

THE DAGAABA ENCOUNTER WITH THE CHRISTIAN FAITH: MISSIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CHURCH IN THE DAGAABA LAND

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***Abstract:** The study reviews how Christianity spread in Northern Ghana, in the early stages of its expansion, particularly among the Dagaaba, through the Catholic Missionaries (White Fathers). It draws attention to important missionary strategies that were employed, crucial missiological issues that emerged and the implications for the contemporary churches in Ghana. The study employed the historical approach in analysing the data on indigenous missions among the Dagaaba. It reveals that in the conversion of the Dagaaba to the Christian faith, the following strategies were essential: use of Dagaare; socialization; collaboration with indigenous people (catechists), the provision of social services and respect for the traditional worldview.*

Key Words: Dagaaba; Mission; Missionaries; Advent; History and Migration; Church.

Introduction

Many Ghanaian people and cultures encountered the Christian faith through the work of the early missionaries. For example, the northerners, especially the Dagaaba, were immediately attracted to the Roman Catholic Church and still are firm in their faith.¹ But what might have occasioned and sustained their peculiar interest in the Catholic Church?

Few scholars have written about the work of Christian missionary among the Dagaaba. One of them is Father McCoy, who has written a detailed historical account of the activities of the first Christian missionaries in Dagaaba land.² McCoy's account reveals that the early

¹ Samuel B. Adubufour and Mark Nso-Yine, "Migration and Mission: The Planting of Frafra Churches and in Ashanti," *Ghana Journal of Religion and Theology* 7, no. 1 (2017): 97.

² Remigius F. McCoy, *Great Things Happen* (Montreal: Society of Missionaries of Africa, 1988), 42.

Catholic missionaries succeeded in their mission to the Dagaaba despite the people's initial resistance to the Christian faith. However, the approach or strategy they adopted to gain the trust of the Dagaaba converts was not analysed.

Against this background, this study examines the historical data on Christian mission in the north of Ghana, especially among the Dagaaba, to explore the missionary strategies employed in the evangelization of Dagaaba land. Furthermore, it discusses the missiological implications of these strategies for the twenty-first century Church in Ghana.

Geographical Location of the Dagaaba

The Dagaaba are located in the Upper West Region of Ghana, which shares borders with the Upper East Region to the east, the Northern Region to the south, and Burkina Faso to west and north. Its regional capital is Wa where majority of people live.³ Christian presence in Wa is, however, less prominent as compared to the surrounding towns and villages, where Christians constitute the majority of the population.

The population in the region is constituted by three main ethnic groups, the Dagaaba, Sissala and the Wala. The focus of our study, however, is on the Dagaaba and their encounter with Christianity.

The Dagaaba are present in all the districts, but some specific areas have been identified as their original location: the north-west part of Ghana stretching out to the Lambussie-Nandom, Lawra-Jirapa, and the Nadowli-Kaleo.⁴ The same ethnic group is also located in Burkina Faso.⁵

³ Government of Ghana, "Upper West – Government of Ghana." www.ghana.gov.gh/index.php/about-ghana/regions/upper-west (Accessed January 7, 2017).

⁴ Peter Baker, *Peoples, Languages, and Religion in Northern Ghana* (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1986), 71-72. The major towns where the Dagaaba are located in the Upper West Region are Wa, Lawra, Jirapa, Babile, Nandom, Hamile, Nadowli, Kaleo, Daffiama, Tuna, Wechiau, Hamile, Han, Nyoli, Isa, Sankana, Nanvile, Lambussie, Jang, Bole, Birifu and Tugu.

⁵ Baker, *Peoples, Languages*, 71-72.

Origin and Migration of the Dagaaba

The Dagaaba have inhabited their present homeland for about three hundred years.⁶ Baker affirmed that studies on migrations point out that the Dagaaba represent a group which split away from Dagomba and have moved north, from beyond Wa, around 1680.⁷

Furthermore, it is also argued that the Dagaaba migrated originally from the eastern corridors of Ghana, particularly from the Mamprussi and the Dagomba tribes. They moved to the west of Ghana some three or four centuries ago because of their discontent with the chiefs of Mamprussi and the Dagomba.⁸ The situation was so serious that the Dagaaba vowed not to have chiefs rule over them in their new settlement. Thus, they were governed by elders.⁹ This perhaps explains the reason that among the Dagaaba the first settlers of the land were the *tendaanba* (landlords or landowners).

Looking for better employment opportunities, the Dagaaba have spread beyond their historical homeland and are now found in every part of Ghana working in farmlands, in the mines and as traders.¹⁰ Dagaaba communities are now present in centres like Obuasi, Kumasi, Techiman, Cape Coast, Tamale, Accra, Sunyani, Ejura and other major towns and villages in the country.

The Advent and Expansion of Christianity in the Dagaaba Land

The Roman Catholic Mission were the pioneers in extending the Christian faith to the northern territories in Ghana, formerly Gold Coast. Debrunner has observed that following an appeal in 1904 by Cromier, a British official to Dakar in a visit to Wagadugu, the White Fathers were asked to start mission work in northern Ghana.¹¹ By

⁶ Baker, *Peoples, Languages*, 71-72.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 73.

⁸ McCoy, *Great Things Happen*, 36-37.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹¹ The White Fathers Religious Congregation (called the Society of the Missionaries of Africa) was founded in Algiers in 1868 by Cardinal Charles Lavigerie. They are known popularly as the 'White Fathers' because of their religious cassock. The group is an international society of priests and brothers who consecrate their lives to the

1906, they secured entry permit from the Governor of the Gold Coast and opened a station and a school at Navrongo.

They were, however, refused the permission to work in Wa and Tamale by Colonel Waterston, the then commissioner for the Northern Territories, who defined them as “deceitful and very untrustworthy.”¹² The situation changed in favour of the White Fathers with the emergence of Waterston’s successor, Armitage. From 1913, he gave preference to the Catholic missionaries respect to the Protestant.¹³ This probably explains why most northerners, especially the Dagaaba, are exclusively Roman Catholics.

Abadamloora and Gilleece state that between 1926-1934, the Missionaries of Africa became resolute in their commitment to evangelization and development, because they were now recognized and loved by the people. They proceed to break new grounds by expanding their borders beyond Navrongo. New stations were, therefore, established to the East and West of Navrongo. Later, stations were opened in Bolgatanga 1927, Wiaga 1927, Jirapa 1929, Binduri 1932, and Tamale 1946.¹⁴

In this period the Dagaaba had their first encounter with the Christian faith. In fact, as stated above, in 1929, Jarapa was chosen as the first outpost of Christianity in the Dagaaba land. It was selected because “it was the most central of the Dagaaba villages.”¹⁵

Fathers McCoy and Paquet, together with Brother Basilid Koot, started mission work at Jirapa in 1929.¹⁶ Though their first aim was evangelization, they also paid attention to medical work which created immediate interest among the people.¹⁷ Strategically, the treatment of

service of the Catholic Church in Africa. See McCoy, *Great Things Happen*, the cover page.

¹² Hans W. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana* (Accra: Waterville Publishing, 1967), 224.

¹³ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity*, 224.

¹⁴ L. Abadamloora and J. Gilleece, *One Hundred Years of the Church in the Tamale Ecclesiastical Province 1906-2006* (Takoradi: St Francis Press Ltd, 2006), 42.

¹⁵ McCoy, *Great Things Happen*, 34.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 54.

¹⁷ Baker, *Peoples, Languages*, 80.

diseases was meant to win the hearts of the people as McCoy stated: “It had been clear from the start that eventually health care would have to be a priority of our ministry among the Dagaaba.”¹⁸ This implies that the mission work among the Dagaaba could not have been successful but for the medical work.¹⁹ “The mass movement among the Dagaaba had been preceded by the healing work of the Jirapa dispensary and would have been unthinkable without it.”²⁰

Apart from the health care services, Father McCoy’s miraculous prayer for rains in the Dagaaba land brought an unprecedented turnaround for the new faith in and around Jirapa. It was in 1932, at the peak of the rainy season, when the rains had failed. The Dagaaba tried all traditional religious means to invoke the rains but all proved futile. The people then turned to the Catholic mission for help from the Christian God.²¹ McCoy reveals what happened in one of these ‘rain’ meetings:

I went on to pray for another twenty minutes or so, voicing the pleas of the delegation for rain and expressing their firm faith in His desire and ability as Supreme Being to give it to them. Then I had them repeat our Father after me and we ended with another sign of the cross, which I explained to them briefly. It was ten o’clock by the time we left the chapel and the delegation took its leave to begin the fifteen- mile trek home. When the swiftest walkers reached Daffiama four hours later, they were met by a soaking rain. Their immediate reaction was one of jubilation and the urge to retrace their steps to Jirapa to give thanks. But the rain was falling so heavily, they finally decided to wait until the next morning.²²

The above quotation refers to the Daffiama experience of the miracle rain. Other towns, including Kaleo, Nadowli and Jirapa had similar rain experiences through the prayer of Father McCoy. In view of this, about 25,000 Dagaaba became Christians. It has been noted that, there

¹⁸ McCoy, *Great Things Happen*, 54.

¹⁹ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity*, 344. However, other churches and missions were also involved in medical work at their prospective locations (Keta, Kumasi, Tamale, Kandai, Agogo, Dormaa Ahenkro, Wenchi, Soboba and Nakpandure, etc) after the Second World War.

²⁰ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity*, 329.

²¹ McCoy, *Great Things Happen*, 109.

²² *Ibid.*, 116.

is no such similar mass conversion in Africa.²³ McCoy describes the mass movement toward Christianity in this remarkable statement: “From the early thirties, it was like a new Pentecost in the northwest Gold Coast. The Spirit of God roamed the land breathing life into the hearts of the people.” Many were walking to Jirapa every week and the number kept increasing.²⁴

As a result of this massive growth of mission work at Jirapa, the society had to open new stations. New parishes were instituted at Kaleo in 1932, Nandom in 1933 and Ko and Daffiama in 1952. In a year, the Dagaaba zone was made a diocese with sixteen parishes with Wa being the Bishop’s seat.²⁵ From then, the Catholic mission has grown and is now found in every village and town in the Dagaaba land. Many Catholic Churches are being built and a lot of parishes created. As at 2015, there were twenty-five parishes in the diocese.²⁶

Even though there are other Churches in the region, the Roman Catholic Church still remains the most patronized church among the Dagaaba. The reasons for this continued success are discussed below.

Strategies and Factors that account for the success of the Mission among the Dagaaba

Despite the initial resistance of the Dagaaba to the new faith and their difficulty to trust the White Fathers, because of the raiders and slave traders, coupled with the resistance of the colonial officials in allowing Christian mission work,²⁷ Christianity finally gained grounds among the Dagaaba.

Several factors and strategies of the missionaries contributed to the mass conversion of the Dagaaba to the Roman Catholic faith. It has been said that “The Dagaaba took to Christianity as ducks take to water.” The first reason is “the miracle rain,”²⁸ that McCoy described as

²³ Baker, *Peoples, Languages*, 81.

²⁴ McCoy, *Great Things Happen*, 18-19.

²⁵ Baker, *Peoples, Languages*, 81.

²⁶ Catholic Hierarchy, “Wa (Diocese) Catholic-Hierarchy;” www.catholic-hierarchy.org/diocese/dwagh.html (Accessed September 4, 2017).

²⁷ McCoy, *Great Things Happen*, 50.

²⁸ Abadamloora and Gilleece, *One Hundred Years*, 43.

the experience of a new “Pentecost” in the Dagaaba land which resulted in the conversion of many.

Another factor is the worldview of the people about God and their attitude in general. In the words of McCoy, “The Dagaaba and Sissala were religious by nature. They believed in God as the most powerful of beings. But they conceived Him as being very remote from them. They dared not address Him directly but always through intermediaries, lesser spirit, who were often harmful to the well-being of the people.”²⁹ However, he elaborates, “the main reason for the hesitation of the Dagaaba to embrace Christianity was their natural cautiousness.”³⁰

In line with their attitude, the testimony of Cardinal Peter Dery, an early Dagaaba convert, is noted:

They are good farmers . . . Their moral code was very high and was strictly observed. Their sense of hospitality and generosity was superb.... In short, they are a people of natural goodness with deep respect for their elders and parents, and a profound sense of worship which they consider a duty towards the ancestors and the Naabilengmen, “the God of the child of man.”

A missionary priest also observed that:

It was easy to translate traditional sacrifice into the sacrifice of the mass, and prayer to ancestors to veneration of saints. It was easy to translate the strict morality of the Dagaaba into the Ten Commandments; the Dagaaba are not proud, dominant tribe but humble and hardworking one, we preach the good news to the poor ...the first missionaries with their medical and educational work lived very close to the people.³¹

This strategy enabled the Catholic Church to win the hearts of many Dagaaba, especially those who were serving family gods because these doctrines namely, the sacrifice of the mass, and the veneration of saints have similarities with some Dagaaba traditional beliefs and practices (sacrifice and ancestral worship). In this way, the indigenous Dagaaba were able to relate to the Christian God and his demands.

²⁹ McCoy, *Great Things Happen*, 17-18.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 72.

³¹ Baker, *Peoples, Languages*, 82.

Furthermore, the social integration of the Catholic missionaries was outstanding and strategic as well. The ‘incarnational’ missionary approach distinguished them from others especially, the colonial officials and the Muslims who would not associate themselves with the Dagaaba. McCoy described their social integration in the following manner:

We were marked immediately as being persons distinct from other “Europeans” they had known until then, mainly colonial officials, by the efforts we made from the start to identify ourselves with them (the people). We began by eating the same food they did and drinking *pito* (a mild millet beer), visiting their sick and learning their language. They were impressed, and a little of the wall around them began to crumble. Word spread quickly among the people that these newcomers were not like the others who pray. They referred to the Muslims, who are not allowed to taste any fermented drink. Though not the noblest of distinctions, perhaps, being labelled *pito* – drinkers – did serve to set us apart from the Muslims and established us in the minds of the people as a more congenial bread of *mwin-puorobo*.³²

This incarnational missionary approach is indeed unique among Christian missionaries among the Dagaaba especially the aspect of drinking of *pito*, considered by the missionaries as a kind of ‘socialization ritual.’ Perhaps, this may suggest why many Dagaaba are adherents of the Catholic faith.³³

Moreover, the willingness of the missionaries to learn the local language in the shortest possible time helped them to interact with the people.³⁴ This was a strategy to improve upon the communication gap between the missionaries and the people. Even though the language barrier was one of the setbacks impeding the mission work, it was soon overcome by “application and perspiration”. Apparently, at the end of a period of three and a half months, Father McCoy had confidently learned enough *Dagaare* and was able to make his first public speech to the *Dagaaba*. He comments: “We also know the local language and do not need an interpreter. We have the advantage of direct

³² McCoy, *Great Things Happen*, 18; 44.

³³ *Ibid.*, 44.

³⁴ Abadamloora and Gilleece, *One Hundred Years*, 76.

access to the people. They are not afraid of us.”³⁵ From this, it can be asserted that the mother tongue language is paramount to doing missions, especially among indigenous people such as the Dagaaba, and missionaries should spend time and energy to learn it.

The Roman Catholic missionaries excelled, and are still doing well among the Dagaaba, because they have considered the local language as a major tool in propagating the gospel. From the beginning, “They have translated into Dagaare the texts required for a three-year lectionary of mass readings from the Bible including the Apocrypha; they have also translated the four gospels.”³⁶ These translations aimed at making understanding of the gospel easier to the people. Recently, these early translations have been revised by the Catholic Church.

In addition to this was “their ability to train and employ indigenous people as pastoral agents or co-evangelizers.”³⁷ Although the missionaries could speak Dagaare, they realized the need to train the indigenes for missions. These locally trained men and women are referred to as ‘catechists.’ They were natives who understood the Dagaare language and could speak little English. The participation of local evangelists in spreading the gospel opened a new phase of evangelization: “The fact that their teachers were now men of their own race and ethnic group, made an impression on them. Even the ‘novice catechists’ were impressed by the result of their work: the ‘catechists’ were producing results even though they were not missionaries.”³⁸ This method remains with the Church even till now especially in the rural areas.

Again, the provision of social amenities such as schools, clinics, good drinking water by the missionaries showed that they were translating the Gospel message into practice, by considering the total development of the people.³⁹ As pointed out earlier in this discussion, the treatment of diseases through their clinics was a great attraction, which resulted in a massive response to the new faith. It is also without doubt that mission schools in the north had contributed immensely in bringing people to Christianity: some students of such schools have

³⁵ McCoy, *Great Things Happen*, 66.

³⁶ Baker, *Peoples, Languages*, 70.

³⁷ Abadamloora and Gilleece, *One Hundred Years*, 76.

³⁸ McCoy, *Great Things Happen*, 94.

³⁹ Abadamloora and Gilleece, *One Hundred Years*, 76.

become priests, religious brothers and sisters, catechists and committed Christian laypersons.⁴⁰ The provision of these facilities, especially the schools and the clinics, was not only meant to assist them socially but also to serve as a point of contact where missionaries could share the gospel with all.

Evangelistic Strategies of the Early Missionaries: Lessons for Contemporary Mission

From the above, it is clear that the early Christian missionaries among the Dagaaba propagated the Christian faith by adopting different approaches. Successful church planting, therefore, does not depend on 'luck' but on strategy. It is not only the product of the Holy Spirit but a result of the combination of different factors.

The early missionaries among the Dagaaba were not only Holy Spirit driven but pastorally strategic. They positioned themselves and attended to the needs of the people. They noted what they could do together with them (socialization); how to make them their collaborators (interpreters, catechist, translators); and also, what to do for them, that is train them for jobs and trade opportunities (carpenters, masons, etc.), and how to assist them in their social lives. The Catholic missionaries practised integral development approach as essential dimension of the gospel they preached to the Dagaaba. For this reason, the Catholic Church has expanded and established new parishes among the Dagaaba and has completely gained grounds in the Dagaaba land.

There are lessons other Churches (Pentecostals, Charismatic and African Independent Churches) can learn from the Catholic missionaries. The success of these Churches may largely depend on their ability to adopt new strategies or approaches in their attempt to win the Dagaaba for their prospective denominations.

Missiological Implications of the Missionary Evangelistic Strategies

White and Niemandt argue that in order for the Church to fulfil its missionary mandate, there is the need to strategically plan ahead of

⁴⁰ Ibid.

her mission. They agreed with Malphurs who is of the view that without mission strategies, Christian Churches and missionaries cannot accomplish their mission. They hold the opinion that the Churches' strategy acts as a vessel by which the Church accomplish her purpose in her missionary agenda.⁴¹

The strategies employed by the early missionaries in the Dagaaba land have played no small role in the development of the people and the mission of the Church. To understand the people is to understand their worldview. Missiologically, understanding the worldview of a people in Christian mission helps to present the gospel in their context. According to Kwame Bediako, worldview connotes "the basic apprehension of the universe as a unified cosmic, essentially spiritual" in nature. The worldview explains the thought patterns of the people including their cultural-religious system. Bediako admits that the African worldview presents a platform for the apprehension of the Christian faith, experience and theology.⁴²

Prince Comte has observed that:

In its early years, the church in Sierra Leone sought to spread not only Christianity... In order to achieve these goals, and because the Gospel cannot be disseminated in a vacuum, it was often necessary to come to grips with the culture of the societies involved. Through the process, some missionaries became endeared to the people they worked among, while others destroyed traditional cultures and even perpetrated horrors in the name of Christendom.⁴³

I agree with Comte to some extent that when missionaries know and appreciate culture, communication and reception of the gospel message becomes easy.

⁴¹ P. White and C.J.P. Niemandt, "Ghanaian Pentecostal Churches' Mission Approaches," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 24 (2015): 243-244.

⁴² Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion* (Studies in World Christianity, 1; Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press - Orbis Books, 1997), 210.

⁴³ Prince S. Conteh, *Essays in African Religion and Christianity* (Accra: Cynergy Media, 2014), 55.

The way people think, consider and respond to fundamental issues in their lives are as a result of their worldview.⁴⁴ Many Dagaaba have remained Catholics and still consider the Catholic Church as their preferred choice because of her ability to adopt and adapt to the Dagaaba worldview. Chemorion suggests that engaging African worldview in understanding the Christian faith offers an opportunity for easy access to the Word of God. But he also points out that the cultural worldviews come with their own hermeneutical challenges which need attention.⁴⁵ On this note, Dagaaba worldview is relevant in placing the Christian faith in the Dagaaba context, but care must be taken not to place much emphasis on it.

According to White, religion is a special force affecting every aspect of the Ghanaian life, “from family life, economic activities, occupation and health to education.”⁴⁶ To experience Christ socially may imply that the Church’s social services should enable people to improve upon their living conditions. Perhaps, it is only in this way that the society may experience the transforming impact of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

With reference to Pierson, White argues that, “the missional assignment of the church is transforming society through the good news, followed by the act of love. That is, the Church participates in the mission of God (*Missio Dei*) to transform the society.”⁴⁷ This underscores the fact that the principal assignment of the Church through missions is to bring a change in societies or communities where she operates. In this case, if the social life of a people is not transformed the Church has failed in her missionary mandate. The provision of social infrastructure such as schools, clinics and drinking water brought development and enhanced the quality of life of the Dagaaba.

⁴⁴ D.C. Chemorion, “Retelling the Story of Job in Sabaoth Worldview,” *Journal of Mother Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics* 1, no. 1 (2015): 53.

⁴⁵ Chemorion, “Retelling the Story,” 54.

⁴⁶ P. White, “Religion, Mission and National Development: A Contextual Interpretation of Jeremiah 29:4-7 in the Light of the Activities of Basel Mission Society in Ghana (1828-1918) and its Missiological Implications,” *Verbum et Ecclesia* 36, no. 1 (2015): 3; <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/VE.V36I1.1419>

⁴⁷ White, “Religion, Mission,” 1.

The educational institutions and policies of the early missionaries among the Dagaaba (Christians and non-Christians) helped to enhance their socio-economic lives.⁴⁸ Education helped the Dagaaba to improve upon their social status thereby bringing a change in their socio-economic lives. Mission institutions among them were strategically a meeting point for missionaries to make new converts and disciple them as well. It also served as a place where new converts were taught their new faith through catechism. These educational institutions also offered great opportunities for many Dagaaba to be schooled and to embrace the ‘religious vocations.’

Furthermore, the usage of Dagaare for mission is another relevant missiological issue to be pointed out. Even though the Catholic Missionaries commitment to the general development of the language in the early stages was somehow slow, their commitment to its usage for mission brought significant progress in Dagaare as a language. Their attempt to use the language for mission necessitated that it should be written: “In the process, they have contributed to the creation of African language orthographies and the development of literatures in those languages.”⁴⁹ Sanneh submits that the use of vernacular became the preparatory medium for the appropriation of Christianity-the gospel, and missionary commitment to translation made the usage of indigenous language necessary and inevitable.⁵⁰ This strategy offered the Dagaaba the opportunity to read, hear and understand God in their own context (language) thereby making the necessary steps for salvation.

Further missiological impact of their strategies is seen in the area of human capacity building. The early missionaries among the Dagaaba were focused on building the capacity of the local people through

⁴⁸ Writing about the policies and missionary strategies of the Basel Mission, White noted among other things that their educational policies offered the “people great opportunities and enhanced their awareness and/ or political consciousness.” White, “Religion, Mission and National Development,” 5.

⁴⁹ Aloo Osotsi Mojola, *Interacting with Scriptures in Africa* (Nairobi: Action Publishers, 2005), iii.

⁵⁰ Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1989), 161.

training in various craftsmanship. This was aimed at empowering the people to overcome poverty.

Finally, the social life style of the missionaries and their ability to train and integrate indigenous Dagaaba (indigenous mission participation) in the mission field was an added advantage. This approach has left great memories of the Christian faith among Dagaaba up to date. This strategy ignited unity and solidarity among the early Dabaaga Christian converts. It was a means of ensuring the people's commitment to their faith. On the other hand, the integration of indigenous Dabaaga as local preachers or catechists had strategically paved the way for Dagaaba involvement in Christian service even after the departure of the expatriate missionaries to the Dagaaba land. Thus, their early involvement in Christian missions was a preparatory ground for their total involvement in future Christian mission.

Conclusion

The article offers an understanding regarding how the Dagaaba encountered the Christian faith. It shows that the preferential choice of the Dagaaba for the Roman Catholic Church is the reflection of the strategies used by the Catholic Missionaries and their attitudes towards the people. The missiological implications of the evangelistic strategies of the White Fathers in their missionary work provided the light in which Christianity was accepted and appreciated among the Dagaaba.

I suggest that these strategies should be explored particularly by churches of Pentecostal, Charismatic and African Independent origins which currently, are undertaken missions among the Dagaaba. In adopting some of the missional strategies used by the Catholic Missionaries, there is, however, the need for missional discernment.

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