

**CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES AND WESTERN EDUCATION IN AUCHI,
1914-1970**

BY

**JEMILA ALASAN
ART2100420**

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
FACULTY OF ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY**

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND
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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this work was carried out by **JEMILA ALASAN** in the Department of History and International Studies, Faculty of Art, University of Benin, Benin City, under my supervision.

PROF. J. C. NWAKA
Project Supervisor

PROF. J. C. NWAKA
Ag. Head of Department

Date: _____

Date: _____

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to God and my parents for their support throughout my stay in the University of Benin.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to register my profound gratitude God almighty for his grace and mercies. I would also like to give a special thanks to my project Supervisor Prof. J. C. Nwaka for her unending support towards the success of this project.

My appreciation goes to all the lecturers in the Department of History and International Studies, University of Benin who have guided me through my path in this academic journey. To Dr. F. Ikponmwosa, (HOD), Prof. Eddy O. Erhagbe, Prof. E. A. Ifidon, Prof. O. B. Osadolor, Prof. J.I. Osagie, Dr. Odigwe Nwaokocha, Dr. Frank Ikponmwosa, Dr. Collins Edigin, Dr. Daniel Iweze,, Dr. Charles Osarumwense, Dr. F. Osariemen, Mr. E. Toby, Mrs. L. Enadeghe, Mr. Daniel Orobator, Mr. Victor Aiguoarueghian, Mrs. P.I. Omoregie-Onuoha, Mrs. Osemwengie (Kalu), Miss. O. Oriahi, Mrs. Bridget Omoruyi, Miss. Oseronoma Omoruyi and the entire non-academic staffs of the Department, I say thank you and may God bless you all.

I would not have satisfactory attain this level, without the immense support of my Amazing parent Mr. Modus Alasan and Mrs. Sadiya Alasan, thanks for the love, prayers, care, and for guiding me from time to time despite their busy schedule. And also, to my lovely siblings, thanks for the show of love and care. Last but not

the least my friends, thank you all so much. Thanks to everyone that made this project a success.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of Christian missionaries in the development and expansion of Western education in Auchi between 1914 and 1970. It argues that missionary activities were central to the introduction of formal education in the area, as various denominations established schools alongside evangelization efforts. The research analyzes the contributions of missionary bodies such as the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church, highlighting their role in building educational infrastructure, training teachers, and increasing access to schooling. It further explores the response of the local population, noting both acceptance and resistance shaped by cultural and religious considerations. The study also considers the impact of colonial educational policies and the eventual transition to government control of schools after independence. The study concludes that Christian missionary efforts significantly transformed the educational landscape of Auchi, laying the foundation for modern education in the region. However, it also notes that this transformation came with cultural implications, including the gradual erosion of certain indigenous practices. Ultimately, the period 1914–1970 represents a critical phase in the historical evolution of education in Auchi, driven largely by missionary initiative and colonial influence.

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Introduction

The inhabitants of Auchi had their own traditions that were revered and treasured prior to the arrival of Christianity. However, society has become more complicated with the introduction of Christianity and Western education. Modern impact on society has greatly increased, and it has been noted that the basis of traditional communal life has been disturbed by foreign or white political, religious, social, and economic institutions, among other things. One These elements have contributed to the widespread breakdown of social ties and penalties. In light of this, this research looks at Auchi's Christian missionaries and western education between 1914 and 1970. People's social and religious beliefs are obviously influenced by their cultural interactions with other countries. People's sociopolitical and religious life now have additional aspects thanks to Western education. The people's traditional beliefs have also suffered as a result of Christianity. 2. Due to interaction with Christianity and Western culture, Auchi people no longer practice socio-cultural practices including marriage, religion, education, festivals, naming, and funeral rites as they once did. Awoniyi claims that once white men arrived in Africa, Africans became devoted to the customs of

the alien culture, and white men consequently tried to have their own culture accepted. 3. Africans are experiencing cultural confusion and identity issues as a result of this shift. To accomplish the work's goal, the researchers used phenomenological, historical, and evaluative approaches. The Auchi people's limited history is covered using the historical method. The impact of Christianity on the Auchi people's sociocultural structure is examined using phenomenological and evaluative approaches. 4. When the first Roman Catholic missionaries came in Agenebode, which is located in the present-day Etsako East Local Government Areas of Edo State, in the latter half of the 19th century, Auchi's Christian missionary history began. Catholic priests began visiting Agenebode and the surrounding area in 1884 from their then-headquarters in Lokoja (Diocese of Auchi), but there is enough evidence of previous interactions between Christian missionaries and the locals. Later, Asaba replaced Lokoja as the location of the missionary headquarters. At that time, Rt. Rev. Monsignor Carlos Zappa was appointed prefect of the upper Niger at Asaba. In his capacity as Prefect, Monsignor Zappa once again carried out missionary efforts over the Niger River into the interior of Agenebode and the communities nearby. 5. The Diocese's first parish, Agenebode, was formally established in 1897, and its first parish priest was Rev. Fr. Peter Piotin, SMA. Other parish stations were established in Ivianokpodi,

Iviukwe, Okpekpe, and Apana in Etsako after Agenebode. He founded St. Martin's Seminary in Ivianokpodi, Nigeria's first major seminary, in 1908. Bishop Broderick subsequently moved the seminary to Asaba in 1927. 6. The late Rt. Rev. Joseph Agbodio Eramah, a native of Anegbette in South Uneme Clan in the current Etsako Central Local Government Area of Edo State, and the late Rev. Fr. Paul Emechete, the first Nigerian priest, were among the seminarians who relocated from the seminary at Ivianokpodi to Asaba. The crucial point at this juncture is that, until the Christian church arrives, Auchi's people live independently of both the Benin Kingdom and their Esan neighbors. Upon arriving, the Christian Church used a few tactics to achieve the desired degree of advancement in both the church and society. Education is one of them. They raised their students' reading levels and strengthened evangelizing via formal schooling. Thus, it may be said that Auchi's educational system underwent a radical transformation with the arrival of Christianity and its unavoidable expansion. It should be mentioned that churches in the Auchi region and across Nigeria formerly had a special role in education. The municipality collected and supported youngsters while introducing them to the Western educational system. 7. The concept of education was introduced to the community by the same individuals who brought Christianity. But education (in a formal school setting)

was seen as a real conversion tool. Because it would allow them to study the Bible, the churches were adamant that everyone of their members should be literate. 8.

The goal of this research was to investigate how Auchi's Christian church has influenced the growth of education.

Goals and Objectives The study's aims include i. Attempting to evaluate Auchi's physical position and population, as well as ii. Examining the rise of Christian missionaries and the impact of western education in Auchi between 1914 and 1970.

ii. To look at Auchi's Christian missionaries' advertisement.

iii. To investigate the evolution of western education and missionaries in Auchi.

iii. To investigate the effects of Auchi's Christian missionaries' educational initiatives.

Study Scope The study's focus includes Auchi's educational growth from 1914 to 1970 as well as the Christian Church. The importance of Christian churches in Auchi, Edo state, Nigeria, in the advancement and expansion of education is also covered in the research.

Review of Literature Taiye Adamolekun, "Church Growth Trends in Nigeria," 9

The primary patterns in Nigerian church growth and development are discussed.

The introduction of Latin Christianity in the 15th and 16th centuries, denominationalism and missionary activity in the 19th century starting in 1842,

the development of independent churches, the emergence of indigenous African churches, and the emergence of Charismatic and Pentecostal churches are the five periods that make up the history of church growth and development in Nigeria. 10. We can learn more about the history of Christian churches in Nigeria thanks to the literature. The function of the Christian church in the advancement of education in Ondo town, however, was not examined in the literature. The Auchi Kingdom's history has received relatively little attention throughout the years, according to Suleiman Yakubu's study, "The Auchi Kingdom: A Century of Growth and Innovations 1920 – 2020,"¹¹ despite the relevance and significance of its rich and noteworthy cultural legacy. The Kingdom's strategic position led the British to establish it as the headquarters of the old Kukuruku District, which was eventually abolished and renamed Afenmai in 1954. The Auchi Kingdom continued to serve as the headquarters of Afenmai area even after the Kukuruku District was abolished. Since 1920, the Auchi Kingdom has served as the Divisional Headquarters, drawing tourists and merchants from all over the world who came to engage in business and take in the beauty of the constantly expanding and thriving Kingdom. Since the British took control of the Kingdom, the Auchi Kingdom has seen several inventions, expansions, and developments. New administrative rules, a modern complex of official buildings and quarters, a new

jail yard, Western education, a new road network, the elimination of some negative cultural customs, and more are some of the noteworthy advancements made by British colonialists. Twelve The religious contact pattern in the Auchi community of Edo State, Nigeria, is examined by Emmanuel Ukpebor in his paper "The Non-Violence Pattern of Religious Interaction in Auchi-Edo State,"¹³. Through the arrival of the Nupe merchants in the early 19th century, the author examines the establishment of the Auchi community and the early spread of Islam. The embrace of Islam followed the end of slave raids, which was made possible by Muslim clerics and the participation and assistance of the Otaru, the community's traditional ruler, even if the Nupes did not personally convert the populace to Islam. During the course of the study, it was found that despite the Christian missionaries' late arrival in the town, the two religions have interacted on the basis of tolerance and collaboration. The lack of violent organizations and the authorities' comprehension of the teachings of both faiths about the unity of people are cited as the causes. The Auchi pattern of religious engagement is suggested by the author as a template for communities dealing with religious conflict. ¹⁴ In his paper "Etsako Traditional Belief in Reincarnation and the Christian Faith: Examining the Incompatibility," A. Nicholas A. D. Oshiokede makes the following claim. Reincarnation is the concept that a deceased person's soul will

reincarnate into a different body for a subsequent period of worldly existence. Two viewpoints on reincarnation are included in Etsako traditional belief: the ogbanje case of birth (born to die children) and uvhielamhi (birth of an ancestor). The Christian religion is in opposition to this notion. Despite its incompatibility with Christian culture, many Etsako Christians find it impossible to abandon its principles. It puts Christians in a difficult situation. Reincarnation contradicts the actuality of resurrection, which is the ultimate objective of Christian rituals. The author explores this revered Etsako tradition in an effort to uncover the contradictions and provide Etsako Christians a legitimate Christian faith based on the expectation of resurrection.¹⁵

Before the coming of Christianity, Auchi's residents had their own customs that were highly valued. But with the advent of Christianity and Western education, society has become more complex. The influence of modern society has grown significantly, and it has been observed that, among other things, white or foreign political, religious, social, and economic institutions have disrupted the foundation of traditional community life. These factors have played a part in the pervasive disintegration of social bonds and sanctions. This study examines Auchi's Christian missionaries and western education from 1914 to 1970 in light of this.

Clearly, cultural exchanges with other nations have an impact on people's social and religious views. Western education has added dimensions to people's religious and social lives. Christianity has also negatively impacted the people's traditional beliefs. 2. Auchi people no longer follow socio-cultural customs such as marriage, religion, education, festivals, naming, and burial ceremonies as they previously did because of their contact with Christianity and Western culture. According to Awoniyi, white men sought to get their own culture approved after Africans were committed to the foreign culture once they arrived in Africa. 3. This change is causing identity problems and cultural disorientation among Africans. The researchers used phenomenological, historical, and evaluative methods to achieve the work's objective. The historical approach is used to explore the restricted history of the Auchi people. Using phenomenological and evaluative methods, the effect of Christianity on the sociocultural structure of the Auchi people is investigated. 4. Auchi's Christian missionary history started in the second part of the 1800s when the first Roman Catholic missionaries arrived in Agenebode, which is in the modern-day Etsako East Local Government Areas of Edo State. In 1884, Catholic priests from the Diocese of Auchi's headquarters in Lokoja started traveling to Agenebode and the surrounding region, although there is ample proof that Christian missionaries and the inhabitants had previously interacted. Later, the

missionary headquarters were moved from Lokoja to Asaba. Then, Rt. At Asaba, Rev. Monsignor Carlos Zappa was named the upper Niger's prefect. Monsignor Zappa once again conducted missionary work across the Niger River into the interior of Agenebode and the surrounding settlements while serving as Prefect. 5. In 1897, the Diocese officially created its first parish, Agenebode, and its first parish priest was Rev. Fr. SMA Peter Piotin. Following Agenebode, further parish stations were founded in Etsako in Ivianokpodi, Iviukwe, Okpekpe, and Apana. In 1908, he established the first significant seminary in Nigeria, St. Martin's Seminary at Ivianokpodi. Later, in 1927, Bishop Broderick relocated the seminary to Asaba. 6. The deceased Rt. Originally from Anegbette in South Uneme Clan, which is now part of Edo State's Etsako Central Local Government Area, Rev. Joseph Agbodio Erameh and the late Rev. Fr. The first Nigerian priest, Paul Emechete, was one among the seminarians who moved to Asaba from the Ivianokpodi seminary. The important thing to remember at this point is that Auchu's people live apart from both the Benin Kingdom and their Esan neighbors until the Christian church comes. In order to attain the required level of progress in the church and society, the Christian Church used a few strategies after arrival. Among them is education. Through formal education, they improved the reading proficiency of their pupils and fortified evangelization. As a result, it may be said

that the introduction of Christianity and its inevitable spread drastically altered Auchi's educational system. It should be noted that churches used to have a unique role in education in the Auchi area and across Nigeria. The municipality introduced children to the Western educational system while collecting and assisting them. 7. The same people who brought Christianity to the town also introduced the idea of education. However, formal education was seen as a genuine instrument for conversion. The churches insisted that all of its members be literate since it would enable them to study the Bible. 8. Investigating the ways in which Auchi's Christian church has impacted the development of education was the aim of this study.

Objectives and Goals Among the objectives of the research are i. attempting to assess Auchi's population and geographical location, in addition to ii. analyzing the effects of western education and the growth of Christian missionaries in Auchi from 1914 to 1970.

II. to see the advertising for Auchi's Christian missionaries.

III. to look at how western missionaries and education have changed in Auchi.

III. to look at the results of the educational efforts of Auchi's Christian missionaries.

Study Scope The Christian Church and Auchi's educational development between

1914 and 1970 are the main subjects of the study. The study also discusses the significance of Christian churches in Auchi, Edo state, Nigeria, for the development and growth of education.

Review of Literature Taiye Adamolekun, "Church Growth Trends in Nigeria," 9

The main trends in the development and expansion of Nigerian churches are examined. The history of church growth and development in Nigeria can be divided into five periods: the introduction of Latin Christianity in the 15th and 16th centuries; denominationalism and missionary activity in the 19th century beginning in 1842; the emergence of independent churches; the emergence of indigenous African churches; and the emergence of Charismatic and Pentecostal churches. 10. The literature provides us with further information on the history of Christian churches in Nigeria. However, the literature did not look at the role of the Christian church in advancing education in Ondo town. According to Suleiman Yakubu's paper, "The Auchi Kingdom: A Century of Growth and Innovations 1920 – 2020,"¹¹ the history of the Auchi Kingdom has gotten comparatively little attention throughout the years, despite the importance and relevance of its rich and notable cultural heritage. Because of the Kingdom's advantageous location, the British decided to make it the seat of the former Kukuruku District, which was later disbanded and renamed Afenmai in 1954. Even after the Kukuruku District

was eliminated, Auchi Kingdom remained the center of the Afenmai region. The Auchi Kingdom has been the Divisional Headquarters since 1920, attracting travelers and businesspeople from across the globe who came to do business and enjoy the splendor of the ever-growing and prosperous Kingdom. The Auchi Kingdom has undergone several innovations, expansions, and improvements since the British took over. Among the significant improvements brought about by British colonialists were new administrative regulations, a contemporary complex of official buildings and quarters, a new prison yard, Western education, a new road system, the abolition of some detrimental cultural practices, and more. Twelve Emmanuel Ukpebor's study, "The Non-Violence Pattern of Religious Interaction in Auchi-Edo State,"¹³ analyzes the religious contact pattern in the Auchi population of Edo State, Nigeria. The author looks at the founding of the Auchi community and the early spread of Islam with the advent of the Nupe merchants in the early 19th century. Even though the Nupes did not personally convert the people to Islam, the halt of slave raids and the subsequent acceptance of Islam were made possible by Muslim clerics as well as the involvement and support of the Otaru, the traditional ruler of the town. Throughout the investigation, it was discovered that the two faiths had interacted on the basis of cooperation and tolerance, even though the Christian missionaries arrived in the area late. Causes

include the absence of violent groups and the government' understanding of both religions' teachings on human oneness. The author suggests that societies coping with religious strife might use the Auchi pattern of religious involvement as a model. 14 In "Etsako Traditional Belief in Reincarnation and the Christian Faith: Examining the Incompatibility," A. Nicholas A. D. Oshiokede asserts... The idea that a departed person's spirit would reincarnate into a new body for a later time of worldly life is known as reincarnation. Etsako traditional belief encompasses two perspectives on reincarnation: uvhielamhi (birth of an ancestor) and the ogbanje scenario of birth (born to die children). This idea is opposed by the Christian faith. Many Etsako Christians find it tough to give up its values, even though it is incompatible with Christian culture. It creates a challenging position for Christians. The ultimate goal of Christian rites is resurrection, which is incompatible with reincarnation. In an attempt to expose the inconsistencies and give Etsako Christians a genuine Christian faith founded on the hope of resurrection, the author investigates this esteemed Etsako tradition.15 Before Christianity arrived, Auchi's residents had their own traditions that were valued and revered. But with the advent of Christianity and Western education, society has become more complex. The influence of modern society has grown significantly, and it has been observed that, among other things, white or foreign political, religious, social, and

economic institutions have disrupted the foundation of traditional community life. These factors have played a part in the pervasive disintegration of social bonds and sanctions. This study examines Auchi's Christian missionaries and western education from 1914 to 1970 in light of this. Clearly, cultural exchanges with other nations have an impact on people's social and religious views. Western education has added dimensions to people's religious and social lives. Christianity has also negatively impacted the people's traditional beliefs. 2. Auchi people no longer follow socio-cultural customs such as marriage, religion, education, festivals, naming, and burial ceremonies as they previously did because of their contact with Christianity and Western culture. According to Awoniyi, white men sought to get their own culture approved after Africans were committed to the foreign culture once they arrived in Africa. 3. This change is causing identity problems and cultural disorientation among Africans. The researchers used phenomenological, historical, and evaluative methods to achieve the work's objective. The historical approach is used to explore the restricted history of the Auchi people. Using phenomenological and evaluative methods, the effect of Christianity on the sociocultural structure of the Auchi people is investigated. 4. Auchi's Christian missionary history started in the second part of the 1800s when the first Roman Catholic missionaries arrived in Agenebode, which is in the

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CHAPTER TWO

THE ADVENT OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES IN AUCHI

Without the entrance of the Niger, Christianity could not have arrived in Auchi. However, following the Lander Brothers' 1830 exploration of the Niger, the 1841 expedition marked the beginning of the River Niger's opening. The goal of the Niger expedition was to introduce Christianity, civilization, and legal commerce to the nation. One However, in 1832, Macgregor Laird sent out two ships with more than forty men, including John and Richard Landers, Dr. Oldfield, Lieutenant Allen, and Laird himself, before the 1841 expedition. Unfortunately, a disease struck the company, and Richard Lander went to Fernando Po and Laird returned to England, making the trip a failure. In England, this led to a great deal of pessimism, but Thomas Buxton rekindled the merchants' bravery and the British government's interest.² He gained the backing of several influential individuals when he established the Society for the Extinction of the Slave Trade and the Civilization of Africa in 1839. The 1841 Niger expedition was the outcome of these efforts.³ Thomas Buxton, a humanitarian who thought that the best way to end the slave trade and revitalize Africa was to establish legitimate commerce with the African rulers by introducing commerce, civilization, and Christianity, was the driving force behind the 1841 expedition, as was previously mentioned. The

organization of extinction of the slave trade and the civilization of Africa, of which Sir Thomas Fowell was a prominent member, planned the voyage under the auspices of the British Government.⁴ Two Protestant missionaries, J.F. Schon, a German, Samuel Adjai Crowther, a former Yoruba slave, and Simon Jonas, an Igbo perentage who was freed from Sierra Leone, accompanied them. The Christian mission organization was established in 1799. Nevertheless, the 1841 Niger voyage was short-lived due to high mortality, which claimed the lives of 48 of the 145 Europeans who had contracted malaria. Because of this, the British government and commercial companies have always seen the 1841 voyage as a complete failure. However, it was a partial success for the missionaries since they were able to preach the gospel to Aboh's monarch, Obi Ossai, and build a personal relationship with him and his people. For this reason, Ajayi pointed out that the 1841 Niger voyage, despite its failure, signaled the start of the missionary endeavor in Nigeria.⁵

The Catholic Church's history in AuchiWhen the first Roman Catholic missionaries arrived in Agenebode, which is now in the Etsako East Local Government Area of Edo State, in the latter half of the 19th century, the history of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Auchi began. Catholic priests began visiting

Agenebode and the surrounding area from their then-headquarters in Lokoja in 1884, but there is enough evidence of previous interactions between Christian missionaries and the locals. Later, Asaba replaced Lokoja as the location of the missionary headquarters.⁶ At that time, Rt. Rev. Monsignor Carlos Zappa was appointed prefect of the upper Niger at Asaba. In his capacity as Prefect, Monsignor Zappa once again carried out missionary efforts over the Niger River into the interior of Agenebode and the communities nearby. The Diocese's first parish, Agenebode, was formally established in 1897, and its first parish priest was Rev. Fr. Peter Piotin, SMA. Other parish stations were established in Ivianokpodi, Iviukwe, Okpekpe, and Apana in Etsako after Agenebode. In 1908, he founded St. Martin's Seminary in Ivianokpodi, Nigeria's first major seminary.⁷ Bishop Broderick subsequently moved the seminary to Asaba in 1927. The late Rt. Rev. Joseph Agbodio Eramah, a native of Anegbette in South Uneme Clan in the current Etsako Central Local Government Area of Edo State, and the late Rev. Fr. Paul Emechete, the first Nigerian priest, were among the seminarians who relocated from the seminary at Ivianokpodi to Asaba.⁸ Bishop Broderick passed away in 1933, and Bishop Leo Taylor took over as his successor in 1934. In 1935, Bishop Taylor, who had previously served as the principal of St. Gregory's College in Lagos, established Uzairue Parish, with Fr. I. Healy, SMA, serving as

its first parish priest. The late Rt. Rev. Monsignor Joseph Agbodio Erameh was the first Edo priest and the second native priest of the Vicariate Apostolic of Western Nigeria. Bishop Taylor ordained him at Asaba on December 20, 1936, and moved the main seminary there to Benin City in 1938. Bishop Patrick Joseph Kelly replaced Bishop Taylor in the Asaba/Benin Vicariate that same year. The Catholic religion expanded rapidly across the present-day Diocese of Auchi and other parts of the Benin Ecclesiastical province because to Bishop Kelly's unparalleled pastoral zeal.⁹ Bishop Patrick Ebosele Ekpu (now Archbishop Emeritus of Benin City), who was appointed as a bishop in 1971, took over the Diocese of Benin City from Bishop Kelly in 1973 when he resigned. And thirty years later, the Archdiocese of Benin City was split off to become the Diocese of Auchi. Under Bishop P.J. Kelly's leadership, the Catholic Church opened eight secondary schools in the region. St. Joseph's College, Otuo; St. Mary's Grammar School, Eme-ora; St. James Grammar School, Afuza; St. John's College, Fugar; St. Angela's Grammar School, Uzairue; St. Peter's College, Agenebode; and St. Aloysius Gonzaga Grammar School, Ososo. The government took control of these organizations in 1973.¹⁰ Additionally, the Mission founded a medical center in Agenebode called Sancta Maria Medical Center and a hospital at Uzairue called Notre Dame Hospital, which is now known as Sancta Maria Hospital. Without

descriptions of the Catholic Church's expansion into the Diocese's Akoko-Edo and Owan Local Government Areas, Auchu's history would be incomplete. The early Catholic missionaries encountered initial opposition, if not outright hostility, from the Church Missionary Society (the Anglican), the first Christian mission to establish its presence in Akoko-Edo and Owan Local Government Areas, in contrast to the warm reception they received in Etsako areas.¹¹ This historical reality is partly responsible for the long-term comparatively sluggish rate of conversion to Catholicism and vocations to the Catholic clergy in the regions. Twelve Through Catholic missionaries stationed in Lokoja and Okene, the Catholic Church made its first documented presence in Akoko-Edo in Imoga in the early 1900s (about 1911) and Igarra in the following century (around 1916). Priests like as Rev. Fathers Keenan, Walsh, Felin, Mcfadden, and Conboy traveled from Okene to spread Catholicism in Akoko-Edo. Bishop Kelly established St. John the Apostle's Parish in Igarra in 1954, and Fr. Morris Maquire, SMA, served as the parish's first pastor. For a long time, St. John the Apostle's Parish, Igarra, was the only parish in Akoko-Edo. Most Rev. Dr. Gabriel Ghieakhomo Dunia established St. Anne's Parish in Ososo in 1983 and St. Peter's Parish in Ibillo in 2003. In his Episcopacy, the first. Since taking over as the new Diocese of Auchu's

bishop, Bishop Gabriel Dunia has created ten (10) mass centers and nine (9) parishes.¹³

Regarding Owan, the Catholic religion entered the region from two sources: Uromi in Esan territory and Uzairue in Etsako. According to records, Fr. Piotin's itinerant Catholic missionaries from Uzairue traveled to Ihievbe, Uokha, and Otuo (all in Owan East) before returning to Uzairue via Igarra in or around 1933.

Regarding Owan's western region, the religion arrived in 1955 in Ubiaja, Uromi, and then Ekpoma. Therefore, all of the Catholic communities in Owan East were outposts of Holy Rosary Parish in Uzairue, while the Catholic communities in the West were first under the jurisdiction of St. Anthony's Parish in Uromi and subsequently Mary the Queen Parish in Ekpoma.¹⁴

In order to build a church in Afuze, the Catholic missionaries attempted to set up a primary school there between 1945 and 1947. The Church Missionary Society (CMS) fiercely opposed these efforts. A Catholic elementary school was finally founded in Afuze-Emai in 1948. St. Joseph's at Eme-ora, St. Jude's at Afuze-emai, St. Thomas Moore, Sobe, St. Joseph mass center Otuo, and St. Patrick's Mass center, Ozalla are the three parishes and two mass centers that currently exist in Owan. In 2003, the Diocese of Auchi acquired St. Thomas Moore Parish in Sobe from the Ondo Diocese. In 1965, St. Mary's Catholic Girl's Grammar School was

founded in Eme-Ora, and in 1969, St. James Catholic Grammar School, Afuze-Emai.¹⁵

In fact, the fight for Auchi Diocese started in the early 1980s. The sons and daughters eagerly awaited this gift to their country year after year, but to no use, until eventually, on December 4, 2002, the news arrived: Auchi Diocese was established, and Gabriel Ghieakhomo Dunia became its first bishop. It was good news, not only because it had been long anticipated, but also because evangelizing will continue to be more accessible and plentiful than ever before thanks to the church. So it has been ever since. The six local government areas of Edo North senatorial district—Etsako West, Etsako Central, Etsako East, Owan West, Owan East, and Akoko-Edo Local Government Areas of Edo State—are geopolitically included in the Diocese.¹⁶ There are two ways that the Catholic religion entered Owan: via Uzairue in Etsako and Uromi in Esan territory. According to records, Fr. Piotin's itinerant Catholic missionaries from Uzairue traveled to Ihievbe, Uokha, and Otuo, all in Owan East, before returning to Uzairue via Igarria in or around 1933. Regarding Owan's western region, the religion arrived in 1955 via Uromi and then Ekpoma. Therefore, the Catholic communities in the West were first under St. Anthony's Pariah, Uromi, and then under Mary the Queen Parish, Ekpoma, but all of Owan East's Catholic communities were outstations of Holy

Rosary Parish, Uzairue.¹⁷In order to build a church in Afuze, the Catholic missionaries attempted to set up a primary school there between 1945 and 1947. The Church Missionary Society (CMS) fiercely opposed these efforts. Eventually, a Catholic elementary school was founded in Afuze-Email in 1948. St. Joseph's at Eme-Ora, St. Jude's at Afuze-ema, St. Thomas Moore, Sobe, St. Joseph mass center Otuo, and St. Patrick's Mass center are the three parishes and two mass centers that now exist in Owan. The Diocese of Auchi acquired St. Thomas Moore Pariah in Sobe from the Ondo Diocese in 2003, while St. Mary's Catholic Girl's Grammar School in Eme-Ora was founded in 1965 and St. James Catholic Grammar School in Afuze-Email in 1969.¹⁸Archbishop Ekpu separated the Diocese of Benin City (now Archdiocese) into three deaneries on May 22, 1981: Afemai, Esan, and Benin City. In order to improve the effectiveness and encourage more passion in the pastoral endeavors of the Diocese's priests, he took this action "for the greater glory of God." Therefore, the establishment of the Deaneries was intended to improve pastoral and administrative efficacy. From 1981 until 2002, when it was promoted to the rank of Diocese of Auchi, Afemai Deanery remained a Deanery. Etsako Central, Etsako East, Etsako West, Owan East, Owan West, and Akoko-Edo local government areas of Edo State are all included in the Diocese's geopolitical boundaries.¹⁹In fact, the fight for Auchi

Diocese started in the early 1980s. The sons and daughters eagerly awaited this gift to their country year after year, but then on December 4, 2002, they received the news that Auchi Diocese had been established and that Gabriel Ghieakhomo Dunia had been named its first bishop. Not only was the news long anticipated, but it was also a happy one since, with the church "nearer home," evangelizing will continue to be more accessible and plentiful than ever. So it has been ever since.²⁰ The Diocese had a total population of 723,905 as of the declaration of its foundation on December 4, 2002, of whom 63,480 (8.8%) were Catholics, 39 priests, 37 diocesan and two religious, 38 female religious, and 14 parishes. Later, the number of parishes increased to 15 with the addition of St. Thomas Moore Parish in Sobe.²¹ Many Afemai priests and nuns are also part of international congregations in Nigeria and other nations. These include the first Nigerian Redemptorist priest, Rev. Fr. Daniel Aigboma CSST, and the first African priest of the Congregation of the Oblates of the Virgin Mary, Rev. Fr. Jude Oseni Ogunu OMV, who was consecrated by Pope John Paul II in Rome in 1985.²² There have been notable advancements in the Diocese's pastoral institutions and human development since its founding in 2002. The table below is a statistical representation of the increase in a few areas of the Diocese's development:

**STATISTICS ON THE GROWTH OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN
AUCHI DIOCESE 2002 – 2021**

S/N	Item	Total at Creation (2002)	Present Total (End of 2021)	Percentage Increase (%)
1.	Population (Catholic)	63,480	120,000	89
2.	Diocesan Priest	37	98	165
3.	Male Religious	2	17	750
4.	Female Religious	38	87	129
5.	Major Seminarians	50	66	32
6.	Catechists	28	79	182
7.	Parishes	15	33	120
8.	Mass Centres	1	25	2400
9.	Nursery/Primary School	14	27	93
10	Secondary Schools	2	10	400

Source of Statistics for 2002-2021: Chancery, Catholic Diocese of Auchi 2021

As can be seen from the table, the population of the Catholics in the Diocese grew by 89% from 63,480 in 2002 to 120,000 in 2021, while the number of parishes increased by 120% from 15 (2002) to 33 (2021) and Mass Centre increased by 2400% from 1 (2002) to 25 (2021).²³

Perhaps, the greatest increases in terms of personnel for the work of evangelism were in the numbers of the Diocesan Priests which increased by 165% from 37 in 2002 to 98 in 2021, Male Religious which increased by 750% and Catechists which increased by 182%. It is also worthy of note that there was appreciable increase in the population of Catholics in the Diocese from 63,480 at

the time of creation (2002) to 120,000 in 2021.²⁴ That the percentage increase in the population of Catholics is not as spectacular as one would have expected, can be accounted for by many factors. Including Islamic predominance in the total population of the area covered by the Diocese, the influence of Pentecostalism with its promise of immediate material rewards and lack of suffering for those who believe and the high rate of rural –urban migration which was quite significant during the period under consideration.²⁵

There is no doubt whatsoever that, all things considered, the Diocese has fared well during the 20 years of her existence. The period, among other things, witnessed the establishment of a minor Seminary at Ivianokpodi, the growth in the number of Nursery/Primary and Secondary Schools from 14 Nursery/Primary Schools in 2002 to 27 in 2021 and from 2 Secondary Schools in 2002 to 10 in 2021 (in addition to the 54 Catholic Schools taken over by Civil Government) as well as the establishment of many communities of Consecrated Women Religious in the Diocese among which are the following:

- Sisters of Perpetual Adoration Community at Agenebode.
- Sisters of Notre Dame Community at Jattu with a Postulant formation house at Fugar.

- Sisters of Sacred Heart Communities at Auchi, Eme-ora and Iddo II, Okpella,
- Sisters of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus (home for the needy) at Ivioghe, Agenebode and
- Mother of perpetual Help of the Archangels Sisters.²⁶

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CHAPTER THREE

MISSIONARIES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN EDUCATION IN AUCHI

The impact of Christian missionaries in Auchi came with so many developments. And these developments are as a result of the various evangelistic methods implored by these missionaries and the influence led to many developments in Auchi. However, the missionaries used various strategies in their work for missionary journey in Auchi; such as the Educational Strategy, Health care strategy, and use of creative Art and Christian village.¹

Christian Missionary and Western Education in Nigeria

The Christian missionary western education in Nigeria started in the latter part of 15th century when the Portuguese merchant set their foot into some areas that made up of Nigeria today. As early as 1472 the Portuguese merchants in search of commerce had visited Lagos, Benin and Sao Tome. They soon realized the importance of communicating with local people in a common language and they need to share a common faith with their customers.² This made them to invite the Roman Catholic Mission to their trading posts in Benin, Brass and Sao Tome. By 1515, according to Osokoya Missionary activities had started in Benin when some catholic missionary set up a school in the Oba's palace. This school was meant to serve the Oba's children and sons of his palace chiefs who had converted to Christianity. The catholic mission also established seminary on the island of Sao Tome off the west Coast of Southern Nigeria.

However, the Catholic was short-lived due to inter-tribal wars that accompanied the trade slaves which ravaged West African for nearly hundred years.³

The Christian activities which had significant education impacts in Nigeria started in 19th century when the Wesleyan Methodist society on 24th September 1842 sent Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman to Badagary on the invitation of Yoruba emigrants from Sierra-leone who had settled in Badagary. Freeman was accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. William De Graft. They established the first formal school in Nigeria named “Nursery of the Infants.”⁴ The effect of the Wesleyan Methodist Church was followed by the activities of the church Missionary Society (C.M.S) led by Henry Townsend who arrived at Badagary on 19th December, 1842 accompanied by Rev. Gollmer and Rev. Samuel Ajayi Crowder and their wives. After a brief stay at Badagary where they opened a mission and school, they moved to Abeokuta in 1846 where they also established mission and school. In 1846, the Church of Scotland mission (CSM) which was based in Jamaica sent Rev. Hope Waddel to Calabar for missionary work. Surprisingly, on reaching Calabar, Hope Waddel met the king already literate.⁵ However, he succeeded in establishing a mission school which eventually gave rise to the famous Hope waddle training institute, Calabar.

However, the primary objective of the early Christian missionary was to convert the natives to Christianity through education. The knowledge of the bible, ability to sing hymns and recite catechisms as well as the ability to communicate both orally and in writing were considered essential for a good Christian. The earliest Christian Missionary School was a replica of a similar development in Britain during the Dark Ages as A.F.

Leach observed. The subjects in the curriculum include those that could be taught without involving much expense and these were limited to reading, writing, arithmetic and Christian religion knowledge and moral instructions.⁶

Educational strategy was an important handmaid of the Gospel. The missionaries made use of Education as means of bringing the people to accept the new religion being introduced. That is why Crowther categorically advised the missionary at a new station that “they would have to teach more when they visit the people”.⁷ Therefore, the CMS basically used the method of education to bring the people of Asaba into Christianity by educating them and eventual establishment of schools in the community. Though, Fr Zappa of the SMA was at a point against the strategy of education as a means of conversion. He opines that there will not be genuine conversion of the people.⁸ Subsequently, he got converted to education as a means of evangelization but the policy was fully adopted by his successor Bishop Broderick, who wholeheartedly used education as a strategy in his mission work by establishing a number of primary and post primary schools in Asaba and environs as well as other stations within his jurisdiction. This is because the schools were the means of evangelization.⁹

Healthcare Strategy used by the missionaries, especially the RCM made themselves known to the natives by means of medical services. They went about administering drugs to the sick, and also visited the natives in their houses to treat the sick among them. This act of visitation got one “Thomas Okolo” converted to the Catholic faith, as he was pleased with the missionaries act of visitation to the sick. He

was one of the first Faithful Adult to get converted.³ However, the use of European medicine used by the RCM got many natives attracted to the catholic Faith and many of the CMS converted formerly defected to Roman Catholicism in order to receive such material assistance.¹⁰

The use of creative Art as a strategy was adopted by the Roman Catholic missionaries in their evangelical work though it was reported to be applicable were it was found useful in winning converts to the catholic church. That was why the convert school established under the superintendence of Rev Zappa for women and girls were thought needle work, cookery and childcare among others.¹¹ This got some of the CMS convert and others attracted to the catholic mission. And the Rev Sisters who were directly in charge of the convent did much to educate the women as they combined these educations with the teaching of the catholic doctrine.

The Christian village was also another method employed by the missionaries to end slavery and slave trade. For Asaba was known to be highly involved in the movement of slave trade. They bought and sold slaves primarily for burial ceremonies and manual labour. Therefore as a way to end slave trade, the missionaries established Christian village near Asaba.¹² This further explained why some of the first set of missionaries convert were drawn from the slave community.

Educational Development Auch

Educational development was pivot for planting of Christianity in Auch, quite a number of developments had taken place. Christianity brought about some visible

changes in the peoples institutions and ways of life. The introduction of education brought about enlightenment to the people, teaching them how to write and read especially the Bible as well as to learn other trades. Also, the people's attitude to sacred things, works of art and human behaviour have continued to be transformed. Some of their old ways of life have disappeared without trace. They have modified their ways in order to accommodate Christianity.¹³

However, the ground for the material prosperity of Auchi was prepared by "western education" which especially the mission schools, and commercial establishment and colonial administration provided. Education was one of the major factors which attracted the youth of Auchi to Christianity. Recall that some of the youth explained that their decision to embrace the Gospel was based on the visible impact of Christianity on the men of Agenebode who had become carpenters and useful in other developments. Hence the establishment of St Joseph's Catholic primary school in Auchi by Rev Fr Carlo Zappa in 1888 marked the beginning of formal education in Auchi and its environs.¹⁴ Among the early pupils of this school was Jacob Igbafe of Okpala quarter, Auchi. He later became the first indigenous catechist of the church named St Joseph's Catholic Church. He assisted Fr Carlo Zappa to compile and publish a directory in French-Igbo in 1907. Subsequently, after the establishment of St Joseph's primary school, the catholic mission through the congregation of Our Lady Queen of the Apostles set up a convent school in 1895 while St Joseph was restricted to boys only and convent schools was for

girls and young ladies. And the boarding facilities at the school attracted ladies from far and wide.¹⁵

By and large, the church missionary society (CMS) in 1890 established its own primary school named after their church, Holy Trinity School. Amongst the early pupils that passed through the school were Lazarus Odibosa Onyia, Andrew .N. Asiekwu and Mr Nkadi Monu. The idea to establish education institution started by Rev. H. Dobinson with Mrs .S. Macaulay as the head master of the school.¹⁶ The CMS later set up a college in Auchi and this college attracted people from immediate neighbourhood and also from the former Aboh division and across the Niger. Though after some years the college was removed from Auchi by the CMS and planted at Auchi (in the present Edo State). Thus, St Joseph's catholic primary school, convent school and CMS Holy Trinity primary school etcetera laid the basis for formal education in Auchi and its environs. They became the envy of society as they were able to communicate with the white men in his language. As a result of this, envoy family scrambled to put their children in schools and existing schools could not accommodate the influx. Similarly, the CMS established the All Saints School. Also a seminary was set up by the RCM at Auchi in 1926, for the training of future catholic priest, though it was later transferred to Benin City.¹⁷ Likewise in 1895, the CMS established the Auchi training institution but was closed down in 1900. Be that as it may, there are several schools and college in Auchi and environs. For education prepared the ground for advancement in every realm.

Religious and social development was another reckonable impact by the missionaries. Apart from the schools, the mission came to exert some impart on the Auchi community through medical care and eventual establishment of hospitals. The missionary introduced orthodox medicines, though prior to the introduction of orthodox medicine, they were used to native way and some are in use till date. But the modern healthcare deliveries were first introduced by the missionaries. Prior to this time malaria was known as a killer disease which labeled 'Africa' as a white man grave because many of the missionaries died of malaria. However, in an interview with Ven. Anwasia, he narrated how Rev Charles Coleman of the CMS missionary who had arrived 'Badagry' in 1845 with his wife, lost his wife not too long after their arrival. According to him, the coming of the missionaries aided the introduction of building of hospitals and in maternity which also helped to reduced mortality rate. To him, the introduction of modern medicine and health care delivery assisted and still in assistance to restore loss of lives and mortality rate.¹⁸

Through medical services, the missions had founded St Joseph's maternity Hospital in 1937.²⁰ Today, there are many hospitals in Auchi, and the government is now actively involved in medical services such as immunization processes etcetera. Therefore, what the missionaries introduced has aided further development even though it. cannot be said to be up to standard as a result maintenance by the government of the state.

Another great impart of the mission was the abolition of the killing of twins and bringing to a considerable end of all sort of barbarism that existed among the people of

Auchi. For instance, in the past, giving birth to twins was regarded as abominable to the spirits of the land and therefore worthy of destruction. But through the interventions of the missionaries, twins and their mother had become acceptable members of the society. Also, with the advent of western education brought by Christianity, slaves were liberated as they found gainful employment which improved their social status as well as the missionary stance against slavery.²¹ The dress sense of the people equally transformed.

Moreso, some of the indigenous people of Auchi did not only embraced Christianity, they were actively involved in the activities of the church, while some were ordained priest. Mention must be made of one Agbede and Jattu that was reported to renounced the “Otarot title” and became actively involved for the work of the gospel. It was said that He carried stones for the church building of his head, which was contrary to the custom of a titled man. This is because, traditionally, all titled persons are exempted from all forms of manual labour. But he worked tirelessly for the Catholic Church and had contributed to the teaching, strengthening and spreading of Catholicism in Auchi and environs.²² Hence, Christianity and western influence changed the form of traditional titles and reduced the authority and respect attached to such titled. All these were made possible through the planting of Christianity and the people eventually accepted to be part of the new religion after much rancor said Monsignor Aviele Stephen²³

However, the first Auchi priest to be ordained a priest in 1952 was Peter Piotin. He later rose to a Monsignor. He also became the first Nigerian rector of SS Peter and Paul major seminary in Ibadan. The second Auchi indigenous person who was ordained a

priest in 1957 was Monsignor Rev. Fr. Thomas Oleghe. He took the gospel of Christ to the various places he was posted to as parish priest.²⁴ The CMS ordained their first indigenous priest in the person of Rev Charles Imokhai in 1968. Henceforth, the RCM and CMS had produced and ordained more priest. And the first Auchi woman to be ordained as Reverend Sister was in 1956.

By and large, through the impact of missionaries, the people of Auchi moved from building houses in form of thatched and mud houses to bricks. And today there are many beautiful buildings in houses, churches, hospitals among other building in Auchi all made with bricks compared to what it was prior to the advent of Christianity and western influence.

Another impact of missionaries are the political and economic development of Auchi. It is however important that, it was through the Education and influence of the missionaries that political administration system was introduced. Though we have always had our cultural way of leadership such as the Otaros and Chiefs who had served as political heads for the affairs of the peoples. But with education, some of the people became trained into various departments. According to Shaibu, some of the converts embraced the gospel not because they needed a new faith but because they wanted missionary education which would fit them into government department as clerks in the offices, interpreters in the court, store keepers and gardeners.²⁴

Gradually, many were brought into the colonial administrative system. It is pertinent to note that the church was the first to train the officials that served with the

colonial administrators. It was from them they learnt the modern aspect of administration and leadership of the state. Alongside, some became principals, head of schools and head of government in different department, while some became politician in the administration of the country prior to independence. That is why P.A Jonas said “the set of people who challenged the colonial administration were those who have been trained in the missionary schools”. He further stated that the first political elite who became leaders upon the enthronement of independence were those who led with missionaries’ ideas and the missionaries through education had enlightened them the more.²⁵

Economically, the missionaries had brought changes to the economic life of the people. Apart from the introduction of legal tender, the people were used to the system of trade by barter. Prior to the advent of missionaries, trades by barter were popularly used as a medium of exchange. But with the coming of missionaries amongst other European Agents, the use of legal tender was gradually introduced to the populace. They were also introduced to some species of cash crops. Though Auchi and its hinterland had been a cotton growing and exporting region prior to the coming of the missionaries and European Agents. However, with their arrival cotton growing was popularized by the introduction of more species and by the creation of wider market for its demand. For instance, the native attire used to be locally weaving which takes quite a long time to be completed but as a result of the cottage industry, the people were introduced to, some of the women had to learn the weaving with the modern machines which made production faster.²⁶ It was reported that as early as 1972, when the Auchi mission was not yet opened,

the Anglican Mission had set up an industrial institution for cotton at Auchi. Also, a variety of tropical plants and food crops were introduced such as flowering plants, shrubs, mangoes, pawpaw, rice and most importantly cassava.²⁷ Hence, with all of these introduced, the economical dependences of the Auchi people to an extent were transformed from slavery and slave trade to a more viable one that does not have to shed human blood.

However, there is no gain saying that the influence of the missionaries had only brought forth positive changes to the people and community of Auchi. It is true that the activities and influence of the missionaries were felt positively but it is pertinent to mention that some of the impacts of the missionaries had negative consequences that has in one way or the other destroyed or obstructed most of the valued culture of the people. Some of the festival such as “Eghogho” festival where people display their bravery with the use of charms were removed as a result of the introduction of Christianity.²⁸ Likewise, the people’s custom and culture have been eroded and the people are gradually or fast losing their identity and those things that binds them together. It has always been a known fact that people far and near usually come home and reunite together but the introduction and activities of Christianity had and still inhibit such bonding as many do not honor such activities because it has been seen as unacceptable by their faith.

More so, some of the idols the forefathers worshiped have been abandoned and such idols had in turned posed to be a tormenting factor to the people. However, only those with faith and trust in God have been able to overcome such torments.²⁹ Also,

important is the fact that Christian impacts had brought new conscience to the people. For instance, the dances, the moonlight play, folktale have been abandoned because of the modernity that came with the Christian way, which have arose the fear of insecurity. Importantly, the dress sense by some of the female folks have become inappropriate and indecent as a result of the modernity that came with Christianity, which posed as an obstruction to the moral standard of the indigenous people in Auchi and Nigeria at large. That is why Ayandele stated that “Christian missions destroyed the high morality of indigenous religion without succeeding in replacing it with Christian morality”... Though he earlier stated that the example of European officers, traders and educated Africans greatly influenced the people than the principles the missionaries were impacting and the fact that the masses were not ready for the moral programs of the missionaries as well as the material wealth and social merits of the world were more appealing to them than the Christian morality.³⁰

Also, in an interview with Mr. Iguelaezo, he stated that Christianity has made many most especially the ladies unmarried. Going further he said “prior to the advent of Christianity there were rarely any woman that was not married because, the society accommodated polygamy which is one man to many wives”. To him, the advent of Christian missionaries were to be blamed for all the atrocities of fornication and adultery and the reason why many ladies were unmarried.³¹ That is why Ayandele said “the idea of an unmarried woman which now exist among the Christian elite was completely absent in the traditional society. And sexual misbehavior was absent in the traditional society

because the offenders were usually punished, disgraced and most times death may be the penalty.³²

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CHAPTER FOUR

IMPACT OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY EDUCATION ACTIVITIES IN AUCHI

The Christian missionaries have contributed remarkably in transforming the communities of Auchi land. The transformation of these communities of Auchi through various missionary activities has become a major contribution of Christian missions to modern social history of Auchi. The activity of Christian mission has become an integral part of Auchi's social history.¹ The theory and practice of Christian missions which affected social transformation can be summed up in its humanitarian ministries and services. Although the advent of Christian missionary activities can be linked to colonialism, its impact can however be studied from that perspective.² Christian mission held a dominant position as leading pioneers in the provision of social needs. These activities did have a profound influence on the nature of Church structures, theology and philosophy and patterns of relationship and approaches to African tradition, culture, religion and colonial policies and other socio-political issues.³

4.1: Educational Impact

Education may be said to be a process of leaning, bringing up or training, formally or informally from childhood to adulthood aimed at good responsible, honest, cultured and productive citizens to enable them contribute individually and

collectively to the overall growth and development of the society.⁴ Emmanuel Ukpebor, viewed education as “conscious and purposeful efforts directed towards the transmission of accumulated abilities, knowledge and attitude from one generation to another with ultimate intention of producing men and women who will be relevant and useful to themselves and the society. Communities in Auchi were not devoid of education before the coming of the Christina missionaries.⁵ In traditional Auchi society, there was informal educational system in which people learn from their parents and elders. On the other hand, there was the Islamic education where people were taught in line with Islamic doctrines. Islamic education was the first non-indigenous education that was introduced to the Estako people. That is to say Quranic schools were in existence prior to the advent of Western education.⁶ However, Islamic education was not enough in catapulting the people to the highest rung of economic and social ladder. The Roman Catholic mission were the first to arrive in Auchi in 1884 and their major motive was to establish Western education. As stated in chapter three, the missionaries revealed to Auchi (named Estako) that the school was not meant for Christians only but also for their Muslims counterpart and even pagans. The coming of the missionaries in 1930s started with educational program alongside its evangelical work. The obvious reason being that without the ability to read and write, the

Auchi people would not be well ‘civilized’.⁷ The early educational program was meant to teach the people how to read their Bible; this was the main policy and concerns of the missionaries. It should be stressed here that the government did not interfere in the subjects the mission’s schools taught at this early period. The second aim was how to give an elementary level of education to as many as they could, who would in future years become evangelist and school teachers. These people were now used as interpreters by the missionaries.⁸

The first primary school in the whole of Auchi was established by the Roman Catholic mission. The primary school was built on the hill because the white missionaries needed ventilation. At first, the people of Auchi doubted the genuineness of the mission’s schools, and instead slave owners sent their slaves to these schools in order to ascertain its genuineness. The dominant Muslim’s community of Auchi rejected Western education. The Western education was now embraced in St. Angela Grammar School, Uzairue, St. James Grammar School, among other places which made them academically good compared to the people of Auchi.⁹ However, children who were sent to school at that time were the lazy ones who could not do serious farm work. The Roman Catholic mission established the highest number of schools in Auchi which include; Our Lady of Fatima College, St. John's College, Fugar, St. Angela's Girls' Grammar School,

Uzairve, and St. Peter's College, Agenebode. It took the missionaries a whole lots of time before they were able to establish these primary schools. The RCM primary school in Egelesor Village which was established in 1955 still remain the only school in that village till date. Progress made in RCM School, Auchi was not very impressive during the tour of Education Officer in Uzairue Division in October 12th 1938.¹⁰ He visited from 8 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., and there were 29 boys and 1 girl present. Several pupils arrived late, the building was in a bad state of repair. English language had just begun and there were good readers in the top class while the rest were poor. Even the reading books which were readily made available to the pupils were too advanced for them. When the Officer visited again in 1939, there was a slight improvement, there were 38 boys and 4 girls on the register, 22 boys and 3 girls were present; ten were Estakos.¹¹

Between 1945 and 1947, attempts were made by the Catholic missionaries to establish a primary school a Afuze as a first step to establishing a church there. These attempts were strongly resisted by the Church Missionary Society (CMS). In 1948, a Catholic primary school was eventually established at Afuze-Emai, 4 present, there are four parishes and four mass centres in Owan: St. Joseph, Eme-ora, St. Jude, Afuze-Emai, St. Thomas Moore, Sobe, St Loserian, Ihebvie, St. Joseph Mass Centre, Otuo, St. Patrick's Mass Centre Ozalla, St Mary, Uzebba and

Mary, Mother of Perpetual Help, Sabongidda Ora. St. Thomas Moore Parish, Sobe, was ceded to the Diocese of Auchi from Ondo Diocese in 2003. St Joseph College, Otuo was established in 1959, St. Mary's Catholic Girl's Grammar School at Eme-Ora was established in 1965, while St. James Catholic Grammer School, Afuze-Emai was established in 1969.¹² The above source also revealed that Bible school was opened in 1964 at Auchi where field preachers and Pastors could train. The early schools which were opened at hat period were evangelical agency of the highest importance through which Christianity and Europeanization could spread very fast among the Estakos. As Ayandele pointed out in the early mission education, “great emphasis was placed on character training and spiritual development, rather than on the raising of pupils status and material standing of the pupils and converts in the society.”¹³ However, the Auchi people had no writing system before the coming of the Christian missionaries under Christian Missions in Many Lands. It was obvious that they lacked interpreters since there were no Estako that understood English. However, the missionaries learned the Estako language themselves.¹⁴ They succeeded in formulating Estako alphabets as shown as follows:

A	E	E	I	O	O	U
Ba	Be	Be	Bi	Bo	Bo	Bu

Da	De	De	Di	Do	Do	Du
Fa	Fe	Fe	Fi	Fo	Fo	Fu
Ga	Ge	Ge	Gi	Go	Go	Gu
Ha	He	He	Hi	Ho	Ho	Hu
Ja	Je	Je	Ji	Jo	Jo	J
Ka	Ke	Ke	Ki	Ko	Ko	Ku
La	Le	Le	Li	Lo	Lo	Lu
Ma	Me	Me	Mi	Mo	Mo	Mu
Na	Ne	Ne	Ni	No	No	Nu
Na	Ne	Ne	Ni	No	No	Nu
Pa	Pe	Pe	Pi	Po	Po	Pu
Ra	Re	Re	Ri	Ro	Ro	Ru
Sa	Se	Se	Si	So	So	Su
Ta	Te	Te	Ti	To	To	Tu
Wa	We	We	Wi	Wo	Wo	Wu
Ya	Ye	Ye	Yi	Yo	Yo	Yu

It did not take the missionaries long to form the writing system in Estako as noted by Suleiman Yakubu “Soon they began to reduce Estako language into writing primer, tracks, Bible and local stories were produced on hand printing

press owned by A.A Hewstone”. It is worthy to note that the establishment of schools by the missionaries was a proselytization strategy but not to enforce the religion on the people.¹⁵ What one may term as real primary school education started in 1935. During this year English language and arithmetic were introduced as new subjects to be taught to pupils, still the teaching of Estako primer or vernacular and religious instructions were not abandoned. In fact no pupil would advance to primary one if he had not done well in vernacular lesson. The criteria for measuring a good pupil in vernacular lesson was ability to read fluently the primer, and to those in “upper” classes reading the gospel according to St. Mark or St. John. Scripture lesson were equally important.¹⁶ Failure to pass well in this subject may earn a pupil a repetition of the particular class. Scripture lesson was full of rigorous memorization of Bible passages and having to know very well some Biblical stories, which were mentioned earlier. Arithmetic and English subject were readily understood by the pupils that it was important: “I tested class 3 in English reading (Niger reader Primer II) they appeared to be able to read satisfactorily”.¹⁷

The leap forward in the opening and expansion of the scope of primary education was an activity whose praises go to Mr. H Dickson who was appointed as the Manager for schools (QMI Schools) in 1935. Around 1936 or so, subject

such as history, geography, personal hygiene, handcraft (in case of boys might be basket weaving, rope-making, cleaning palm fronds for brooms; while girls engaged in either broom making or handkerchief making).¹⁸ Rural science or natural study was also introduced. The main reason for the expansion of primary education during this period was partly due to the willingness of many parents to send their children to school. This necessitated opening of more primary schools. Schools that were established initially were for the purpose of instruction but were later converted into real primary schools. Competition to send children to school contributed much towards its expansion.¹⁹ From 1956 the new education grants-in-aid approved by the government of Northern Nigeria came into effect, and helped the missionaries a great deal.

The new government education law of that year approved both capital and recurrent grants-in-aid to all voluntary agencies running educational work in Northern Nigeria. The capital was intended to meet the cost of building materials and equipment for schools, while recurrent grant was meant for payment for teacher's salaries and allowances. The voluntary agencies including Christian mission could only be granted the aid provided they were prepared to accept pupils irrespective of their religious background and no pupils was to be given religious instruction unless his parents

agreed to receive such instruction.²⁰ These conditions were laid down since 1936. Despite this success, the QIM faced challenges, as far as opening of new schools is concerned between 1964 and 1968. The reason given is that the mission faced financial problems. This arose from the increasing of teachers' salaries, the expensiveness in school equipment and also the high cost of building materials. From 1959-1965 the mission complained that it was not granted any capital grants.²¹

By 1967 the RCM broke a very big record which marked a great turning point in the history of education in Estako land by establishing the Saint Charles College in Auchi. Saint Charles College is the first post-primary institution established in Auchi. The school is the 4th Post-primary institution established in the entire Estako land. The pioneer principal was Rev. Fr Malchy and its motto is: We shall overcome.²² Saint Charles College produced prominent personalities like; Doctor Wada of the famous IVF of the specialist hospital Abuja, Doctor Ekele of the Nigerian Air Force Hospital, these people and many more in Diaspora have contributed in one way or the other in the development of Auchi. The Christian mission has come under criticism from many Estakos especially the educated elite. These critics contended that the Christian mission has contributed nothing to the educational development of Auchi. One of such proponent critics is Bishop Leo

Taylor who argued that the quality of mission's education cannot be measured up with real development because the children were only taught how to say "ABCD" and how to write their names.²³ While the real education in their mother land was that of Science and Technology education that can sprang up other forms of development. That type of education he says was not brought to Auchi, but he also agrees that mission's education brought "development" but it must be written with a quotation mark. J.B Abah further added that the missionaries were not highly educated as such, they were mainly concerned with the establishment of religious instructions and primary schools. That type of education was simply meant to enable the Auchi people to be able to communicate with missionaries; there were no Technical Institutions, no Universities of Technology and so on.²⁴ The Western education was limited in scope, the people clamored for more but the Europeans were not willing to take them to that higher stage.

One of the primary task of African education was to assist in the growth of rural communities securely established on the land. It is true that a boy who goes through school and then does not receive the "job" he has expected considers ill-used This type of schooling system was to train converts or teach them how to read the Bible and also to write, and if possible to calculate simple figures.²⁵ This was the type of Western education in Northern Nigeria. One painful thing about

the content of what the pupils were taught is that the mission's school tried by all means to portray the greatness of European civilization vis-a-vis African rich tradition and custom with rich historical heritage. Thus topics in history were all about Kings and Queens in England, European explorers and empires buildings, the colonial wars of pacification and hence the growth of British Empire. This Eurocentric conception of African history subsequently led to the neglect of teaching pupils in their local history. As Coleman summed that the early Europeans, be they missionaries, explorers and administrators thought that African history was considered either non-existent or unimportant.²⁶

The European sees both Africa and its past as darkness as such, darkness cannot be studied. Therefore, if the colonial subject must learn from the past, then it should be from the European's past and not Africa. At a point, there was a burning desire by the Africans to reconstruct their own history in terms of education, politic, economic etc. They realized the rich cultural and political history of Africa which they now used to liberate themselves from the Europeans; it justified the further question for independence.²⁷ The way and manner the Europeans described Africa as a dark, barbaric, savage and unsophisticated continent, angered Africans which subsequently led to the emergence of Africa historiography. As rightly seen in chapter three, missions and colonialism are

related both in spirit and ideology which inevitably justified Rodney's assertion that "Colonial schooling was education for subordination, exploitation, creation of mental confusion and the development of under development."²⁸

Impact on Health Care Education

Health care system is the organization of people, institutions and resources that deliver health care services to meet the health needs of target populations. There is wide variety of health system around the world, with as many histories and organizational structures as there are nations. Implicitly, nations must design and develop health system in accordance with their needs and resources, although common elements in virtually all health systems are primary health care and public health measures. The Christian missionaries pioneered health care service where both the people of Auchi, Colonial government and Native Authorities had no adequate medical services and institution for their subjects. Before the coming of the Christian missionaries to Auchi, the rate of mortality was high.²⁹

The people had no knowledge about known medicines which was capable of curing some dreaded ailment, which intensified death toll in the communities. Moreover, the people were unaware about many of these diseases. In many cases four out of five children died before they were two years old. Some of these killer diseases include small pox yaws, chicken pox, leprosy (which was discovered in

1940 by H.W Dickson), and the greatest threat which was malaria.³⁰ By 1820 quinine was discovered which was used to combat malaria. Quinine played a significant role in the missionary's enterprise. Quinine had been said to be the proud reason African cease to be known as the "white man's grave." In those days, when the people of Auchi were sick, they go to the witch doctor to know what they have done wrong.³¹ Christian missionaries came to Auchi, they felt compassion for the people and therefore, decided to leave no stone unturned until the solution was found. Medicine became the second motive of the Christian missionaries in

Auchi, though the actual motive was the establishment of Western education. Just like Christ had strong compassion in healing the sick, so also the missionaries were not only concerned in preaching the Good News but also to do so through haling the sick.³² Even though the missionaries have genuine interest in combining both medical work and evangelical work in Auchi, the Colonial government were however not in support of that. It is to be realized that missionaries cannot be expected to disassociate religion propaganda of some kind from medical attention to a patient. It is unlikely that any missionary body would agree to carry on its medical treatment indefinitely unless it were auxiliary to what are, in fact, the main end of its work in this country. On the other hand, in areas which are either

entirely pagan, or at any rate predominantly so, there cannot be said to be political objection to the association of religious teaching with medical practice.³³

Assistance (grants) were given to missions engaged in medical work, and such assistance were to be unconditional as regard to religious teaching that may be given to a patient. Ordinarily, the establishment of health care services in Estako land was supposed to be the duty of the Colonial government but the government gave more priority to educational 'development'.³⁴ The Christian missionaries were more responsible in meeting the basic needs of the people than the Colonial government. The Q.I.M championed this responsibility of meeting the medical needs of the people in 1950. The medical work which commenced was by H.W Dickson who opened a dispensary at Afuze-Emai in early 1933. Medical work didn't mark watershed in Ihebie until 1950s when a dispensary and leprosy center was established. Noticeable medical work was embarked upon by Mr. & Mrs. Dibble who opened a baby clinic in 1937.³⁵

At this clinic the Dibbles cared for orphans and motherless infants. The health center was opened under the care and supervision of the C.M.M.L. In 1937 the clinic was looking after no less than six motherless infants with some success³⁸¹. Success in looking after and feeding them to survive the pains of motherlessness.³⁶ While Mrs. Dibble looked after the orphans, her husband carried

out some other medical activities. This is mainly dental extraction for those suffering from tooth ache. The missionaries collected two eggs for the removal of one tooth. The missionaries accepted eggs in place of European currency. Medical work was less important at this time, this is because many people who could not easily attend government hospital at Auchi were treated.³⁷

At first, the Auchi people perceived the European's medicine with suspicion just like they suspected their Western education. Their assumption was that the former was much more active than the latter. But they later learned that the White man's medicine really heals.³⁸ T. Wheeler observed that the introduction of medical services in Auchi posed serious conflict which arose from the traditionalist who felt that the missionaries were taking away their business. Medical activities was not very much felt in Auchi compared to education and religion. Medical centers which were established was chiefly at Ughidane Village, Idani-Yelwa Village and Osomeke Village.³⁹

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CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the impact of Christian Missionary activities in Auchi land in Edo state. From the second half of the 19th century, Christian missionaries featured prominently in the series of events that led to the development of Auchi community, and brought vital political, economic and social changes in the area. The Christian Evangelical activities led to the winning of more converts.

The missionaries produced increasing number of Auchi people adherents a powerful weapon through the provision of western education. Within the mission stations education was the main instrument used for establishing and maintaining the new values. By so doing the missionaries asserted significant impact on the development for of education in Auchi. Many schools were established in Auchi in 1905.¹ The Mission embarked on building schools and their example was a model for the Local Government Authority.

The contribution of the Church has significant impact on the health sector of the people of Auchi. The health sector was another area where the people of Estako benefited from with the advent of the missionaries. The Catholic Mission established health care facilities and later on the establishment of catholic

hospitals like St. Camillus Hospital in Auchi which was commissioned in 1917 due to the incidence of terrible skin diseases like yaws, guinea worm, infant mortality amongst others.² Aside from tackling the health problems in Estako, St. Camillus hospital years after 1960 became a tertiary institution where nurses and midwives were trained, this was an avenue for females to get educated and trained as nurses and midwives.

In the study of Christian missionary activities in Auchi land, it is to show that the establishment of schools by the missionaries was a strategy for proselytization and to bring about 'development'. The establishment of Western education by the missionaries has come under serious criticism by the educated elite in Estako land. These critics argued that the missionaries contributed nothing to the development of Auchi. To that perspective of thinking, the work argued it by viewing the coin from its two sides. In general, the missionaries used numerous strategies in which are not contained in our today's Bible in order to convert the people of Auchi.³

It is crystal clear that the justification of this research is to delve into the bank of knowledge regarding the activities and impact of Christian missionary activities in Auchi. It is to add up to what has been written and do avail the coming generation with credible information about the missionary's enterprise. Therefore, the aims and objectives of the work is to trace the coming, and the history of the

impact on the communities of Auchi.⁴ It also examines what others have written relating to the subject matter and make some comparison. Other aims include; to leave out room for a fresh understanding and to view the past activities of the missionaries in the eye of the present. The proceeding date for the research is 1900. The period was not arbitrary chosen because it marks the beginning of Colonialism, secret traffic in slaves, the reemergence of missionaries in Auchi, and the attempt to ‘civilize’ and Christianize the people.⁵ While on the other hand, the terminal date for the research is 1980. By this time, Colonialism has been incapacitated which provoked a burning desire for freedom of the church.

The period also witnessed emergence of Pentecostalism. Most importantly, by 1980, the impact of the missionaries was very much felt in Auchi. The relevant concept and theories which anchored in the understanding of the enterprise of the missionaries in Auchi include; theory of Christianity, theory of Missionary and theory of Impact. Philosophical concept of religion traces the development of the concept in various determinate religions of humanity and finally finds the consummation of the concept in Christian religion. Missionary on the other hand has been reversed for those who have been called by God to a full time ministry of the word and prayer and who have crossed geographical and or cultural boundaries

to preach the Gospel in those areas of the world where Christ is largely, if not entirely unknown.⁶

The Christian missionaries have contributed remarkably in the transformation of the communities in Auchi through various missionary bodies which subsequently changed the social modern history of Auchi. The theory of Christian mission which affected the people of Auchi can be summed up in its humanitarian services. The advent of the missionaries which coincided with the period of Colonialism, its impacts can further be examined from that perspective. The missionaries took the lead in meeting the needs of the people which ordinarily was the duty of Colonial government.⁷ These activities did have a profound effect on religion, education, health, social structures and political philosophy. History still remembers the activities of Christian missionaries on the communities of Auchi LGA and Estako land as a whole.

With the exposure of Christian Missionaries activities in Auchi, the marriage institution experienced some changes in its cultural practices due to the impact of new beliefs, aspiration and lifestyle because of Western education, and Christianity. For example, the practice of pawning, seizure, and home wife have culturally become unpopular because it is argued that it borders on the question of fundamental human right of choice and freedom of the brides.⁸

Due to the Christian Missionaries activities and penetration, child marriage was also frowned upon. However, it was discovered that the parents that betrothed their daughters, collected bride price in advance of the consummation of the marriage in the husband's house had spent the money even before the finalization of the marriage. To resolve the issue of high sum of money demanded as refund of dowry when the girl decides to quit the marriage, a definite sum of ten pounds was fixed for the annulment of the marriage.⁹ This study has established that the Christian Missionaries in Auchi has had significant impacts on the development of Auchi people. It would be of academic interest to investigate the role of other established religion on the development in the Auchi, like the Muslim religion.

At this point, let it be emphasized that for any claim to be accepted as historically correct, the historian must achieve some kind of contact with the mind of whom he is writing about. Even though the missionaries neglected the basic dogma of the culture of the Auchi people, there was still some cultural practice among the people which was highly obnoxious.¹⁰ However, in understanding how much the Christian missionaries did for the communities of Auchi, there is every need to draw up a 'balance sheet of missionary activities'. On the balance sheet, there was credit and debit and the good outweighed the bad. Other people might

wish to challenge that conclusion but we must however understand that the introduction of Christianity by the missionaries justified their ends.

Endnotes

1. Emmanuel Ukpebor, "The Non-Violence Pattern of Religious Interaction in Auchi-Edo State," *European Scientific Journal*, Vol.2, No.1, 2021, p.56.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.66.
4. Suleiman Yakubu, "The Auchi Kingdom: A Century of Growth and Innovations 1920 – 2020," *Brazilian Journal of African Studies*, Vol.6, No.12, 2021, p.5.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. T. O. Ebhomienlen, "Christianity: Its Influence on the Socio-Cultural Organization of the Ekpedo People," *International Journal of Theology and Reformed Tradition*, Vol.8, No.2, 2016, p.199.
8. Ibid.
9. Adamolekun, Taiye, *Trends in the Church Growth in Nigeria*, Ibadan, End Time Publishers, 2009, p.59.
10. Ibid.

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Names	Age	Occupation	Place of Interview	Date of Interview
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Amenze, J.	53 Years	Teacher	Benin City	23/08/2025

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