to God is expected.

Care for the environment is also put forward as an act of love. At all Sunday services, the leader reads either the Ten Commandments, or the shorter version with only two: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind; and you

¹⁵² This usage includes the parish landscaping as well as the trees being a contribution to the environment as a whole.

¹⁵³ This quote is a composite. Rafaeli is a very dynamic preacher, jumping around, doing gestures, funny voices and onomatopoeia noises, interrupting himself with little wisecracks. It would be impossible to transcribe.

shall love your neighbor as yourself.”¹⁵⁴ At a Sunday service in Sagana Parish, district head Mch. Marenga brought up these two commandments again in his sermon, and said, “Today I would add a third: ‘Love your *mazingira*, care for it and protect it.’ This is God’s commandment since the beginning. If you love the *mazingira*, you won’t drop litter or cut trees haphazardly.”¹⁵⁵ Again, care for the environment is put on an equal footing with the very foundational tenets.

Discussions of tree-planting were actually where I began to get a sense of the action-oriented theology I have been describing. When I asked Mch. Ngalami, the head of the women’s department, if I could accompany her on parish visits, she asked why. I said I wanted to understand local theologies, and she cut me off: “That’s a big question. Theology is what you do – it’s not just your understanding of God; that is actually a pretty small question. But how do you respond? If I plant trees because of my understanding of God’s creation, that’s theology.”

This became a frequent theme. If I were to ask a pastor to describe “theology in action”, planting trees would be the number one example, and ceremonial tree-plantings are part of many diocese events. Pastors often discuss their work using agricultural metaphors; what they do is *kufanya kazi katika shamba la Bwana*, working in God’s farm. The concepts of faith in God, and of doing the work of God, are experienced as being rooted in the earth. Attitudes towards trees are influenced by a perceived Chagga heritage of connection to the land in remembrance and reverence, as we have already seen in Chapter 1.5 when Baba Askofu was outraged at the trees having been cut down at Mwika, or in the descriptions of Chagga cosmology, ancestor veneration, and life-cycle rituals where trees play an important part. By taking the environmental

¹⁵⁴ “*Mpende Bwana Mungu wako kwa moyo wako wote, na kwa roho yako yote, na kwa akili zako zote; na Mpende jirani yako kama nafsi yako.*”

¹⁵⁵ “*Leo nikaongeze ya tatu: Yapende mazingira yako, kuyatunza na kuyalinda. Ni amri ya Mungu toka mwanzo. Ukiyapenda mazingira, hutatupa taka wala kukata miti hovyoy.*”

discourse of preserving and planting trees, and attaching it to Christian concerns for creation, and to ideals of Chagga spiritual heritage, religious leaders imbue it with a moral aspect.

Cultural Dimensions: Identity as Chagga people

The importance of trees is connected to concepts of the household and the maintenance of order, both of which are essential to Chagga cosmology, and understandings of “the environment”. Most Chagga households are surrounded by trees, of which I describe three.¹⁵⁶ The first is the banana, of which there are dozens of varieties. Bananas are the staple of the Chagga diet, and traditionally figured prominently in life-cycle rituals (Hasu 1999, 472ff) and religious symbolism (Moore and Puritt 1977, 51). Bananas are also used for brewing *mbege*, the local beer. Traditionally, social life without *mbege* was impossible; it was a crucial part of most life-cycle rituals. Although connotations around its consumption have changed, drinking *mbege* is still a common social and ceremonial event; and although beans, maize, and rice have also become staples, bananas are still the archetype of food.

Second is coffee. Tanzania is Africa’s fourth largest producer of coffee. Kilimanjaro region, where coffee was introduced in the 1920s, accounts for an estimated three fourths of Tanzania’s production, and about two thirds of that is intercropped with bananas on smallholdings (African Fine Coffees Association n.d.; Tanzania Coffee Board n.d.). Although coffee doesn’t provide a living to most people on its own, it is a common part of smallholders’ strategies. In my experience, a large majority of rural Chagga people grow coffee and bananas together.

Finally, the dracaena (*isale*). Kyomo, a Chagga pastor, writes:

If two people ... have any ... disagreement, the “*isale*” leaf is used in reconciliation and peacemaking. Being aware of one’s guilt, one looks for an “*isale*” leaf. He ... picks it up and ... rushes to his partner whom he has offended. This genuine and contrite repentance will not be ignored. (2003, 101)

¹⁵⁶ These descriptions are not complete; entire dissertations could be and have been written on the social significance of each plant, and in this short section I am only able to mention a couple highlights.

This reconciliation, according to Kyomo, is analogous to that done by Jesus between man and God; and although actually bringing an *isale* leaf to someone you have quarreled with is now rare, it is remembered as an important symbol of reconciliation. *Isale* is also hedge plant; it is exceedingly common to see as the border between properties. When a property is subdivided, the clan elders come to place the *isale*, indicating its relevance to the larger social order and not just the immediate family. In both cases, reconciliation and marking borders, *isale* does the work of delineating proper social spaces (Sheridan 2008, 495).

Between these three trees, found on almost all smallholdings, you can see all aspects of life: sustenance (physical and otherwise) from bananas, cash from coffee, and the maintenance of social ties from *isale*.

Environmental discourse reflects concepts of domesticity, since *mazingira* also includes the home. Most mountain smallholdings contain a house, domestic animals, the banana grove, and a vegetable garden, which are all kept tidy. Walkways, paved or dirt, are swept every day. These are part of *mazingira* – it means most simply “surroundings”, so one of its strongest connotations is to surroundings at home – the house and its gardens, groves, hedges, and pathways. Thus the concept of *mazingira* is broader than the modern Western concept of “environment”, including the ordinary and everyday. This was obvious from the first week of my research, at the Sunday School teachers’ seminar put on by Next Generation. When participants were asked to list important things that contributed to their relationship with God, and daily busy–work, “caring for the environment” was suggested under both columns.

The value of proper order (as we have seen in discussions of Chagga cosmology and relationships in Sections 2.1.a and 4.1.b above) can also be expanded to abstract connotations of

mazingira as a context or a situation. Appropriate behavior and good *mazingira* build on each other, as I illustrate with three anecdotes.

At the meeting described in Chapter 6.3.b above, where pastors were preparing the study series on rights, the discussion included references to the environment at home. One pastor commented, “[We should] enable families to build a context at home which is respectful. ... If you just make demands, you’ll have conflict and confusion.”¹⁵⁷ The others agreed, and added this to the list of discussion questions: “What are things that build a *mazingira* of mutual respect, of understanding and upholding rights?”¹⁵⁸ The correct *mazingira* is necessary for people to have rights within the household; conversely, one must act well to build the *mazingira*.

The following day, diocese office employees gathered for some team–building activities, including a presentation on responsibilities and expectations. The presenter gave a few characteristics of a good leader, including: “He should take care of the *mazingira* of the office – to throw out trash appropriately, to dress appropriately, etc.”¹⁵⁹ To take care of the *mazingira* is not just to do with climate change, but also with good order and bodily comportment.

I attended a seminar for Parish Workers, who are in charge of (among other things) the *mazingira* of the parish, particularly the accoutrements of worship: Clerical robes, altar linens, candles, etc. They must cultivate *uchaji*, “reverence” in worship. One participant described some of her responsibilities: To be “an advisor on cleanliness, starting with the altar and the *mazingira* as a whole.”¹⁶⁰ The seminar leader agreed: “Reverence depends on the Parish Worker. ... You shouldn’t throw flowers randomly, nor let the candles get messy. It ruins the reverence. ... If I

¹⁵⁷ “*Kuwezesha familia kujenga mukhtada ya nyumba yenye heshima. Haki ya kuheshimiwa. If you demand from others una ugomvi, una zogo.*”

¹⁵⁸ “*Mambo gani yanajenga haya mazingira ya kuheshimiana, kufahamu na kutendeanana haki?*”

¹⁵⁹ “*Atunze mazingira ya ofisi kuu – kutupa taka ipasavyo, kuva ipasavyo, na kadhalika.*”

¹⁶⁰ “*mshauri wa ... usafi ikianzia na madhabahu na mazingira ya ujumla*”

see the altar all disorderly, my mood of reverence ends.”¹⁶¹ The Parish Worker’s job of tending to the *mazingira* allows for the proper disposition in worship.

Political Dimensions: Regional and national debates

In 2015, the Tanzania Environmental Action Association announced plans to plant 300,000 trees around Mt. Kilimanjaro (Matowo 2015), supporting the efforts of the Regional Commissioner. Environmental discourse in the diocese occurs within a political context which reflects debates on household energy consumption, engagement between church and government, and ideals of modernity and development.

In environmental discourse, reforestation takes a much greater priority over issues such as emissions. Carbon emissions are a large part of environmental discourse globally, but they don’t have much prominence in Tanzania, which is far down the list of global emitters. Instead, environmental discourse is oriented to what is happening on or in the ground, especially since most of the population engages in subsistence agriculture. Even discussion of what circulates in the air returns to the forest and domestic sphere: *Moshi*, smoke, is understood in relation to firewood; while carbon dioxide is known as *hewa mkaa*, “charcoal air”.

Household energy consumption is a major topic, particularly the use of firewood and charcoal for cooking as opposed to gas.¹⁶² Gas cookers are widely available; some diocese properties also produce biogas from the cattle pen. Still, according to the 2012 census, 79.8% of Kilimanjaro region households use firewood for their primary cooking fuel, and 10.9% use charcoal.¹⁶³ At all parishes I visited, the daily cooking for parish staff and occasional cooking for celebrations was done with firewood. Public opinion is that this is due to *uchumi*, “economics.”

¹⁶¹ “*Inategemea PW, na madhabahu ipendeze – usitupe maua ovyo, wala usivuruge mishumaa. Inaharibu uchaji. ... Nikiona madhabahu ovyo, uchaji wangu unaishaga.*”

¹⁶² Not once did I see electricity used for household cooking.

¹⁶³ National figures are 68.5% and 25.7% respectively; see <http://dataforall.org/dashboard/tanzania/#Environment>

Firewood is free when gathered from groundfall, and charcoal is cheaper than gas by nearly half. These debates get plenty of attention in the media, where charcoal-related deforestation is frequently criticized in opinion columns (e.g. Dausen 2015). At the local level the need for household fuel contributes to the emphasis on tree-planting, both large-scale formal schemes and small-scale planting at parishes, schools, and homes. A common saying is *Kata miti, panda miti* – “cut a tree, plant trees”, emphasizing that planting should be above replacement level. The salience of household fuel in environmental discourse also highlights the connection between *mazingira* and the domestic sphere.

The church provides an arena for engagement with government, as politicians are often invited to large celebrations. Regional Commissioner Leonidas Gama spoke at the retirement service for outgoing bishop Martin Shao in 2015, saying:

Shao has worked so everyone has one goal especially with respect to the environment, having emphasized the importance of trees. It's our job as Chagga people – forests and trees are sacred places. . . . The climate has changed, behavior has changed. But Shao has been trying to improve things, and this involvement will be his legacy.

At the service to install Baba Askofu as ELCT Presiding Bishop in January 2016, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa Majaliwa congratulated the church, on behalf of president John Magufuli, for its contribution to national development, particularly in “caring for the environment”. More recently, at a building dedication, Freeman Mbowe, the chairman of the opposition party CHADEMA, criticized the government for sacking public employees too hastily. Baba Askofu did not reply to Mbowe's complaints; he discussed trees. I suspect this was intentional, since he knew that journalists were present, and indeed the *Mwananchi* paper reported the next day:

Askofu Shoo alisema tafiti mbalimbali na zinaonyesha ukataji wa misitu umesababisha uharibifu mkubwa hivyo ni vyema Serikali ikachukua hatua za haraka ili kuokoa kizazi kijacho.

Aliwataka wananchi kuchukua hatua za haraka kutunza mazingira hususan miti ya asili ambayo inaweza kusaidia kurudisha uoto wa asili ambao tayari umeharibiwa baadhi ya maeneo.

Bishop Shoo said that various research has shown that cutting down forest has caused great damage; thus it is good for the Government to take steps quickly to save the next generation.

He requested citizens to take rapid steps to care for the environment, especially native trees, which can help to return indigenous vegetation which has already been destroyed in places. (Lyimo 2016)

The Lutheran Church worldwide considers part of its job to be holding governments to account for their treatment of the poor, including those disproportionately affected by climate change. In the ELCT, this has meant that at times, the pulpit becomes a public arena for engagement between church and state on environmental policies.

I conclude with a quotation from Baba Askofu, speaking at the 2015 Summit of Conscience for the Climate in Paris, and I hope it will illustrate the interconnected moral, cultural, and political aspects I've been discussing.

Mt. Kilimanjaro is the highest point in Africa, and of course one of the majestic mountains of the world. I grew up there. And I've been engaging myself in reforestation of Kilimanjaro, and I've mobilized my community ... to plant as many trees as we can. ... In my sermons, I use a story or a saying, ... "*Ewe itondo, ata mu'ro mmba iye.*" It simply means, translated, "You fools. Keep on playing with that fire, until the hut, the whole hut, burns down." Dear friends, the world we are living in is like a huge hut, African hut, and God has placed us, each one of us in his or her respective place. But we have invented a game, a fire, a game of fire, which we call "market". Keep growing, continue to exploit the nature as much as you can. Consume and have more and more. At the end of the day, my dear brothers and sisters, the hut, our common home, is going to burn down. ... Why do we care? I care because I know I have a moral and religious responsibility to take care of our common home, the hut.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁴ This is a transcription of an edited clip I showed when I presented this section at an RAI conference; the unabridged speech is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ng5PvkPils8>

The speech was expressly political; the summit was staged as a precursor to the Paris Summit in 2015 and was attended by French President François Hollande. Baba Askofu seized the opportunity to attack neoliberal politics; he frames his efforts as a specifically moral and religious duty, and the conceptual importance of “home” is obvious. The Chagga cosmological value of proper order is also there, though he doesn’t draw it out explicitly: a more literal translation of his Kimashami proverb might be, “Hey idiot, light a fire so the house burns down.” In Chagga traditional homes, though, it was not only idiots who lit a fire inside. The woman of the house lit her cooking fire every day, in the middle of a small thatched hut (see Figure 13).



Figure 13: Traditional Chagga house. Photo by Tanzania-Experience, 2008.

In order to keep the house from burning down, she must maintain the proper order, and keep the fire in its place.

Environmental theology does include concerns for climate change, but it goes beyond this, including the ways that people understand how their homes and social and cosmological worlds are ordered. Theologizing as a way of “figuring out” how to understand and respond to environmental (and other) concerns both informs and is informed by moral, cultural, and political currents.

I have presented two paradigms of African theology in this chapter, and in conclusion I will offer an initial comparison. I have interpreted environmental and rights-based theologies here as efforts to “figure out” new situations, in ways which are informed by globally circulating ideas of Christian concern for the environment and social welfare. Though I hesitate to offer any concrete basis for which to evaluate comparatively these 21st century theologies against the ATR-based theologies of the 1970s and 1980s, such as Urio’s, perhaps I may speculate that the latter proceeded from a motivation of independence as against former colonial and missionary powers which manifested itself in a concern for ATR; while many of the theologies I saw being developed in sermons, board meetings, and seminars proceeded from a motivation of correctly balanced interdependence with other Christians (who are just as likely to be considered dear friends and partners as neo-colonialists), which manifested itself in a concern for social justice and welfare. I do not think that today’s theologians would find their earlier counterparts to be misguided (and often, they are the same people anyway). I shared Urio’s thesis with a few of my pastor friends, and while they enjoyed reading it and found it engaging, they did not really feel it was workable in practice. One commented that Urio’s theological efforts were possibly too little too late; one can try to theologize Chagga ancestor veneration, but it will not undo a hundred

years of being told it is wrong. Perhaps, in the end, it was simply Urio's misfortune to be writing just before a shift in focus for African theology.

Conclusion to Part 2

Though Part II has discussed a broad range of topics, I believe it will have begun to convey some of the breadth of forms theology takes, places it is invoked, and goals it is mobilized toward. I began by asking, how can anthropology engage theology? In the simplest way, this is what I have done by examining theology and theologizing as anthropologists have done for many other areas of the human experience: through close ethnographic observation, paying attention to how theology reflects and influences the lifeworlds of my research participants. Through ethnographic attention to both formal and informal (though, in all cases, intellectual) discussions of theology and theological concepts, I have shown some of the ways in which theology forms an essential part of human life and religious practice, and a way of figuring out, through “difficult collective deliberations” (Varenne 2007), new situations which are encountered therein.

As Fountain (2013, 323) argues, anthropology must seek continued vitality and vibrancy, aspiring to more than mere observation or critique. In Part 2, I have drawn out some of the theological concepts and models my interlocutors are concerned with (particularly hope, friendship, and theological-pedagogical methods), and identified therein ways for anthropology to move forward as a reflexive, critical, and engaged discipline. As anthropology and theology both move forward in *potentiality* (relying not simply on descriptive or normative functions, respectively), new possibilities are opened up for theoretical, methodological, and epistemological research.

Part Three: Mission in Context

Chapter 7: Colonial missions

In this chapter, I describe the history of missionary work in Northern Tanzania prior to national and ecclesiastical independence. I discuss the debates around independence, how they were brought up within church and mission contexts, and how they were negotiated by different mission actors. I also compare German and American mission philosophies and methodologies, arguing that the transition during the Second World War represented not just a change in administration, but a paradigm shift in mission methodology.

7.1. German mission

In this section, I describe German missionaries' approach to mission, including their activities, methodologies, and philosophies. I explore how the interaction between missionaries and indigenous leaders involved a number of complex political maneuvers between chiefs, colonialists, missionaries, and new church leaders.

a) Establishment of missions

The first missionaries in the Kilimanjaro area were working for the Church Missionary Society, a Church of England (Anglican) organization, although they themselves were German. These were Johannes Rebmann and Johann Ludwig Krapf, who started missionary and exploration work in East Africa in 1846. Rebmann is often cited as the first European to see Mt. Kilimanjaro, in 1848. News of a snow-capped peak nearly right on the equator was received with no small amount of incredulity. Upon the division of African colonies at the Berlin Conference of 1884-5, most of what is now Tanzania was incorporated into German East Africa¹⁶⁵ and administered by an imperial charter granted to Karl Peters' Society for German Colonization. By

¹⁶⁵ The territory included modern-day Rwanda and Burundi, but not Zanzibar.

1891, German rule in the Kilimanjaro region had been consolidated, and CMS missionaries were suspected of sympathizing with Chagga chiefs (particularly Sina and Rindi) in their resistance to German rule. CMS personnel were therefore asked to leave, giving the Leipzig Mission Society a monopoly on Protestant mission (Stahl 1964, 268). Leipzig's mission territory included large parts of what is now Arusha and Kilimanjaro regions. The first expedition arrived in 1893, and they decided to locate their headquarters at Machame. That was indeed the first mission station, at what is now Nkwarungo Parish, the third largest in the diocese. A second station was soon established in the Mamba chiefdom, at what is now Ashira Parish. It is said that the missionaries asked Koimbere, chief of Mamba for some land, and he saw a benefit in their presence, although he was still suspicious. Thus he gave them Ashira, a poor location on several counts. It was very close to the border of Marangu chiefdom, and far from his own court. Furthermore it was considered to be uninhabited only by spirits and wild animals, drawn by the dead bodies there: Ashira was the place where the bodies of those who had died childless were thrown into the bush (see description of Chagga religion in Chapter 2.1.a). In fact, the name "Ashira" has to do with the stench of death. The chief also sent several boys along with the missionaries to work for them, although he did not expect to see them again since there were rumors that the Germans were cannibals (Hasu 1999, 130).

The immediate orders of business at the stations were to establish schools and attract confirmation students who would eventually be baptized and confirmed (Hasu 1999, 143ff). Hospitals were also an early goal; in addition to the "missionaries" (i.e. the German pastors) there were numerous women working there also, as teachers and nurses. Eventually each mission station also had a parish church, pastored by the resident German missionary. No African pastors were ordained until the 1930s, but promising new converts were made into catechists (now

known as *wainjilisti*, evangelists) who would take on the task of traveling to outlying areas to teach classes there. This pattern is still basically how many diocese parishes are run: pastor(s) oversee the central parish and its congregation, while evangelists are in charge of outlying *mitaa* (sing. *mtaa*), “neighborhoods”. By 1910, mission stations and parishes were established at Machame, Kidia in Old Moshi¹⁶⁶, Mwika, Masama, and Siha. Many of those parishes are still large and influential within the diocese today, particularly Kidia due to the influence of Bruno Gutmann, who was stationed there. By the end of World War II there were nine parishes.¹⁶⁷

b) German mission philosophy and methodology

Fiedler (1996, 10) argues that the Leipzigers were profoundly influenced by German Romanticism, particularly Bruno Gutmann, who arrived at Mamba Station in 1902, and at other points in his career was posted to Machame, Masama (which he was tasked with establishing, in 1906), and Kidia (from 1910 until the end of his career). In this section, I will give a background on German Romanticism and describe its influence on the Leipzig missionaries: the resulting theologies and methodologies which they implemented in Kilimanjaro, their understandings of Chagga culture, and interactions between them and new converts and church leaders.

German romanticism

Fiedler locates the main distinctiveness of the Leipzig Mission in Kilimanjaro in German Romanticism. Against the Enlightenment, Romanticism

rediscovered the non-rational dimension of life, thus making room for an appreciation of both metaphysics and feeling. The fact that the historical process was also seen in a positive light meant that social differentiation could be accepted, and tradition could be viewed as a means of transmitting the values of past generations. It also encouraged a careful appreciation of the richness of different cultural heritages. (Fiedler 1996, 12)

¹⁶⁶ That is, not the town “New Moshi” (which is today just Moshi), but the old chiefdom of Moshi.

¹⁶⁷ Not including seven in areas that are now part of different dioceses.

The concept of *Volk* was a major element within German romanticism, and had a massive impact on how the Leipzig Missionaries carried out their work in Kilimanjaro. Before Romanticism *Volk* was an epithet denoting the uneducated rural class; Romanticism gave it an inverted prestige associated with authenticity. *Volk* was thus imagined as a “living organism comprising all individualities within a nation” and “the result of a historical process” which unites “the present generation with those long since dead and those still to be born in a metaphysical unity” (Fiedler 1996, 14) – a statement very similar to Urio’s (Urio 1990, 21) description of the Chagga religion and life-cycle memory.

Johann Gottfried Herder, an influential Romantic, believed that every *Volk* had a history, a heritage, and an identity which—rather than individuals—was the “driving force behind history” (Fiedler 1996, 15); that language was the clearest manifestation of the character and common identity of a *Volk*; and that every language shared some qualities of the divine Word, the *Logos*. Schleiermacher, who by the early 19th century had become a leading Romantic thinker, held a similar position: as Herder saw language as sharing qualities of the Divine Word, Schleiermacher saw *Völker* as part of the *imago dei*, image of God. In other words, “parts of the ongoing historical process were identified as divine creation” (Fiedler 1996, 17). Romantic philosophy declined in Germany in the 1820s, until a series of unsuccessful revolutions in 1848. The Industrial Revolution “evoked a wave of nostalgic feeling for the innocent rural society lost but a generation or two ago” (Fiedler 1996, 18), and Romanticism was back, more pessimistic than ever. Two specific movements, the Village Church Movement (*Dorfkirchenbewegung*) and German Youth Movement (*Jugendbewegung*) were influential; they regarded the changes brought on by industrialization as disruptive to village life, and intended to counterbalance (Fiedler 1996, 20).

Volk as mobilized in mission

The philosophical concept of *Volk* played a major role in the Leipzig Mission, in two ways. First, individual missionaries like Gutmann had absorbed Romantic philosophy, and generally conceived of the cultural identity of every tribe as a divine gift. Gutmann particularly adopted Schleiermacher's version of "historical process as divine creation" in his theological conception of "primal ties" (*Urtümliche Bindungen*). He was somewhat unique in this view, even compared to other Leipzig missionaries:

[In Chagga historian] Lema's analysis, the factor in missionary work most disruptive to Chagga social order was the missionaries' emphasis on individual responsibility and achievement. Contrary to this view, Gutmann did not see man as an isolated individual but as organically bound to a community. He wanted to implant Christianity firmly into society and not to uproot individuals from it. (Fiedler 1996, 28)

This did not exclude the individual's conversion, but once a person was converted, he was duty bound to serve those to whom he was related by what Gutmann called 'primal ties'. There were three of them, clan, neighborhood, and age group, or expressed with other words, solidarity based on blood relationship, territorial proximity and proximity of age. Conversion to Christianity would therefore not sever the ties to the convert's community. To the contrary, it would strengthen them (Fiedler 1996, 28).

Because Gutmann considered that man was created as a member of a community, the "primal ties" were understood theologically as part of the doctrine of man being created in the image of God – so Chagga people living in their primal state of creation with their primal ties, is itself the image of God (Fiedler 1996, 29). Subsequent aspects of Chagga culture that Gutmann saw as based in those primal ties, and thus worthy of the full support of the church, included the political structure and chiefly authority, folklore, and transition rites including circumcision (for

both boys and girls) and, most important, the teachings that went along with it. (Fiedler 1996, 30).

Second and more directly, the concept of Volk had been consciously introduced to missiology (Fiedler 1996, 20). Karl Graul, who became director of the Leipzig Mission, regarded that the ultimate aim of missionary work was the establishment of a *Volkskirche*, “folk-church” (Fiedler 1996, 13). This was a departure from other Protestant missionary work, which was influenced by Pietism and stressed the conversion of individuals and a separation between the church and the world (cf. Beidelman 1982). Instead, the *Volkskirche* was supposed to represent the whole *Volk*, relating positively to a people’s cultural identity. Establishing a folk-church thus meant in practice that the demands upon converts can’t be difficult, since they want as many of them as possible; and that “traditional social order” had to be accepted as basically good (Fiedler 1996, 25).

One theological concept with particular traction in the Leipzig Mission was *adiaphora* (sing. *adiaphoron*, Greek “things in the middle”). This referred to morally neutral issues; Leipzig missionaries considered *adiaphora* to be mainly civil matters about which regulations shouldn’t be made, including circumcision, beer drinking, and bridewealth. However there was a downside, as Fiedler (Fiedler 1996, 24) points out: “Whereas in traditional Chagga society circumcision had been a religious rite as well as a civil affair, the mission divested it, by definition, of its religious qualities.”

Gutmann’s theological approaches were seen as quite innovative, and he is well remembered among diocese pastors today (see Shao 1990). However, it did lead to controversies, perhaps most notably the circumcision controversy. According to Fiedler (1996, 76ff), the initial debate arose not between Germans and Chagga people, but between progressive and traditional

factions of the nascent Chagga church. While German missionaries were repatriated in 1920, several congregations banned circumcision, and at the 1923 annual meeting circumcision was abolished entirely, indigenous church leaders being of the view that the Bible forbade it. Fiedler (1996, 79) suggests that congregants went along, but under duress; they felt that church leaders were putting their own opinions above the Bible. Some congregants refused to obey the ban, and were permanently put outside the *kundi*. Gutmann, upon his return in 1925, immediately sided with the congregants. His concept of *Volk* meant that the ordinary people were to be considered the foundational unit, and therefore he put his considerable support behind what he felt was a “silent majority of parishioners” and against the elected local church leaders. The ban was reversed in late 1925, though leaders such as Filipo Njau still resisted by failing to inform his congregation of the decision. He was sent to the Teacher Training school in Marangu, thus removing him from direct competition with the missionaries.

Circumcision was a limit case between Gutmann’s theological idea of *Volk* and the concept of *adiaphora*. The first idea produced a set of things which he felt the church had to support, as they were part of divine creation; the second, a set of things which the church could not oppose. Circumcision teachings, for Gutmann, were in the first category, and the physical operation in the second. In the actual debate, he ended up appearing to most parishioners to support both. Besides concepts that had to be supported as part of the Chagga *Volk* identity, and *adiaphora* that could not be opposed, Leipzigers also conceived of a number of practices that *did* have to be opposed as incompatible with Christianity. These included polygamy,¹⁶⁸ animal sacrifice, and divination.

¹⁶⁸ Not all German missionaries thought so; the Moravian missionary Bachmann in southern Tanzania pushed back against anti-polygamy policies as much as he possibly could (Fiedler 1996, 56ff).

There does not appear to have been a significant independent church movement as a result of these controversies, similar to Githeiya's (1999) description of the Arathi in Kenya: when a translation of the Bible was made available in the local language, new Christians started perceiving that not only were missionaries not doing things that were commanded (keeping Kosher for example), they were also doing things that were forbidden. So they felt that they needed to correct the Christianity that the missionaries brought back to its original state. By contrast, in the new Chagga churches, the progressives who disagreed with the missionaries and wanted to keep a stricter standard stayed firmly within the Lutheran church and fought for control there.

c) German mission during inter-war period

The First World War brought numerous changes to mission in Kilimanjaro, most notably debates around governance arising from the shifting locus of control during and after the war. Although German East Africa was controlled by the British starting from 1916, British missionaries did not establish a presence in Kilimanjaro, and the period of German mission continued until 1940, though not without interruptions, complications, and the addition of new actors under the auspices of the American Augustana Synod. Smedjebacka (1973, 40f) describes the situation around the Leipzig Mission during WW1 as such: It had been thought that in the event of hostilities in Europe, the "Congo Act" would apply to African territories to prevent them being drawn into a European war, but they soon realized this was not to be the case. In 1916, the British army occupied Northern Tanzania, including some of the Leipzig mission stations. As such, the Leipzigers' freedom of movement was restricted. In August 1920 the Leipzig missionaries were deported, and in October, the British Mandate Administration ruled that mission work could not be carried out by ex-enemies, and that missionaries repatriated to

Germany could not return until further notice. This had evidently come as a surprise, since even though their work was restricted from 1916, the Leipzigers apparently did not take any steps to prepare for their absence (Smedjebacka 1973, 41).

In 1920, the Leipzig mission area around Kilimanjaro had 90 houses of worship (including *mitaa*), 5,700 members, an average total Sunday attendance of 10,000, and one ordained pastor – the Estonian Rev. Leonard Blumer, who as a non-German had been allowed to remain.

Leadership tasks that had been previously done entirely by Leipzigers were taken on by local leaders (including Solomon Nkya, and Benyamin and Ruben Moshi)¹⁶⁹, though none of them were ordained. Smedjebacka writes that “they were well suited for their new functions” and that they even began arranging evangelistic campaigns in neighboring areas. However, Leipzig considered it too risky to leave them without foreign missionaries (Smedjebacka 1973, 41–42), and they applied for assistance from the National Lutheran Council in America. In an agreement that came into force 20 June 1922, the Augustana Synod (an American Lutheran church which eventually merged into the ELCA) agreed to take over the work in Tanzania.

Assistance from Augustana Synod

Augustana missionaries began arriving in late 1922 (Smedjebacka 1973, 42). After less than three years of local governance for the Kilimanjaro parishes, all of the day-to-day tasks were once more taken over by foreign missionaries. In 1924 German missionaries were permitted to return to Tanzania, occasioning further negotiation between Leipzig and Augustana. At a meeting in London, they agreed to divide up the work in Northern Tanzania, and Bruno Gutmann and Johannes Raum returned in 1925. However, the London agreement was a problem; on one hand, local leaders from Chagga, Pare, Meru, and Maasai backgrounds had become used

¹⁶⁹ Smedjebacka does not point this out, but the latter was almost certainly Stefano Moshi’s father; his middle name was Ruben and it is known that his father was one of the first converts.

to working together, but on the other, the agreement would have essentially divided up the Chagga people (Smedjebacka 1973, 43). Furthermore there was concern about a religious split, because the German and American missionaries “represented divergent directions of piety” (Smedjebacka 1973, 43). The Americans belonged to a pietistic tradition originating in an evangelical revival in Sweden in the 1800s, emphasizing individual conversion, personal belief, and revised Christian conduct. This was in stark contrast to the German romantic-conservative approach described above. The London agreement was cancelled in 1926.

Interwar German activities and growing independence movement

Discussions around self-governance were raised several times after the return of the Leipzigers, with three thrusts: an independent Church separate from Leipzig Mission, questions of leadership and specifically episcopal polity, and increased leadership roles for Tanzanian people. These were influenced by political changes under the British administration, which promoted “local government” and the employment of traditional political leaders as administrators (Smedjebacka 1973, 44) – a move that the Leipzigers did not always agree with (Moshi 2016, 900).

Part of the general vision of the Leipzig Mission was the “creation of an autonomous Church, with its own pastorhood and own constitution” (Smedjebacka 1973, 45). Here I must point out the difference between “Mission” and “Church”; the capitalized “Church” refers to a discrete organizational entity.¹⁷⁰ Of course, creation of an autonomous Church doesn’t necessarily mean “governed by Tanzanians”, it just means incorporated separately from the Leipzig Mission, regardless of who was in charge of it. The ELCNT (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Northern Tanganyika) was incorporated in 1928, and “Congregational Rules” laid out,

¹⁷⁰ In Christian discourse, a capitalized “Church” can also refer to a universal body of all Christians past, present, and future. In my usage I refer to the organization unless context demands otherwise.

but as it was determined not to have “come of age”, it was still subordinate to the Board of the Leipzig Mission.

The Congregational Rules *did* fuel further discussion on indigenizing leadership, since they referred to church discipline, congregational councils, etc. It had become obvious that teachers and evangelists could not do everything, and African pastors had to be trained. This sparked the development of the first theological training course in 1933, whose graduates would be ordained the following year. That accomplished, they technically had the same powers as the missionaries did, including the administration of sacraments (Smedjebacka 1973, 47–49).

The desire for autonomy was not restricted to Kilimanjaro. The first Tanzanian Lutheran pastor to be ordained, in 1929,¹⁷¹ was Andrea Kajerero, of what is now Karagwe diocese (Iliffe 1979, 260), in 1929. Kalugila credits Kajerero with raising the issue of *uaskofu*¹⁷², episcopacy, at the 1929 *Mkutano wa Kanisa la Misioni* “Mission Church Meeting” in Bukoba. The Bukoba-Buhaya-Karagwe district was a Bethel Mission area, and Kajerero was not sure if the Mission would accept it, since as Kalugila says, “it would mean that the church would be made free” (*jambo ambalo lingemaanisha kulifanya kanisa kuwa huru*). Kajerero’s request was ignored (Kalugila 2001, 2–3). Thirty years later, Kajerero would be influential in electing the first bishop of Karagwe, Swedish missionary Bengt Sundkler, and in actually convincing him to accept the nomination (Swantz 2002, 177).

In 1937, the Mission Church Federation (*Fungamano la Mekanisa ya Misioni ya Kiluteri Tanzania*) formed, with Paul Rother of Leipzig Mission as the first president, and constituent members being the seven “Mission Churches” established in Tanzania. The end goal was the creation of one indigenous Lutheran Church in Tanzania, rather than just mission

¹⁷¹ For their part, the Roman Catholic church had ordained the first Tanzanians to the priesthood in 1917.

¹⁷² That is, governance by bishops. Meaning, of course, that there had to be an autonomous church since that is what a bishop is bishop of.

cooperation(Smedjebacka 1973, 55). One of the major decisions at the MCF's first meeting in 1938 was to start a Federation-wide theological program at Marangu Teacher's Training College. Dr. Ernst Tscheuschner from the Berlin Mission was appointed Director, arriving in Marangu in late August 1939 (Smedjebacka 1973, 56). A few days later, though, the entire project had to be scuttled.

7.2. American missions

a) Steps toward local governance

On September 3, 1939, German missionaries again became enemies of the British Mandate Government. By September 1940 all Germans had been interned, leaving the church in northern Tanzania once again in local hands (Smedjebacka 1973, 57).

Smedjebacka describes the situation at that time as being quite different from that in 1920; in 1940 there were 18 ordained African pastors working in a Church with a constitution. The Mission Church Federation also provided for inter-church contact and support. The leader of the Leipzig Mission, Paul Rother, called a meeting in Marangu on 1-4 September 1940. By that time he was one of the very few German missionaries not yet interned, and he assumed (correctly) that he would join the rest in a matter of days. It was decided that the church should have two vice-leaders to assist (and in his almost certain absence, replace) the leader. These were Mch. Solomon Nkya (from Machame) and Mch. Lazaros Laiser (from Arusha). Smedjebacka identifies this meeting as the start of a new paradigm in the history of the Church: although "it was not stated explicitly in the minutes that the vice-leaders had to be Africans, everybody understood that this was the intention of the decision at Marangu (1973, 58).

"Regional leaders" (an office that still exists, now called District Heads) were also selected at Marangu. Since "the Chagga tribe was taken to be a regional unit", that became one region and the leader appointed was Mch. Nkya; Mch. Laiser was appointed leader of Arusha/Meru, and

Pare region was tasked with electing their own leader. At the first election to take place at an entirely local level with all African participants, they elected Mch. Andreas Msechu. One important upshot of this was that the church was organized along ethnic lines. What was once seen as natural boundaries for regions or districts eventually came to be seen as natural boundaries for dioceses wanting their own bishop: By the time I conducted my research, Arusha, Meru, and Pare were all separate dioceses. The most recent to separate from the Northern Diocese was Meru in 1993. Erasto Kweka, bishop of the Northern Diocese at that time, considered the secession to be 100% motivated by tribalism; he told me this in as many words and has similarly gone on record with other researchers (Ludwig 1999, 170).¹⁷³

b) Re-involvement of Augustana and continued tension over local governance

By 1940, the ELCNT had leaders, an organizational structure, and a constitution, but it was still contained under the umbrella of the Leipzig Mission, with only a vague border between. Additionally, the hospitals, schools, and parcels of land were owned by the Mission, not the ELCNT; the ELCNT was not a registered body and could not administrate property legally. The Augustana Synod was given permission to resume its administration of the Mission. They met on 5-6 September 1940 and decided to send three Augustana missionaries to the Leipzig field. Richard Reusch was appointed the leader of the mission, a position he had held twenty years earlier (Smedjebacka 1973, 59).

This made for another awkward situation. The decision to appoint Reusch as Rother's successor in leadership of the Mission

implied that Dr. Reusch had also been nominated as leader of the indigenous church. The decision reached at Marangu [1-4 September] would thus be difficult to implement. To judge from the minutes, those in the Augustana Mission [meeting 5-6 September] were not aware of the Africanization that had been in mind at Marangu.

¹⁷³ Williams (2009, 15n) is more critical, suggesting that Kweka's disappointment also had to do with the reduction in influence and esteem of his formerly massive diocese.

Moreover, the new leader, Dr. Reusch, did not exhibit any interest in restricting his functions to the affairs of the Leipzig Mission, but rather threw himself wholeheartedly into becoming the leader of the Church. (Smedjebacka 1973, 60)

Simultaneously, Reusch became interim president of the Mission Church Federation (a post which was formalized two months later). His efforts in his new capacities as leader of Mission, Church, *and* Federation included soliciting the cooperation of leading laymen within the Church, most notably influential chiefs, including Abdiel Shangali of Machame and Petro Itoni Marealle of Marangu. This represented a reduction in the influence of local ordained or church leaders.

Although Smedjebacka doesn't say this, it appears that Reusch may have thought of himself as superhuman. He was the president of the Mission Church Federation, the leader of former Leipzig, Bethel, *and* Berlin missions (in Kilimanjaro, Usambara, and Uzaramo), and the superintendent of the ELCNT. Furthermore, when it became obvious that more Africans should be trained as pastors due to the shortage of missionaries and another theological training course was inaugurated in Machame in January 1942, who was to be the only teacher but Dr. Reusch? Smedjebacka writes, "It is accordingly understandable that the training provided was inadequate, and that the theological knowledge of the candidates at the end of the course left something to be desired" (1973, 62–63).¹⁷⁴

Smedjebacka (1973, 63) considers the 1942 assembly of the ELCNT to be a turning point: "Of the members at the Assembly, only two were missionaries: these were the Church superintendent, Dr. Richard Reusch, and Rev. Elmer R. Danielson from the Augustana Mission."

¹⁷⁴ Even today, many (long- and short-term) mission participants have a goal of equipping local ministers – "they're not equipped" is a sentiment I heard from several of the short-term groups I observed. This has long been perceived as an issue, but here is a clear case where equipping pastors with theological training was made a lower priority, and it looks like one of the major causes was the reluctance of American missionaries to let Africans have any real leadership – probably because they felt the Africans weren't "equipped" yet. This is even more incongruous when you think that a common phrase used to justify short-term mission (especially among young people and teenagers) is "God doesn't call the equipped, he equips the called."

The Church Constitution was revised which made the ELCNT competent to make decisions “without intervention on the part of the Leipzig Mission”, and the language of the Assembly report indicates a reconceptualization not as a “group of congregations” but as “our church” (Smedjebacka 1973, 63–64). However, since the position of the superintendent was left in the hands of the mission, the 1942 constitution resulted in a situation that was not what the delegates intended:

The intention seemed to be that the Church should be released from the authority and superintendence of the foreign mission, but in fact the right of decision was not given to the indigenous Church members. Since the superintendent would still be an expatriate missionary, the power to decide was in reality transferred from the Mission Board in Leipzig to one missionary in the Church. (Smedjebacka 1973, 67)

c) Independence debates during American mission

The question of *uaskofu* was raised again during the 1944 meeting of the Augustana Board of Foreign Missions. According to Kalugila (2001, 3), ELCNT leaders were cognizant that the Anglican Church in Tanzania had appointed bishops, and that people were joining the Anglican Church. Another reason church leaders were pushing for an episcopate was that bishops can ordain new pastors, while superintendents cannot. This caused discord when in 1951 the Swedish church was asked to send a bishop to ordain new pastors in Kashasha, in what is now the North-Western diocese; they refused (Kalugila 2001, 4).

Various progressions towards an autonomous episcopate were made in in the fifties. The Mission Church Federation (*Fungamano la Makanisa ya Misioni ya Kilutheri Tanganyika*) dropped “Mission” from its name in 1952 and became the FMKT (*Fungamano la Makanisa ya Kilutheri Tanganyika*, Federation of Lutheran Churches in Tanganyika). Several institutions had already been started under its auspices, including Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center, Lutheran Theological College Makumira,¹⁷⁵ Marangu Teachers Training College, and *Redio*

¹⁷⁵ Established in 1947 as Lutheran Seminary Lwandai in Lushoto, Tanga Region; moved to present location at Makumira, Arusha Region in 1954; now Tumaini University Makumira.

Sauti Injili “Radio Voice of the Gospel” (Kalugila 2001, 111). Second, the LWF held its first All-Africa conference in Marangu, where *Mangi Mkuu*, Paramount Chief Marealle II, gave the opening speech, insisting that all African Lutheran Churches should have *uongozi wa kiaskofu*, governance by bishops¹⁷⁶ (Lutheran World Federation 1956).

However, no bishops were immediately forthcoming. In 1957, the FMKT asked the LWF head office for a statement supporting *uaskofu*, and Director Fridtjov Birkeli gave one, but Kalugila gives no further information about what became of this. The FMKT met again in 1959, but did not press the issue (Kalugila 2001, 6). Stefano Moshi had already been elected Church Superintendent in 1958, and installed as such in 1959. Finally, as I have described above, Moshi was declared *Askofu* in 1960; when the heads of the 7 member churches of the FMKT met in Moshi Town in 1961, Moshi was the only African (Kalugila 2001, 7).

7.3. Comparison

The German and American mission periods can be seen as representing two different mission paradigms. Their mission philosophies had divergent theological and historical underpinnings: German mission was heavily influenced by Romantic philosophy which valued the participation of the entire *Volk*, while American mission proceeded from a Scandinavian Pietist theology emphasizing individual conversion. However there were differences in practical matters as well, which themselves have become reified in historical accounts of those missions.

In written histories of mission in Kilimanjaro, like ethnographic histories, the main source of information on the German period was Bruno Gutmann. His writings form the basis of historic accounts of German mission activities, including how the missionaries interpreted local religious practice, recorded linguistic data, translated scripture and song, interacted with chiefs, and

¹⁷⁶ The discussions of implementation of episcopacy and indigenous government were happening concurrently, and were closely related, but were not the same thing, as we can see for example by Sundkler’s election in 1964.

attempted to “Christianize” Chagga rites.¹⁷⁷ Gutmann’s administrative records and notes at Kidia parish were also kept scrupulously, and these form another main source of information on the operation of German mission, particularly in Fiedler’s (1996) account. The Leipzig missionaries were also active as pastors; each missionary therefore had regular parochial duties. Though he would have been spread thinly, he nevertheless had a congregation of ordinary parishioners to tend to, and their record-keeping reflects this involvement at the individual level: Hasu (1999, 223f and elsewhere) is able to discuss pastoral involvement of German missionaries in situations such as marital counseling, the handwritten notes from these meetings with quarreling spouses being available in the Diocese archives. Therefore, the general character of the German mission period became portrayed as almost anthropological (and in fact, in many biographies (e.g. Shao 1990), Gutmann is described as a missionary, theologian, and anthropologist). In terms of historiography, German mission became strongly associated with an orientation towards Chagga culture and the implantation of Christianity into it.

American mission in Kilimanjaro, on the other hand, is widely portrayed as administrative in character. Apart from the 1923-1925 interregnum, Augustana missionaries did not assume control of the church in Northern Tanzania until 1940. By that time there was an established Church with ordained pastors, and a cadre of teachers and evangelists who were overseeing the day-to-day parish work. The Augustana missionaries did not have the same orientation towards understanding Chagga culture as divinely imparted, and in any case, significant ethnological works had already been published (not only Gutmann’s works in German, but Dundas’ 1924 study). Therefore, it appears that Augustana’s main concern was more administrative in nature. Sources for historical analyses covering this period (e.g. Smedjebacka 1973) are mainly letters

¹⁷⁷ See Magesa (2004, 10) and Young (1993, 3) on the “old guard” in mission’s characteristic focus on “religio-cultural analysis” and Christianizing African culture

and minutes of meetings: Mission board meetings, elder's meetings, church council meetings, and so on. Perhaps this characterization of Germans as more concerned with "Chagga culture" and Americans as more involved in bureaucracy may be attributed to what documents were available to historians. There is no mention in any works I have read of Augustana missionaries being involved in parish-level work, but whether this is because it was not happening, not being recorded, or not being included in historical publications, I cannot say. Swantz (2002, 140) describes how the role of Augustana women including missionaries' wives in the 1955 LWF conference in Marangu was overlooked in the meeting reports; perhaps a similar dynamic applied in the day-to-day mission work.

However, I think it can be argued that the shift from German to American responsibility for the Mission and the Church in Kilimanjaro constituted a paradigm shift in terms of what the core elements of "mission" involved. Linguistic and ethnographic documentation, pastoring, and translation were replaced by administration of several interrelated organizations – the Mission, the Church, and the Federation. This paradigm would itself begin passing out of use in 1963, when the ELCT became independent.

Chapter 8: Post-independence partnership and mission

In this chapter, I discuss the current state of mission and partnership within the diocese. I have already examined the concept of partnership in general, and here I describe specific partnerships with former mission organizations, newer groups, and other African churches. I describe the forms that mission now takes in the Northern Diocese, and how “partnership” has become a major theme in mission. I argue that “mission” is now highly diverse and even contradictory in its multiple and shifting meanings in different contexts, but that this does not make it an irrelevant concept.

8.1. An independent church & diocese

The seven member Churches of the Federation of Lutheran Churches in Tanganyika (formerly the Mission Church Federation) amalgamated in 1963 to form the *Kanisa la Kiiinjili la Kilutheri Tanzania*, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania.¹⁷⁸ The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Northern Tanganyika (ELCNT) was dissolved, becoming the Northern Diocese of the ELCT. Stefano Moshi became both the diocesan bishop, and the presiding bishop of the ELCT (although he would not actually be consecrated as a bishop until 1964).

The ELCT has since grown from seven to 25 dioceses, as a result of both adding new areas and dividing existing ones. Many are contiguous with administrative regions (compare Figures 14 and 15).

The Northern Diocese has lost a significant amount of territory since its inception in 1963; originally it included what is now North-Central, Meru, Mwanga, and Pare. North-Central (also sometimes known as Arusha Diocese) separated in 1972, and Pare in 1975. The shaded area in the west of North-Central is the Karatu district of the Northern Diocese. Meru separated from the

¹⁷⁸ To be precise, the T stood first for Tanganyika until the merger with Zanzibar in June 1964.

Northern Diocese in 1993 under very tense (and at times even violent) circumstances (Williams 2009, 16ff). In 2016, Pare Diocese was divided roughly in half, the northern half becoming Mwanza Diocese.

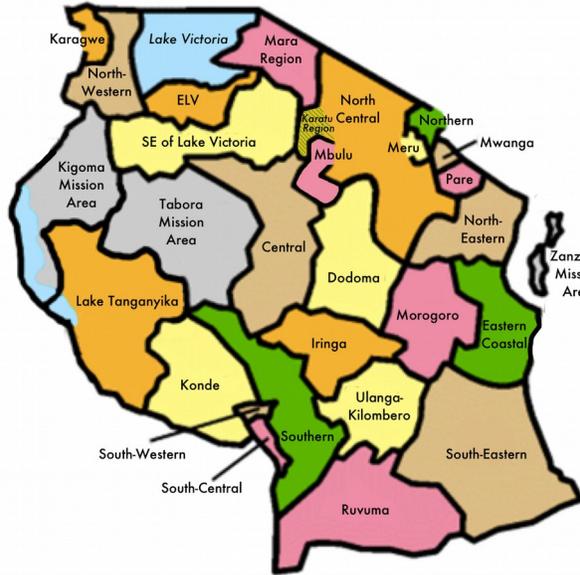


Figure 14: ELCT dioceses. Drawing by the author with data from ELCT.



Figure 15: Tanzania administrative regions. Adapted from *Regions of Tanzania* by Sémhur, CC BY-SA

Stefano Moshi served as bishop for both the ELCT and the Northern Diocese until his death in 1976. He was succeeded as Northern Diocese bishop by Erasto Kweka, and as ELCT Presiding Bishop by Sebastian Kolowa of Usambara (Northeastern Diocese), who presided until his death in 1992. Samson Mushemba of the Northwestern Diocese was elected and served until 2007; Alex Malasusa of Eastern and Coastal Diocese then presided until 2016 when Dr. Shoo was installed. In the Northern Diocese, Martin Shao became bishop when Kweka retired in 2004, and was in office until Dr. Shoo was consecrated bishop in 2015.

a) Mission within Tanzania

In this section, I describe the “mission” work that the diocese does itself internally, or within the ELCT. This highlights the difficulty of the term “mission”, in that it often has very

divergent meanings in different contexts, or to American and Tanzanian audiences – as we will see below in the post-independence relationships with former colonial missions. As a result, the concept of “mission” becomes very porous and flexible.

One point of pride within the Northern Diocese is that it is making its own partnerships within Tanzania, and with other African churches rather than with only European/American churches, or those who were their parents – that is, in terms of family metaphors, they are not just a child church, but now also a parent and a sibling church to other areas. The Diocese (and the ELCT) now manage every aspect of what, during the German and Augustana periods, was called mission – but they do not necessarily call it mission anymore.

Revival and evangelism

In 2015, I attended a meeting of the *Uamsho* “Revival”¹⁷⁹ committee at the Hai District headquarters in Boma Ng’ombe. The meeting actually had a distinctly Pentecostal style which surprised me, especially given the frequent antipathy of Lutheran church leaders to Pentecostalism. To start with, they were singing from *Tenzi za Rohoni* rather than *Tumwabudu Mungu Wetu*.¹⁸⁰ When the group finished singing, they started praying, also in Pentecostal style: All of them at once, aloud, and loudly; using short staccato sentences with falling intonation, and forceful language with many vocalizations of “Katika *jina* la Yesu!” (“In the *name* of Jesus!”). Some of them pounded their fists on the table or into the palm of their other hand, eyes scrunched up tight, bodies twisting back and forth. Eventually the prayers petered out, and the chair called the meeting to order. He recalled an evangelism trip that he’d been on in Karatu and Babati (which is part of the Mbulu diocese), where 142 people had been baptized. His description of the outreach struck me as similar to the short-term mission trips that bring *wageni*

¹⁷⁹ Lit. “awakening”

¹⁸⁰ TMW is the ELCT’s liturgy and hymn book, Tenzi is a non-denominational songbook associated with Pentecostalism. See pages 65 and 67 above.

to Tanzania. However there were several key differences: the members of this committee, though not ordained, were all *wainjilisti* who were tasked with going on these revival trips. They also had a lot more latitude in planning; they could arrange the dates and who would be going amongst themselves, although they were encouraged to make it at least a 2-3 week trip since that brought down the costs to the district, relatively. They also understood that they had two jobs, *uinjilisti* and *uchungaji* (evangelism and pastoring). They were authorized and accustomed to baptising new members and offering ongoing pastoral care to people.

Although the church prides itself on being self-propagating—in that they are conducting their own outreaches, sending missionaries rather than just receiving them—and they contrast this to “how we used to do”, this is not a new trend. In fact, indigenous members of the Northern Diocese have been organizing their own outreaches since the 1920s; including the post-WWI years when German missionaries were interned (Smedjebacka 1973, 41). The ELCNT also started its own mission, separate from the Leipzig Mission, in Sonjo, a couple hundred kilometers northwest of Arusha (Smedjebacka 1973, 122ff; M/Mkuu 1948, 39f).

These internal “mission trips”, then, have actually quite a long precedent, having existed before most of the first wave of American short-term mission organizations were even founded. However, it seems their categorization has changed. The 1948 General Assembly Report explicitly calls this “mission”, but at the Uamsho Committee meeting I attended, the word *umisioni* “mission” was not mentioned.

Diakonia

I have alluded above to connections between *diakonia* and mission. *Diakonia* is enacted at all levels throughout the diocese, including in partnerships between parishes. This is a familiar concept of course, since many parishes have official partnerships with American or European

parishes. However, the diocese also takes pride in the fact that it now has these same kinds of partnerships internally (refer to the discussion of parish partnerships in Chapter 4.3.a). I observed *diakonia* food security projects at both the Hai and Kilimanjaro Kati districts, which were explicitly described to me as a transition to doing something internally that would previously have been done by American or European partners.

American and European parishes often consider this type of work to fall under their mission department, and at a global level, the LWF also considers *diakonia* to be part of mission, in the sense of a holistic *missio Dei*, “mission of God”. Additionally, *wageni* often do work that would locally be considered *diakonia*, though the term would be unfamiliar to most American groups. However, within Tanzania, the relation of *diakonia* to mission is also a topic of debate. Some diocese pastors consider the chief characteristic of mission to be crossing borders, whether those are conceptual borders or between nation states; others suggest that it is bringing the gospel of Jesus to those who have not heard it before, thereby distinguishing at least in theory between mission, evangelism (general preaching the gospel), revival (calling for those whose faith has cooled to return), *diakonia* (ministry to the needy, whether Christian or no), and pastoral care (ministry to Christians). Others do include *diakonia* in the conceptual category of mission; Stephen Munga (bishop of ELCT Northeastern Diocese) argues:

Mission is the self expression of the church, and her language is the gospel. ... This mission work is mainly through evangelization for the sake of making disciples. Evangelization is ... a method of doing mission to the world, i.e. proclamation through preaching and *diakonia* (the holistic evangelism). Therefore, it should be affirmed from this outset that *diakonia* is evangelism. (Munga 2009, 56)

Thus, not only is there slippage between Tanzanian clergy and Western partners on the relationship between *diakonia* and mission, but also within the ELCT. Many of the diocese *diakonia* projects are rooted in a history of mission partnerships. The same concept of

“partnership” is applied internally, but the connotations with respect to “mission” have diverged and become contextually flexible.

Establishment of Lake Tanganyika Diocese

Lake Tanganyika Diocese (also known as Rukwa Diocese, since it is contiguous with Rukwa Region) in western Tanzania is one of the newer dioceses. Until 2014, it was classified as a “mission area” along with Kigoma, Tabora, and Zanzibar. These are areas without much of a Lutheran presence. It also means that the church there, such as it is, is not self-supporting¹⁸¹. As a mission area, Rukwa was supported by the Northern and Konde Dioceses, and when it became a diocese, these relationships carried on. The bishop of LTD gave his greetings at one funeral I attended, saying, “Lake Tanganyika Diocese did not come not from any German or American or European missionaries. It was the work of the ELCT, of the Northern Diocese.”¹⁸² Baba Askofu tells me that LTD still does ask for them to send some pastors since they have a shortage (although ND pastors are reluctant to do go, since they perceive they will not be as well paid or respected compared to in their home diocese). Sometimes ND *wageni* even visit Rukwa.

In this area as well, the concept of “mission” is slippery. It can be used as a euphemism for “not (yet) self-sufficient”, thus equating the concept with financial support: a dynamic which can become awkward and even tense between Tanzanian and American partners, as we have seen in Chapter 4, but one which has its roots in independence discussions, as we will see below. At the same time, the actual efforts put forth (e.g. by the Northern Diocese) are oriented towards *ending* a state of mission.

¹⁸¹ This also operates at other levels; Baba Askofu told me that several of the parishes in Karatu District are “mission parishes”, that is, their operating costs are subsidized by the diocese.

¹⁸² “*Dayosisi ya Ziwa Tanganyika haijatokana na wamisionari kutoka Ujerumani, kutoka Marekani na kutoka Ulaya. Ni kazi ya KKKT, ni kazi ya Dayosisi ya Kaskazini.*”

b) Diversification of mission and shift to partnership

As the ELCNT moved towards greater independence, Leipzig and Augustana began to take on new roles and relationships with respect to the diocese. In 1957, German missionaries were readmitted to Tanzania, but the situation was again rather different. Many of the founding Leipzig missionaries had died. Gutmann was still alive (d. 1963) but had retired. The Augustana mission had settled into its administrative role, and after 17 years they were not about to revert control as they did in 1925. In any case, Germany was still in reconstruction, and the Leipzig Mission, now located in East Germany, was further restricted in its activities (Leipzig Mission 2013, 37). Furthermore, the ELCNT had become a member church of the LWF, and significant efforts towards episcopacy and indigenous leadership had been underway. As a result, Leipzig found themselves on significantly different terms, and their relationship was reconceptualized as “partnership” (Leipzig Mission 2013, 21)

Augustana missionaries were also in uncharted waters in the movements for ecclesiastical and political independence. Under Elmer Danielson (President¹⁸³ 1947-1956), the ELCNT had pursued a devolution of power to Tanzanian church leaders. His predecessor Reusch was a Russian citizen and had joined the Augustana Synod, but his family was German, and he had been as influenced by Romanticism as the Leipzigers. Danielson, conversely, had a pietist orientation more in line with Augustana generally, which placed more emphasis on the imminent return of Jesus Christ; according to Moshi (2016, 127) this would have disposed him a shift in power to Tanzanian church leaders much more readily than Reusch. Upon assuming the superintendency in 1947, Danielson immediately installed Solomon Eliufoo¹⁸⁴ as General

¹⁸³ Technically he began as “Superintendent”, this title was changed to President in 1956 (Moshi 2016, 163)

¹⁸⁴ Eliufoo, an influential man from Machame, had political machinations of his own. He was the son of Solomon Nkya (mentioned above, who was chosen as the leader for the Machame congregation in 1920, and for the whole Chagga area in 1940), and Chief Abdieli Shangali’s son-in-law, and later would become quite active within TANU, including in their efforts to depose Thomas Marealle as Mangi Mkuu.

Secretary and Treasurer, who would oversee much of the Church administration (Moshi 2016, 131). Upon the election of Stefano Moshi as President in 1958 (and as Bishop in 1960), Augustana missionaries were elected as vice presidents and assistant bishops on both occasions. According to Moshi,

This was meant to safeguard the relation between mission and the LCNT. The presence of a foreign missionary at this high position after the indigenization of the presidency in the Northern Diocese, therefore, allowed for continued cooperation between the Diocese and its partners. This cooperation paved way for accessibility by the Diocese to assistance and nurture from its partners. (2016, 192)

However, though the ELCT was self-governing from its inception in 1963, it still required support, including financially. The source of this support is unambiguously identified as “Western partners”, and one of Stefano Moshi’s tasks as bishop was to assert independence from the start, lest support become governance by another means (Moshi 2016, 181f). Speaking at the meeting of the newly-constituted ELCT, Bishop Moshi said:

I continue to urge the missionaries and the mission societies to not cause us to have difficulties in making forward steps. Our churches, that were seven, have received different traditions and heritencies [sic] from different Mission Societies. ... Please, leave it to use to take our own decisions. Let the African himself choose the way that he feels benefits Tanganyika best. (Leipzig Mission 2013, 39)

Mission societies such as Leipzig and Augustana, and their relationship to churches such as the ELCT, had doubtless been influenced by the creation of the Lutheran World Federation in 1947, which provided a new aspect for relationships between churches. In modern-day historical narration, the LWF emerged from four concerns, which are now identified as the “pillars” of the LWF and of Lutheran identity worldwide. In the opening presentation at the LWF Conference, General Secretary Martin Junge identified these concerns as:

1. A context of hunger, displacement and migration in Europe after World War II, and a perceived need for service to those affected.

2. Emerging churches and willingness on the part of Western churches to support them.
3. The need for collaboration in developing theology, since theology developed in isolation is at risk of threatening rather than enhancing the dignity of all people
4. The Christian ideal of unity.

These four concerns became enshrined, respectively, as the LWF “pillars” of *diakonia*, mission, theology, and unity.

The basic upshot of these renegotiated relationships between churches was a redefinition of mission. “Missionary” had (at least in Tanzania) become a synonym for expatriate ministers or church leaders, as is evident in accounts such as Smedjebacka’s, ELCNT and Northern Diocese General Assembly reports, and even the current Diocese constitution. The same tasks of pastoring and church administration were being done, but not by missionaries as it came to be understood. They were therefore reclassified conceptually, as I have described above in the examples of *uamsho* “revival”, *diakonia*, and the establishment of new dioceses. In some sense mission is whatever missionaries do, and so it took on a new meaning as “support” became the main task for missionaries; in the ELCT for example, mission became associated with support in education and medical work (Moshi 2016, 174). Furthermore, as churches in Tanzania and elsewhere in the global South were now on theoretically equal footing by virtue of common membership in organizations such as the LWF and the World Council of Churches, a need was perceived for a different type of engagement between churches (which would still be imagined as “mission”, as evident in Rev. Junge’s presentation). “Partnership” emerged as this model, as we have seen in both the Leipzig and Augustana cases.

Today, “partnership” is not just a model for mission between the Northern Diocese and former colonial mission societies. The term is applied liberally to relationships with dozens of

churches, mission societies, para-church organizations, and self-organized groups, including all four of the groups whose short-term visits to Tanzania I observed. It is not just used by Tanzanian ministers; “partnership” is an exceedingly common way of imagining mission for these European and American organizations as well, many of which came into existence well after independence. How has “partnership” become one of the major themes of 21st century mission in general?

Part of the reason for the prominence of “partnership” generally within mission might be, speculatively, put down to several interrelated dynamics. American Evangelicalism had become more self-conscious regarding criticisms of neo-colonialism (see Chapter 9); many African churches had become independent and had produced charismatic and active church leaders such as Stefano Moshi and Josiah Kibira who insisted on freedom for African Christians. “Partnering” with local churches offered American organizations the opportunity to use existing infrastructure rather than having to develop their own, and economic conservatism within American Evangelicalism associated with concerns about financial dependence made partnership an attractive concept. The ease in international communication and travel offered para-church organizations (such as Next Generation) the capacity to operate programs in more locations worldwide. Specifically in Tanzania, the NGO Act (United Republic of Tanzania 2002) required all non-governmental organizations (including religious organizations) operating in Tanzania to register with the government; partnership may have offered American religious NGOs a way to bypass this.

However, I suggest that the greatest impetus for the widespread adoption of “partnership” in mission methodology was the diversification happening within mission. The independence-era paradigm change I discussed above was happening not just in mission relationships between Tanzania, Augustana, and Leipzig, nor just within Lutheranism. A postwar crisis was emerging in

mission worldwide, in social, political and theological terms: Mainline Protestants had departed from evangelism as the main driving force for mission, and youth movements were contributing to a growing trend in “short-term missions” (Howell 2012, 71), a phenomenon I examine in detail in the next chapter.

The ambiguity of mission was not new. Beidelman’s (1982) account describes the anxiety of CMS missionaries in Ukaguru about the nature of mission work, and about what it meant to be a missionary. Although by 1963 two specific mission societies operating in Tanzania had reoriented towards “support”, evangelism, pastoral work at the parish level, and church administration continued to be aspects of global Christian mission. Even where missionaries *had* largely reoriented towards support instead of evangelism, evangelism did not stop being mission – at least as far as *they* were concerned. Therefore, the change occurring within mission was not a substitution, but a diversification, and one that was happening in several directions at that. Missionaries continued to grapple with the question, “What does it mean to be a missionary?” in a context where, simultaneously, more *and* less was being categorized as mission.

Mission had become almost anything, or almost nothing, depending on who you asked; an exceedingly flexible and porous concept. Nevertheless, even with this slipperiness, it remains one of the main conceptual foci of Christianity. I suggest that “partnership” was able to accommodate the flexibility and the lack of total cohesion that emerged in mission in the late 20th century. As I have described in Chapter 4, *ushirikiano* “partnership” in the Northern Diocese is a loosely defined and flexible concept that can accommodate nearly any type of collaboration. It forms the perfect complement to the equally loosely defined and flexible concept of mission. In my observations, it was obvious that Next Generation, Nebraska Synod, and Worldwide Missions for Youth explicitly identified their work with mission, although in different ways.

Diocese pastors did not. Moshi (2016, 47) writes that during the colonial mission period, “missionaries and Northern Tanzanians were at cross purposes and expectations.” This is still the case in the Northern Diocese, but within a partnership model, these diverse purposes and expectations need not be mutually exclusive.

8.2. Partnership in Modern Lutheran Mission

I do not make an argument about what should or should not be considered “mission”. What I am arguing is that the conceptual space of mission has expanded, but not without critique: the nature of mission and how it changes is a perennial topic for theologians and missiologists. However, this does lead to identifications not always matching up evenly. Short-term missionaries, visitors from former colonial missions such as Leipzig, and LWF representatives—regardless of what they call themselves—are recognized as *wageni* by my interlocutors, not as missionaries. What does this do to the conceptual category of “mission”?

What can we gain from looking at the different ways in which *wageni* conceptualize their presence, and the still more different ways in which Tanzanians perceive them? In the rest of this chapter, I will take two Lutheran bodies (the LWF and the ELCA) as examples to discuss how something that isn’t mission can nevertheless be part of mission. The Nebraska group do not call themselves missionaries, nor do they call their visit a “mission trip”, but it is underneath their Global Mission department and their involvement comes from a history that was expressly designated as a missionary enterprise.

a) LWF: Diakonia and mission on a global scale

I have alluded above to the role of the LWF in redefining the terms on which Churches encounter each other, including in mission, and in what follows I will examine the discourse of

the Lutheran community globally on mission, including a discussion of both the LWF and the ELCA, of which the Northern Diocese's main partner (Nebraska) is a part.

The LWF does indeed have a Department for Mission and Development, which describes itself as follows:

Our role as the Department for Mission and Development is to accompany LWF member churches as they respond to the call to do mission in a holistic way.

...

What do we mean by holistic mission?

We want to support our churches in developing the capacity to

- proclaim the reconciling message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- carry out diaconal service among the vulnerable and those on the edges of society
- advocate on behalf of the marginalized¹⁸⁵

This description connects *diakonia* to mission, and the page for *diakonia* does so even more explicitly: “LWF member churches are called to take part in God’s mission, which includes proclaiming Christ’s Gospel, serving the vulnerable (*diakonia*), and advocating for them.”¹⁸⁶ Here again, we see a slippage of categories: at the global LWF level, *diakonia* is definitely mission (and ELCT delegates to LWF meetings are perfectly happy to agree on this), but the individual ELCT member, in her weekly *diakonia* rotation, would be very unlikely to think she is doing *umisioni*. Partly there is the lexical issue that the English “mission” can mean purpose in general, as LWF means it in “take part in God’s mission”; and they do use this intentionally as a decolonizing measure and a conceptual broadening of mission. Conversely, in Swahili, *umisioni* is a different concept from an organization’s mission (*dhamira*) as articulated in its mission statement. However, I want to highlight again that the divergent meanings attached to “mission” do not split neatly along national lines (although general tendencies can be observed). Rather, divergent and contextual meanings are attached to “mission” within national churches as well.

¹⁸⁵ <https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/about-dmd>

¹⁸⁶ <https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/capacity-diakonia>

b) Accompaniment Theology & Mission

LWF's description of its Mission department specifies that it exists to "accompany" LWF member churches. I have examined Accompaniment theology in Chapter 6 above, but in this section, I will look specifically at Accompaniment as it is deployed with respect to mission between LWF member churches, particularly between the ELCA and its partners.

In the ELCA, "accompaniment"¹⁸⁷ is generally discussed as a method for mission, or even a redefinition of what "mission" is. Adopted as the guiding principle for ELCA's Global Mission department in 1999, Accompaniment has been discussed in numerous mission-themed conferences since. In a PowerPoint presentation available for download on its Resources page (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, n.d.), the ELCA takes well-known theological concepts such as "justification" and "sanctification" (which are analogous to the "already/not-yet" theological tension I have discussed elsewhere), and imagines new ways of seeing them in practice: for example, as a "two-movement symphony" where justification¹⁸⁸ is God's movement toward us and sanctification¹⁸⁹ is God's effort at "reconciling us in community". Mission is reimagined as this "reconciliation" and thereby expanded beyond concepts of proselytism and conversion, to the holistic *Missio Dei*, the mission (in the sense of "purpose") of God. Since God's purpose is reconciliation, the ELCA argues, we need to start thinking of "mission" in those terms – including prioritizing the entire communion of God as a group rather than focusing on individual conversion.

¹⁸⁷ See p. 183 for the underlying Road to Emmaus passage.

¹⁸⁸ i.e. in the sense of forgiveness of sins, not a sense of rationalization for a course of (sinful) action. See the explanation of "justification by faith" on p. 62.

¹⁸⁹ i.e. being made holy. In classic Lutheran theology, this refers to a lifelong process by which the Holy Spirit enables Christians to produce good works, which are not "meritorious" towards justification, but demonstrate faith.

I've already cited the Road to Emmaus story, but another example used to convey this paradigm is Jesus' parable of the Lost Sheep, found in Luke 15:1-7:

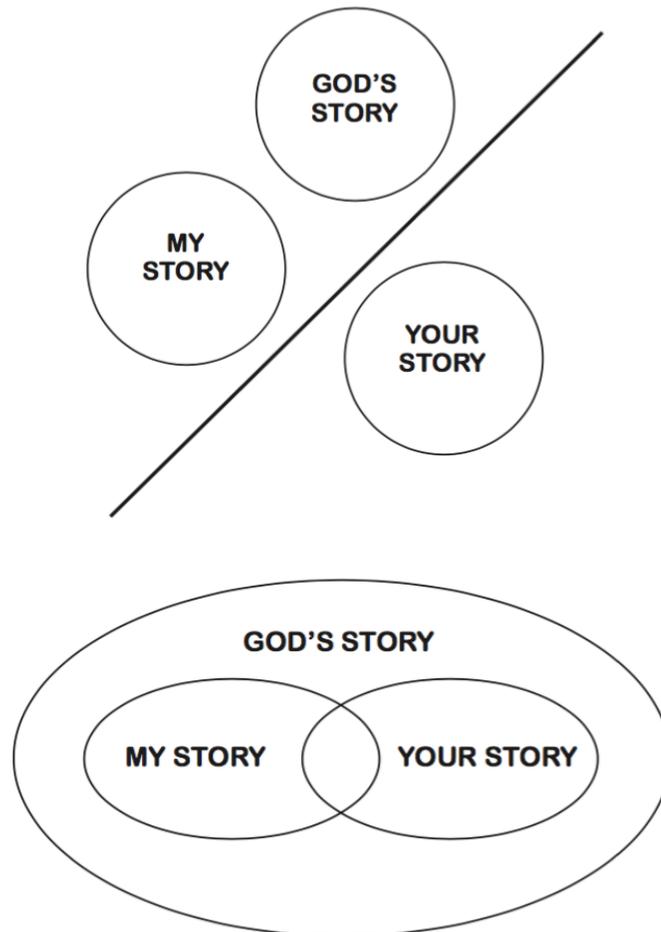
Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear [Jesus]. And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

So he told them this parable: "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

The ELCA presentation discusses two interpretations of this passage with respect to mission. In mission philosophies focusing on the "lost sheep", the problem is that the sheep is lost, the solution is to determine that sheep's needs and find the sheep, and when found, the lost sheep should be thankful. The ELCA suggest a rereading of this parable through the lens of accompaniment, whereby the problem is that the 99 incomplete, the solution is to find the lost sheep, and when it is found, the 99 should be thankful.

Various ELCA mission publications sum up these different ways of looking at "mission" (looking at God's whole purpose of reconciliation; focusing on making a community whole rather than individual conversion) by returning to the Road to Emmaus passage, and the concept of different "stories". Cleopas, the unnamed disciple, and Jesus each have their own stories, and the ELCA reading of this passage has Jesus' story appearing and making itself relevant to the disciples' own stories. The ELCA suggests that, by reinterpreting the relationship between these stories, it promotes an understanding of mission based in dialogue between churches in the global North and South. In a handbook for a 2014 ELCA mission workshop, accompaniment is put forward as a way to adapt mission to changing global contexts:

A lot of mission work historically looked like this: there is God's story, my story and your story. Mission meant me bringing God's story to you. God's story is on my side, and you are on the other side. I'm crossing boundaries to bring God to you.



Accompaniment invites us to see differently: In reconciliation, we realize that my story and your story are not divided by boundaries, but are both reconciled within God's story. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America 2014, 4–5)

I should note that although this seems like a very happy model, it doesn't obviate all problems; in fact the handbook itself points this out:

Because we live in the tension of already and not yet, between reconciliation and alienation from God, we continue to experience alienation from one another. We continue to experience, and to create, boundaries between ourselves and everything else. The categorization of what we encounter is unavoidable as we live in the world, but it can create boundaries between us and others. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America 2014, 5)

Tensions still exist in several ways; the quote from the handbook mentions the “already” and “not yet” aspects of salvation, and a later section mentions issues of race, class, nationality, and religion (guest-host dynamics are another tension, which is not mentioned.) These tensions are discussed in terms of lines or boundaries drawn in relationships between groups of people, which show how power becomes distributed asymmetrically. This, too, is then addressed by accompaniment:

Accompaniment helps us see the asymmetries of power in relationships. Because these asymmetries, just like the creation of boundaries and categories, seem natural to us, often we do not see them or think about them. Through accompaniment relationships we learn to see and think about asymmetries in order to live out Christ’s reconciling mission, the reconciliation that has lifted up the lowly, and has broken down the walls between people. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America 2014, 6)

I believe this is significant, in that it does directly address global issues of inequality which are often glossed over. Although inequality figures prominently in short-term mission discourse (and I observed this clearly in the 2012 WMY team), Howell (2012, 192, 214) argues that the dominant narratives in STM can actually *obscure* awareness of global inequality in participants. This was a trend I too noticed; some of the groups I observed had very little awareness of the real power dynamics that exist between them and Tanzanians.¹⁹⁰ The ELCA materials, in contrast, *do* significantly engage with power asymmetries, and ask participants to think of how these show up in their own lives and relationships. However, since my research was not conducted primarily with Nebraska visitors, I am unable to draw any conclusions as to whether this reorientation and redefinition of mission at ELCA level precipitates any change in individual understanding of structural poverty and inequality.

However, I suggest that “partnership” is not necessarily anything to do with efficacy in addressing global inequality and structural poverty. What it *does* is to match the flexibility and

¹⁹⁰ For example, one constantly took photos of people and upon being told why some people don’t like it, that they are not tourist attractions, he replied, “Why not? They can come to the US and take pictures of me, I don’t mind.”

lack of complete coherency in mission. Debates both within and between American and Tanzanian churches on what is or can be considered “mission”, and divergent formulations of mission as broader *and* narrower than at some reference point in the past, have made mission into an extremely slippery concept. In this context, “partnership” emerges as a model for doing something that may well mean very different things to each partner.

Chapter 9: Short-term mission

Perhaps it is fitting that I end with what was actually the entry point to my research. As I have written in Chapter 1, I found early on in my research that I could not think of “short-term mission” in the way I had been, as a type of Christian ministry immediately identifiable to Tanzanian Christians, which occasionally turned their lives upside down. Although my methodological and theoretical focuses changed significantly, shifting towards *watumishi* and theology, I did not reject the idea of short-term mission. People who call themselves short-term missionaries show up regularly in the Northern Diocese, and pastors incorporate these people into their work according to their understandings of *uhusiano*, *ushirikiano*, and *utumishi*. Many pastors maintain ongoing relationships with visitors (particularly repeat visitors), at various levels of depth ranging from liking their Facebook posts to visiting them in America. Therefore, since short-term mission manages to remain so prominent in global Christianity, I will finish where I began. In this chapter, I examine the history of short-term mission (STM) and the short-term mission trip: How it has become a salient concept in Christianity, an industry in itself, and an influence on mission in general, particularly in its ambivalence. I argue that STM both reflects and influences the diversification of mission which I have already described.

9.1. Introduction

The definition of short-term mission that I use here is: International travel for religious motivation other than pilgrimage, for a period of two months or less. All four components of this definition have some degree of arbitrariness, so I discuss them in detail first. I should also mention that in addition to this definition, STM can also refer to a sort of industry or business model that has emerged since the 1970s, with para-church organizations specializing in short-

term mission trips. Of the groups that I observed, WMY and Rise fit this model, Nebraska does not, and Next Generation is somewhat of a hybrid.

a) International

First, why international? Many people travel domestically and call it mission. Groups like WMY insist that the “mission field” is not just somewhere else, but right outside your own doorstep; every year their projects on offer include a few domestic destinations. I also have compared some of the diocese’s own evangelism efforts to short-term mission in Chapter 9. But there is something particular about international travel, and mission has always had a worldwide aspect. Many organizations refer regularly to the “Great Commission”, Matthew 28:19: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.” This project of going to “all the nations” is taken quite seriously, particularly among WMY and Rise, the two evangelism-oriented groups I observed. Some groups, especially American Evangelicals, espouse a dispensational premillennial theology drawing from Matthew 24:14 (“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come”) whereby mission hastens the return of Jesus. While a comparison of eschatologies is outside my scope, premillennialism can be briefly summarized as an anticipation of the “end times” occurring with this order of literal events: The Rapture (all Christians living or dead are taken away from the earth), the Great Tribulation (the world is ruled cruelly), the Second Coming (Jesus and Christians return to earth), the Millennium (Satan is locked away for a thousand-year reign of peace), and the Final Judgement (Satan and unbelievers are thrown into the lake of fire, God reigns undisputedly for eternity). Through some intermediate logical connections (see Bosch 1991, 429 for a brief history of premillennialism and mission), this theological underpinning *requires* Christians to proceed as quickly as possible with the job of preaching the gospel to literally every ethnic group

in the world. Obviously, this requires international travel. This position is not universal within American Evangelicalism, but it has been influential through various persons and publications, including the Scofield Reference Bible, Jerry Falwell, and Tim Lahaye's *Left Behind* series. Therefore, although not all groups doing mission trips ascribe to this premillennialism, and even of the ones that do, very few are actually doing "first evangelism", nevertheless, for many American Evangelicals missions has an international character.

b) Religious motivation

Second, why for religious motivation? On one hand it seems straightforward in that I am writing this in the vein of anthropology of Christianity, particularly how theologies are mobilized. It seems unlikely that a non-religious group would have any theological underpinning – yet many civil society organizations put together exactly the same type of travel, just without the religious impulse. The diocese maintains partnerships with a British volunteering organization, which has sent volunteers to build children's houses, and an American state university, which offers a study-abroad opportunity for elective courses in their Social Justice program. The itineraries for these visits, catalogued in the *Wageni* file, are nearly identical to the Nebraska vision trip itineraries. The planning memos among staff are identical in tone. The only difference is that Sunday services are labelled "optional". The parishes that work with these groups, and the diocese in general, do not differentiate them from other *wageni*. For the students' part, their evaluation seems to parallel experiences of mission trip participants. Their testimonials on the study-abroad program website (which included comments on group bonding spurred on by a foreign and unfamiliar location, being surrounded by and learning from a different culture, different perceptions of "on time", squatty potties, lions, and the gracious hospitality of Tanzanian people) would not be out of place in a post-mission-trip slideshow.

The “religiously motivated” part of my definition is actually the most arbitrary. It does not seem to make much difference at all to the diocese; and non-religious groups also appear to discuss their visits in very similar ways to religious groups.

c) Other than pilgrimage

Third, why other than pilgrimage? Pilgrimage and tourism are often studied together and there are definite parallels (Howell 2012, 54f). Both short-term mission and pilgrimage are often sold¹⁹¹ as a means of moral or spiritual edification, both in the journeying aspect and in the destination aspect – both “getting there” and “being there” are important. One key difference is that in short-term mission, the location may be nearly irrelevant: WMY reserves the right to move any participant to a different team, and Howell (2009, 209f) discusses how the concept of “calling” to do whatever work is necessary can erase the importance of a specific location. In contrast, this emphatically not the case for Nebraska or some of the diocese’s other official partners, who *do* focus on visiting Tanzania specifically. Pilgrimages are oriented towards spiritual edification and a place of special significance, and though short-term mission *is* often characterized as benefitting the traveller more than the local—something acknowledged freely by most participants—that isn’t its only or main goal. There usually *is* some expectation that you will bring some change to the place you’re going, which I see as the main difference between STM and pilgrimage.

d) Two months or less

Fourth, why two months or less? This parallels scholarship on “voluntourism” – what’s the line between a voluntourist and a charity worker?¹⁹² Where does medium-term volunteering such as gap years or Peace Corps fit in? This criteria isn’t as arbitrary as the others, though. Travel of

¹⁹¹ I have not yet mentioned aspects of commercialization or commodification, though I discuss this somewhat below.

¹⁹² In fact, I would not object to a definition of STM as “Christian voluntourism”.

shorter duration, less than two months, is not a rupture in one's life. Although a one or two year volunteering commitment is similarly intended to be temporary, it does require taking time off from work or study. Short-term mission, and volunteer tourism, are both more comparable to a holiday, after which travelers can easily return to whatever they were doing. That's not to say there is no long-term involvement: many partnership representatives visit Tanzania every year, sometimes several times, and have been doing so for years. And for some it *is* their job: Leipzig Mission, Mission EineWelt, or LWF staff visit areas throughout the world including Tanzania; these people are also counted as *wageni* by the diocese.

As I've discussed in previous chapters, short-term travel also engages with aspects of hospitality and guest/host relationships. People who are in that category are kept as *wageni* and no matter how many times they visit will struggle to be seen as *wenyeji* "locals" no matter what the cumulative total visits add up to.

9.2. American evangelicalism

In this section, I examine how American Evangelicalism has been one of the main factors influencing the growth of STM and the STM industry in postwar Christianity, particularly in its implicit theologies. "Evangelicalism" is a broad and diverse category, and means many things to many people. Several American sources (e.g. National Association of Evangelicals 2015; Eskridge 1996) use a doctrinally-based definition, citing Bebbington:

There are four qualities that have been the special marks of Evangelical religion: conversionism, the belief that lives need to be changed; activism, the expression of the gospel in effort; biblicism, a particular regard for the Bible; and what may be called crucicentrism, a stress on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. (Bebbington 1989, 3)

Eskridge (1996) includes two other senses of the term “Evangelicalism”: It can serve as a catch-all for an “organic group of movements and religious traditions”; a term that denotes style as much as belief and is identifiable in a “you know it when you see it” sense. It can also indicate a self-ascribed label which arose as a response to fundamentalist movements of the 1920s and 1930s. In this sense, it is a loose coalition with highly visible core members, including individuals and groups such as Billy Graham, Youth for Christ, and others.

The sense in which I use the term “Evangelical” is addressed by all three of these. Conversionism, activism, biblicism, and crucicentrism were not only salient aspects of programs such as WMY’s trips; they are concepts which were explicitly affirmed and performed daily, and they underlie the world view which eventuated in anyone undertaking such a trip at all.

a) Early development

The “evangelical” label originally separated Protestants from Catholics in Reformation Germany, and in continental Europe, “evangelical” still usually means simply Protestant. In today’s English-speaking world though, “Evangelical” refers to a specific movement (see Bebbington 1989) with roots in European Pietism, Presbyterianism, and Puritanism (Balmer 2002, vii). In the 1730s, revivals took place in Britain and New England that Noll (2003, 76) characterizes as more intense than previous movements. They were innovative in two areas: enthusiasm for sharing the gospel and converting others, and the idea of “assurance of faith” as a normal experience for all Christians (Bebbington 1989, 42, 74).

Several prominent figures emerged in the 1730s, including Jonathan Edwards, a Massachusetts Congregationalist minister, and Charles and John Wesley, English brothers who would both become prolific hymn writers (John would also found the Methodist Church). These figures are still heroes in modern-day evangelicalism and were concerned with individual

conversion (including from other Christian denominations), salvation, and piety.¹⁹³ The importance of individual salvation continued on in American Evangelicalism, its work in mission, and particularly within short-term mission which grew up in that setting; a contrast to the school of thought adopted by Leipzig Mission and to more liberal theologies which became what we now know as Mainline Protestantism (which includes the ELCA). This contrast has shaped the different approaches visible between the ELCA and the other three groups I observed in Tanzania.

Evangelicalism rejected liberal theology which gained popularity towards the end of the 19th century.¹⁹⁴ In the early 20th century a split developed within Evangelicalism, resulting in “neo-Evangelical” and “Fundamentalist” factions. The former saw the latter’s reaction to liberal theology as extreme; they felt it was still important to maintain dialogue with other denominations, and to “engage the larger culture by addressing social issues”; a point of view which became known as the “Social Gospel”. In contrast, those who retained the Fundamentalist label felt that Christians should focus on the “Spiritual Gospel”; this position was also influenced by a premillennial eschatology (Balmer 2002, 505) and influenced the approach of Evangelical missionaries elsewhere in Tanzania, such as the African Inland Mission in Maasailand (Waller 1999, 85).

The postwar period was a time of growth within Evangelicalism; Anderson (2005, 75ff) argues that the 1948 establishment of Israel was, for dispensationalists, a sign of fulfillment of

¹⁹³ See for example Noll’s (2003, 85ff) account of John Wesley’s conversion experience

¹⁹⁴ Liberal theology generally views the Bible not as a set of bare facts, but records of people about their experience of God, which reflect the various social and political contexts at the time of writing. Broadly speaking liberal theology went on to influence Mainline Protestantism, including the United Methodist Church, the ELCA, Presbyterian Church USA, Episcopal Church, United Church, and others. These churches formed the majority of American Christians until about the 1950s.

Biblical prophecy¹⁹⁵ and encouraged greater involvement in politics (which continued throughout the 1980s with a more politicized Christianity, influenced by the Christian Right, Moral Majority, Christian Coalition, and Family Research Council).

b) Short-term Mission as an Evangelical enterprise

I suggest that short-term missions emerged out of the rise in popularity of Evangelicalism, the emergence of a youth culture with available leisure money, and growing enrollment in college and university. Much of the growing movement in Evangelicalism was taking place on college campuses, and Howell (2012, 74) credits youth movements with making mission available—and, in many streams of Evangelicalism, *imperative*—to students. For current students though, a more temporary form of missions had to be developed. This was, essentially, the short-term mission trip.

Contributors

Many notable figures within Evangelicalism were active in the postwar period, particularly on college campuses and in student circles. Many of these individuals and organizations included mission, particularly short-term mission, in their operations.

Billy Graham, who was immensely influential from 1949 onwards, became the first full-time evangelist for Youth for Christ. InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, established in the US in 1941, includes ventures such as college campus Bible study groups, long- and short-term mission trips, and the immensely popular Urbana Missions Conference. Campus Crusade for Christ (now known as Cru) was established by Bill Bright in 1951; it helped establish Evangelical Christianity as a visible subculture in American higher education (Turner 2008, 225). Cru's more notable personnel include author Josh McDowell; their ventures include Athletes in Action, the

¹⁹⁵ In fact, the first time I encountered this teaching (about a theological justification for support of the state of Israel) was on my first mission trip with WMY.

1979 film *Jesus* and the subsequent Jesus Film Project which dubbed the film into over 1300 languages, tract and pamphlet publishing,¹⁹⁶ and mission trips, including summer trips marketed to college and high school students, such as the one I observed in 2015.

Other groups significant to the emergence of STM include Operation Mobilization, founded by George Verwer in 1957 and arguably one of the pioneers of modern short-term mission organizations; Youth With A Mission (YWAM), founded in 1960 by Loren Cunningham, which offers short-, medium-, and long-term trips as well as educational institutions with 600 branches in 142 countries (including five in Tanzania), under the umbrella of the University of the Nations which offers diplomas, Associates, Bachelors, and Masters degrees (though unaccredited in any country); and Teen Missions International, founded by Robert Bland in 1970 as one of the first organizations to offer mission trips for high school students. They have since expanded to include trips for adults and preteens, missions-oriented camps for children, a Bible school, gap year programs, and they have exported their mission trip and Bible school models to dozens of other countries.

This is not an exhaustive history; see Howell (2012) for a more in-depth examination. Though other individuals and organizations were prominent, these are a few that constituted the post-war climate of Evangelicalism in terms of a focus on youth ministry, and were influential in the emergence of short-term mission.

Short-term mission picked up speed in the 1970s and 1980s. It seems that Americans were becoming better-off, financially, between 1985 and 1990, and between 1995 and 2000 (and less well-off between 1980 and 1985, and 1990 and 1995).¹⁹⁷ International travel has become more

¹⁹⁶ Most notably “The Four Spiritual Laws”; you may be familiar with Law 1, “God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.”

¹⁹⁷ Based on median income adjusted for inflation and CPI; see <http://www.advisorperspectives.com/dshort/updates/Real-Median-Household-Income-Growth>

easily accessible to the average American since the founding of a lot of these short-term mission groups beginning in the 1970s, and Howell (2012, 74) includes this as one of the factors in the growth of STM, along with increased paid vacation time.

By about 2000, STM had become almost universally accepted as a feature of American Evangelicalism. The “diffuse practices” of STM had gained “wider recognition in the Christian world” (Howell 2012, 110) and although it was still a site of contestation, the debate had shifted from whether STM is mission or not to whether it was worthwhile in its own terms (Howell 2012, 114–15). Debates, difficulties, and trends in Evangelicalism more broadly had also become evident within STM.

Tension between social and spiritual gospel

One of these tensions is in the split between Fundamentalism and neo-Evangelicalism concerning the “social gospel” and pure evangelism. WMY as an organization is firmly neo-Evangelical. They present themselves as an inter-denominational organization, with none of the opposition to “social” projects that existed in the Fundamentalist vein of Evangelicalism; while many trips focus on evangelism, others have a significant “work” component. Projects advertised in 2016 included: Construction work or manual labour at churches, orphanages, and WMY bases; ESL-themed summer camps; Vacation Bible Schools for children; well drilling; foot washing and distributing socks and shoes; and distributing and fitting reading glasses. However, there is still an emphasis on evangelism and “sharing the gospel”. Blurbs for “work” teams include descriptions of how participants will be able to share the gospel to those around them wherever they are working; during training, much discussion focuses on the importance of evangelism. Observing the team at work on their construction project in Tanzania, I noted how participants spoke about how they were looking forward to their evangelism phase.

Rise also exhibited this tendency and were counting converts – by the end of their two weeks, this number was north of 900, since at most schools they did presentations at, literally everyone wrote on their comment card something like “I have received Jesus as my savior.”¹⁹⁸ Next Generation did not to the same degree, since they were working with an established church and specifically Sunday School teachers. Still, they were careful to include, on the last day of their seminar, a brief message that if any of the participants had never personally accepted Jesus into their heart, they could do that now. Thus, even in neo-Evangelical circles such as WMY where groups are comfortable doing “social” projects as opposed to “strictly spiritual”, there is still a strong affinity for evangelism and attracting new converts.

Difficulty post-recession in 2010s

Some STM organizations have perceived that participation has decreased in the 2010s. One Evangelical organization known for its STM trips, Teen Mania, closed its doors in 2015; the founder, Ron Luce, mentions changing expectations in a new generation of young people as one factor (Lee 2015). Some personnel at WMY felt that they were in a decline as well. Older leaders who had been on teams in the 1990s would reminisce that during their time as team member, the training camp was a lot more full. Staff members speculated that teenagers might now be choosing to go on summer trips with their church or family.¹⁹⁹ One staff member told me after the 2012 teams had finished that she felt things had gotten more difficult with rising costs, especially after 9/11. She wondered what would happen as things get more expensive, with the economy not doing so well.

¹⁹⁸ Though I cannot dwell on the dynamics of this type of reporting, it is a concern for local *watumishi* and long-term expatriate missionaries. Those partnering with Rise felt their numbers were dubious; in fact the team was counting everyone who prayed their prayer – many of whom would have already been Christians and prayed along because they are used to following along in prayer aloud.

¹⁹⁹ This could be related to the ease in international communication; up through the 2000s it would have been very difficult for the average person with no contacts in Tanzania (for example) to coordinate a mission trip on their own, but now it is very easy with almost universal access to mobile phones and particularly smartphones.

9.3. Neo__ism: Criticisms of Short-term Mission

In this section, I discuss some of the criticisms of short-term mission, and how these are handled. I demonstrate that many of these criticisms are circulating *within* the Evangelical and STM community, and argue that this type of self-conscious critique has actually become part of the makeup of STM.

a) Neo-imperialism

Short-term mission has often been criticized as an expression of the “White Man’s Burden”. Originally the topic of an imperialist poem written by Rudyard Kipling, the concept was a justification for white imperialists to justify incursions into Africa and Asia, which were portrayed as efforts to benefit others and bring them the fruits of civilization.

There are numerous parallels in short-term mission. To begin with, it is obviously very white. During my research, I observed the visits of 118 Americans in detail, and dozens more incidentally. All but five were Caucasian. Second, Evangelical visitors speak of “burdens” frequently; they may have a burden for children, or albinos, or whomever. Members of the WMY group prayed that God would give them a burden for Tanzanian people. According to the leaders, a burden is something that compels; if you truly have a “burden for the lost” then you will be compelled to tell them about Jesus.²⁰⁰

However, I don’t even need to consult my fieldnotes to discuss STM as “white man’s burden”, because many Christian commentators—including proponents of short-term mission—are doing it themselves. Peter Greer (2012) discusses awareness of negative results as the “second wave” of mission (and especially short-term) engagement, an awareness motivated by secular economists’ writings, particularly Dambisa Moyo (2009) and William Easterly (2006, a volume titled ‘The White Man’s Burden’). Reese (2016) concludes that short-term mission does

²⁰⁰ This takes care of “white” and “burden”, but as for “man”, in my observations STM participants skew towards female. However, my research is unable to address this dynamic in any detail.

tend to foster a problem of dependency and a White Man's Burden dynamic, while Busby's (2012) blog post offers advice on how to avoid a White Man's Burden tendency.

None of these articles really seriously question racial dynamics, and in fact barely any mention it at all (though some websites, like the satirical Barbie Savior Instagram,²⁰¹ do poke fun at it). I have elsewhere argued that encounters between locals and visitors (in my case, Tanzanian *watumishi* and American *wageni*) do become racially inflected as multiple areas of shifting meanings of race come together, resulting in disjunctures of understanding. These disjunctures, coupled with the guest-host dynamic and the lack of in-depth knowledge characteristic of short-term mission in general, reveal patterns of inequality and tensions inherent in the changing context of Christian mission (Christian 2016).

Neither do Christian commentators offer a critical analysis of some of the development impulses inherent in STM. Recommendations in the articles I mention read like harm-reduction strategies: the premise of having short-term mission is not in itself seriously questioned, and the discussion is rather how to improve it. Although teenagers building a church is very different from the type of industry that James Ferguson and others have studied, many Christian commentators (including Greer and Busby, cited above) explicitly connect STM to "development" and understand it in economic terms such as those used by Moyo and Easterly.

In poststructural critiques of development, a major theme is the de-politicization of poverty, rendering complex political issues into technical problems that are easily fixable, by us. There are definite parallels between this and what participants in STM trips, such as WMY's, are told: *You* can change these people's lives. The ad copy for one of WMY's projects states, "Imagine having to walk miles just to get drinking water each day! Come to Malawi, Africa and bring not only water, but also the living water of Christ to the Malawi people as you work hand

²⁰¹ <https://www.instagram.com/barbiesavior/>

in hand with local Malawians to provide a well for a local village.” Other projects are advertised similarly, encouraging teenagers that they will personally be able to provide people with shoes or glasses.

Another post-structuralist critic of development, Hobart (1993) particularly focuses on “ignorance” as a characteristic of development. Ferguson (1990, 26–28) argues that development does not propagate deliberate lies, but that misrepresentations are inevitable and in fact necessary for “development” to function. This is also true in STM. WMY’s ad copy for the Tanzania team invites prospective participants to “Watch the faces of the children light up as you come into their schools bringing the story of Jesus to them for the first time.” When asked if they thought there were any Chagga people who had never heard of Jesus, most of my pastor friends just laughed at what they considered a ridiculous question.

Other groups that I observed also misrepresented the state of Christianity they encountered. One of the Next Generation team members wrote a blog post about his experience, where he constructed a “thriving against all odds” narrative about the parish they visited (Wona, where I conducted observations). It had about 1000 members, he said – that much was true. However, he said this was remarkable since the average African church has less than 100 members, and that Wona was the largest church in Kilimanjaro Region. In reality, for the Northern Diocese, 1000 is almost exactly the average reported membership, and no parish has less than 100.²⁰²

My goal here is not to make fun of well-meaning but sometimes less well-informed American Christians. I do not suggest that they were being disingenuous in order to dupe potential supporters or participants. There is a lack of connection between the STM organization staffer who copies and pastes last year’s ad copy into this year’s brochure, the teenage participant

²⁰² The largest Lutheran parish in Kilimanjaro Region is Lyasongoro with 3674 members. Additionally, membership may often be under-reported, when parish pastors want to avoid greater responsibility. I do not have statistics for Pentecostal or Catholic churches, whose numbers may be similar or larger.

who excitedly sets out on door-to-door evangelism and is (partly, and uncomfortably) disappointed to find every door opened by a member of the Lutheran church, and the parish facilitator whose English isn't great and who does not grasp what the participant was hoping for. Perhaps ignorance, in this type of encounter, is inevitable. Those who visit for ten days at a time—even if they do it dozens of times—will undoubtedly remain ignorant on many of the actual dynamics that inform Tanzanian Christianity.²⁰³ The narratives that are constructed out of this experience then portray a state of affairs to those back home in America, which—incomplete though it may be—is part of what keeps short-term mission going.

For their part, the *watumishi* that facilitated these visits were also unfamiliar with many dynamics in American Christianity. Those that hosted the WMY group were unaware that the teenagers initially thought they would be doing “first evangelism”, or that they were considering all those that prayed along with the “prayer of salvation” to have been saved for the first time that day. When I mentioned this to them, they seemed rather bemused.

One of the most common currents within STM groups is the awareness of various criticisms of STM. Christian magazines and blogs run articles with titles like “Why you should consider cancelling your mission trips” (Carlson 2012) and “Five reasons your short-term mission trip might do more harm than good” (Threlfall 2014),²⁰⁴ a theme several groups assumed would form one of my research questions. Howell (2012, 199, 203) writes that there have always been mission practitioners and missiologists who find STM problematic, or who have suggested reforms. But while a self-conscious criticism from within is now one of the features of STM, I argue that this criticism is at present partial. It presents a discussion of the White Man's Burden and connects STM to development and aid in an economic sense, but in addition to Howell's

²⁰³ Interestingly enough though, this same criticism is sometimes applied to the *bishop*.

²⁰⁴ These articles do not recommend *actually* cancelling your mission trip.

(2012, 192) claim that STM does not address (and even *obscures*) awareness of global structural poverty, I argue that STM does not seriously interrogate the ethnic dynamics, nor the aspects of depoliticization and misrepresentation associated with development.

b) Neoliberalism and commercialization of the religious experience

Within Evangelical circles (including the blogosphere), very few discussions of (short-term) mission examine the role of neoliberalism. Brahinsky (2013), reviewing Howell (2012), criticized him for not unpacking the relationship as thoroughly as he might. And yet the relationship between evangelical Christianity and neoliberal capitalism is a difficult and complex one to sort through; Connolly (2005, 874–76) has characterized the link not as simple causality or shared allegiance, but a “resonance” where evangelicalism and neoliberal capitalism continually feed into and reproduce each other.

Interestingly enough, liberalization and privatization in the Tanzanian economy coincided with the growth of STM in the 1980s. *Ujamaa* socialism ended in 1985 when policies of *utaifishaji* “nationalization” were replaced with *ubinafsishaji* “privatization”. Structural adjustment plans were enacted at the same time, promoting private investment, deregulating public services including health and education, and devaluing the Tanzanian shilling. Over the next fifteen years benchmarks such as GDP and school enrollment declined (Vavrus 2005, 182). I asked former bishop Erasto Kweka about his experience with respect to the work of the church between *Uhuru* (Independence, in 1963), *Ujamaa* (Socialism, 1967-1985) and afterwards. He was born in 1934, ordained a minister in 1964, and was bishop from 1976-2004. Until about 1972, he said, at least 75% of the primary and secondary education in the country was being done by churches. They didn’t have so many partners as they do now, but the relationships they had were good, and it was important to maintain them because of how much people relied on

their service provision. However, he said, things got worse after privatization: corruption and selfishness increased, and SAPs caused a lot of harm. I had read that SAPs provided a new context for engagement between churches and the state (Green 2003, 5), but Kweka seemed puzzled when I asked him if the diocese saw an increased scope of ministry as a result of structural adjustment, and he replied with a question of his own. “Isn’t the church its people? We didn’t have the income.” Vavrus (2005) demonstrates that in Kilimanjaro, structural adjustment policies were linked to public perceptions of *maisha magumu* “difficult life”, lack of opportunities in education and employment, and increased risk of AIDS.

At the same time, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, short-term mission was growing. I suggest that there is a close and probably complementary relationship between neoliberalism and the growth of the short-term mission enterprise. Religious organizations became social service providers, and faith-based policies made for a new type of relationship between religion and the nation-state (Stambach 2009, 2ff). And, although religion is not itself a public service in the way that health and education provision are, it too has experienced a lot of commercialization, and short-term mission trips are part of this. Trips are packaged and sold in shiny brochures. Similar discussions of commodification have been happening in development and tourism studies vis-a-vis voluntourism (see Smith 2014). Church functions become commodified, and in some senses STM can be seen as a kind of adjunct or reserve labour. In addition, religious organizations can be seen to supplant state function as Stambach (2009) discusses. At the same time, STM is often conceptualized as bringing relief to those suffering from poverty or lack of education: a state of affairs which was likely exacerbated by the very same withdrawal of the state.

c) **Neo-romanticism and neo-primitivism**

Fiedler discussed the romantic philosophy that informed the Leipzig missionaries' work in Kilimanjaro, particularly in Gutmann's cultural conservatism. Today, this is seen as one thing that was a major contributor to the success of the Lutheran church in Kilimanjaro. But romanticism is not unproblematic. Here I'll discuss ways in which STM constructs two "positive" narratives of African people – one spiritual and one cultural, but both concerned with authenticity.

The spiritualized poor

A common feeling among short-term missionaries is that African people—particularly the poor—have a more inherent experience of God, or a more immanent, authentic, or pure spiritual life. Mission trips are often conceptualized as an opportunity for personal spiritual growth, spurred on by the "simple faith of the poor" (Howell 2012, 100, see also pp. 30f, 63, 178). Rev. Thompson, who had a role in getting the Nebraska-Northern Diocese partnership and the annual visits off the ground, told me, "Tanzanians have so much to share with the vision trip participants. They have an experience of God that we can't live without, that we need." The traveller's manual for the 2015 Nebraska trip told participants that "Africa is a land of contrasts, but none more profound than the faith and joy which flows from a people so impoverished." WMY team members also spoke about seeing how Tanzanian people, who have to walk several miles to school, or who may not have easy access to clean water, worshipping God was a spiritually edifying experience.

One of the Next Generation team members displays a similar dynamic in his blog posts; he discusses how parishioners at Wona have a spirituality that is more to be admired than what "we Americans" have. This is one of the things that all four of my short-term groups had in common: The perception that Tanzanian Christians had an undoubtedly joyful and genuine faith, as

evidenced by their physical comportment in worship (singing, dancing, smiling, clapping), bringing tithes of cash or especially agricultural goods which are (incorrectly) perceived to be given when one is too poor to bring money, and their generosity and hospitality. These are often mentioned by *wageni* as existing in spite of (or perhaps because of) Tanzanians' perceived poverty and especially authentic culture, which I examine next.

The “culturally rich” Africans

Paralleling a perception of Africans as “spiritualized poor” is a perception of cultural richness. Many visitors connect an observation of genuine faith to their perception of culture, specifically that Tanzanians (and Africans in general) are more culturally rich and expressive – perhaps a similar dynamic to the Leipzig perception that all *Völker* have a spirituality that is inherent to them. But just as German romanticism gave an inverted prestige to the common person (Fiedler 1996, 14), romanticism in STM does a similar task with the African person.

Rise team members mentioned, at the start of their project, their expectations including “experience God in a deeper way”; after attending worship services at a Pentecostal church just outside Arusha, the team talked about their impressions.

“Seeing the kids dance was encouraging, they are so joyful in worship.”

“They’re way more expressive. Is that denominational or cultural?” (It was agreed probably cultural.)

“People were sincerely worshipping the whole time. I’d love to bring this back to America.”

“I often have a hard time with loud and expressive music at home, it seems like people are just caught up in the loud music, but not here.”

“At home, ‘contemporary’ music seems more like a shell, but here you can tell it’s genuine.”

Many visitors to Tanzania, whether they call themselves tourists, missionaries, or something else, want to have “authentic” cultural experiences. Missionaries especially delight in the ability to go where tourists don’t – to see ordinary people’s homes and farms, for example, where they can experience what African life is “really like”. In general, a common perception is that to be authentic, African culture should look quite a lot different, but it also shouldn’t be too commercial. Thus the lack of perception of “real culture” in towns like Moshi,²⁰⁵ or even in Chagga areas in general compared to Maasai areas (see Christian 2016 for a comparison of *wageni* perceptions of Chagga and Maasai ethnicity); and the simultaneous antipathy for the Maasai cultural villages which are suspected to be fake, or the widespread practice of charging tourists for taking photos. However “culture” is not just perceived in terms of Maasai, Chagga, or any other ethnicity, but in terms of a general African-ness. In fact, some *wageni* probably have no idea of local ethnic demographics. Rather, they often refer to “African culture” in terms of how people love to dance, sing, clap, and just generally be more enthusiastic, particularly in church. All four of the STM groups I observed discussed at least once how they appreciated the way that people dance in church, walk long distances to get to church, or seem more excited while in church.

Dancing and general liveliness are seen as really authentic, both culturally and spiritually. To *wageni*, it’s indicative of a fervor of faith existing in spite of perceived material poverty, or even because of it. Spiritualized poverty and cultural richness go hand in hand. When I was in talks with WMY to do my pilot research with them in 2012, I said I wanted to observe the Tanzania team, since I’d been on it before, I was planning on continuing research in East Africa, I spoke Swahili, and it would have both work and evangelism projects. The WMY director wanted to send me with the Zambia team instead. When I asked why, he replied that he did not

²⁰⁵ Barbie Saviour has recently skewered this; see <https://www.instagram.com/p/BLrMXVFA0Sw/>

care either way himself, but that he thought I might prefer it because their Zambia location was more remote. With Tanzania, he said, “You will not get the real culture of the people that's in the bush.” I said that I did not mind, since I would be observing the team and not the locals. He pointed out that the Zambia team would be more affected by the greater degree of rurality and poverty in their location as opposed to Tanzania.

Poverty and rurality are associated not just with a need for help or mission, but with a more real and immediate culture, with a greater degree (or quality) of spirituality in comparison, and by extension, with a greater potential for personal edification for a team of visitors.

9.4. Problematizing "short-term mission"

Although short-term mission has formed a stable category within American Evangelicalism for several decades, I argue that it has become a highly flexible and permeable phenomenon, and can now mean almost anything – or nothing. To put it another way, “typical” STM does not exist anymore, if it ever did. However this lack of unitary cohesion nevertheless does not render it incoherent. The diversification and decentralization of short-term mission is an important facet of what mission is today.

a) American lack of desire to fit into the category

When I started planning my research, my main strategy was to contact groups that were going to be doing short-term mission trips in Tanzania in 2015-2016 and see if they could connect me with their Tanzanian contacts. I eventually added 94 such groups to my list, and I contacted 26 of them. I did not expect all or even most to be interested, and I was right. I had framed my research as being about short-term mission, and several organizations wanted to distance themselves from it.

“We’re not typical STM”

Many organizations advertise for people to join their “mission trips” to Tanzania, but upon reading my research proposal, they pointed out that they were not typical short-term mission trips. Organizational representatives replied to me that they did not meet my criteria, giving various reasons:

“The project ... is run by Tanzanians with no long term ‘white’ missionaries.”

“We have developed deep relationships with people in Tanzania [and] work together in determining ... the best approaches. ... So, I am not sure [Organization] meets your criteria for short-term missions. I would not say ours is a short-term mission organization, even though our mission trips last only two to three weeks.”

“These are not trips that we will be sending lay teams to work with the locals. They are more interacting with existing partners regarding existing partnerships.”

“I was a 3-year missionary teacher at the [school in Tanzania], so our group is not a typical STM group, as most of the groups I’ve encountered are not facilitated by a former missionary with a strong cultural understanding.”

One organization that did agree to participate (although in the end it was not possible due to scheduling conflicts) expressed repeatedly, in nearly every email, that while they would go along with my research, they still weren’t sure they fit my criteria:

I am not sure we qualify as the kind of group you are looking for. I see the groups we bring out as less “service trips” and more “vision trips.” ... We are trying to have an impact on the lives of people in TZ. We will engage in activities in connection with the hospital in [village]. But the main focus of the trip will be asking the question, what is God doing in TZ, how do I fit into that and how is that impacting my life? (That may be by helping while we are there, it may be in ways that will be discovered when they return home. We are trying to have a positive impact on folks in TZ and help make life “better” for them. We are trying not to just use them for ourselves – which you could take my goal to be. That is not what we are about. We have a broader ministry than the trips.

The disqualifiers for STM identification thus included: Having long-term relationships with Tanzanian groups, having no long-term expatriate missionaries,²⁰⁶ not doing construction or

²⁰⁶ This is particularly interesting, in that it basically adds up to “we are not a short-term mission organization, because we have no long-term missionaries”

evangelizing, having regular communications with Tanzanians, sending only specialized teams rather than laypeople or general volunteers, having an expatriate team leader with more local familiarity, having a focus on learning, and having a focus on improving Tanzanian people's lives.

Some of these may be in contradiction with each other, and every short-term mission group I've come across claims some of the above points, whether or not they eschew the "short-term mission" label. In fact, the Fellowship of Short-Term Mission Leaders includes "Empowering Partnerships" as one of its guidelines for best practice in STM; definitely not as a disqualifier (Howell 2012, 202). Worldwide Missions for Youth at times emphasizes the goal of making a difference in the lives of Tanzanians (e.g., in their brochure blurbs), and at other times de-emphasizes this, focusing instead on personal spiritual development (e.g., during leader training sessions, and team devotional sessions). Balancing these different orientations produces a state of ambiguity. Likewise, a kind of ambivalence prevails about whether or not one is a short-term missionary, or even a missionary in general (Howell 2012, 48). STM organizations move away from "typical" STM, but in different ways, thus making "typical" STM non-existent.

Changing names

As criticism of STM grows (including from within) and desire to identify as STM wanes, organizations have frequently started calling their efforts other things. In fact, this is the *first* suggestion that Carlson (2012) gives for improving short-term mission:

Change the name. ... we all live on mission in the context where God has placed us, and when we leave that context for a short period of time for a focused time of ministry, we are participating in short-term ministry. When we serve in another culture we then should call it "Short-Term Cross-Cultural Ministry."

This seems to be a common strategy. Several of the groups I found, when looking for short-term mission trips, had started calling them "international ministry trips" or similar. Of my

American research participants, only one group, Nebraska had rebranded itself. The synod website description says:

A “Vision Trip” is different from a “Mission Trip.” We will not step off the plane and set about building a church or a school. We go to learn from our brothers and sisters in Christ, to pray and worship with them, and to bring encouragement, support and love. We will learn to walk in the shoes of our Tanzanian brothers and sisters and the hardships and joys that come with that walk.

Thus, in some circles there has been a move away from considering short-term mission to be “mission”, in using terms like “vision” or “ministry” instead – although I argue that it still occupies the conceptual space of mission.

b) Tanzanian lack of the category

I described in Chapter 1 how asking my Tanzanian friends about “short-term missionaries” usually resulted in confusion, since it’s not a familiar term. Any temporary visitors are classed as *wageni*, visitors. Records of 206 visits made their way into volumes 10 and 11 of the *Wageni* file (spanning 2007-2015), and these are not all of them by any means; the WMY visits aren’t recorded there, nor were some of the other casual visits I observed during my research. These included: 14 visits from other African church bodies (a Kenyan choir, bishops of Uganda, Zambia, Kenya, women’s groups, etc.), a few documents relating to gap-year volunteers, two visits from potential investors, 20 secular civil society visits, 22 visits from individual- or family-organized groups, 23 visits from para-church organizations, 20 visits stemming from historical mission partnerships (especially Leipzig Mission), 70 visits from groups which I would classify as having more formal or structural partnerships (this includes 38 visits from groups connected to the Nebraska Synod partnership, 24 groups from various German Lutheran churches, 3 from Sweden, 3 from other American groups, 1 from the LWF, and 1 from Finland), 27 visits from other individual parishes, seven occasions where Northern Diocese personnel were the guests

visiting other places (Montana, Zambia, Kenya, Germany, etc.), and one random tourist who had a mutual acquaintance with one of the diocese pastors and was asking about where to attend church and safari company recommendations (Dr. Shoo was happy to oblige both requests). These are all filed together with the records of what would be immediately recognizable to Americans as “short-term mission trips”. So the category that short-term missionaries fit into, in Tanzania, is quite a lot broader, and “mission” is not even part of the definition.

Mch. Msanga told me once, “We don’t have missionaries anymore.” And I never did hear anyone refer to *wageni* (including self-identified short-term missionaries) as *wamisionari*. This, for most Tanzanians, is a career choice and a mainly historical category. The Northern Diocese constitution does mention *wamisionari*; officially, the diocese considers these ministers from any other diocese who are employed by the diocese. “Partners”, then, are firmly excluded from the official definition.

Of course, the diocese does not have the ability to dictate what “being a missionary” involves for people not working *for* them. Several of the groups or individuals whom they partner with regularly *do* consider themselves to be missionaries or missionary organizations. However, that is not a salient feature of their relationship with the Northern Diocese; the diocese does not consider them to be missionaries *for their purposes*. That’s an important caveat; it’s not my job to say who is and isn’t a missionary, and based on my observation of relationships, and how those relationships are worked out, I don’t think the diocese considers that to be their job either. As such I did not go out of my way to ask diocese pastors whether they thought any particular group constituted missionaries. Being a missionary, for the diocese, is similar to an employment relationship, it comes with responsibilities and rights, which are not part of their relationship with *wageni*, even those in long-term ministry in Tanzania. As for short-term people,

in the *Wageni* files, their activities are not once referred to as “mission” – although some of the documents do mention groups *visiting* mission projects. They are not required or expected to learn Swahili, join a parish, accept a job posting, or attend meetings. That is why they are received as guests, and the diocese is happy to work with them even though they may have different underlying philosophies or methodologies of ministry.

c) Diversification in Short-Term Mission

In Chapter 8 I discussed the ways in which mission experienced a huge diversification and even destabilization following the independence of many African nations and churches. Here I add several ways in which STM has both reflected and contributed to that.

Missionaries have gotten younger. Of my four groups in Tanzania, two were mainly students – the WMY group, of 13-17 year olds; and the Rise group, mostly college students but a few high school students as well, along with the leaders’ children, the youngest being 10 years old. As for WMY, they now have programs for kids as young as four. Though during the emergence of STM, these youth may have been considered more as possible recruits or interns (Howell 2012, 75ff), their inclusion in the conceptual category of mission has now become relatively mainstream.

Visits have gotten shorter. Mission used to be considered a profession or a career; while this sense still does exist, it’s no longer a given. Nobody gets on a boat and expects to never come home. The subsequent model of several years’ tour followed by a “furlough”, an extended home visit for reporting and fundraising, was quite common, but these days even career missionaries can expect to visit home more frequently than that; a return flight between Kilimanjaro and the Eastern US can be had for under \$1500. Gap year volunteers have proliferated: the diocese has several of them on formal arrangements at any given time;²⁰⁷ I also

²⁰⁷ During my research, these were all German women between 19-21.

met numerous free-agent style gap year people. And, of course, short-term visits. Of the groups I observed, NG was in Tanzania for 10 days; Rise, 21 days; Nebraska, 13 days; WMY (2015) 20 days.

In one sense, missionaries have gotten less professional. Although some *wageni* are, like the Tanzanian pastors, *watumishi* in the sense of being professional religious ministers, most are not. Particularly this is true of student groups. Of the Nebraska group, several parish pastors were in attendance, but most of the group was a middle-class cross-section. In another sense, missionaries have gotten *more* professional, in that professions other than “religious minister” are considered valid missionary work. Doctors and dentists’ mission trips are popular; the *Wageni* file records a mission trip from an electrical engineer who was assisting with lighting installations. Teaching English has become a huge category of mission work, raising questions amongst both researchers and Christian commentators: In what sense is teaching English spreading the gospel? Is just any Christian already a qualified missionary, or just any English speaker already a qualified English teacher? (see Stambach 2009 for an account of evangelism-through-English). In some circles this is known as being a tentmaker – St. Paul’s day job was tentmaking, so this means using your profession, whatever it is, as an anchor or a source of legitimate income in order to enable evangelistic work in your “free” time. In the 21st century, English is the new tents.

Former mission agencies and other faith-based organizations take on new roles with “partnership” or “friendship” models. As religious organizations become more institutionalized, corporatized or secularized, the visits undertaken through these partnerships might even come to resemble business or dignitary trips more than mission trips. The diocese regularly hosts visitors from groups such as Opportunity Education Fund (a secular educational organization, but with

close links to the Nebraska Synod), St. Joseph Medical Centre in Towson, MD, Catholic Health Initiatives, and so on who carry out projects including tablet education programs, construction, and mosquito net distribution.

d) Divergent identities

In the context of this diversification of short-term mission work, I soon observed that visits to Tanzania were often more fraught for American visitors than they were for Tanzanian hosts. Many visitors experienced their identity as source of tension; they self-consciously discussed their identification or non-identification as missionaries, tourists, workers, or friends (see also Howell 2012, 167, 191).

Some *wageni* considered themselves missionaries and spent devotional times reminding each other that they were *not* there as tourists but to bring the light of the gospel. A couple members of the 2012 team discussed how they were a bit disappointed in the trip listing in the brochure, which mentions tourist attractions. They agreed that sightseeing wasn't *bad*, but it's not their purpose, so it was disingenuous to allocate that much space to it in the brochure blurb. And they were right, WMY says that's not what they are. This is literally the first point in leader training: In Part 1 of the WMY General Policies, under Section A, "What We Are Is Not", Point 1 says: "A Sightseeing Tour." But at the same time, the team leader was irritated at them all. He complained, "This team is always tourists, not missionaries – they are *not* serious about sharing the gospel." The leader of the 2015 team didn't share that view. She mentioned to me that they were expected to include some sightseeing and shopping time, since parents get mad if kids don't come home with souvenirs. And they were on tourist visas, even though Tanzania has a volunteer visa which they were supposed to get, but which costs two and a half times as much. In fact, other *wageni* have complained to the diocese about these immigration fees.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁸ Wageni vol. 10

Meanwhile, other groups, such as the Nebraska delegation, did consider themselves to be “just visiting”. One participant said, “People think we’re putting on a roof or building something, we’re not. Well we are, we’re building relationships. We’re here to learn about things and make friendships.” But at times, there was discomfort when they perceived they were being approached as benefactors, thus calling into question their identity as “friends”. I suggest that these tensions apparent among *wageni* arise from a situation of ambiguity where multiple possibilities present themselves, are perceived as mutually exclusive, and a resolution is desired, but difficult to obtain. However, in general the diocese *watumishi* did not seem to be troubled by this ambiguity; Stambach (2009, 125) argues that ambiguity is a normal part of Chagga life.

e) What is “mission” about short-term mission?

If those working in short-term mission are starting to reject the term, and it’s not considered to be a salient feature of what *wageni* are doing in Tanzania, then what is so *missionary* about it? There are several aspects in which “mission” is still salient.

First, it’s not universal that STM is rejecting the “mission” label. Many short-term mission trip participants do see themselves as exactly that. One WMY Tanzania team report reads:

Right now our trip is coming to a close and the team is getting ready to go into Moshi to enjoy a day of tourism and shopping but like we have all discussed, we’re full time missionaries and just because your surroundings change doesn’t mean that your mission does. Whether we’re on the side of a mountain in Africa or in the middle of our own home town we are all missionaries on our mission field.

Second, mission is actually a broader category than commonly discussed. This is hinted at above as well: while in some theorizations of mission, it does have discrete borders, in other contexts any kind of work for God can be thought of as mission, and, in this sense, it parallels the two senses of the term *watumishi*.

Third, in spite of the “we are all missionaries all the time” rhetoric, mission trips *are* experienced as something different from ordinary (read “less missionary”) life, and even though organizations may be moving away from calling them “mission”, for participants, they are still recognizably part of the project of “mission”. Churches may call their travel “cross-cultural ministry” but administratively they include it in the “mission” department; groups (such as NG) may not refer to themselves as missionaries, but they advertise their “mission trips” online. The Americans I encountered in Tanzania all considered their travel to be part of the continuing history of mission, regardless of how they felt about whether they themselves were missionaries, whether they felt it was a muddy question, or an obvious yes or no.

I have written that some groups of *wageni* expressed a “fuzziness” about their identity as missionaries, while others who definitely considered themselves missionaries often acted in ways that revealed a tension with other identities (e.g. as tourists), and still others who considered themselves *not* missionaries also felt conflicted at times with mission-y desires.

I suggest that these ambivalences about what mission actually involves or looks like *are* part of mission today, and this is especially true of short-term mission in that it showcases these ambivalences and brings out the tensions in identity particularly well. The debates within churches about whether they should call that group of students a “short-term mission” team or a “cross-cultural ministry” team; the obvious discomfort that the parish partnership committee chairman feels when his Tanzanian counterpart keeps making financial requests, while in the same breath both are gushing about how great it is they have an equal and two-way partnership; the token “if you’ve grown up your whole life in the church but have never actually given your life to Jesus” section of the Sunday School teachers’ seminar are part of what makes mission what it is.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

Throughout this thesis, I have pointed out some of the connections between the three areas on which I've focused: local Christianity, theology, and mission. By way of conclusion, I will revisit these themes, and draw a more detailed connection between each of them.

10.1. Theology and social relationships

For my interlocutors, theology and social relationships are mutually constitutive. This is apparent in the structure of the diocesan hierarchy as an ideological apparatus (Lester 2005, 17), in how it arranges persons, places, and authority positions. In an *mtumishi*, theological understandings of service, ministry, and authority (both divine and ecclesiastical) structure social relationships between pastor, parishioner, diocese and church leaders, political authorities – and amongst pastors themselves. At the same time, locally understood ideas of honor, authority, and political strategizing influence how the office of *mtumishi* is articulated and experienced.

Identity as Chagga people is enacted and negotiated in Lutheran practice, including in how *watumishi* discuss the role of language in liturgy and song, while Christian values are performed in rituals understood to be part of Chagga spiritual heritage. *Watumishi* also navigate connections between national politics and their identities as Chagga people and as Lutherans. They do so in various ways, and I have highlighted aspects of pedagogy and “figuring out” in theology. Theology as pedagogy may be seen as an effort at continuation of identities, especially as Lutherans. Not only do *watumishi* teach theological concepts, including Lutheran doctrine in contrast to Catholicism and especially Pentecostalism, they encourage parishioners, students, and each other to use theological concepts such as reconciliation to guide their “figuring out” of salvation and other Christian ideals.

It may seem painfully obvious to argue that theology deeply influences Christianity, but this is a conceptual relationship that has in general been glossed over by anthropology, which has often looked to processes of negotiating meaning (Geertz 1973; Engelke and Tomlinson 2007), authority (Asad 1983), or political and economic realities (Green 2003). These elements of Christianity are not unimportant, but anthropological conceptions of theology as a formal articulation of normative dogma miss a crucial aspect of Christian life, particularly the lives of pastors and other ministers.

In the sense of “figuring out”, theology directly addresses the relationship between various identities that obtain in popular Christianity in Northern Tanzania, and it is mobilized in negotiating tensions between them. I have argued that while theology can (and often *does*) have a normative aspect in bringing authority to bear on social situations, much theologizing, whether formal or informal, is oriented towards questions of potential. Today’s African theologians “figure out” questions such as “How can African Christians better integrate their understandings of salvation and ecology in order to address the aspects of climate change that are directly affecting them?” (Golo 2013), “How can the Tanzanian Church work creatively towards eradicating poverty, broadly understood?” (Maanga 2010), “How can African theology continue to be innovative, progressive, and relevant?” (Magesa 2004), and “How can we understand the Church as a truly global body, and how might that understanding affect what the Church does?” (Munga 2009). Orientations towards normativity and potentiality are not exclusive; for example Maanga takes a strong normative position (“Poverty must be eradicated”), but these theologies and others articulated informally in meetings, sermons, Bible studies, and discussion groups also orient themselves towards what *could* be, and how they might be brought about.

10.2. Theology and the practice of mission

Theology is also mutually constitutive with the practice of mission, in that mission proceeds from theological underpinnings (which may be explicitly spelled out in formal theological treatises, or vaguely understood by mission trip participants), and often articulates with current theological discussions. Diocese pastors understand mission partnerships partly in terms of formal doctrinal articulations of what mission is, but in addition, I have argued that transnational religious encounters in mission, such as those between *wageni* and diocese *watumishi*, may be understood in terms of theological concepts such as hope. Particularly, I have borrowed Fountain's use of "hopeful acts of friendship" and reapplied it to a mode of understanding such partnerships in a way that includes, but does not reduce them to, financial aspirations, unequal power relations, or opportunities for self-improvement on the part of visitors.

Theology and Christian mission—especially as manifested in 21st century "partnerships"—reflect and reproduce each other, a point which may again seem like a given to most scholars of theology or mission, but one which has not been fully developed in anthropology. Furthermore, I have broadened the scope of mutual constitution beyond examining formal theologies of mission (although I have examined one such theology, "Accompaniment") in giving an ethnographic account of how global theological trends become instantiated in specific locations, and how partnerships influence the production of theologies besides those around mission. Global partnerships between churches, including at a broad-based level which subsumes what is typically thought of as "mission", influence popular theology. Theological trends on a global level (e.g. in the LWF) become articulated at national, regional, and local levels, and I have demonstrated ethnographically how rights-based and environmental theologies are expounded

within the diocese, in terms of local understandings of *haki* and *mazingira* which include and go beyond Western conceptions of rights and the environment.

I have also discussed how dilemmas in partnership—including debates on the neocolonial connections to Christian mission—influence the production of theological reflections on the nature of freedom and unity. These reflections are particularly important for many theologians in Africa (and elsewhere in the Global South, who have formed organizations such as the Ecumenical Association for Third World Theologians). The historical legacy and ongoing experience of mission has become fertile theological ground for many African pastors, as they negotiate a balance between independence, interdependence, liberation, and communion. Other theologians consider how concepts central to mission efforts (including salvation and conversion, and more recent focuses of “holistic mission” such as *diakonia*) may be understood in an African milieu.

I suggest that these articulations between theology and mission are also ways of “figuring out”. Historically mission has been understood in terms of colonial domination. For some theologians who argue for complete liberation of African theology, they may be understood as one and the same. Others, like many pastors in the Northern Diocese, consider themselves to have escaped the worst of colonial mission, but still see aspects of colonial domination in the mission legacy. African pastors and theologians today, in both their theological reflections on mission and their everyday engagements with *wageni* whose work is part of the ongoing history of mission, are “figuring out” how mission may be done best, and how theological inspiration may be drawn from mission partners.

10.3. Mission and local Christianity

Finally, I have examined the ways in which mission occurs in a context of local Christianity. The context of mission has changed significantly, in that it can no longer be seen as primarily a transaction between white Christians and African pagans. Mission becomes extraordinarily slippery and flexible, though still easily discernible as a salient feature of Christianity. Now often existing in “partnerships”, mission is highly contextual in terms of locally understood ideas of relationship, ministry, and identity. The way that Tanzanian pastors and other Christians engage with mission or with visiting partners is shaped by their understandings of religious ministry and what it does or ought to look like. Thus, groups doing evangelistic outreaches are directed into locally salient models of visiting parishioners who are outside the *kundi* or have fallen on hard times rather than the “unchurched” they had been planning on evangelizing; groups who are “just visiting” are given standard tours and shown the hospitality befitting guests.

Similarly, engagements with visitors in mission partnerships reflect Tanzanian pastors’ views on the conceptual basis for and value of personal and organizational relationships. This may include any or all of relationship as an *a priori* value, as a possible revenue stream, as an expression of Christian unity, as a potential for learning about other areas of the world, and as a genuine friendship to be enjoyed. Mission partnerships are also understood in terms of pastors’ own identity as Chagga people or as Lutherans, as expressions of hospitality and guest-host relationships are often ethnically inflected. Short-term mission, which I take to include any short visits, even those conducted under the auspices of stable long-term partnerships, is interpreted by Tanzanian pastors within a given historical and socio-cultural context; it is understood in terms of locally salient values of hospitality and guesthood.

For Northern Diocese pastors, mission (including short-term mission trips) is not something out of the ordinary, something that “punctures” normal life. As a manifestation of *ugeni*, guesthood, it is part of the normal daily work of the diocese. In these encounters, the nature of “mission” has become very ambiguous. This is not only due to the fact that the conceptual category of “mission” both broadened and narrowed simultaneously in different contexts. In mission as experienced in the Northern Diocese today, two highly ambiguous positions, *watumishi* and *wageni*, are immediately juxtaposed. *Watumishi* experience these encounters as part of their day-to-day lives as shepherds and servants, and interpret them in much the same way as they interpret the various other social relationships in their lives which revolve around hospitality, politicking, friendship, hierarchy, and pastoral ministry.

Epilogue

On January 31, 2016, about three months after my fieldwork ended, Baba Askofu was installed as *Askofu Mkuu*, Presiding Bishop, of the ELCT. I returned to Kilimanjaro for the event. The presidential election had been held the previous October, and President John Magufuli installed in November 2015. Although election fever had obviously come to an end, people were still abuzz with political discussions, particularly on Magufuli's early efforts to "lance abscesses" (*kutumbua majipu*).²⁰⁹

At a formal dinner at Baba Askofu's home a few days before the installation, I sat with some guests from Nebraska. One man, who had visited several times previously, told me, "It's good that Shoo is the bishop. They have such a culture here of wanting to put church leaders and bishops above everybody, but he shows humility."

The installation ceremony itself was attended by hundreds of guests and dignitaries, including Edward Lowassa, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa Majaliwa (on behalf of President Magufuli), and representatives of other Tanzanian churches and of all the diocese's major partners. Hundreds more attendees sat in plastic chairs under temporary tents filling the cathedral's parking lot. The main street in Moshi Town was closed and lined with onlookers as a procession of *watumishi* and bishops went by. A veritable feast was thrown at Uhuru Hotel and Conference Centre, for thousands of attendees. Prime Minister Majaliwa was presented with an *ndafu* – not being Chagga, he went along gamely, joking that where he comes from they just make ordinary porridge out of bananas but that he'd be happy to accept *these* bananas. Yet another reception followed at Baba Askofu's home, attended by close to a thousand people. There's no doubt that, as a religious ceremony, it was also closely tied to political and economic

²⁰⁹ This is a metaphor for any task that is immediately unpleasant, but necessary to get rid of an underlying problem.

spheres. Though in my research and in this dissertation I have zoomed in on the church as a *theological* body, I was often reminded that it was also inherently political and economic, and to close I will zoom out again. Perhaps this is best accomplished by Figure 16.



Figure 16: Lunch reception at Uhuru Hotel: Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa Majaliwa (left) shakes hands with Chagga tycoon Reginal Mengi (centre), while retired Northern Diocese bishop Martin Shao (right) looks on. Photo by the author, 2016.

It was an obviously lavish occasion, with numerous parties being thrown before and after the installation. For the reception at home alone, at least eight goats lost their lives, close to 200 crates of soda and bottled water were on hand, and dozens of catering, audiovisual, and security staff had been hired. Baba Askofu, the bishop and church leader, was obviously being “put above everybody”. He was, though, both host (including to numerous foreign *wageni* such as the Nebraskans) and the guest of honor, one who serves and is served generously: The ideal *mtumishi*.

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