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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### The Contribution Of Friends African Mission To Western Education Development In Vihiga District In Kenya, 1919-1949

\* Beatrice A. Namatsi

Department of Humanities, Turbo Girls High School, P.O. Box 184 – 30100, Turbo, Kenya.

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##### \*Corresponding author:

[namatsib@yahoo.com](mailto:namatsib@yahoo.com)

#### Abstract

This paper traces the educational activities of the Friends African Mission (FAM) soon after the War World 1 to 1949, specifically focusing at Vihiga District in Western Kenya. In doing this, a critical examination of the various forces which influenced the trend of education in the District during the stated period is undertaken. The 1920s saw for the first time increased political pressure by Africans who wanted to have a say in the education of their children. This came as a result of insistence by the missionaries on industrial education and the kind of laxity which they displayed towards their educational systems at the time. This was the background against which the government undertook to permit Africans to establish Local Native Churches (LNC) schools in the country in the early 1930s - an activity which hitherto had been the preserve of the Christian missionaries. The preoccupation by the missionaries with internal feuds at Kaimosi in the 1930s almost crippled the FAM's educational programmes. On their part, Africans continued to oppose the missions system of mass education in favour of higher education especially at secondary level. These agitations, together with the effects of the World War 1, made Africans to intensify their campaign for a secondary school at Kaimosi. Nevertheless, the government refused to yield to the said demand until 1950 when the FAM was given responsibility to run a secondary school following the recommendation of the Beecher report in 1949.

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#### Introduction

The initial development of western education in Kenya was the responsibility of Christian missionaries that belonged to different church organizations from Europe, USA and Canada. The major Christian groups that operated in Kenya were Protestants and Catholics. The protestant groups included the Church Missionary Society (CMS) from England. Arriving in Kenya in 1844, their work was mainly confined to the coast until the construction of the railway. In 1885, they founded a mission station at Taita and later in the central parts of Kenya at such places as Kahuhuruka, Waithaka, Kahuiya, Mahiga and Embu (Abreu, 1973, p. 24).

The entry of the Church Missionary Society to western Kenya was through Uganda in 1905. Mission

stations were opened up among the Luo, Abaluhya and the Kisii. The church of Scotland Mission, later known as the Presbyterians, founded missions at Kibwezi, Thogoto, Tumutumu and Chogoria in Meru. At the same time, the African Inland Missions established stations at Kangundo, Kijabe, Githurai and at Kinyona. The Catholic Missions, which operated in central Kenya, were the Holy Ghost Fathers (HGF) and Italian Catholic Missions between 1903 and 1906.

The extension of the railway into Western Kenya generated intense rivalry among the missionaries as they scrambled for spheres of influence. Involved in this rivalry were the CMS at Maseno, Butere and Ng'iyia in 1906, Friends African Mission (FAM) or Quakers at Kaimosi in 1902, the Church of God at

Kima in 1905, the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) at Kamagambo in 1906 and Mill Hill Missions (MHM) at Yala, Mumias, Mukumu, Nyambururu and Asumbi in 1906. The latest on the scene was Pentecostal Assembly of God (PAG) at Nyangóri in 1910. Three missionaries led by Willis Hotchkiss were sent to western Kenya to establish an industrial mission by the American Friends. Hotchkiss had come in 1895 with the African Inland Mission (AIM) but left that society because of its policy of concentrating only on evangelization. He now led the missionary team through Kisumu and settled at Kaimosi among the Luhya people around 1900. They purchased about 900 acres of land with the aim of using it both to evangelize and to help their converts acquire skills in various trades and in farming. Consequently, they established their mission station at Kaimosi in 1902 (Painter, 1966, p. 24).

The principle motive of these missionary groups, especially the Protestants, was to reform the social sector of African life. This was to be achieved through bringing the Africans into membership of their churches whereas education was to be used to spread the gospel and to reform the African society. In pursuit of this objective, each mission set up central mission schools with networks of village or "bush schools". The latter category of schools was so instrumental in the opening up of the rural areas to western values and ideas that they were termed by the Phelps-Stokes Commission as the "outposts of civilization". In these schools, African children were given simple education in reading, writing and arithmetic alongside religious instruction. Thus early schools grew out of the desire to win converts, train African catechists and workers so as to create an African middle class who could be used to introduce European civilization to the local population.

Whatever the argument, Christian missionaries did much by way of contributing to the African educational development. As F.B. Welbourn summarizes, "The greatest known farmer, carpenter, smith, doctor, linguist and story teller had missionary contact" (Bogonko, 1992, p. 18). Missionaries trained the African converts as masons, carpenters, and architects for purposes of building churches, schools and houses. They compiled dictionaries in local languages, made Bible translations, wrote books, set up Bible colleges, mission presses for publications and other educational related activities. Their most important contribution was setting up schools based on western models.

It is therefore against this background of Christian missionary enterprise in Kenya that this paper seeks to establish the role played by one of the Christian missions in the development of education in Vihiga District from 1902 to 1973. Though comparatively

smaller than the other missionary groups, the Friends Africa Mission is nevertheless important in demonstrating the extent to which diverse missions adopted different approaches in their work. To the Friends, for example, the acquisition of industrial skills would give Africans a new way of life in the world as they responded to the gospel.

In September 1901 the FAIM board decided to send the first party of three missionaries to Africa purposely to investigate the possibility and location of its missions. This expedition group came to be known as the Friends Africa Mission. The missionaries sent were Willis R. Hotchkiss, Edgar T. Hole and Arthur B. Chilson with Hole as the leader of the group (K.N.A., E.A.Y.M.F 109/80). They sailed from New York for Africa via England in April 1902 and arrived in Mombasa on 24 June 1902. On arrival, they left straight for port Florence (Kisumu) in the western part of Kenya as they had been advised by Bishop Tylor of the CMS, Kampala, whom they had met in England, on the need for missionary work in the Lake Victoria region since there was no mission at that time. They arrived in Kisumu during the first week of July (Painter, 1966, p. 21; Rasmussen, 1985, p. 39). With assistance from Charles Holey, the then sub-commissioner in charge of North Kavirondo, they set out to locate their station to the north of Kisumu. The missionaries met with Nabongo Mumia on 17 July 1902. After a few days of prospecting among the Abaluhya sub-tribes, they finally arrived at Kaimosi. The reasons the missionaries preferred settling in Kaimosi were:

- i. Kaimosi had large tracts of unoccupied land.
- ii. Kaimosi was heavily forested and thus provided enough timber to build structures.
- iii. Kaimosi passed the Goli Goli which provided enough water for the mission.
- iv. Kaimosi was a highly populated area which meant more converts.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It is observable from the foregoing discussion that the coming of the Friends African Mission into Kenya was religiously motivated. However, the Mission did provide some western education to their early converts, although this was a subsidiary concern aimed at achieving religious success. The missionaries sought to train African catechists who could be used in the process of spreading the gospel and winning Africans to Christ. The schools which missionaries opened first were prayer houses meant to teach Christianity. Missionaries needed to erect mission stations, to provide food for their residents and later to meet government requirements in industrial training for grants-in-aid to missions. Simple industrial education in agriculture and

technical training helped solve these problems. The overall objective of these strategies was to make missions self-perpetuating. Literary education was never a priority in mission schools. It was the pressure from Africans which eventually forced missionaries to tilt their evangelical work by adding doses of academic education. By 1910, most of the missionary bodies had established central schools as well as village schools. Despite the crucial role played by the Friends African Mission in education, this has largely escaped scholarly attention. This paper, therefore, focuses on the advent of the Friends African Mission in Vihiga District, with a specific emphasis on its impact in the propagation of formal education both at Kaimosi and in the adjacent areas.

### **The Early Educational Activities of the FAM, 1903-1918**

Less than six months after the arrival of the first FAIM party at Kaimosi, Edgar Hole started his first class of learners which was composed of both youth and adults. The school was in a way meant to attract Africans to the station for evangelism since, right from the beginning, these missionaries had identified education as one of the effective means towards that end (Rowe, 1958, p. 45; Rasmussen, 1995, p. 47). Learning went on under a tree for sometime before a permanent building was erected (Chilson, 1943, p. 39). At first Kiswahili was used as the medium of instruction till 1907 when it was replaced with Lulogoli – one of the Luyia dialects after Emory Rees managed to reduce it into a written form (Painter, 1966, p. 50).

The school curriculum in Kenya during the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century entirely depended on the aims and needs of the individual missionary groups. It was not until 1911, following the recommendation made by Prof Nelson Frazer in 1909 on education in the East Africa protectorate that the government formerly decided to participate in the provision of African education. It did this by establishing the department of education in 1911 with J.R as its first Director. The FAM had therefore developed a curriculum purposely aimed at meeting its primary missionary objective in Kenya, that is, the establishment of a self-propagating, self-supporting and self-governing church already alluded to in the previous section. Right from the beginning, its schools emphasized on the 3Rs, Bible and industrial education. Basic skills in some of the manual activities such as building, brick making, cooking and cultivation were informally taught to those who got attracted to the industrial mission at Kaimosi (Kay, 1973, p. 80). Similar activities were later spread to other stations such that for the first two decades of the century, those who worked on the FAM stations

were instructed in logging, lumber-making, carpentry, brick-making, book-binding, tailoring, cooking, walling, planting, harvesting, milling, smithing, brick laying, masonry, type-setting and printing.

These industrial programmes were developed by Fred Hoyt who joined the FAM in 1912 from the Lumbwa industrial mission. His efforts were further complemented by Frank Canover, an agricultural specialist who also came at Kaimosi in 1912. He taught Africans better methods of cultivation and carried out practical demonstrations in planting and cultivation of fruits, vegetables and maize among others. Apart from these, the mission workers were also given some rudimentary classes in 3Rs (Kay, 1973, p. 90; Culpin, 1976, p. 56; Rasmussen, 1995, p. 41). This industrial programme greatly assisted the mission in acquiring less expensive materials as well as some trained technicians who assisted in the maintenance of the mission stations. At the same time, these vocational skills helped Africans to improve their ways of living (Kay, 1973, p. 96-97).

This type of curriculum fitted in very well with that suggested by the government following Frazer's recommendations which never deviated from the thinking of the government and settlers on the provision of technical and religious education for Africans. Whereas the former meant to make Africans good artisans to take over from the Indians who were very expensive to hire, the latter served to train the natives in their morals (Sifuna & Otiende, 1994, p. 168). There is no doubt that Kaimosi stood a better chance to receive government grants for technical education introduced by the department of education in 1912. But the fear of losing autonomy over its education programmes in terms of policy forced the FAM to reject this offer by the government together with other protestant missionaries such as AIM and SDA (Furley & Watson, 1978, p. 156).

Most of the instruction work during these initial stages of the FAM education system was mostly done by missionaries. Within a short time the first African converts also started to assist. The hiring of Cherubini Matolas in 1904, who was later joined by his brother Bartholomew in 1907, assisted a lot in the instruction of Africans at Kaimosi (Kay, 1973, p. 119). Later, as many Africans started to take initiative in spreading this new form of learning, it became necessary to coordinate their activities. Hence the coming of Rexie Reeve in 1912 who started a training programme for African teachers in and out schools to improve their skills. She also gave these teachers weekly lesson outlines and used to pay monthly visits to their schools for inspection and advice. The missions' printing press also helped in improving the quality of instruction through the

production of instructional materials. By 1918, these efforts had led to the publication in Lulogoli series of 12 reading charts, two graded readers, two arithmetic texts, a brief biography, a hymnal, and five books of the bible and series of weekly scripture lessons (Kay, 1973, p. 95).

African response to the FAM educational initiatives in western Kenya still followed the dimension already taken by various communities towards these evangelical activities as explained in the previous sections. The Tiriki who had rejected the settlement of these missionaries in their midst outright did very little to send their children to Kaimosi mission for education compared to other Abaluyia communities (Sifuna, 1977a; Kay, 1973, p. 123-135; Kenworthy, 1987, p. 26). The Maragoli, for example, saw promises of a good future in education and took upon themselves the responsibility to spread the same to the other Abaluyia communities who lagged behind. Individual responses to missionary education in the initial stages were not quite encouraging. Africans viewed the missionaries with a lot of suspicion. Others even thought that these intruders (missionaries) could bewitch them (Oliver, 1965). Accordingly, those who first ventured on mission stations were mostly the despised and marginalized in the society – orphans and strangers as well as those who ran away after committing serious community offenses and were in essence escaping punishment, the idlers those who were found to be lazy, among others (Sifuna & Otiende, 1994, p. 168; Kay, 1973, p. 14). Chiefs also played a very important role in getting pupils for these missionaries. Murunga who ruled over north Kitosh told his headsmen to send their children to Lugulu after establishment of schools and also assisted these missionaries to start outstations and schools in his area (Lohrentz, 1977, p. 173; Culpin, 1976, p. 82-83). A similar trend was seen in Maragoli where through the cooperation of headmen, the out schools increased from two in 1911 to ten in 1915 (Kay, 1973, p. 110, 112-113). The African initiatives taken in the spread of Quakerism and education to their respective communities led to the opening of many village schools with most of those admitted being sons and relatives of chiefs (Culpin, 1976, p. 84).

A major factor which boosted the number of learners not only in the FAM schools but in other schools in Kenya was the outbreak of the World War 1 in 1914. The decision by the British to recruit Africans to serve in this war forced quite a number to take refuge on mission stations to avoid conscription (Tsimungu, 2008; Temu, 1972, p. 17). This event increased the pool of learners thereby forcing the missionaries to open more schools to cater for those flocking to their stations in large numbers. This became a blessing in

disguise to the missionaries who capitalized on their plight to evangelize and introduce them to some literally skills. This forced the FAM to double their institutions in western Kenya. For example, the Kaimosi station which had only 6 schools in 1914 with an average attendance of 377 saw their schools increase to 13 by 1915 with an average attendance of 1,004. This was also reflected in Maragoli whose 5 schools with an average attendance of 1064 in September 1913 increased to 14 with average attendance of 2050 in March 1915 and to 20 schools by June the same year (K.N.A, E.A.Y.M.F, 136/80). But as the war continued, the authorities decided to invade some of the mission schools to force the able bodied pupils into the army. Such a case was reported by Andrew Estock at Lirhandu mission in 1917 (K.N.A, E.A.Y.M.F, 160/80).

It is instructive that a number of factors had made the FAM education system to expand tremendously during the first two decades of their work in western Kenya. From its humble beginnings, the system had grown over time such that by 1916 the mission boasted over 42 schools which provided a religious, literally as well as practical education to its adherents who numbered over 4,000 (Kay, 1973, p.77). Out of this the Maragoli proved to be the most responsive by the time the war ended in 1918. For instance, the Maragoli hosted a total of 20 FAM schools by 1919 (Culpin, 1976, p. 86-87).

### **Limitations of the Study**

The study relied heavily on opinions of old men and women who witnessed the coming and activities of European missionaries, friends Africa Mission fathers, headmasters, teachers and administrators. These gave information that was considered reliable thence reducing the effect of the above limitation on the results of the study; the author used a large sample of informants that corroborated conflicting view points and opinions as well. The study mainly concerned itself with only two friends African Mission schools in Vihiga District. As such, the findings of the study may not apply to educational activities of other missionaries in the country.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The study was conducted in Vihiga District, one of the five districts of Western Province. Being a historical study, the historical method of inquiry into the past was adopted. The method attempts to establish facts so as to arrive at conclusions concerning past events and determine their relevance to the present circumstances. The interpreted facts also form a basis for prediction of future events. The case study method was also blended with the historical research method.

This study was thus heavily dependent on historical source of information. These sources were both primary, regarded as fundamental to historical research (Sidhu, 1990, p. 7) and secondary sources and secondary sources which were used in the absence of Primary sources. Primary sources consulted included oral testimonies of actual participants or witnesses of events in Vihiga District. Apart from oral testimonies, other primary sources that were used were archival documents, either personal or institutional, such as correspondences, photographs, mission publications, minutes of meetings and colonial government annual reports. The main secondary sources that were utilized were published and unpublished articles and books. They acted as a useful check on any errors reported orally. Methods used to collect data were document studies, questionnaires and interview schedules. Documents were read and notes on relevant information taken. The questionnaires used were structured into open and closed-ended type of questions. Interview schedules consisted of questions of a special category meant for explanation on various aspects which were restricted to the questionnaires alone. The interview schedule was guided by oral interviews which were blended in the process, especially for the respondents who were unable, for certain reasons, to fill in the questionnaires. Procedures on data collection included field interviews on established population sample and notes were taken. For the sake of clarification and the need for more information, some respondents were interviewed more than once. Visits were made to various quarters to read documents on the information being sought. The places visited were the Friends Africa Mission headquarters at Kaimosi, the University of Nairobi and the Macmillan Library in Nairobi, as well as the Kenya National Archives.

Most of what is described is based on information given by testimonies of actual observers and participants as well as on published sources. The guiding principle to this process of verification was subjecting the gathered information to historical techniques of internal and external criticism. External criticism is a process of seeking to determine the authenticity of the documents studied and the person giving information it seeks to answer the question "is" the source what it seems to be? This helps to determine whether the document is original or derived from expurgated versions. On the other hand, internal criticism is the process which undertakes to analyze the meaning of statements within documents or a reporter which or who have already been established as genuine, and to determine their accuracy and trustworthiness. This involves finding

out the intent meaning of various statements made by respondents and documents consulted.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Friends Educational Developments during the Inter-War Period, 1919-1939

The end of the First World War saw a good number of Africans start to demand for increased educational opportunities in Kenya. This came about after the realization by those who took part in the war that the power of the white man lay more in his knowledge than anything else (Kay, 1973, p. 118). Apart from this, interactions among Africans themselves provided a lot of learning opportunities. For instance, the Abaluyia who travelled to the coast either as soldiers or carrier corps came into contact with advanced culture which became instrumental in changing their perception towards life. According to Miss Chadwick of CMS Butere, those people went back to Kavirondo with a lot of thirst for education. She writes:

.....during the campaign, the Abaluyia had been much laughed at by the more civilized coast boys both because their faces showed the old tribal marks or scars of heathen days and because they could not read [Chadwick papers, as cited in Lonsdale, 1964, p. 211).

The increasing effect of colonialism that manifested itself in terms of taxes, inflation and forced labour on the settler farms forced Africans to look for alternative ways of survival outside their tribal confines with the school proving to be a major avenue to new experiences (Sifuna & Otiende, 1994, p. 176-177). This new perception was well reflected among the Friends by the increased number of Africans who started to enrol in schools at the time. For instance, while Kaimosi School had 611 pupils in December 1919, enrolment had risen to 800 by December 1920 and 1450 by December 1921. A similar trend was also recorded in Maragoli where enrolment figures rose from 3123 in December 1920 to 4613 in December 1921 (K.N.A, E.A.Y.M.F 164/80).

The 1920s also ushered in an era where Africans started to demand for quality education that could enable them get good paying jobs. They argued that the technical and religious education which was being offered to them at the time was virtually useless. The Friends' converts for example told FAM missionaries frankly in 1921 that:

.....the people of the church are wanting all earning. We are being taught the bible and we want to learn carpentry and English, also work in telegraphy and clerkship. Now the people are asking you that a teacher should come to train leaders in such work together with school

teachers (Maragoli mission minutes 17/1/1921, as cited in Painter, 1966, p. 39).

In essence, the Friends wanted an education which could adapt them to a fast changing environment. Hence their insistence on English and trades, subjects which gave them guarantees for employment both in government sector as well as on the settler farms (K.N.A, E.A.Y.M.F.135/80; Sifuna & Otiende, 1994, p. 177).

The emphasis on technical education and religious education in Kenya as provided by the missionaries was in line with government and settler demands since it aimed at producing competent artisans who were also expected to be morally upright. Just like the Frazer report of 1909, the East Africa Protectorate commission report of 1919 also tied the provision of government grants-in-aid to schools run by the mission for technical training (Furley & Watson, 1978, p. 157). Consequently, Africans demand at this time, which contradicted the official government policy, put the mission in a tight spot as they were supposed to adhere to government stipulations if they expected to get grants. Although the FAM's curriculum clearly reflected the thinking of the government of the time, they still did not want to apply for grants. With time, mounting pressure from the government, as well as the advice given by the Phelps Stokes Commission, which visited Africa in 1924, influenced these missionaries to accept the said grants from 1924 (K.N.A, E.A.Y.M.F,122/80; Jones, 1925, p. 130-131). The FAM also acceded to government pressure due to economic hardships that faced it soon after the war. The depression of the early 1920s had forced the board to cut down on financial spending, a thing which almost crippled the educational programme (Rowe, 1958, p. 66-67, 69-70).

The flow of the said grants from 1926, together with African contributions enabled the mission to survive the said hardships and expand its educational work (Rowe, 1958, p. 74-75). The FAM's industrial programme had started right from the time of these missionaries established themselves at Kaimosi. They took the teaching of industrial work to Africans as a very effective means towards the establishment of a self-supporting native church (K.N.A, E.A.Y.M.F. 260/80). Consequently, an industrial centre got started at Kaimosi purposely to attract Africans who were taught practical subjects such as carpentry, brick-making and masonry apart from the academic ones (Kenworthy, 1987, p. 326). This instruction was meant to help Africans (K.N.A E.A.Y.F.M, 122/80; Jones, 1925, p. 131).

Although this training was meant to equip Africans with some of the essential skills to make them become self-reliant, these missionaries also

emphasized on this program because of the direct benefits which accrued from it because the artisans were expected to assist in the maintenance of the mission stations thereby cutting down on some of their financial expenses (Hotchkiss, 1901, p. 152).

It should not be forgotten that the emphasis on this practical programme for Africans was also not totally divorced from the racial prejudices which the western world held towards Africans, generally seeing them as depraved people with inferior intellectual abilities that could not enable them handle a purely academic curriculum which at the time was seen as a preserve of the whites. Unfortunately, the FAM in its efforts to uplift the standards of Africans through evangelization and education also fell into this trap. This is clearly seen from the writing of the missions' pioneer workers and the stated objectives of the FAIM which leave no doubt as to the kind of prejudices that these Americans held towards Africans. The latter were portrayed as benighted people that were both mentally and morally retarded and could only be saved from this unfortunate state if exposed to some kind of manual training. For instance, Willis Hotchkiss, the man behind the formation of the F.AIM and a leading proponent of the industrial curriculum for the Africans had this to say about them:

If we were to realize our aim of self-supporting, self-propagating native church from such material, the regenerate units who are to compose that church must from the first be aided in the direction of responsible manhood; cost will power must be retrieved ;and the usually weak, vacillating character re-enforced by means of careful training in habits of industry.....By training him in habits of industry, we create in him the stability of character otherwise impossible and without which he will ever be vacillating and unreliable; a wave driven by the wind and tossed; a prey to every evil passion; a melancholy picture of the house swept and garnished, only to be passed again by seven other devils worse than the first (Hotchkiss, 1901, p. 50-151).

Such prejudicial ideas about Africans made American Friends come to Africa totally convinced about a manual based curriculum as the panacea for these people if they were to reap any benefits at all (religious, moral and social) from their missionary work intended mainly to assist Africans reconstruct their society along Christian principles (Hotchkiss, 1901). Hence those Africans who attended the FAM schools ended up benefiting from a double curriculum of both the head and the hand (Kay, 1973, p. 90).

Apart from the foregoing, another rationale for the heavy industrial feature in the FAM curriculum in Kenya had to do with these missionaries inferior educational backgrounds. Most of those people who came to Kaimosi were rural people who were not necessarily trained theologians but instead carried with them very practical orientations to their daily lives (Cuplin, 1976, p. 2). This deficiency became a very big hindrance when it came to the promotion of African education by these missionaries who therefore settled for a practical curriculum for their schools out of convenience since it carried with it the experiences, set of values, and beliefs of Quakers as practiced in the Midwest America – their place of origin (Cuplin, 1976, p. 30).

The emphasis by the FAM on industrial education made this educational policy fit very well into the proposal made by the Phelps-stokes commission. The commission had recommended an education which was meant to adapt Africans to their local conditions and took industrial education as the best alternative towards that end.

The commission which had also asked the government to participate actively in the administration of its education system led the latter to come up with the education ordinance of 1924. This marked the beginning of a definite commitment by the colonial government to control its education system. African education was no longer a preserve of Christian missions in terms of provision and control. And since the FAM had at the time accepted government grants, its school system also came under government control. The mission was therefore required to implement the educational policies of the government and observe the standards as well.

To bring some order into the colony's education system, the government imposed a uniform nomenclature for all schools of all races in line with the educational ordinance of 1924. Elementary grade ran from Standard 1 to Standard 5 and covered ages from six to twelve. The junior and senior secondary school grades ran from Forms 1 to 6 and covered up to the age of 18 (Furley & Watson, 1978, p. 160-161). Prior to this, mission schools had been categorized as village schools which were mostly catechumenates and gave very little secular education, and central schools which completed the primary course where pupils were prepared for training on secondary education (Sifuna, 1990, p. 30). By 1927, the Kenya school structure followed the pattern shown below.

The 1927 revival which led to the desertion of a number of Christians from the church also led to a corresponding decline in school enrolment in the early 1930s. Pupil population fell from 18,000 in

1930 to about 13,000 in 1933 (AFBM annual reports, 1930-1934, as cited in Kay, 1973, p. 213). These defections also meant that African support to friends' schools decreased during this period.

The global economic depression which started in 1929 greatly affected the operations of the FAM, including its education system in the early 1930s. Richmond was unable to give more money as well as recruit more staff for its field. To meet this deficit, Fred Hoyt, the head of the industrial department converted the plant into an income generating venture for the mission. He started to grind a lot of grain for flour and sawing timber to sell on settler farms and the gold mining companies near Kakamega. Africans were not amused by these commercial activities by the FAM which gave them a very stiff competition. At the same time, the convergence of over 400 European gold prospectors on the gold field scared Africans of being alienated from their land. Thus under the influence of the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) activities in central Kenya, the Abaluyia also decided to form the North Kavirondo Central Association (NKCA) in 1932 to articulate these grievances on their behalf. In this way, the Abaluyia hoped to get assistance from KCA to evict the gold miners.

Most of the associations' leadership was drawn from the F.A.M. adherents (Lonsdale, 1964, p. 313, 325; Kay, 1973, p. 167-8). In 1934, the association's secretary, Andrew Jumba, himself a Friend, launched a scathing attack on the FAM when he wrote directly to Richmond and accused the mission for holding 1000 acres of land at Kaimosi which went unused. According to the Africans, this land belonged to them and yet they benefited little from it. Jumba also accused the mission of its involvement in trading activities which gave the Africans a very unfair competition because of the Missions' huge capital base (Kay, 1973, p. 200-201).

The Mission's involvement in secular activities, especially the above venture, not only eroded its credibility in the eyes of Africans but also exposed the sharp differences between fundamentalist and modernist missionaries at Kaimosi. These groups of missionaries who happened to be uncomfortable with the verbal inspiration of the Bible started coming to the mission field from 1920. This made the evangelical missionaries to show a lot of intolerance towards them. Dr A.A. was now pitied against the fundamentalist camp composed of Everret Kellum, Jafferson Ford, and Fred Hoyt. Whereas the former supported African rights, the latter held a divergent view. Bond was even believed to be an advisor to the NKCA (Kay, 1973, p. 169; Lonsdale, 1964, p. 317). The cracks in the missionary ranks between the two

camps became visible when in a correspondence to Howard Cope in September 1934, Bond stated that:

There is also a feeling that the land which the mission holds here is not being used together for the direct benefit of the native Africans....I believe that no other single act for which the mission has been responsible ever lost so much prestige as this one did. That brings to mind a criticism that has been made against the mission for indulging in commercial enterprises in the country..... Mr. Hoyt has sawn a great deal of timber which is piled at the mill and he grinds much mill for mining companies. The natives feel that it is a money making enterprise from which they profit little. Personally, I believe that the operation in connection with our mill have, for years, done more harm to the missionary cause than good (Friends African Foreign Mission Archives, Richmond, Indiana, as cited in King, 1971a, p. 151-152).

The infighting among missionaries at Kaimosi almost brought the FAM's education system to its knees during the 1930s. The AFBM in Richmond decided not to send more staff to the mission field for fear of escalating the differences between these two camps. At the same time, it started to stay aloof lest it be seen as taking sides in the mission squabbles. It was because of this fear, together with the fundamentalist influence that forced Richmond to shelve a proposal made by J.W.C. Dougall from the protestant education department (Kay, 1973, p. 1740).

The differences in theological views divided the mission staff, a thing which affected their work including education. The Mission board was forced to send a delegation to Kaimosi in 1937 to resolve these differences and restore harmony in its staff. But the damage had already been done. African agitations with support from the modernists for a secondary school at Kaimosi were also opposed by Kellum as premature. Instead, stress was placed upon the development of mass education which embraced a lot of manual work as the most ideal for Africans (Kay, 1973, p. 173-217). The failure to employ more staff to run the education work at Kaimosi made the government in 1937 to cancel the elementary teacher training program started in 1936. It was not until 1939 that the department of education allowed the program to be re-started due to an increasing number of schools which were being opened at the time. In an ecumenical spirit, the FAM agreed to train elementary school teachers for the two neighbouring missions – Nyango'ri PAG and Kima CGM (K.N.A, E.A.Y.M.F. 131/80).

The kind of problems which the FAM educational programmes went through, especially during the

1930s, made Africans very unhappy, more so when they saw other schools like Maseno and Yala progress steadily into junior secondary schools in 1938 and 1939 respectively. The other source of unhappiness emanated from the poor performance of Kaimosi in examination which led to very few of their children joining secondary schools. For example, out of the 120 students enrolled at Alliance in 1936, only 4 were from Kaimosi. When Maseno Junior secondary school started in 1938, only 3 boys from Kaimosi joined the form one class (Kay, 1973, p. 175). This encouraged Africans to exert more pressure on the mission to improve its education system by calling for teacher training, the teaching of English, more advanced schooling as well as an academic education (Kay, 1973, p. 220).

#### **The Demands for Advanced Education at Kaimosi during the Post War Period, 1940-1949**

The FAM's educational system during and after World War II was to a very large extent influenced by the emerging African elite as well as government policies. Most of these elite friends took upon themselves the responsibility of championing the educational needs of their people. At the same time, the war provided a booming market for African agricultural products which earned a lot of money for the people who later on decided to invest in the education of their children (Kay, 1973, p. 230-231). All these factors served to increase the friends' interest in education as reflected by the building of more schools during the war period. Before the war started, the mission had a total of 302 schools out of which 16 were aided by the government. By the time the war ended in 1945, the schools had increased to 361 with 20 being aided by the government. During the same period, the number of pupils increased from 20,400 in 1938 to 32,900 in 1945 (Painter, 1966, p. 61). The friends' educational program had definitely moved from its former subordinate role in 1920 to a very prominent position from the 1940s (Rowe, 1988, p. 107).

**Table 1: School Grading System in Kenya, 1927**

Normal age	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Sub-standards, standards and forms	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	1	2	3	4	5	6
Grade of school	A			B			C			Junior			senior
Stages of education	Elementary						secondary						

Source: Sifuna, 1990

**Table 2 A comparison of Boys' and Girls' in Attendance at Four Mission Schools in Nyanza in 1910**

Mission	Boys attending	Girls attending
Friends African Mission	64	55
Seventh Day Adventist	95	31
Ogada (N.I.M)	65	20
Mill Hill	345	58

Source: Kenya Blue Book, as cited in Furley & Watson, 1978, p. 78

The new cadre of educated leaders at the grass root greatly changed the people's perspective towards matters of development in general and education in particular. The appointment of people like Paul Agoi, Jeremiah Segero, William Shivachi, and Hezron Mushenye, who were all friends as chiefs, in the southern part of the district in the 1940s helped to sensitize the people on the importance of educating their children. The vision of these young and energetic administrators was further reinforced by the coming onto the scene of another educated elite, the likes of Solomon Adagala, Fred Kamidi, Benjamin Ngaira, Simeon Sabura and Hezekiah Ngoya among others who took up important positions in education, the church and politics (Kay, 1973, p. 231-234; Culpin, 1976, p. 250). As Culpin (ibid.) unequivocally observes:

As the most articulate in community with the mission and the government, these new men were able to represent the views of the church, support for mission, and for their particular priorities (p. 250).

To a large extent, this new impetus finally forced the mission to abandon its long held policy of mass education and started focusing on the provision of higher education for its adherents (Culpin, 1976, p. 251). This shift was also made possible after the closure of the technical schools in 1945 following the retirement of Hoyt who had been in charge of industrial work since 1912. The closure was also necessitated by the termination of government support to these schools (Culpin, 1976, p. 254). From mid-1940s, there emerged increasing calls for the establishment of a senior secondary school at Kaimosi although the missionaries still insisted on a technical school (K.N.A., E.A.Y.M.F., 131(80)). The poor standards of education exhibited by the Kaimosi

School, especially during the 1930s, had become a great source of disillusionment among the friends. However, because of the steady improvement in its standards during the early 1940s African hopes were rejuvenated. The school performance in the primary school examinations on the whole showed a marked improvement between 1942 and 1945. The number of passes consistently rose from 4, 9 and 20 for 1943, 1944 and 1945 respectively. At the same time, the number of pupils who qualified for admission to junior secondary schools was also on the increase. For instance, whereas only 3 pupils out of 39 that sat for the examinations in 1941, that is 0.7% qualified for junior secondary education, this figure had more than doubled by 1946 when 16 out of 66 that sat for the examination or 18% qualified for the next level of education (Fort Hall district annual reports, 1942, 1944-1946, K.N.A.D.C/FH/6/4, as cited in Bogonko, 1992, p. 56; K.N.A. E.A.Y.M.F.135/80). These results in away provided the African friends with more impetus to fights for the establishment of a school at Kaimosi.

The government approval to the FAM to start two more junior secondary schools in 1945 at Musingu and Lugulu meant an increased number of school leavers who needed opportunities for further education, a scenario for which the FAM was ill equipped. By late 1948, the number of schools offering junior secondary education in North Nyanza District increased by eleven (8 for boys and 3 for girls). Out of the eight boys' schools, five were run by protestant missions in Kaimosi, Musingu, Lugulu, Kolonya and Nyang'ori (K.N.A DC/NN). Pupils from these schools were likely to enrol at Kaimosi, for apart from Kakamega, this was the most popular school.

African pressure for advanced education in North Nyanza District during the 1940s was also mounted by organizations, clubs and political associations. The Maragoli, who all along had been pace setters in educational matters especially among the friends, formed the Maragoli Education Board (MEB) in 1945 to articulate their educational needs before the F.A.M. as well as the government (Culpin, 1976, p. 254–255). In 1948, this body renewed the Maragoli demands for a school of their own at Mudete – a demand first made in 1926. This plan had been shelved ever since because as the administration put it, they have to wait for the “right time”. The shelving of the Maragoli plan also come as a result of pressure from LNC members who saw it as a possible interference with their demands for the establishment of Government African School at Kakamega. But by 1948, the MEB could now state as follows:

Our people have ever since been waiting patiently for a period of twenty years to 1948. They are not satisfied now by being told that the right time has not yet come. When will it come? The right time for things never really comes until the people themselves begin doing those things with their own hands and not only sit and wait for the right time..... We do not ask the education department for money now but for two things ..... PERMISSION to start building and ENCOURAGEMENT (MEB to SEO Nyanza, June 18, 1948, KNA, PC/NZA 2/733, as cited in Kay, 1973, p. 243).

Although the government and the missionaries came out strongly to oppose this move on the grounds that it was likely to interfere with plans to start Chavakali as a junior school and the general plans for the educational development in the district, its resolve was telling in itself – that Africans were now ready to promote their own education outside the confines of the government and the missionaries. The Maragoli were also contemplating to take this move because none of the three FAM junior schools at the time had been established in their area.

All this pressure exerted by Africans both to the government and the FAM convinced quite a number of people about the possibility of upgrading Kaimosi from junior secondary status to a senior secondary school towards the end of the 1940s. Nevertheless, these hopes were dashed when the ten year plan failed to make provisions for technical schools in 1948 as expected by the missionaries. The plan instead called for the establishment of 14 secondary schools for boys in the colony out of which five were allocated to Nyanza province. But the authorities did not see the need for a senior secondary school at Kaimosi because of its proximity to the three big

schools (Maseno, Yala and Kakamega) in the province at the time (K.N.A, E.A.Y.M.F 81/80). Another reason for this refusal was the continued staffing problem which had been haunting Kaimosi for a long time because of the mission’s refusal to hire qualified white teachers as demanded by the government (K.N.A, E.A.Y.M.F 131/80).

Thus for a long time, the Quaker educational system faced a lot of problems which left many of the church’s adherents deeply disappointed. Yet it is important to note that these American missionaries, more than other groups which evangelized the people of western Kenya distinguished themselves very much when it came to the education of women/girls. This initiative was started by Deborah Rees and Adelaide Hole who worked at Vihiga and Lirhand stations respectively. These two women did a lot in introducing African women to literacy, child care and sewing (Painter, 1966, p. 51). The inspiration towards gender parity in educational matters in Africa during this time most likely emanated from the teaching of George Fox which emphasized the equality of sexes before God (Rasmussen, 1995, p. 5). Hence regarding education, Fox called for the instruction of both boys and girls “in whatever things were civil and useful in creation.” This was one of the tenets strongly emphasized by a document on the faith and practice of the five years meeting (K.N.A, F.A.Y.M.F, 15/80). Imbued with the sense of faithfulness to their master, these two women missionaries struggled against all odds to ensure that the Abaluyia women acquired useful skills for a good living. For instance, thanks to their zeal, the difference between girls and boys, who attended FAM schools in 1910, was not as big as that which existed in the other mission schools in Nyanza. The table 2 clarifies this.

## CONCLUSION

This paper, has tried to examine the educational work of the FAM in Western Kenya from 1919 to 1949. It has been shown that a number of factors affected the manner in which the FAM and other missionaries carried out their activities from the 1920s. One such important factor that gave new direction to the process of education was the increased interest by the Africans in their own education. This altered the grip by the missionaries on African education and led to the establishment of the LNC schools in the country in the early 1930s.

A lot of emphasis was put on manual work in the Friend’s Schools – a curriculum which these American missionaries saw as the best for the Africans because of what they perceived as the latter’s inferior intellectual capacities. The poor showing by the FAM in their educational matters, especially in the 1930s, did a lot to demoralize

Africans. Consequently, increased pressure was brought to bear on the FAM by Africans to change their attitude towards African development through the school. This, together with increased need for advanced education, saw FAM mount a lot of pressure onto the Government to upgrade Kaimosi junior secondary to senior secondary status.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper has only examined the contribution of the FAM towards the development of secondary education in Vihiga District. This has only been done based on the history of two schools. In the District, it would be important to undertake studies on other schools like Vihiga Secondary School, Mbale Secondary School and Iirhandu Girls' Secondary School in order to build a richer historiography about FAMs contribution to their development.

It should also be pointed out that apart from the FAM, Vihiga District was also evangelized by other missionary groups. These other missionaries also took the education of Africans as an important aspect of the overall process of evangelization. It therefore becomes imperative to document the contribution of missions such as MHM and PAG for the also established educational programmes in Vihiga District.

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