

A history of christianity in uganda assignment

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Kevin Ward Began and Charlatanry Began in the 19th Century [1]

Christianity came late to Uganda compared with many other parts of Africa. Missionaries first arrived at the court of Kafka Mutates in 1877, almost a century after the missionary impetus from Europe had begun. And yet within 25 years Uganda had become one of the most successful mission fields in the whole of Africa. What were the causes of this phenomenal success?

Any discussion of Charlatanry In Uganda–the creation of colonialism at the end of the 19th Century–must begin with Began–the ancient Independent kingdom on the rather shores of the lake which the Baghdad call Analyzable (the home of the valuable gods) and which the British christened “ Victoria. ” Over the centuries Began had evolved a complex system of government under a Kafka (king), a system unusual for its high degree of centralization and internal cohesiveness. Another feature of Kananga society, of importance in explaining the eventual success of Christianity, was its remarkable adaptability and receptivity to change.

In 1856 Kafka Mutates Inherited a kingdom which was already the strongest in the region. During his long reign of 28 years he consolidated and enhanced that power. A major part of Muteness’s strategy as rubber was to open up Began to the outside world. Seawall and Arab traders from Zanzibar were encouraged to trade their cotton cloth, guns and luxury Items for Ivory and slaves. But outside Influences did not stop at trade: Islam was soon exerting a profound religious and cultural influence on Began.

By the time Christianity arrived, the impact of Islam had already been felt for a generation. The Impact of Islam [2] In the 19th Century two “ world”

religions–LULAS and Christianity–were both making significant advances in Africa. Often they were in serious competition; and this indeed was the case In Began. But this should not disguise the fact that both Islam and Christianity were In many ways complementary. Both were called “ dint” In contradistinction to the traditional African religious heritage.

Both offered a “ worldview,” a universal explanation of life with all its opportunities and problems. Such systems seemed increasingly relevant to societies, like Began, which were prepared the way for Christianity in a number of ways. In fact, Christianity arrived al strategic time–when Islam had awakened among Baghdad certain needs and aspirations, but before Islam had become 50 entrenched in society that Christianity failed to find a foothold. Islam had, for example, created a thirst for literacy, especially among the young pages (bagatelle) at court.

Christianity was able to build on this interest, and with its printing presses and distribution of cheap books in the vernacular or Swahili, was able to satisfy that interest to a much greater extent than Islam was able to do. But Islam had prepared the way in other ways. The idea of a holy book, of a holy day, of a God above all gods who was interested in the affairs of this life and in the moral life of the individual, the expectation of the resurrection of the body and of a judgment after death–these were concepts pioneered by Islam which received further emphasis from the Christian missionaries.

But how far did the Baghdad already acknowledge such a supreme Gad? Certainly neither Islam nor Christianity needed to import a foreign name in order to proclaim their God. The Baghdad already knew of Katmandu, the

Creator. But the status of this Katmandu has been the subject of controversy within the religious historiography of Began. Was Katmandu just one, very insignificant label? Or had he always been geared as superior to the valuable, high above Mucosa and Kabuki and Magna, but remote from the life of the nation and of the individual, and therefore not the focus of a strong cult?

Whatever the answer to these questions, it is certain that Islam gave a new prominence to Katmandu, and that Christianity built on this growing significance. Thus, in a society already open to new ideas, responsive to the technological, cultural and religious influence of the outside world, first Islam and then Christianity made an impact on Began in the second half of the 19th Century. But if the Began were so receptive to the message of a “ world-religion,” why did they not simply remain with Islam?

How could Christianity not only mount an effective challenge to Islam but eventually become the dominant din of Began, forcing Islam into the position of a small (but tenacious) minority? Answers to this question lie, not in any supposed superiority of Christianity over Islam, but in the volatile political situation of these years. Muteness’s disillusionment with Islam For ten years from 1867 to 1876, Mutates strongly patronized Islam. He learnt some Arabic, attended and even led prayers in a mosque built at the lubing (court), and redder the observation of the Ramadan fast.

Mutates had a genuine intellectual curiosity in the teachings of Islam. One should not discount such interest. But inevitably as a ruler his concern was largely with matters of state. He saw Islam as a valuable cults were not

always so amenable to royal control. But by 1876 this basis for the encouragement of Islam was being undermined by the forces of Muslim Egypt, striving to incorporate the head-waters of the Nile (including Began) into an Egyptian Empire. The visit of Egyptians to Began in 1876 precipitated a crisis in Muteness's relations with Islam.

They criticized the Cabala (direction) of the court mosque and the fact that the uncircumcised king should lead the Friday prayers. They also encouraged Began Muslims strictly to observe Islamic food laws and to refuse to eat meat slaughtered by the Casaba's butchers. The subsequent defiance of a number of young bagatelle (pages) led to the execution of some 100 Muslims at Amongst, one of the traditional execution sites of Began. For Mutates it was not simply a matter of insubordination, serious as that was, but a confirmation of fears that Islam was becoming a politically subversive creed.

It was about this time that Henry Morton Stanley visited Mutates. For the Kafka the advent of the Unsung (European) was a welcome opportunity to counteract the Egyptian threat, as well as to get in contact with the actual source of the technological innovations which the Muslims had introduced but did not originate. The arrival of Christian missionaries, 1877 [3] Stanley famous letter to the Daily Telegraph painted a much romanticized picture of Mutates. He represented the Kafka as a great enlightened despot eager to hear the Gospel and speedily to propagate it throughout his kingdom.

The reality was different as the missionaries were soon to discover once they reached Began. But the letter did produce a speedy response in Britain. The

Anglican Church Missionary Society (SMS) hastily assembled a band of enthusiastic missionaries. The first two representatives of this group arrived at the court of Mutates on June 30, 1877, having traveled from Zanzibar on the route pioneered by the Swahili traders. Eighteen months later, on February 17, 1879, a group of French Catholic White Fathers arrived, also by the East Coast route.

The presence of these rival versions of Christianity was immediately a matter of controversy. SMS understandably felt that this was a deliberate attempt to sabotage the Protestant missionary effort. The Catholics on the other hand, and equally understandably, could point to the fact that they had been planning the evangelistic of the lake region of Eastern Africa for many years and were not to be out-staged by the superficial emotions aroused in Britain by Stanley misleading letter.

They could also point to the flimsy and insubstantial nature of the SMS presence in those early years. The rivalry has to be understood against the background of centuries of controversy and warfare between Catholic and Protestant in Europe. In these years (1877-1890) the rivalry was embodied in two individuals: Alexander McKay and FRR. Simenon Lourdes (mapped'). Both were young men in their ass's when they arrived in Began; both delighted in the vigorous cut and thrust of theological debate or rather polemic. The confrontation was a " scandal to the Christendom" (Kiwanis).

But the spectacle was also much appreciated by those in court, who applauded the dialectical skill with which each missionary defended his version of the faith. It should also be noted that the rivalry between the two

religious groups fitted well into the traditional sectionalism of court life. It was to encourage competition and zeal among the Baghdad converts and is one factor in the success of Christianity in Began. For the Christian believer this is the first of many 'contradictions' in the success of Christianity in Uganda: that zeal for the Gospel should be fuelled by prejudice, partisanship and polemic.

Even more scandalous aspects of the rivalry emerged later, with the "wars of religion" and the cut-throat scramble for political power in the sass. The first converts [4] Both Protestant and Catholic missionaries soon attracted a lively interest, especially from the young pages at court, many of whom began to frequent the missionaries' compounds. These bassos (readers, as they were called) enquirers, catchments, and from about 1881, baptized began to form little groups of believers in different sections of the lubber.

The Protestants were especially numerous at the Awaking (the treasury/armory), under the patronage of Chief Kluge a consistent friend of the Protestants, though not a Christian himself. The Catholics developed a strong following in the private quarters of the Kafka. This was a measure of the greater favor the Catholics tended to enjoy. Both Mutates and later Magna came to regard the Protestants with some suspicion. This seems to have originated from the links which SMS had with General Gordon, acting as agent for the Egyptians in Sudan. The second group of SMS missionaries had arrived from the north). Since missionaries had been invited to Began expressly to counter the threat from the north, these links were detrimental to good relations with the Kafka. Moreover the Arabs at court increasingly denounced the missionaries as agents of European imperialism. In 1882 the <https://assignbuster.com/a-history-of-christianity-in-uganda-assignment/>

British actually bombarded Alexandria in Egypt and this was the prelude to gradual takeover of Egypt. SMS missionaries protested that they had non connection with their government; but they could not at times resist pointing out the might of the British Empire.

In the event the authorities were right to be suspicious by the sass the SMS missionaries were openly advocating a British takeover of Uganda; though this is not to say that they had been conscious agents of imperialism in the sass. The Catholic withdrawal [5] The Catholics did not fall under the same suspicion, if only because the French government had little interest in East Africa at this time. Nevertheless what favor the Catholics did enjoy was precarious. Mapped incurred the active hostility of the Muslims at court by his flamboyant and extravagant denunciations of Islam.

In 1882 and even now the precise reasons for their withdrawal are not altogether clear. But it seems that they were particularly concerned about the corruption of their orphans and freed slaves by homosexual practices infiltrating into their orphanage from the nearby lubber. These orphans were, by and large, not Baghdad. The practice of redeeming slaves to provide a nucleus of Christianity was still a major element of heir mission strategy in Began and this may be a sufficient explanation of their withdrawal to the moral haven of Bikini, south of the lake.

The withdrawal did not mean an end to Catholic activity in Began-the pages continued to meet and an increasing number of neophytes were taught. Responsibility for the propagation of the faith increased among Baghdad Catholic converts. Muteness's last years and the succession of Magna By

1897 Mutates had come to realize that a complete alliance with one of the Christian groups was neither practicable nor desirable. (The insistence of both on monogamy was a fundamental obstacle, but there were other factors. Mutates decided that he should identify with none of the new 'dint', while allowing them to stay and extracting what advantages he could from each, without letting any one group get too much power in the country. Mutates was a consummate master at this political balancing act His successor, in the much more difficult international climate of the late 'ass, prove incapable of keeping things under control. Magna succeeded his father in October 1884. He was 18 years old. Magna seems to have lacked strong religious convictions—he was a skeptic in an age of faith.

His emotionality alienated him from the missionaries. Like all Casabas at the beginning of their reign, Magna needed to assert his authority over all elements and factions within the country, including the foreign missionaries (the White Fathers had not yet returned and so at first this meant the Protestants). This general need to assert his authority and the personal antagonisms with the three missionaries in the country (especially with Ashes) led to the death of the first three Baghdad Christians on January 31, 1885.

The young protestant martyrs, Make Kumara, Nana Sergeant and Hussy Lugar, were all members of the mission household. The missionaries were being warned against becoming a focus of political power or political discontent against the young Kafka. The deaths of Bishop Huntington and the Uganda martyrs [6] Whatever may have been his personal attitudes to Christianity, Magna, like his father, was of necessity primarily concerned with

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the political implications of the new religions. By 1885 this was causing very grave anxieties.

The Muslim threat from the north had receded with the Maddest rebellion in the Sudan in 1881. But a new and greater threat to Bugaboo's independence quite suddenly emerged from the East African coast with the intrusion of German imperialism early in 1885. It was fear of a European invasion which principally caused the death in Busboy on October 29, 1885 ignorant of, or chose to ignore, the precarious position of the Christian community within Began and the dangers, in the international climate, of approaching Began by the politically sensitive ' back-door' of Busboy.

Huntington was killed on the orders of the Kafka. His death is often blamed on a fickle and revengeful young king; but this is very unfair to Magna, who was certainly acting on the advice of his read chiefs—including the normally friendly Kluge. Hanging's death, from the Kananga point of view, was a legitimate act of state, designed to ward Off potential invasion. Nevertheless, it was politically a mistake. Huntington had not been heading an invading army—on the way up from the coast his caravan had been ridiculed for its puny size. Hanging's death had repercussions within Began.

It led to further killings of Christians. Only 2 weeks later, on November 15, 1885, Joseph Mucosa Baldheaded was brutally killed for daring to criticize the Kafka for the murder of the Anglican bishop. Baldheaded became the first Catholic martyr. In May and June 1886 a large massacre of Christians, both Catholic and Protestant, took place. Many were executed at Amongst, the traditional execution site also used for the Muslim martyrs of 1876. The

immediate cause for the killings was the Kabob's anger at the disobedience of his Christian pages, in particular their refusal to indulge in homosexual practices.

Charles Lang, the Catholic head of the pages in the king's private apartments, had been particularly vigilant in protecting the Christian boys under his charge from the advances of the Kafka and some of the hives. But, in addition 10 young pages, quite a number of the victims were minor chiefs: men such as Andrew Agway and Matthias Malibu for the Catholics; and Robert Unmanageably, Nana Walking and Freddie Aziza for the Protestants. The youngest page, Kitty, was about 14 years; some of the chiefs were in their ass.

Some of these chiefs were the victims of particular grudges by their seniors- (for example Stroking Mucosa, the Prime Minister), jealous that these up and coming young men would soon be ousting them from power. Undoubtedly these Uganda martyrs (there were Bonjour and Bassos as well as Baghdad) died believing and trusting in Christ as their Savior. They sang hymns on the way to their deaths, preached to their persecutors, strongly believed in a life after death, and their courage and fortitude made a great impression on those who saw them die.

But naturally, secular historians have been cautious about accepting wholesale the simple pieties of hagiography. The deaths of these Christians must be put in the context of the traditional precariousness of life at court, and the deeply ingrained habits of obedience which made Baghdad generally face death holistically if the Kafka so wished. This would put the Christian

martyrs firmly in the long tradition of the skinned, the ritual sacrifice of a number (skinned) of victims at the instigation of one of the valuable. Conversely, it has also been argued imperialism.

There is some truth in all these assessments, traditional and modern, religious and secular. Historical reality is complex and does not admit of simplistic explanation. The martyrs are part of that complex reality. The wars of Religion 1888-1892 [7] Whatever the original motivation of the missionaries, the traumatic events of 1885 ND 1886 convinced many of them that foreign intervention might be the only long- term solution to safeguard the future of Christianity in Began. Meanwhile, however, events in Began pursued an internal logic which at first had little to do with external affairs.

The persecution of Christians (perhaps 200 had died in all) was not part of a coherent strategy to eradicate Christianity. By 1887 Magna had begun to rely on the younger generation of Baghdad leaders- and this meant relying on many who were converts to the new religions. Backed by official favor, the leaders of the three religious groups (Muslims, Protestants and Catholics) began to bring in large quantities of arms and to organize themselves into militaries “ regiments”-the first time that Began had something resembling a standing army.

These soldiers were nicknamed paper and gained a great deal of notoriety for their high-handed attitudes, for rape and plunder. It is one of the ironies of the Christian history of Uganda that the witness of the martyrs (strong in faith but weak and powerless politically and militarily) should have convinced

the survivors that the future of Christianity depended on securing military and political power. Moreover these regiments attracted young men, fortune seekers and adventurers, who saw membership as the new avenue to progress, and who at first had little conception of Islam or Christianity.

Magna at first encouraged these groups as a way of countering the older generation of chiefs. But by 1888 he began to get scared that they were becoming too powerful. His feeble attempt to get rid of the paper provoked a coup, and in April 1888 Magna was overthrown by the united forces of the new religions. Magna fled and sought refuge with the White Fathers at Bikini, to the south of the lake. But the new leaders were soon quarreling among themselves. The Muslims, as the most powerful group in terms of numbers and fire power, were able to oust the Christian groups, who in October 1888 fled to Kabul, on the borders with Moore.

The Muslims proceeded to establish a Muslim state. They circumcised their Kafka, Kale, and called him 'sheikh'. They envisaged a radical reordering of society along Islamic lines. At this stage the survival of Christianity seemed to depend entirely on questions of military and political power. The Christian exiles made overtures to Magna to restore him as their Kafka. They also made a tactical alliance with traditionalists fighting the Muslim regime from Gewgaw (eastern Began)-since many traditionalists were alienated by the harshness of Muslim rule and its radical attempt to overturn traditional society. The Muslims, who retired to the borders of Bonjour to regroup. They might well have regained control if it had not been for intrusion at this point of an external factor in the form of Captain Lugar and the Imperial British East Africa Company (IPECAC). The Christian forces needed help to ensure

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that the Muslims did not get back to power. But the Catholics were unhappy that this help should be British and, therefore, Protestant. The fragile unity of the Christian factions soon gave way to bitter quarrels about the division of political office. The Catholic party was stronger in that it attracted more followers as the party of the king.

Magna was not baptized, nor did he lead a life morally acceptable to the Catholics. But he did believe that he had more chance of retaining Bugaboo's independence if he sided with the Catholics. The Protestants, conscious of this fundamental weakness, clung all the more strongly to Lugar, who at first tried to remain aloof from these conflicts. But increasingly he was drawn into supporting the only group which supported him—the Protestants. When open warfare broke out in 1892, Lugar threw in his lot decisively with the Protestants. He directed his Maxim gun against the Catholics and routed them.

The Protestants, exulting in victory, were keen to divide the spoils (I. E. Political office) among themselves alone, on the basis of 'the winner takes all'. But Lugar, the real arbiter of the situation, insisted that both Catholics and Muslims be given some small share in the political life of the country. This was how Buddy became a Catholic county, the strong base on which much of the subsequent success of Catholicism in Uganda was based. Nevertheless, the Catholics felt bitter against Lugar, the architect of their defeat. Lugar, for his part, always insisted that he was neutral as far as religion was concerned.

His support for the Protestants had been purely on political grounds. It is quite conceivable that had Lugar found the Muslims in control of Began in

1890 he would have tried to work with them—in which case Began might have become a Muslim state! The British annexation [8] IPECAC was a private British chartered company, which the British government approved of but had no financial responsibility for. It was a way of ensuring British influence without the inconvenience of costing the British taxpayer anything: Imperialism on the cheap. But by 1892 the IPECAC was in imminent danger of bankruptcy.

Bishop Tucker and the SMS conducted a vigorous campaign in Britain to ensure the ‘ retention of Uganda’. Tucker enlarged on the inevitability of a renewal of the religious wars (and a Protestant defeat?) if the British government did not assume direct control. One M. P. Seed ironically why the state should spend money “ to prevent these very remarkable Christians from cutting each other’s throats”. But British Public opinion had been effectively embroiled and in 1894 the British government formally declared a Protectorate over Uganda’. The Protestants were well satisfied.

The Catholics bowed to the inevitable. Bishop Hirsh, who had been such an outspoken critic of Lugar, was transferred to German territory; and it was arranged work in eastern Uganda in 1895, a sign to Uganda that being a Catholic did not mean being anti-British. British control was at first hesitant and problematic. In 1897 there was mutiny of the Nubian troops used by the British to subdue their Protectorate. There was also a last attempt by Kafka Magna to regain his independence. Both revolts were put down, largely with the help of “ loyal” Baghdad. Magna was deposed and exiled to Seychelles.

There he was baptized as a Protestant: a recognition that the forces of Christianity and imperialism had triumphed. But was his choice of baptismal name Daniel, a final act of defiance—a reference to his confinement in the lions' den of his British captors? In 1900 the Began Agreement consolidated the British takeover ND established the special relationship between Britain and Began which was to survive until 1955. The Agreement consolidated the dominant position of the Protestant oligarchy under Apollo Agway, the Swastika and one of the regents to the boy Kafka UDDI Caw.

A “ Christian Revolution” [9] The events of this violent period in Bugaboo's history are sometimes characterized as a “ Christian revolution”—by which is meant the fact that a fundamental change occurred in Began in which Christianity was the motivating force and the chief beneficiary. It was a revolution with several phases: a revolution of the ‘ new into’ (1888), a ‘ Muslim revolution’ (1888-9), a ‘ Christian counterrevolution’ (1889), a ‘ Protestant seizure of power’ (1892), and finally the consolidation of the revolutionary changes by the British take-over and loss of Bugaboo's sovereignty (1894/1900).

Christianity came to dominate the political arena of Began; and Islam was relegated to an under-privileged minority. But the Christian chiefs have also been called ‘ conservative modernizes’. They had a strong sense of Bugaboo's history and traditions. They wanted to graft Christianity onto these traditions, to use the literacy which Christianity had brought to preserve these traditions. Agway wrote a history of the Kings of Began in Luggage. He also wrote a history of his clan. The institutions of the

Spaceship and the clans were the two fundamental pillars of Began.

Christianity (in its two forms) was now added as a third pillar.

This meant that the valuable cults (especially the large shrines) were displaced by Christianity. But the national gods did re-emerge in times of national crisis, such as the deportation of the Kafka in 1953. And the basic thought patterns and practices of Kananga religion remain strong to this day.

The Spread of Christianity in Uganda Christianity and “ sub-imperialism” [10]

The fact that Christianity, in its two rival creeds, became the religion of Began local collaboration to make their occupation of Uganda effective and cheap (financial economy was always a prime consideration for the British! The British regarded the civilization of Began as superior to anything else available in Uganda; and the acceptance of Christianity and literacy enhanced that superiority. The Baghdad, for their part, became enthusiastic “ sub-imperialists”. They benefited from their relationship with the British. Began increased its territory at the expense particularly of Bonjour, which was severely punished for Omak’s Gable’s heroic but in the end futile resistance. Baghdad–both Christian and Muslim–became chiefs (British agents) in such areas as Bonjour and Ankle.

The soldier and adventurer, Semi Gauntly, a Protestant Managua who had quarreled with Apollo Agway, attempted to compensate for his political failure in Began, by carving out for himself a “ kingdom” in eastern Uganda. His followers, in search of land and power, were able to find both in Bucked and Test. In the wake of this “ sub-imperialism,” and indeed part and parcel of it, went the janissary expansion of the Church of Baghdad evangelists.

They were motivated by an eagerness to spread Kananga culture alongside

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Christianity, by desire for a status and prestige often unattainable within Began itself.

But, apart from these political and social advantages, we must not discount genuine religious impulses. The Catholics appealed to the sacrifice of the Uganda martyrs as an inspiration to Uganda to offer themselves as missionaries: as living sacrifices. For the Protestants, Phlogiston's revival of 1892 emphasized a victorious Christian life of a total commitment in the power of the holy spirit. Many of the evangelists shared the arrogance and domineering tendencies of the colonial agents.

But many are remembered for their devotion to duty, often in difficult circumstances and with little financial reward. In these early years, two men stand out for their qualities of devotion and saintliness: Apollo Giveaway and Hanna Agitating. Giveaway, a Protestant unusual for his life-long celibacy, became an evangelist to Tort in 1895, and subsequently spent his life among the Mambo people of Kong (now Zaire). He was ordained a priest, made a canon, and died in 1933. Agitating was a polygamist who gave up his five wives before baptism.

In 1901, when already in his ass, he set off on a remarkable evangelistic career, pioneering Catholicism in Bankruptcy and other parts of Ankle, in Size and Fumbler, before his death in 1939. Christianity in Western Uganda [1 1] From the sass the Western kingdoms of Uganda had come to terms in one way or another with British colonialism. The acceptance of Christianity was an important means of adjusting to this new situation. In Tort

Christianity came as part of an attempt by Gammas to recreate the kingdom of his father; in Bonjour as a response to military defeat and devastation.