

SETTLEMENT-POLICY OF THE MISSIONARIES OF
AFRICA (WHITE FATHERS) IN KIVU, BELGIAN CONGO,
PHASE 1910 - 1914

Political and Religious Factors In the Decision-making of the
Society (1)

by

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POSITION

The concept of mission-history to many still evokes only the image of ever-baptizing fathers, and sisters continuously attending patients, lonely whites among a backward people, certainly in the midst of the mysterious jungle and suffering from an unbearable climate.

So far, the softening or the irony with which that blurred image is viewed, has but too often hampered a critical approach to the mission action in its connection with and its individuality towards

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Our interest in the settlement-phase in Kivu has matured at the time of writing our bachelor's thesis, on which we drew for the background of this study : *Het Evangelisatiewerk der Katholieke Missie binnen de Kolonisatie van Kongo, 1876-1926. Detailstudies : Witte Paters en Broeders van de Kristelijke Scholen*, Ghent, September, 1973, 2 vol.; unpublished.

The maps inserted in this article are based on : *Nos Missions. Atlas Historique. Société des Missionnaires d'Afrique. Pères Blancs. Maison-Carrée*, 1931. Plate 19 (Upper Congo, 1895-1929), Plate 25 (Lake Albert, 1922-1930), Plate 32 (Kivu, 1930-1931).

the partners within a colonial framework. The will to take a shaded stand to such representations and analogous stereotypes, as "the mission is merely the maid-servant of private capital" or "the footman of the state", is a first requisite to gain an insight both into the phenomena of church and colonization, and into the relation between them.

The historical investigation will also entail a better insight into the present relation between the church and the state in a number of young African countries.

As yet a detailed investigation is indispensable.

Our part of mission-history is to be placed in a colonial situation under construction. This means that the real occupation of the field has not been completed yet. The process of power-acquisition — through alliances and conflicts — of state, catholic and protestant missions (in our case the three leading parties) is still in full progress. An eastern borderland of Congo, the Kivu, is the scene. Our attention will be paid mainly to the years 1910-1914. Not until those years do the powers agree on the boundaries between Lakes Tanganika and Edward. The internal occupation (in the presence of the autochthonous population) is far from being realized yet.

We ascertain that a catholic society, the Missionaries of Africa, also called White Fathers, displayed an intense settlement-activity in this period. In the Congo-colonization this congregation played an important role for various reasons, but certainly because their field of activity stretched over practically the entire eastern boundary, from the south of Lake Tanganika to the north of Lake Albert (2).

The question of whether the wave of settlements that we ascertained, is a rather casual phenomenon or is related to other colonization phenomena, is the problem dealt with in this study.

By "other phenomena" we mean precisely what we termed before "the colonial situation under construction": the fact that both the state, and the catholic and protestant missionaries are still acquiring their place, a process in which a series of parallel and conflicting interests determine the mutual relations.

The importance of this case study lies in the fact that it permits a number of important characteristics of this play of interests to be laid bare, even though it is concentrated on a rather limited number of facts, a limited area, and a limited period. The choice of the area

(2) Except for a small strip between Lake Edward and Lake Albert (Priests of the Sacred Heart). See map I. The dates added are establishment-dates.

and the period are essential here : they present a complex in which — analogous to crisis-situations — the important options of different groups clearly come to the fore.

We restrict our study almost exclusively to the analysis of the decision-making of the White Fathers with regard to their settlement strategy. Hence that it is mainly their projects and realizations, motivations and decisions which will draw our attention. Consequently, the further organization and the evangelization from the stations will be left out of consideration.

THE EXPANSION-LINES OF THE WHITE FATHERS IN CONGO, 1880-1920

As early as 1880, so even before the foundation of the Congo Free State, the White Fathers are active on Congolese soil. Together with the Fathers of the Holy Ghost, they are the first representatives of the catholic mission there. Other congregations do not appear there before the late eighties and especially the nineties. The Fathers of the Holy Ghost, also a congregation of French origin, rather soon got a hint of king Leopold II to leave his state. The White Fathers, on the contrary, were allowed to stay. Yet, they had not come at the request of court-circles — as contrasted with most other congregations later — but in fact to meet the quite broad geographical views of their founder, the French cardinal Lavigerie. Leopold II tolerated them in his state on the condition that the congregation should send mainly Belgians. From the beginning of the nineties on the Belgian element in their Congo-mission will indeed become gradually dominant. Yet, this was not sufficient to remove the distrust in government-circles and in the public opinion of the “French inclination” of the society. As late as November, 1905, Mgr. Roelens must urge his superiors to send no more French missionaries, and he pleads for the establishment of a Belgian province within the congregation.

The same request will be repeated in the crucial years 1910-1911, at a moment when there are high expectations of the “Belgicism” of the White Fathers (3). That is the time when the

(3) See our dissertation, *Het Evangelisatiewerk...*, vol. 1, pp. 78-82; pp. 214-221.

Belgian government expressly appeals to them to occupy the area north of Lake Kivu and west of Lake Albert as Belgian missionaries. At that moment the expansion of the White Fathers north of Lake Tanganika has already started.

However, before going into that further it is necessary briefly to elucidate their settlement in the heart of the Upper-Congo Vicariate, between Lualaba and Lake Tanganika.

Only after the Arab wars (1894) and especially after the riots caused by rebelling soldiers (about 1899) can the White Fathers think seriously of an expansion of their work.

Between 1895 and 1905 they supplement their first stations at Lake Tanganika with foundations in the Massanze, Marungu, Urua and Maniema (map I). These stations are parts of what became the "Apostolic Vicariate of Upper Congo" at the end of 1895, headed by Mgr. Roelens (4).

When we examine the spread of the stations, we get the strong impression of being confronted with a systematic layout, having as its first and foremost objective the occupation of the eastern and western border zones. For the time being the south and north remain outside this movement. Especially for the foundations in the Urua, an argument that we shall often encounter later, is already influential, namely the fear of the advance of protestant missionaries. There are numerous enunciations of Mgr. Roelens which point in this direction. In 1898 and 1899 he repeatedly complains about the fact that the protestants had been ahead of him in the south, at Lake Moëro, and he warns against an analogous evolution in the west of the Vicariate (5).

(4) The area which, by decree of the Congregatio de Propaganda Fide of December 10, 1895, constitutes the Upper Congo Vicariate (map I), is but a limited part of what had originally, in 1878, been assigned to cardinal Lavigerie in the Congo-territory.

Roelens Victor (1858-1947) : first mission-bishop of Congo, ordained in 1896; resigns as Vicar in 1941.

See about him : A. DE ROOVER, *Victor Roelens. De Vlaamse Lavigerie*, Antwerp, 1952; *Biographie Coloniale Belge* (henceforth : B.C.B.), volume VI, columns 861-864 (N. LAUDE); *Notices Nécrologiques* (henceforth : Not. Nécrol.), 1947-1948, pp. 5-12 (N. ANTOINE); W. BLONDEEL, *Evangelisatiewerk*, vol. 1, pp. 110-228.

(5) Letters Roelens-Livinac, 1898 and 1899; Central Archives of the White Fathers in Rome (henceforth C.A.W.F.), Dossier 113, folder 1 (1893-1908), Upper Congo. Mgr. Roelens (henceforth D.113, f.1).

For the same reason he had planned the trip to Europe for his episcopal ordination in 1896 to go along the Congo-stream through the area north of Lake Tanganika, "where", he writes, "*English traders are settling and the protestant missionaries will follow*" (6). Likewise, the year before he had been sailing up part of the Ruzizi, towards the practically unknown Kivu (7).

After his return in Baudouinville (1897) he does not immediately direct his attention to the north — unquiet through the revolt of Dhanis' soldiers — but he builds stations in the east and west of the Vicariate, off Lake Tanganika (8).

It is important to note here that it is also in the same years that E. Van Eetvelde, secretary of state for the Congo-state, calls the attention of Mgr. Roelens to a district in the then farthest northeast of the state, outside the Vicariate of Upper Congo, namely "*the part of the province of Emin Pacha which had been ceded to Belgium*" (9). For the time being that remains unsuccessful.

Not until about ten years later do the White Fathers effectively move north.

This new settlement-wave, part of which will further be dealt with in detail, starts cautiously in 1906 with the foundation of a station at Karhongo, belonging to chief Nya-Ngezi.

From 1910 on the advance is accelerated. In June of that year we find a station with chief Katana; in 1911 near Lulenga; in 1912 at Kitalaga near Bobandana. Other plans are not realized at once. During the war this movement is temporarily discontinued and is

(6) Letter, Roelens-Livinhac, s.l., 06/08/1895; C.A.W.F. D.113, f.1. Owing to his ill-health and the soldiers' revolt in the west, he cannot execute this plan.

(7) V. ROELEN, *Notre Vieux Congo. 1891-1917*, vol. I, Namur, 1949, pp. 57-66.

C. DE KESEL, *Histoire de l'Eglise au Kivu (1878-1970)*, Bukavu, s.d., p. 5.

Enmity of the population and the great natural obstacles are said to have caused this failure.

(8) We point out that the east frontier of the Kivu Vicariate as delimited in 1929 (map I) also runs along part of Lake Tanganika. When we speak about "Kivu" we mean only the area north of the latter lake.

(9) Letter, Roelens-Livinhac, Malines, 15/04/1897; C.A.W.F. D.113, f.1. Allusion to the area of Lake Albert and Lado-enclave.

resumed in 1921-1922 with the creation of stations near Ngweshe and Kabare (10).

From 1910 on Mgr. Roelens also gets involved in evangelization-plans for the area west of Lake Albert, so outside his Vicariate. We shall not deal with this latter movement here, but we cannot omit mentioning what is especially striking in this connection : here also is a borderland of the colony in which the Belgian government takes a lively interest, and which is assigned to Belgium in 1910; in consultation with the government, the White Fathers play an important part in the effective occupation of this area as well (11).

After having traced the great expansion-lines we can take a closer look at the settlement-phase in the Kivu about 1910.

FOUNDATION FEVER IN THE KIVU

The existence of an extensive and thorough literature on the international complications about the Kivu in the period which is of interest to us, relieves us of a detailed discussion of this aspect. Yet, a short outline of the situation is necessary.

(10) These 6 foundations (with a seventh of 1928 : Mungombe) will later, by decree of 25/12/29 be detached from the Upper Congo Vicariate to make the autonomous Kivu Vicariate. For a short historical record of the phase 1880-1929 in the Kivu we refer to : C. DE KESEL, *op.cit.*, pp. 3-10.

This Kivu Vicariate (II) must not be mixed up with the Vicariate of the same name (Kivu I) which was created in 1912 and comprised Ruanda, Urundi and the Uha (also White Fathers). It fell apart in 1922 into the separate Vicariates of Ruanda and Urundi. (*Nos Missions. Atlas Historique*).

(11) Several groups are involved in the negotiations about the (catholic) evangelization of the area west of Lake Albert : the White Fathers of Uganda and those of Upper Congo, the Priests of the Sacred Heart, the Propaganda and the Belgian government. The ultimate result of the consultation is the establishment of the Apostolic Prefecture of Lake Albert on June 27, 1922, mainly in the hands of Belgian White Fathers. We have sketched a provisional outline of the rather complex growth of this Prefecture in : *Evangelisatiewerk...*, vol. 1, pp. 121-126.

For the international political difficulties about this region, we refer to the numerous studies dealing with the Nile-policy of Leopold II; also to a number of works which we have consulted for the Kivu-question, such as a.o. :

R. CORNEVIN, *Histoire du Congo (Léopoldville)*, Paris, Berger-Levrault, 1963; P. JENTGEN, *Les Frontières du Congo Belge*, Brussels, I.R.C.B., Sc. Mor. et Pol., Mém. in -8°, XXV-1, 1953; P. VAN ZUYLEN, *L'Echiquier Congolais ou le Secret du Roi*, Brussels, Dessart, 1959.

The international frictions pivot on boundary disputes, in which three powers are involved : Belgium, Great Britain and Germany. Insufficient knowledge of the areas, non-corresponding maps, local arrangements and incidents, have eventually necessitated a three-party conference. Resulting from this were the agreements about the British-Congolese and the German-Congolese boundaries on May 14, 1910, which were later confirmed in treaties (12).

Above we outlined the first settlement-wave of the White Fathers in the Kivu (13).

The first foundation comes about with chief Nya-Ngezi, south of Lake Kivu in 1906. In fact, it replaces the Lusenda-station which proved untenable on account of the sleeping sickness and because the Christians wanted to leave the area (14).

The new mission meets a number of favourable conditions, as described by Father A. Huys on November 1, 1906 :

"Le Kivu au contraire est resté, jusqu'à ces jours, indemne de la maladie; la population y est très dense; le climat y est sain.

(12) We have mainly used the studies mentioned in footnote (11) and : L. STIERS, *La Frontière orientale du Congo Belge*, I.R.C.B., Bulletin, VIII-2, 1937, pp. 307-329; J. WILLEQUET, *Le Congo Belge et la Weltpolitik (1894-1914)*, Brussels, U.L.B. Travaux Fac. phil. et lettres, vol. XXI. The treaties date from August 11, 1910 (with Germany) and from February 3, 1915 (with Great Britain).

(13) For the Kivu-foundations we have especially relied on the personal correspondence of the two main characters of Upper Congo, Mgr. V. Roelens and Mgr. A. Huys with the mother-convent of the society (especially Mgr. Livinhac, at Maison-Carrée, Algeria). Wherever it was necessary, we have supplemented it with data from the annual reports of the White-Father missions (*Rapports Annuels*, henceforth : *Rapp. Ann.*) and the historical records of C. DE KESEL (see above) and of P. MAZE, *Le Vicariat du Kivu*, 1930, 10 p. (typed; C.A.W.F., 282.12).

Mgr. Roelens is absent from Baudouinville from May, 1910 to December, 1913. It is Mgr. Huys who is then in charge of the Vicariate, though for the important decisions he keeps referring to Mgr. Roelens.

Especially the name of the coadjutor is linked to the concrete foundations of the Kivu-stations. Here C. DE KESEL, in our opinion, overemphasizes the role of the Vicar himself.

Mgr. A. Huys (1871-1938) : active in Upper Congo since 1897; Pro-Vicar in 1904; coadjutor-bishop in 1909 (see : *Rapp. Ann.*, 1937-1938, suppl., pp. 34-41).

Mgr. Livinhac (1846-1922) : after Lavigerie († 1892) head of the society, till his death.

(14) Letter, Huys-Livinhac, Baudouinville, 11/05/1906; C.A.W.F. D.114 Upper Congo. Mgr. Huys, nr.2, 1905-1909 (henceforth : D.114, nr.2). Nya-Gezi (also Nya-Ngezi) or Tielt St.Peter was founded in September, 1906 (P. MAZE, *op.cit.*, p.5 ff; C.A.W.F. 282.12).

La mission est située en territoire incontestablement congolais; les officiers de l'Etat y ont prêté un appui sérieux aux missionnaires. Disposant du steamer du Tanganika qui transporte les missionnaires gratuitement, les communications entre confrères ne seront pas difficiles." (15)

(The Kivu, on the contrary, has, up to now, remained unaffected by the illness; the population is very dense and the climate is healthy there. The mission is situated on territory which is indisputably Congolese; the local state officers have given valuable support to the missionaries. With the disposal of the Tanganika-steamer for the free transportation of the missionaries, the communications among the brethren will not be difficult.)

Here we want to underline that the situation on Congolese territory is strongly emphasized. That is the case, indeed, since the station is situated west of the Ruzizi-river and consequently may be considered Belgian territory in accordance with the agreement between commanders Hecq and Bethe of April 10, 1900, which was still in force at that time (16).

Also the second foundation, the one with chief Katana, on the Cibimbi Hill (June 25, 1910) is situated on indisputably Congolese territory, namely on the west bank of the lake. The location of this settlement had been selected a few years earlier (17).

(15) Letter, Huys-Livinhac, Baudouinville, 01/11/1906; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr.2.

(16) The boundaries of the area in dispute: a straight line connecting the farthest north of Lake Tanganika with the intersection of parallel 1°20'S and the 30th meridian; the Ruzizi-river to the place where it leaves Lake Kivu; the medianline of Lake Kivu to the north; and finally a straight line connecting this point with the above-mentioned point 1°20'S - 30° longitude east. Here it was agreed that the two parties could establish posts, in the same number and military power, but that the execution of the sovereign power belonged to Germany (cfr. L. STIERS, *op.cit.*, p. 313).

In one of the incidents with regard to this arrangement a White Father, Father Loupias, is involved. When he is murdered near Ruasa, in Ruanda, right of the Germans. Father Loupias belongs to the South-Nyanza-mission (so, not Upper Congo); cfr. L. STIERS, *op.cit.*, pp. 323-324; M. VANNESTE in *B.C.B.*, v.V, col. 563-566; *Rapp. Ann.*, 1910-1911, p. 397.

Mgr. Huys mentions this matter only once, occasionally (letter, Huys-Livinhac, Ufumbiro, 08/07/1910; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr. 3, 1910-12).

(17) C. DE KESEL, *op.cit.*, p.6. In 1914 the Katana-station is moved to near-by Mwanda (*ibid.*, p.7).

The Cibimbi-location had been chosen during an exploration-journey by Mgr. Roelens in August-September, 1908 (*ibid.*, p.6; see also: Mgr. ROELENS, "Het Kivoe-meer en de omstreken", in *Afrikaansche Missiën*, 1909, p. 271).

Then the Vicar ranges Lake Kivu and visits a.o. Tielt St.Peter (Nya-Gezi), the state-post Bobandana and the outskirts of the lava-plain north of the lake.

A few months before that settlement, in March, Mgr. Huys, now coadjutor to the Vicar, expresses the hope of being able to travel to the Kivu and to continue the exploration to the north boundaries of the Vicariate : the area south and south-west of Lake Edward (18). That is the beginning of the period of strong concentration on the Kivu (1910-1912).

Suiting the action to the word, Mgr. Huys writes on July 8, 1910 that he has found a good settlement-place where the sleeping sickness does not prevail, and which is inhabited by a dense population which "*grâce à l'occupation du pays par les troupes belges, y est soumise et confiante*" (owing to the occupation by Belgian forces, is obedient and trustful).

Unfortunately, however, at that moment he does not know yet that the place of his choice is situated in the area which, by virtue of the Belgian-British agreement of May 14, has been assigned to England (19). When he learns this shortly after — through newspapers — he is obliged to do away with his location and to find another one. Then, even before the end of the same month, his choice falls on a convenient place south of the Belgian military post of Rutchuru.

In his official settlement-application to the state-administration he mentions two arguments, namely "*high reasons of christian*

(18) Letter, Huys-Livinhac, Baudouinville, 10/03/1910; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr.3.

(19) Letter, Huys-Livinhac, Ufumbiro, 08/07/1910; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr. 3. He situates the settlement-place at about 1 km. south of Lake Mutanda, at about 29°40' longitude east and 1°15'S. He situates the place so accurately, perhaps because he realizes how close it is to the east frontier of the colony, which, in theory, is still the 30th meridian on that latitude. About that 30th meridian it had meanwhile been found, in 1903, that it was 19 to 20 kms. further east-wards than had always been thought !

The problem of the Ufumbiro begins in fact with the German-British boundary-agreement of July 1, 1890, in which a 'Mount Mfumbiro' is assigned to England, convinced as they were that it is situated east of the 30th meridian. Afterwards it appears that the Ufumbiro — in reality a plain ! — is situated mainly west of this meridian, so that a compromise about that matter must be found with Belgium. This is reached on May 14, 1910 and it defines the boundary as : the line from the top of mount Sabinio to the Ngabua-top and further via the Isasa-river to Lake Edward.

This means that Lake Mutanda becomes English territory. The words of Mgr. Huys of July 8, 1910 seem to indicate that the situation is still under control of the Belgian forces in that region. Lake Mutanda — where the mission-station was to be founded — is, according to L. STIERS, indeed one of the two points which the Belgians especially relied on.

See for the Ufumbiro-aspects : L. STIERS, *op.cit.*, p. 317, 321, 327; J. WILLEQUET, *op.cit.*, pp. 221-222; P. VAN ZUYLEN, *op.cit.*, pp. 396-398. See also map II.

civilization” on the one hand and the thesis that the station “*would make a barrier against the English influence*” ! (20)

The bishop accounts for his choice to his superiors by pointing at the density of the population and the good climate “*which is similar to that of Europe.*”. However, he adds an important remark :

“Le point noir à l’horizon est la menace du Protestantisme. J’estime, Monseigneur, que le moment est venu de fonder plusieurs missions capables de barrer le passage aux ministres de l’erreur.”

(The dark spot on the horizon is the threat of Protestantism. I deem, Monseigneur, that the time has come to found several missions capable of barring the passage of the ministers of error)

(...)

Il va sans dire qu’une fois les questions de frontières officiellement réglées les missionnaires anglais s’étendront jusque sur nos frontières et tâcheront de pénétrer dans ces magnifiques et populeuses régions. Les missionnaires protestants allemands sont déjà en train d’en faire l’essai.

Il faudrait donc absolument qu’après la saison des pluies (mai 1911), je puisse envoyer des missionnaires sur nos limites Nord Est” (21).

(It is evident that, as soon as the boundary-questions are officially settled, the English missionaries will advance to our boundaries and will try to penetrate into these magnificent and populous regions. The German protestant missionaries are already trying to do so. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary for me to send missionaries to our north-east borders after the rain-season (May, 1911).)

At the end of July, 1910 Mgr. Huys also makes the first allusion to the situation in the Isle of Kwidjwi, in Lake Kivu, something to which we must later revert separately.

Hardly a few months later, in September, the bishop expresses the wish to found another station, in the Bugoye now, north of Lake Kivu, a region which, in accordance with the boundary-agreements, has become Belgian for the greater part.

In his view politics and religion are closely associated here :

(20) Letter, Huys-Supreme commander of the Ruzizi-Kivu, 24/07/1910; Archives Former Ministry of Colonies, Brussels (henceforth : A.Min.Col.) M 601, VI. Pères Blancs-1910.

(21) Letter, Huys-Livinac, Ngoma, 28/07/1910; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr.3. In this letter the bishop draws the new boundary quite correctly. He situates the new location at about 1°18’S and 29°25’ longitude east.

“Il est de toute nécessité que nous barrions le plus vite possible le passage à l'élément protestant tant anglais qu'allemand.

(...)

Il est donc hors de doute qu'une fois cette question des zones d'influence politique solutionnée, les avant-postes protestants vont essayer de passer les frontières.

(...)

(...) pour pouvoir occuper après la saison des pluies, la frontière doublement exposée à l'invasion néfaste des hérétiques.” (22)

(It is absolutely necessary that we should bar the passage of the protestant element both English and German, as soon as possible.

(...) Consequently, it is beyond any doubt that, as soon as this question of the political influence zone is solved, the protestant outposts will try to cross our boundaries.

(...) ...in order to be able to occupy, after the rain-season, the boundaries which are doubly exposed to the pernicious influence of the heretics).

In an instable way the prelate chooses in October for 5 or 6 stations to be founded — a “front-line” — in the northern regions of the Vicariate (23).

Of these Rutchuru must come first. The presence of an international committee for the delimitation of the frontier can postpone his plan for a while, but in June, 1911 the new mission is founded at Kiheri, with chief Lulenga (24). We shall revert to this foundation later.

(22) Letter, Huys-Livinhac, Baudouinville, 22/09/1910; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr.3 Bugoye : see map II.

(23) Letter, Huys-Livinhac, Baudouinville, 10/10/1910; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr.3. Quotation : “(Mais) il nous faut une *ligne fortifiée* de stations de mission pour barrer le passage à l'erreur.” (But) we need a fortified line of mission-stations to bar the way to the error). In his annual report of 1911-1912 about the Upper Congo Vicariate, the bishop uses the term “*barrière infranchissable*” (impassable barrier). (*Rapp. Ann.* 1911-1912, p. 544).

(24) Letter, Huys-Livinhac, Baudouinville, 07/04/1911; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr.3. C. DE KESEL, *op.cit.*, p.7. In April, 1913 this station is removed to near-by Rugari (eo.loc.)

Rapp. Ann. 1911-1912, Tongres Ste Marie, p. 558. The foundation of Lulenga is prepared from the White-Father station at Nyundo (Ruanda) (*ibid.*, p. 559).

For the delimitation-committees, see : P. JENTGEN, *op.cit.*, pp. 68-70; L., STIERS, *op.cit.*, p. 328; *Doc. Parl.* 1910-1911, Chambre/Sénat, p. 407 (Explanatory memorandum to the bill for the approbation of the convention of 11/08/1910).

Meanwhile, on April 8, 1911 the east frontier of the Upper Congo Vicariate has been adapted to the new political boundaries by decree of the Propaganda (25).

In the middle of 1912 Mgr. Huys considers new concrete plans. During a reconnaissance-expedition to the north with the express purpose "*de barrer le passage aux protestants allemands*" (of barring the passage to the German protestants), he must admit that the area of the Mokoto-lakes, west of Lulenga, cannot be taken into consideration for the time being. The population seems to him to be too much scattered as a result of recent military operations.

Eventually he opts for a settlement in the north-west of Lake Kivu. In July he presents to the government the official application for the settlement of Pélichy St. Joseph, at an eight hours' march from the state post of Bobandana (26). With the aid of the administration the final installation takes place in December of the same year (27). He writes about this :

"Le Commandant du Kivu m'a promis de faciliter cette fondation" (28).

(The Commander of the Kivu has promised me to facilitate this foundation)

and

"Le Commandant a envoyé 14 têtes de bétail au P. Gillès.

Ces Messieurs ont intérêt à favoriser le P. Gillès dont le frère député est l'ami du Ministre.

M. le Commandant a recommandé aux chefs d'envoyer leurs enfants à l'école des Pères" (29).

(The Commander has sent 14 head of cattle to Father Gillès. It is in

(25) *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 1911, p. 199 (08/04/1911).

This adaptation does not raise many problems as Vicariates belonging to one and the same congregation, are concerned.

(26) Letter, Huys-Livinhac, Lake Kivu, 20/07/1912; Letter, Huys-Livinhac, Liège St. Lambert (Katana), 23/07/1912; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr.3

(27) Letter, Huys-Livinhac, Baudouinville, 12/10/1912; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr.3. *Rapp. Ann.* 1912-1913, Pélichy St. Joseph (Bobandana), p. 592. C. DE KESEL, *op.cit.*, p.7. *Petit Echo*, 1974/10, p. 522 (biography of Father Gillès) (*Petit Echo* is a monthly news-bulletin for the members of the society).

(28) Letter, Huys-Livinhac, Baudouinville, 12/10/1912; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr.3.

(29) Letter, Huys-? , Baudouinville, 04/03/1913; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr.3. Father Alexander Gillès de Pélichy is the founder of the mission (*Petit Echo*, 1974/10, nr. 655, pp. 520-527).

The brother who is alluded to, must be Charles Gillès de Pélichy, former representative for the district of Roeselare-Tielt (cfr. P. VAN MOLLE, *Het Belgisch Parlement. 1894-1969*, pp. 155-156).

the interest of these Gentlemen to favour Father Gillès whose brother is a representative and a friend of the Minister's. The Commander has recommended the chiefs to send their children to the school of the Fathers).

Incidentally we also want to mention here that Mgr. Huys declares on July 23, 1912, that, for the time being, he waives a foundation on the Isle of Kwidjwi, to which we shall revert below.

His immediate concern is not only for the region of Bobandana; also the Byahi, west of the Bugoye, seems to him threatened territory. There he plans, still in July, in agreement with the state-administration, the immediate foundation of a school-chapel, dependent on Lulenga :

“Je me suis entendu avec le Commandant pour multiplier ces fondations secondaires afin, ai je dit au Commandant, que le gouvernement puisse opposer un refus motivé aux protestants allemands.

La Belgique ne peut évidemment que se féliciter *au point de vue politique*, de notre occupation effective.” (30)

(I agreed with the Commander to multiply those secondary foundations in order to allow the government — as I told the Commander — to offer a motivated refusal to the German protestants. From a political point of view Belgium can, of course, but be pleased with our effective occupation).

That term “effective occupation” is important because the truth had already been made fun of.

Protestant missionaries had, indeed, already presented a settlement application to the Ruzizi-Kivu commander, which had been refused “*since the locations applied for were already evangelized by the Belgian catholic White Fathers*”. Mgr. Huys admits that this representation is not altogether reliable (31).

In the same year 1912 the bishop also hatches plans to go and

(30) Letter, Huys-Livinhac, Liège St.Lambert (Katana), 23/07/1912; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr.3.

(31) *Eo.Loco*.

Already on July 20 he also expresses the fear for the Byahi. In art. 6 of the Act of Berlin (1885) it is stipulated that christian missionaries of whatever denomination or nationality, are entitled to “protection”. Protestants could not be barred without more ado. In practice we notice that the presence of catholic missionaries is put forward as a sufficient reason to deny a positive answer to a protestant settlement-application. Apparently that presence did not even have to be always effective...

occupy the north-west of the Vicariate, near the Warega and the Wazimba. For the time being the matter ends with projects.

Consequently, the term "settlement-fever" used in the heading, is clearly not out of place.

At a quickened rate one mission-station after the other is planned or rashly founded.

Now two foundations deserve our special attention.

THE FOUNDATION NEAR RUTCHURU : CATHOLIC COMPETITION ?

With regard to the settlement near Rutchuru it is necessary to digress on an aspect that must not pass unmentioned, though it was of no determining importance in the foundation-strategy.

It is indeed the question if the foundation at Lulenga and possibly the whole frenzy with which Mgr. Huys operates in that period, are not partly to be imputed to the fear of the progress to this region of another catholic congregation, namely the Priests of the Sacred Heart.

This aspect should be viewed in the framework of a plan for exchanging territories among three ecclesiastical districts : the Vicariate of Stanleyfalls, in the hands of the Priests of the Sacred Heart, headed by Mgr. Grison; the Vicariate of North-Victoria-Nyanza (Uganda), White Fathers; and the Vicariate of Upper Congo, also White Fathers.

The first rumours about this plan date from 1908. Around the turn of the year 1910-1911 the essence of it already belongs to the past (32).

Geographically speaking the plan refers to the area of Lake Albert, a strip along the north boundary of the Upper Congo Vicariate, and a tract between Lakes Kivu and Edward, having Rutchuru as its central point, equally belonging to the White Fathers of Upper Congo. Only the latter tract, around Rutchuru, is here of interest to us. We can state positively that Mgr. Grison, as early as

(32) We outlined the evolution of this plan in : *Het Evangelisatiewerk...*, vol. 1, pp. 121-126.

The most important result of these negotiations was indeed the creation of the autonomous Lake Albert Prefecture (1922), in the hands of the White Fathers.

May 11, 1909, wants to add the Rutchuru-zone to his jurisdiction and that he speaks about it to Mgr. Roelens at the end of June-July, 1910 (33). From the reaction of the latter — “*J’ai fait aussitôt mes réserves*” (34) (I made reserves at once) — we think to be justified in concluding that the Vicar of Upper Congo is then confronted with this part of the Grison-plan for the first time.

At the end of November and the beginning of December, when the Ministry of Colonies also becomes aware of this project, the Nunciature is expressly informed that the Belgian government “*had rather not see*” these frontier modifications “*realized*”.

The Belgian government express their strong confidence in the Belgian White Fathers, rather than in the Priests of the Sacred Heart who are struggling with staff-difficulties and who number more foreigners in their ranks. They deem the occupation of the Rutchuru region urgent for political reasons in view of the recent frontier agreements and for religious reasons, considering the protestant threat (35).

On January 4, 1911 Mgr. Roelens can inform his superiors and the ministry that Mgr. Grison waives any claim (36).

The question which must be asked here, is whether the duo Roelens-Huys have been influenced in their foundation-strategy by

(33) — Note of Mgr. Grison, Panga, May 11, 1909; Central Archives of the Priests of the Sacred Heart, Rome (henceforth : C.A.Pr.S.Heart), Correspondence Grison, folio 1897-1926.

Gabriël Grison (1860-1942) : Apostolic Prefect of Stanleyfalls since 1904, Vicar from 1908 till 1934.

— Letter, Grison-Streicher (Vicar of Uganda), St.Gabriel, 31/07/1910; C.A.W.F. D.117, nr.2.

— The meeting Grison-Roelens took place on the St.Gabriel-mission near Stanleyville, on the occasion of a conference of ecclesiastical superiors of Congo. The meeting lasted from July 5 to July 16. Mgr. Roelens arrived there on June 29 (Grison, *Annales St.Gabriel*, 1897-1912, p.38; C.A.Pr.S.Heart).

(34) Letter, Roelens-Livinhac, Antwerp, 04/11/1910; C.A.W.F. D.113, F.2.

(35) Note for the Nunciature, 15/12/1910; A.Min.Col. M601, VI. Pères Blancs - 1910.

The fact that Mgr. Huys is building a mission-station near Rutchuru at that moment — in consultation with the administration — and that he has chosen three more settlement-places during the previous summer, is also used by the government as an argument in favour of the White Fathers.

It is not mentioned what those three places are. The statement that the station near Rutchuru is already under construction then, is certainly incorrect (for that matter, a few days later this is admitted to the nuncio by the government; A.Min.Col. M 592.F.1910).

(36) Letter, Roelens-Livinhac, Antwerp, 04/01/1911; C.A.W.F. D.113, F.2. Letter, 1st General Direction, Min.Col.-Mgr. Tacci, Nuncio, Brussels 07/01/1911; A.Min.Col. M 593.F.1911.

the active interest of the Priests of the Sacred Heart in the north-eastern part of their Vicariate.

The available correspondence does not offer complete certainty about this matter (37).

It may be readily assumed that the White Fathers were informed of the gradual eastward progress of the Priests of the Sacred Heart, up to Lake Edward, with Beni (founded 1906-1907) as their most advanced station.

This is not threatening, however, as their ecclesiastical jurisdiction reaches that far.

Their progress does become important for the White Fathers at the moment when also the Rutchuru-area is aimed at.

What we know for certain is that in March, 1910 Mgr. Huys expresses the hope to explore the area south of Lake Edward and that in June-July he visits this region indeed, looking for a settlement-place there, first in the Ufumbiro, and only later near Rutchuru. As this is precisely the moment — the end of June and in July — when Mgr. Roelens hears of the Grison-plan for the first time, and as it is indeed quite improbable that his coadjutor should have been informed before him, we may well assume that the decision of Mgr. Huys with regard to the settlement at Lulenga, has not been influenced by Mgr. Grison's view.

Has this "threat" perhaps had an impact on the subsequent foundations ?

From the utterances of his feverishness, which begins in July, 1910, precisely at the time of the Lulenga-choice, it appears that the coadjutor especially associates the protestant threat with the new political situation of the frontier-agreements.

The fact remains, however, that this quickening-phase in his decision-making may theoretically also have been influenced by the

(37) For this question we have drawn on the central archives of the White Fathers, the Priests of the Sacred Heart, and the Ministry of Colonies. On inquiry, it proved that also the archives of the archbishop of Kisangani do not possess further details on this subject.

Grison-plan, as Mgr. Roelens has certainly been able to inform him (38).

However, we ascertain that the coadjutor, in his confidential letters to his superiors, does not make a single allusion to such a thing when speaking about his motivations. Neither does the Vicar mention anything about this.

The representative at Rome of their society, Father Burtin, does pronounce once upon this subject on October 24, 1910 : he wonders whether it would not be good for Mgr. Roelens to go and occupy the Kivu-area as soon as possible, in order to prevent any further claim of the Priests of the Sacred Heart (39).

We must, however, point out that 14 days earlier (October 10), Mgr. Huys already speaks about his front-line of 5-6 stations !

Finally it must not be overlooked that, at the beginning of January, 1911 the Vicar already knows that Mgr. Grison waives all claims, and yet the plans and foundations are continued.

We may, perhaps, speak of an additional stimulus.

(38) On October 10, 1910 Mgr. Huys writes, with regard to Rutchuru : "Je sais que loin de rencontrer une hésitation quelconque de la part du gouvernement, ce dernier ne demande pas mieux que de voir s'aligner les stations des missionnaires d'Afrique (Pères Blancs) dans ces régions.(...) J'ai d'ailleurs déjà eu les assurances du Commandant Supérieur du Territoire de la Ruzizi-Kivu que les ordres sont données pour venir à son aide. Du bétail de l'Etat sera mis à sa disposition dès son arrivée." (I know that, far from encountering the slightest hesitation on the part of the government, the latter will be delighted to see the stations of the missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) lined up in these regions.(...) Moreover, the Supreme Commander of the Ruzizi-Kivu Territory has already assured me that orders have been given to help him. On his arrival cattle of the state will be placed at his disposal ("his" refers to the superior of Rutchuru) (C.A.W.F. D.114, nr.3).

Does the fact that the bishop expressly mentions the name of his congregation here, indicate that he is perhaps informed about the wishes of the Priests of the Sacred Heart ?

(39) Letter, Burtin-Livinhac, Rome, 24/10/1910; C.A.W.F., correspondence Burtin-Livinhac, vol. 1908-1912.

Father Burtin is the intermediary between the Vatican services and the society-headquarters.

STRATEGIC KWIDJWI, OR : CATHOLICISM TAKES
PRECEDENCE OF PATRIOTISM

Kwidji, a spear-head

We have repeatedly mentioned that we intended to devote special attention to the settlement of a mission-station on the Isle of Kwidjwi (40).

Why ?

Kwidjwi is very important, because in the decision-making about it, the influencing factors are so intensively at work that the different interests here come most clearly to the fore indeed. The interest-relation catholic mission — state — protestants stands out so sharply in this case on account of the very special international political background of the island.

Under the German-Belgian agreements of 1910 Kwidjwi belongs to Belgium. Not unconditionally, however. Belgium scored this victory only after a lot of insisting and somewhat as a compensation for the considerable gain of territory realized by Germany. Moreover, certain conditions were made. In an explanatory memorandum, Minister of Foreign Affairs J. Davignon puts :

“The imperial deputies eventually accepted the motives of their Belgian colleagues, on the understanding that the civil rights acquired by the German missionaries on the island, (...) should be respected’ ! (41)

These German-protestant designs upon the island-population are not unknown to Mgr. Roelens and Huys.

With unconcealed fear the latter ascertains, in the first allusion to Kwidjwi known to us, of July 28, 1910 :

(40) Sometimes also Kwijwi, or Idjwi, Ijwi.

(41) Here we mean the Explanatory Memorandum to the bill for the approbation of the agreement of 11/08/1910 (confirmation of the arrangement of May 14).

Doc. Parl., 1910-1911, *Chambre/Sénat*, pp. 402-407; especially p. 407. The bill is dated 22/12/1910 (*ibid.*, pp. 408-410). It is introduced in the House of Representatives on 23/12/1910 (*Ann. Parl.*, 1910-1911, p. 405).

In the report of the House committee charged with the examination of the bill, and drawn up by Carton de Wiart, the Isle of Kwidjwi is likewise dealt with extensively, but without making any mention of the German missionary (missionaries). (*Ibid.*, especially pp. 550-552).

“Déjà un ministre protestant est aux aguets à l’île Kwidjwi (centre du Kivu). (...)

Oh qu’il serait dur à notre coeur de missionnaire de voir les protestants prendre pied dans ce Vicariat du Haut-Congo qui jusqu’ici avait échappé à leur funeste influence.” (42)

(A protestant minister is already on the look-out on the Isle of Kwidjwi (Centre of the Kivu) (...) Oh, how painful it would be for our missionaries’ hearts to see the protestants get a foothold in this Vicariate of the Upper Congo which up to now escaped their lamentable influence).

Neither is Mgr. Roelens — in Belgium — easy about those protestants who “threaten” to settle on Kwidjwi (September 4) (43).

He is the one who will see to the contact with “Brussels” in that matter in the subsequent months.

His coadjutor on the spot in Upper Congo writes on September 22 that the supreme commander of the Belgian forces has assured him that the German missionaries who ventured on the island, have withdrawn. Mgr. Huys wonders if they will not come back... (44).

A month before supreme commander Olsen had informed the Governor-General, on August 8, that “*according to the natives a German-protestant mission is said to have settled on Kwidjwi*”, to which he adds, however, that this would surprise him “*as it has not yet been established definitely to whom the area will in fact belong*”.

Meanwhile we know that the arrangement was indeed made on May 14, but confirmed in official agreement on August 11.

More important, however, is his remark :

(42) Letter, Huys-Livinhac, Ngoma, 28/07/1910; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr. 3. Also in the *Rapports Annuels*, confidential news organ within the society, we regularly find allusions to the Kwidjwi-situation. That is, indeed, what Mgr. Huys often refers to in his general annual reports on the Vicariate of Upper Congo. However, the bishop’s attitude can undoubtedly be retraced more accurately through his correspondence than through his annual reports. See : *Rapp. Ann.* 1910-1911, p. 137; 1911-1912, p. 535; 1912-1913, p. 553; 1913-1914, p. 284.

(43) Letter, Roelens-Livinhac, Antwerp, 04/09/1910; C.A.W.F. D.114, f.2. It is very probably that he has his information from Mgr. Huys.

(44) Letter, Huys-Livinhac, Antwerp, 04/09/1910; C.W.A.F. D.114, nr.3.

The supreme commander meant here is either F. Olsen or E. Derche. F. Olsen (1877-1962) becomes supreme commander of the Ruzizi-kivu territory on February 12, 1907. He fills this place till 1910, alternately with E. Derche (1867-1941). After a leave of absence from May, 1909 till June, 1910, E. Derche resumes the command on September 3, 1910 (see : A. LEDERER, F. Olsen, in *B.C.B.*, vol. VI, col. 783-790; A. LACROIX, E. Derche, in *B.C.B.*, vol. V, col. 237-238). On the management of this territory, see : L. STIERS, *op.cit.*, pp. 314-318.

“Si la dernière hypothèse se réalisait (namely Kwidjwi Belgian) il me semblerait plus logique que le Gouvernement Belge encouragea les missionnaires Pères Blancs à étendre leur oeuvre civilisatrice à l’île Kwidjwi.” (45)

(If the latter hypothesis should come true, it would appear more logical for the Belgian Government to encourage the missionaries of the White Fathers to extend their civilization-work to the Isle of Kwidjwi).

Vice-Governor-General Fuchs, in his reply of October 31, 1910, draws the attention to the fact that the Belgian-German convention provides that “*the society of evangelical missions of Bethel, near Bielefeld, is entitled to make religious propaganda on Kwidjwi, and shall obtain a settlement-permission, even though the island belongs to Belgium*” (46).

We have already pointed at this clause before. Anyhow, the answer of Fuchs is not very stimulating for a White-Father settlement.

With regard to the concrete situation on the island, Mgr. Huys, on December 9 of the same year, appeals to the superior of the Katana-station to write that the German protestants have effectively established a mission-station there (47).

(45) Letter, Supreme Commander of the Ruzizi-Kivu, Olsen-Governor-General, Nya Lukemba, 08/08/1910; A.Min.Col. M 601, VI. Pères Blancs - 1910.

(46) Letter, Fuchs-Chief Commander of the zones of Rutchuru and Uvira, Boma, 31/10/1910; A.Min.Col. M 601, VI. Pères Blancs-1910.

F. Fuchs (1858-1928) : then Vice-Governor-General; in 1912 becomes Governor-General, till 1915 (B.C.B., vol. I, col 389-394, by F. DELLICOUR).

(47) Letter, Huys-Livinac, Baudouinville, 09/12/1910; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr.3. This news is confirmed by : letter, Weymeersch-Livinac, Liège St.Lambert (Katana), 15/01/1911; C.A.W.F. D.115 Haut-Congo, Les Postes, Katana.

In a report of state-inspector De Meulemeester, in all probability dating from 1912, it is stated that a German protestant mission has been settled on Kwidjwi “depuis peu” (A.Min.Col. M 601, VIII. Pères Blancs-1912).

In his above-mentioned historical record Father MAZE remarks that German protestants from Ruanda have effectively settle on Kwidjwi in 1910 (source ?) (C.A.W.F. 282.12).

The settlement of protestants on Kwidjwi is, however, not mentioned in : E.M. BRAEKMAN, *Histoire du Protestantisme au Congo*, Brussels, Librairie des Eclaireurs Unionistes, 1961, Collection “Histoire du Protestantisme en Belgique et au Congo Belge”, vol. 5.

From the Bethel-Mission, now merged with the Rheinische Mission into the “Vereingte Evangelische Mission” (Wuppertal) — whom we want to thank here for this information — we learned that two of their missionaries made a reconnaissance-expedition on the island as early as July, 1909. The real beginning

Now a quick counter-action seems essential to him : he has instructed the superior of Katana to establish a key-point (a "pied-à-terre") on the island, "while", he writes, "Mgr. Roelens submits an application in Brussels for a permanent settlement".

He is convinced that the government will not protest :

"Je suis certain que le gouvernement belge fera son possible pour expulser les protestants de ses frontières orientales. Il y a évidemment tout intérêt au point de vue politique. Le gouvernement colonial désire voir occuper le plus tôt possible toutes ces régions Nord-Est par les Pères Blancs Belges du Haut-Congo." (48)

(I am convinced that the Belgian government will do everything possible to expel the protestants from its eastern frontiers. It is obviously quite desirable from a political point of view. The colonial government wants to see all those north-east regions occupied by the Belgian White Fathers of Upper Congo as soon as possible).

That this is indeed the wish of the government according to the White Fathers, but that a year later nothing has changed on Kwidjwi, appears from a letter written by Mgr. Roelens December 12, 1911 :

"Le gouvernement par ailleurs demande une mission dans l'île Kwidjwi, ou mieux Idjwi, du Kivu (afin de prévenir l'établissement d'une mission protestante allemande)." (49)

(Moreover, the government asks for a mission on the Isle of Kwidjwi, or rather Idjwi, of the Kivu - in order to avert the establishment of a German protestant mission)

Consequently, he puts it that this White-Father settlement must be prepared.

In March, 1912 Mgr. Huys assents that Brussels really wants the establishment and he holds out the prospect of its realization after a personnel-reinforcement (50).

of the mission dates from June, 1910. Not until about one month later does the missionary on the spot learn that Kwidjwi has become Belgian territory. The mission remains, in spite of this unexpected turn (after "*Führung und Erfahrung in 40jährigem Missionsdienst*", s.d., vol. II, by Bethel-missionary Ernst JOHANSEN, pp. 135-143).

By Royal Decree of 06/08/1913 this mission, under the name of Evangelische Missionsgesellschaft, is incorporated (*Bulletin Officiel*, 1913, p. 824).

(48) Letter, Huys-Livinac, Baudouinville, 09/12/1910; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr.3.

(49) Letter, Roelens-Livinac, Antwerp, 12/12/1911; C.A.W.F. D.113, f.1. The mentioned motivation of the government is left out of consideration.

(50) Letter, Huys-Livinac, Baudouinville, 05/03/1912; C.A.W.F. D.114. nr. 3.

person, he learns that the protestants of Kwidjwi have already asked the Belgian authorities for the permission to settle in the Byahi, north of Lake Kivu.

His reaction : "*Heureusement que le gouvernement est catholique, et qu'il a, au point de vue politique, ses frontières à sauvegarder*" ! (51) (Fortunately the Belgian government are catholic and, from a political point of view they have to safeguard their frontiers).

The commander has, indeed, dismissed the application, because catholic missionaries are (said to be) present there already.

Mgr. Huys states that the area at issue will have to be occupied effectively, because otherwise Berlin might put Brussels through its paces !

At any rate his conclusion is that they must quickly bar the way of the German protestants of Kwidjwi, the more so because the latter will soon have the disposal of two motor-craft...

These considerations date from July 20, 1912.

Altered Plans

Three days later Mgr. Huys, perhaps mainly under the influence of that Byahi-application, elaborately expounds new tactics (52). Summarized the plan amounts to the following : instead of settling on Kwidjwi, he will go all out to occupy himself those areas which are threatened from the island by the protestants, thus being ahead of them.

Two arguments tell in favour of such action : on the one hand a catholic offensive on the island might be a pretext for the protestants — who could not be prevented from doing so — in their turn to

(51) Letter, Huys-Livinhac, Lake Kivu, 20/07/1912; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr.3.

(52) Letter, Huys-Livinhac, Liège St.Lambert (Katana), 23/07/1912; C.A.W.F. D.114, nr.3. Included as appendix.

launch a counter-offensive in the areas where the White Fathers have settled, and on the other hand, if the White Fathers should concentrate their strength on Idjwi, the protestants would find sufficient openings on the mainland round the lake to infiltrate !

It is in this framework that he immediately plans the school-chapel in the Byahi, dependent on Lulenga.

Kwidjwi would come later for the White Fathers, "*when the risk would be smaller of their own lines being broken.*". That is purely strategic language with the sole purpose of systematically implanting catholicism.

Moreover, he adds a few observations about the Belgian government. He suggests that the Belgian government should use the White Fathers to accomplish what is in fact the government's task; from the context it appears that this would be the consolidation of the Belgian presence and of its impact.

Moreover, he puts that the island, admittedly, is Belgian in theory, but is rather under German influence in practice.

He explicitly refuses to "*be the cat's paw*" !

It is considerations with regard to the future of the catholic religion which are of prime importance.

At the beginning of his letter he puts :

"First the Belgian government wanted the White Fathers to settle on Idjwi.

In reply I wrote to Mgr. Roelens that such a situation appeals little to me.

Now it appears that the government should have given up this wish." (see appendix).

The whole context in which Mgr. Huys writes this, creates the impression as if the government should have been the first to take the initiative with regard to a possible settlement on the island and that the mission should have been contacted only, without taking any step itself. Above we pointed out that on August 8, 1910 supreme commander Olsen advocates a White-Father settlement, but on October 31 Governor-General Fuchs does not prove very enthusiastic.

It is on December 9 of the same year that Mgr. Huys writes that he has ordered a provisional key-point to be established there, while Mgr. Roelens asks for the official permission for a permanent settlement ! The government will certainly not object to this, he adds.

This implies in other words that now the mission itself certainly takes the necessary steps and deems a settlement important.

Not until December 12 of the next year, 1911, does Mgr. Roelens mention an express request of the government, which is then confirmed by Mgr. Huys on March 5, 1912, with, indeed, still a prospect of a settlement. On July 23, however, Mgr. Huys announces that, from a strategical point of view, it seems to him no longer desirable.

Consequently, his representation of the growth of the project is distorted in the sense that he should have mentioned not only a request of the government, but also his own plan of December, 1910.

By that new strategic position of the middle of 1912, less direct attention is paid to Kwidjwi itself, than to the areas threatened from the island.

Father Watteyne, superior of Katana, in November, 1913 states that the danger of infiltration from this island is still imminent (53). From the station mentioned, off the island, on the western shore of the lake, the movements of the protestant missionaries are watched as closely as possible.

Thus the superior of the station pays a visit to the Belgian commander on the island at the beginning of December, 1913 (54).

It strikes him "*that the protestants are more of traders than of missionaries who accept payment for their medical care. The chief of the island would rather see other missionaries there, and also the commander declares that he wants the settlement of a catholic mission there. He says that he has amply informed the government of that.*"

Quite at the end of that year the mission of Katana receives from Kwidjwi a message, which in its opinion is favourable indeed — and very probably comes from the Belgian commander :

"Bonnes nouvelles. Messieurs Wiemers et Strenger de la mission protestante, quittent l'île." (55)

(Good news, Messrs. Wiemers and Strenger of the protestant mission are leaving the island).

This time again, however, the departure has not been final. Indeed, on September 23, 1914 — meanwhile World War I has started, also in Africa — the district-governor of Kivu issues a warrant

(53) Letter, Watteyne-Livinhac, Katana, 01/11/1913; C.A.W.F. D.115, Katana. Father J. Watteyne was superior of Katana for a first term in the period 1912-1919 (*Petit Echo*, April, 1966, nr. 567, p. 209).

(54) *Report 4th trimester Katana - 1913*; C.A.W.F. D.115, Katana.

(55) *Ibidem*.

against the German missionary Von Bodelschwing residing on Kwidjwi, who is deemed to have a hand in the “unwillingness which has characterized the population for some time”.

The Germans, however — among other things with the help of a craft belonging to the protestant mission, as Mgr. Roelens stresses — are about to get the whole Lake of Kivu under control, and on September 24 the Belgians capitulate on the island (56).

The tide of the battle turns by April, 1916.

When the island falls into Belgian hands again, the protestant missionaries prove to have left it (57).

THE SETTLEMENT-POLICY ELUCIDATED

In the above-outlined settlement-policy three aspects strongly come to the fore.

In the first place it appears that the strong concentration on the Kivu-area in the years 1910-1912 is mainly determined by the wish to prevent a possible invasion of protestants from English or German territories.

Even though factors such as climate, density of the population, fertility of the soil, tranquillity in the area, must certainly be taken into account for a foundation, yet the fear of protestant infiltration is undoubtedly the principal motive (58).

(56) *Les Campagnes Coloniales Belges. 1914-1918*, vol. I, Brussels, 1927, p. 163. V. ROELENS, *Notre Vieux Congo*, II, Namur, 1949, pp. 138-139.

Owing to the war circumstances Mgr. Roelens was obliged to remain in the Kivu from June, 1914 till the end of 1916 (*ibid.*, pp. 175 ff.)

(57) For the war-phase, see : *Les Campagnes Coloniales Belges. 1914-1918*, II, Brussels, 1929, pp. 142-150.

Annual report 1916, Katana mission, p. 1; C.A.W.F. D.115, Katana.

P. MAZE, *Le Vicariat du Kivu*, p. 7; C.A.W.F. 282.12.

Eventually a full-blown White-Father mission is founded on Kwidjwi on 28/12/1936 (Kashofu) (*Rapp. Ann. 1936-1937*, pp. 360-361).

(58) We must be well aware of the fact that precisely those traditionally good properties of a settlement-location are also most attractive for the protestants ! About the relation between the White Fathers and the protestants L. GREINDL gives a few indications in his article : “Notes sur les sources des Missionnaires d’Afrique (Pères Blancs) pour l’est du Zaïre”, in *Etudes d’Histoire Africaine*, VII (1975), p. 197. Here he also refers to the study of J. PIROTTE, *Périodiques missionnaires belges d’expression française. Relfets de cinquante années d’évolution d’une mentalité, 1889-1940*, Louvain, 1973 (see especially pp. 137;

The activity of the White Fathers is aimed at turning the political frontier delimited since 1910, into a religious front-line as well. The new political situation leads to an intensification of the wish for preventive protection.

Competition with the protestants is, of course, not a characteristic which applies to the Kivu only, in that period. We are convinced that it has played a part in practically the whole of Africa.

However, the protective measures which we have been able to study, are extremely intense, indeed, and a classic example of this aspect of the catholic settlement-policy, favoured here by a political border-situation.

A second datum concerns the mutual relation of the catholic congregations.

We entered into this aspect when discussing the foundation of Lulenga, near Rutchuru. We cannot establish with absolute certainty if the fear of losing part of the Vicariate to the profit of the Priests of the Sacred Heart, has had a considerable influence on the White Fathers. We do consider important the fact that no allusions to this are to be found with the decision-making people.

Eventually we are under the impression that this movement has probably meant at least a stimulus.

A third element is the relation between mission and state.

To what extent does the will to co-operate in the Belgian occupation play a part in the foundation-strategy ?

In fact that Belgian occupation has two facets, which in a border-area overlap without coinciding, on the one hand safeguarding against non-Belgian influences, and on the other hand effective submission to the Belgian government.

So far we have left the second facet, the submission, practically out of consideration.

With regard to Kivu obvious evidence is to be found of state-functionaries who consider the presence of the White Fathers very favourable on this point. In August, 1910 commander Olsen

142-146; 358; 366).

The two authors suggest a relatively good understanding between the White Fathers and the protestants (especially for Ruanda). The only conclusion that can be drawn for the time being, is that further study of this matter is essential. This should be done on the basis of a combination of three great series of sources : the publications for the internal use within the society (GREINDL), the periodicals for a larger public (PIROTTE) and the private letters (the approach which we have mainly applied here).

pronounces in that sense, when he advocates a settlement on Kwidjwi, and in 1912 state-inspector De Meulemeester praises their civilization-work around Lulenga, in an “*area which one and a half year ago was unsubmitted yet*” (59).

These are appreciations of the result of the White-Father settlements which in practice have effectively been confronted with occupation and rebellion (60).

When reading this and analysing the activities in and about the mission-stations, one wonders if this aspect also plays any part in the decision-making as to the settlement-strategy.

In other words, have the White Fathers knowingly made their plans, as to the choice of settlement-places, the concentration on the Kivu-area — indeed famous for its long resistance to the European occupation — and the speed of their action, with a view to assistance in the political submission ?

This question can be solved only when we have sufficient knowledge of the considerations that have guided the decision-making persons, notably Mgr. Roelens and Mgr. Huys.

We have the disposal of only the text of one settlement-application to the administration, a few allusions of the Vicar and some 15 letters of the coadjutor addressed to his general superior, in which the plans for the Kivu-foundations fill an ample place.

This evidence, scattered over the period 1910-1912, seems to us to offer the best guarantee to be able to define the considerations which were of real importance.

After a thorough investigation only three remarks can be

(59) Letter, Olsen-Governor-General, Nya Lukemba, 08/08/1910; A.Min.Col. M 601, VI. Pères Blancs-1910 :

“ces missionnaires ont toujours en même temps eu pour but d’inculquer à nos peuplades indigènes le respect et l’obéissance au Gouvernement”. (These missionaries have always had as their aim to force the respect and the obedience to the Government upon our native population).

Report of state-inspector De Meulemeester, inspection-zone of Kivu, added to letter, Governor-General Fuchs-Minister of Colonies, Boma, 27/06/1912; A.Min.Col. M 601, VIII. Pères Blancs-1912.

(60) For the activities in and about the stations in this sense, the published “Rapports Annuels” are already a first important source of information.

For a considerable part of the population with whom the White Fathers were confronted — the Bashi — west of Lake Kivu and Ruzizi, we refer a.o. to :

— P. COLLE, *Essai de Monographie des Bashi*, s.l., s.d., -4^o, stencilled, 426 p.

— P. MASSON, *Trois siècles chez les Bashi*, Tervuren, Musée Royal de l’Afrique Centrale, Archives d’Ethnographie, nr. 1, 1960, 126 p.

— P. BEGHIN, *Geleide Verandering in een Afrikaanse Samenleving. De Bushi in de koloniale periode*, Brussels, Royal Ac. Overseas Sc., Cl. Mor. & Pol. Sc., N.S., XLIV-1, 1974, 183 p.

considered which may prove of some importance in this context :

— As we pointed out before, Mgr. Huys announces a foundation near Lake Mutanda, in the Ufumbiro, in his letter of July 8, 1910. In the considerations he adds to that, he mentions among other things a “*submitted and trustful population, thanks to the effective occupation by the Belgian forces*”.

Here the political tranquillity comes to the fore as an element in favour of the foundation.

— In the application for the foundation of the station near Rutchuru (Lulenga) of July 24, 1910 Mgr. Huys speaks of “*high reasons of christian civilization*” and of a “*barrier against the English influence*”.

We shall enter into the latter consideration further, but here we want to point out that he expressly takes advantage of something that must sound good to the Belgian government.

He does not clarify the “*high reasons of christian civilization*”. Neither does he say that, in the light of that civilization-mission the post would be of help in the submission of the native population.

In other words, he obviously speculates on an international-political element — which at the same time suits his purpose very well — but he omits saying anything about the internal occupation, which must equally have been of interest to the state. This reserve is in violent contrast with the extent to which he evokes the bogey of protestantism to his superior.

— In his letters of July 20 and 23, 1912 to the general superior, Mgr. Huys points out why, for the time being, there will be no foundations in the area west of Lulenga, at the north frontier of the Vicariate : the population is too sparse there as a result of recent military operations.

In other words political unrest keeps him from making a foundation here.

We should bear in mind that this area is at some distance from the east border.

Neither have we found any allusion which would point out that a certain place along the border-line should have been avoided especially for this reason.

On the basis of these data it does not seem possible to us that the White Fathers were especially in search of turbulent areas, nor that they would avoid such areas if the border-line should induce them to make foundations there.

Striking, anyhow, is the almost absolute silence of Mgr. Huys about the aspect of occupation and rebellion.

This throws an even stronger light on the exceptionally great interest in a protective strategy against the protestants. It is essentially a question of settlement-projects on a religious front-line.

What is the meaning of the first facet, safeguarding against non-Belgian influences, in their foundation-strategy ?

Undoubtedly the White Fathers are happy with the fact that the Belgian authorities must protect their borders there, the more so because there "non-Belgian" coincides with "protestant".

The two parties, state and mission, are well off with this protection.

We have pointed out that the local commander even goes so far as to reject a protestant settlement-application in the Byahi on fictitious grounds. So the mission can rely on the help of the administration, also with regard to the material upbuilding.

In order to obtain that help of the state the White Fathers themselves speculate on the political border-concern of the state. The "barrier against the English influence" of Mgr. Huys is sufficiently clear.

But what about the Kwidjwi-project ?

On July 23, 1913 the same prelate writes indeed literally that he has the impression that the state wanted to "employ" them on the island and that he is not willing to "*be the cat's paw*" !

It is obviously mission-strategic considerations which prevail at that moment, which means the struggle against the protestant infiltration, which necessitates another approach.

What we can conclude from that Kwidjwi-phase, is that the White Fathers are indeed willing to go along part of the way with the colonial administration, however, only in so far as it will not be at the expense of their own main objective.

This fits very well in a more general picture outlined by Mgr. Roelens on November 7, 1912 :

"Ce serait même faire une injustice et un déshonneur aux missionnaires catholiques que de croire que vraiment, ils ne font rien pour propager, soutenir et augmenter l'influence de leur Patrie",
(It would even be an injustice and a disgrace to the catholic missionaries as to believe that they really do not do anything to propagate, support and increase the influence of their Country)

but to which he adds :

**“Le sentiment catholique doit prévaloir sur le sentiment patriotique” ! (61)
(The catholic feeling must prevail over the patriotic sentiment)**

**(61) Letter, Roelens-Streicher, Antwerp, 07/11/1912; C.A.W.F. D.113, f.1.
(Mgr. Streicher : Apostolic Vicar of Uganda).**

APPENDIX

From : Letter, Mgr. A HUYS to Mgr. LIVINHAC, Liège St.-Lambert
(Katana) (Kivu), 23/07/1912
(C.A.W.F., D.114, HUYS, no. 3, 1910-'12)

(...)

Le principal but de mon excursion dans les régions situées au Nord du Kivu a été de fonder une station de mission en vue de barrer le passage aux protestants allemands. Votre Grandeur sait que ces derniers sont établis dans l'île Kwidjwi. Le Gouvernement Belge aurait d'abord voulu que les Pères Blancs s'établissent à Idjwi (île du Kivu). J'ai répondu à Mgr. Roelens que pareille solution me plaît très peu. Maintenant le Gouvernement semble se désister de ce desideratum.

Voici la grande raison qui me guide à ne pas fonder actuellement à Idjwi. Nombreuses sont les portes qui restent ouvertes sur le continent et qui pourrait livrer passage aux protestants. Or si nous allons immobiliser nos forces dans l'île Idjwi où les Protestants allemands se sont établis avec le consentement réciproque de l'Allemagne et de la Belgique lors des protocoles de la délimitation, je trouve que d'une côté nous invitons les Protestants allemands à passer chez nous, car ils pourront prétexter que nous venons les harceler chez eux, et d'un autre côté ils trouveront diverses portes larges ouvertes p.ex. celles du Byahi et de Bobandana sans parler des lacs Mokoto.

Ce qui plus est, ils trouveraient de ce chef un argument plausible aux yeux de Berlin pour forcer la main à Bruxelles.

Déjà ils ont essayé d'obtenir l'autorisation du Commandant du territoire, mais celui-ci a répondu que les endroits sollicités étaient déjà évangélisés par les Pères Blancs catholiques Belges.

Cette occupation catholique mise en avant par le Commandant, est en réalité platonique et non effective.

Je trouve donc que, puisque les populations ne manquent pas ailleurs qu'à Idjwi où les Protestants se sont établis au centre des populations, il est absolument inopportun de lâcher pied sur le continent pour aller entamer la guerre sur l'île. D'autant plus que, si ns.n.s. établissons sur l'île, les Protestants ne manqueront pas de pousser en avant sur le continent forts qu'ils seraient de notre tactique offensive à leur égard.

J'ai donc conclu qu'il faut occuper aussi fortement que possible toutes les frontières et laisser les protestants actuellement "faire des tuiles" à Idjwi, car leur évangélisation a les allures d'une exploitation économique.

J'ai donc décidé que pour le moment l'on occupera d'abord toutes les positions sur le continent limitrophe, quitte à évangéliser Idjwi plus tard quand nous ne courrons plus le même risque de voir percer nos lignes.

Je devrais ajouter pour être complet, que dans mon esprit, le Gouvernement voudrait se servir de nous pour faire son oeuvre à lui. Mais je ne suis pas d'avis d'entrer dans cette voie. A mon avis, dans ce cas-ci, le bien et l'avenir de la religion catholique dans ces régions s'y opposent.

Je ne sais pas si Bruxelles est au courant de la situation exacte.

En théorie, Idjwi est Belge; en pratique l'influence allemande s'y affirme de plus en plus. Et je doute fort que le sous-officier Belge qui y réside empêche

l'Allemagne de profiter des avantages de cette île. Il me semble donc, qu'à moins de raisons très graves qui pour moi n'existent pas, ce n'est pas aux missionnaires de tirer les marrons du feu, au risque de se brûler tous les doigts. Tout cela, Monseigneur, pour Vous dire que pour le moment, je ne fonderai pas de mission à Idjwi, à moins qu'on me l'ordonne. (...).



