

# El Salvador en transición



El Salvador

El acuerdo de paz firmado el 16 de enero de 1992 entre el gobierno y el movimiento rebelde FMLN puso fin a más de diez años de guerra civil en El Salvador. En este capítulo trataré los antecedentes de esa guerra y el desarrollo y el proceso que llevaron al acuerdo de paz. El énfasis radica en los cambios entre el estado, los partidos políticos y las organizaciones de la sociedad civil. De esta manera surge una imagen del contexto social en que nacieron las organizaciones de ayuda para el desarrollo y del espacio donde estas organizaciones intervinieron. Para dar una imagen global del contexto histórico de la guerra civil, me adentraré primero en algunos importantes desarrollos políticos y económicos que tuvieron lugar entre 1870 y 1970. Trataré después a los principales actores en los decenios anteriores a la guerra civil. Estos eran, entre otros, los (nuevos) partidos políticos, los militares, las organizaciones paramilitares, la iglesia y los movimientos revolucionarios. Seguirá a continuación el tema de la guerra civil, en el que se prestará atención al papel desarrollado por el FMLN, los partidos políticos, el gobierno salvadoreño y los Estados Unidos. Para terminar, se tratará el acuerdo de paz. Esbozo allí los cambios principales que tuvieron lugar en base a la llamada 'triple transición' en El Salvador.

## *Una historia de exclusión*

Para Torres Rivas y González Suárez (1994:12), la guerra civil fue el resultado de un largo período de exclusión social, económica y política a la que fueron sometidos grandes sectores de la población. Este proceso tuvo profundas raíces históricas y llevó en los años sesenta y setenta a la polarización y al agravamiento de la crisis en la sociedad salvadoreña. La crisis social que surgió en estos años no puede explicarse solamente como el resultado de la influencia de los Estados Unidos o de la oposición de la poderosa oligarquía agraria a las reformas

(Carrière y Karlen, 1996:368). Hubo una combinación de factores internos y externos que en los años anteriores a la guerra impidió una modernización a fondo de la política, la economía y la sociedad. La mayoría de los análisis de la guerra civil salvadoreña comienzan en la segunda mitad del siglo pasado. Este fue el período en el que se desarrollaron el cultivo y la exportación de café a gran escala. El café tuvo una influencia definitiva en las relaciones sociales salvadoreñas en gran parte de ese siglo. El cultivo y la exportación de este producto fueron la reacción ante la disminución de la demanda internacional de indigo, un colorante azul oscuro de textiles que constituía hasta entonces el principal producto de exportación de El Salvador. Las mejores condiciones para el cultivo del café se dan en suelos situados entre los 500 y los 1.500 metros sobre el nivel del mar. Una gran parte de los suelos adecuados para el cultivo del café eran propiedad comunal, entre otros de pueblos indígenas. El gobierno dirigido (desde 1871) por los liberales era partidario de la comercialización en el usufructo de los suelos y abolió la propiedad comunal de la tierra en las reformas de 1881 y 1882. Un número relativamente pequeño de familias (entre ellas las dedicadas antes al cultivo del indigo) compró grandes extensiones de tierra, dominando rápidamente la producción y el comercio del café.

La concentración en pocas manos de la propiedad de la tierra aumentó en los años siguientes. En el período comprendido hasta el inicio de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, un pequeño grupo de familias mantuvo el control sobre la mayor parte del comercio del café (Paige, 1998:18-9). El lado opuesto de este desarrollo lo conformó una gran parte de la población, obligada a cultivar granos básicos, como el maíz y el frijol, en pequeñas parcelas con suelos de baja calidad, mientras que otros se quedaban sin tierra (Browning, 1971). La población en las plantaciones de café trabajaba por salarios bajos y en malas condiciones. Los años que van de 1900 hasta la Segunda Guerra Mundial constituyeron, en palabras de Pérez Brignoli (1989:89), un período de 'crecimiento empobrecedor'. La formación de la nación y del estado salvadoreños tuvo lugar en la segunda mitad del siglo diecinueve. Existió una relación estrecha entre la formación del estado y la llegada del café (Williams, 1994). La revolución liberal de 1871 testimonia esto. Los cultivadores de café tuvieron una influencia importante, sobre todo en el período de construcción del estado, y supieron, ya en un estadio temprano, asegurar sus intereses por intermedio del estado. Como consecuencia de su dependencia de los impuestos sobre la exportación de café, 'resultaba un acto suicida para los gobiernos poner en peligro el crecimiento del café' (Williams,

1994:220).

La militarización del estado salvadoreño data de comienzos de los años treinta del siglo veinte. Esta siguió a la primera apertura política en la historia salvadoreña. Bajo la presión de las protestas crecientes en las ciudades, Pío Romero Bosque, investido presidente en 1927, anunció elecciones libres. Estas fueron ganadas en 1931 por Arturo Araújo, un representante de la élite salvadoreña inspirado en las ideas del Partido Laborista inglés. Su gobierno se inició sin embargo poco después de la gran crisis económica de 1929. La economía salvadoreña entró en recesión. Las tensiones sociales crecieron. Araújo no fue capaz de enfrentar con éxito los problemas. Intervinieron entonces los militares, quienes restablecieron el orden y designaron a Maximiliano Hernández Martínez como nuevo presidente.

Hernández Martínez anunció en un comienzo la celebración de elecciones libres en las que podría participar el Partido Comunista (PC). Los comunistas ganaron las elecciones en algunos municipios, pero Hernández Martínez no permitió que accedieran al gobierno. El PC organizó entonces una rebelión popular (Bulmer Thomas, 1987; Dunkerley, 1988). El gobierno se enteró de los planes para organizar esta rebelión. Los dirigentes del Partido Comunista, entre ellos su fundador, Farabundo Martí, fueron arrestados y sentenciados a muerte. Sin embargo, dos días antes de la fecha fijada para la rebelión (el 22 de enero de 1932) comenzó una gran rebelión, que se concentró en la región occidental del país. La rebelión se había originado en los pueblos indígenas, cuya población había sufrido las consecuencias de la expropiación de tierras de 1880 y la subsiguiente concentración de tierras en manos de unas pocas familias después de 1920. Junto a esto, las miserables condiciones de vida a comienzos de los años treinta fueron además el motivo que impulsó a los campesinos de los pueblos indígenas, armados de machetes y armas de fuego, a ocupar haciendas y pequeñas ciudades. Hernández Martínez permitió que los militares intervinieran. Miles de indígenas fueron asesinados en la llamada matanza. Esta forma de represión extrema marcó el tono en el sistema utilizado decenios después para responder a las exigencias de las organizaciones campesinas. Los militares tuvieron desde entonces un papel dominante en el gobierno nacional y en la política. Esta situación se mantendría hasta la firma del acuerdo de paz.

Hernández Martínez gobernó más de diez años sin oposición, pero fue depuesto en 1944 por una coalición de militares descontentos y liberales. Esta nueva junta dispuso la celebración de elecciones. El resultado de éstas no fue sin embargo

aceptado por los militares conservadores, quienes dieron un contragolpe. Esto fue algo típico en el proceso político que se dio entre 1931 y 1980 (Montgomery, 1995:37-8). A un golpe militar dado por militares reformistas (en colaboración con la oposición civil) se sucedía un contragolpe dado por militares conservadores. Los latifundistas no formaron nunca un partido político propio que defendiera sus intereses, pues confiaban en los militares. A pesar de los problemas y las contradicciones políticas dentro del aparato militar, además de las contradicciones entre los militares y la élite salvadoreña, los militares defendieron los intereses de la oligarquía hasta 1979. Si se mira en retrospectiva el período después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, marcado por circunstancias económicas externas positivas, se concluye que para El Salvador este fue un período de oportunidades perdidas (Bulmer Thomas, 1987). El gobierno, dominado por los militares, tuvo desde 1948 un rol más activo en la economía y siguió la ideología del desarrollismo, sin romper por lo demás con la tradición autoritaria. En los decenios posteriores a la Segunda Guerra Mundial aumentó el gasto estatal. El gobierno adelantó un gran número de proyectos infraestructurales y comenzó una política de desarrollo social (Martínez, 1991:12). Esta actuación del gobierno llevó entre otros a un aumento en la exportación de algodón y azúcar. Sobre todo los años sesenta mostraron un enorme crecimiento económico. Esto fue en parte el resultado de la creación de Mercado Común Centroamericano (MCCAM). Las reformas políticas durante el gobierno del presidente Rivera, en los años sesenta, parecían anunciar la democratización del sistema político salvadoreño. Estos desarrollos tenían sin embargo una contraparte. Mientras la economía salvadoreña crecía en los años sesenta y setenta con un promedio del 5% anual, aumentaba al mismo tiempo la concentración de la propiedad de la tierra. De este modo, los campesinos con pequeñas parcelas debieron entregarlas para permitir el desarrollo de las plantaciones de algodón en la costa. Según un estudio del Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (UNDP), el porcentaje de campesinos sin tierra aumentó del 11% al 40% en el período comprendido entre 1961 y 1975 (citado por Martínez, 1990:15). El campo se empobreció. A esto se agregó el hecho de que la oligarquía cafetera extendió sus intereses hacia la industria. Por esta razón no surgió una fuerte burguesía urbana independiente que, siguiendo el análisis de Moore (1966), hubiese afectado los intereses de la oligarquía agraria, dando así un impulso a la democratización. Las tensiones producidas por este desigual desarrollo económico pudieron ser frenadas en los años sesenta por la migración masiva de salvadoreños a Honduras y por una serie de limitadas

reformas políticas (ver párrafo siguiente). La reforma agraria, que formaba para los partidos de oposición un instrumento clave para llegar a un reparto más equilibrado del crecimiento económico, resultaba sin embargo un tema tabú para la oligarquía salvadoreña. Esto se manifestó aún más después de 1969, cuando, como resultado de las tensiones entre El Salvador y Honduras (la llamada guerra del fútbol), grandes grupos de salvadoreños residentes hasta entonces en Honduras regresaron a El Salvador, aumentando la presión existente en la tierra.

### *Apertura política, polarización y agravamiento (1960-1979)*

En los años sesenta y setenta se agudizaron las contradicciones sociales y aumentaron las tensiones políticas. En un comienzo parecía posible para la oposición política imponer cambios por medio de la vía parlamentaria. Los militares anularon sin embargo dos veces la victoria electoral de una coalición de partidos de oposición. Con esto se agotaron las posibilidades de realizar cambios por medio de las elecciones. Los movimientos populares y las organizaciones revolucionarias ganaron fuerza. La represión de la oposición por parte de militares y paramilitares aumentó. De esta manera surgió en El Salvador una situación de guerra civil. Estos desarrollos se tratarán más adelante.

### *Apertura política en los años sesenta: gobierno contra oposición*

A finales de los años cincuenta se criticaba crecientemente al Partido Revolucionario de Unificación Democrática (PRUD), porque éste no ofrecía un espacio para la oposición política. En 1960 un grupo de oficiales jóvenes dio un golpe militar y anunció la celebración de elecciones libres. Tal como había ocurrido frecuentemente en la historia salvadoreña, este golpe militar produjo un contragolpe, realizado por militares más conservadores. Estos designaron como candidato presidencial al coronel Julio Rivera. Las consecuencias de este hecho tuvieron un gran significado en el sistema político de El Salvador, prolongándose hasta los años setenta. Rivera buscó civiles para conformar el gobierno y se acercó con este fin al recién fundado Partido Demócrata Cristiano (PDC). Dentro del PDC y después de un debate interno ganaron los 'puristas', bajo la dirección de Napoleón Duarte: El PDC decidió llegar al poder sólo por medio de elecciones y no aceptó participar en la junta. El coronel Rivera fundó seguidamente, ante el descontento del PDC, su propio partido político, el Partido de Conciliación Nacional (PCN), que debía proveer a la junta de una masa de seguidores propia. Existía sin embargo una diferencia importante con el prud, ya que Rivera reconocía el interés de celebrar elecciones libres, que incluyó en la constitución

de 1962. El PDC había sido fundado en 1960 por representantes de la clase media urbana, quienes se habían inspirado en el trabajo de los líderes democrata-cristianos Eduardo Frei (de Chile) y Rafael Caldera (de Venezuela) (Webre,1979:53). El partido luchaba por una tercera vía y por reformas económicas y políticas, aunque era anticomunista, como ocurría con el PCN (Webre, 1979; White, 1973). El PDC experimentó un crecimiento vertiginoso: en 1964 ganó 14 de los 52 escaños en el parlamento, además de un gran número de alcaldías, entre ellas la de San Salvador. El PDC consolidó su posición en los años siguientes. La mayoría de los seguidores de este partido provenía de la capital (que crecía cada vez más), pero también los había en las provincias cerca de la capital, entre ellas Chalatenango (Webre,1979:103).

En las elecciones presidenciales de 1972 el PDC formó una coalición con dos partidos más pequeños, apuntando a la victoria electoral. Como consecuencia del fraude electoral esta coalición no resultó ganadora. El candidato del PCN, coronel Arturo Armando Molina, llegó al poder. En los meses tormentosos que siguieron, durante los cuales se celebraron separadamente elecciones para el parlamento, un grupo de militares jóvenes dio un golpe militar el 25 de marzo de 1972. Este golpe fue abortado por los servicios de seguridad y la fuerza aérea, que permanecieron fieles al presidente en funciones, Sánchez Hernández. Napoleón Duarte, quien había apoyado a los jóvenes militares golpistas, fue expulsado del país después de permanecer un corto tiempo en prisión. El PCN era en los años sesenta un partido fuerte e influyente. Este partido tuvo incluso una formidable victoria electoral un año después de la 'guerra del fútbol' (1970) y mantuvo durante el resto de los años setenta una base importante entre el sector campesino. El partido podía hacer uso de los recursos estatales. El partido y el gobierno estaban ligados de hecho. Esto se revelaba también en el lenguaje que los dos utilizaban. Términos como gobierno, partido y nación resultaban sinónimos (Webre 1979:19). La dirección del partido estaba compuesta por el presidente de la república y un pequeño grupo de altos oficiales.

En la descripción del PCN hecha por Alastair White en 1973, se afirmaba que los militares podían acceder a funciones gubernamentales por intermedio del PCN y también que civiles provenientes de las ciudades eran miembros del PCN y terminaban escalando puestos oficiales. White hacía énfasis en el hecho que no todos los empleados oficiales eran miembros del partido, pero que para los que no eran miembros resultaba más difícil acceder a puestos más altos.

La base del PCN mantenía corrientemente contactos personales con los líderes de partido, el personal gubernamental y los militares. Ser miembro formal tenía un interés secundario. A nivel local las estructuras militares, gubernamentales y de partido resultaban difícil de diferenciar: 'Es justamente a este nivel que estas tres organizaciones emergen como una unidad, una tríada, cuyos miembros están separados sólo formalmente entre sí' (White, 1973:194). Los que pertenecían a esta unidad eran llamados oficialistas o gobiernistas. El sistema político salvadoreño no fue dominado exclusivamente durante este período por los militares. Los civiles tenían también posiciones en el aparato estatal. En algunos ministerios las estructuras militares y civiles estaban fuertemente ligadas entre sí. El ministerio del Interior era particularmente conocido en este aspecto. Apoyaba a las municipalidades con mayoría del PCN y combatía a las de la oposición (White, 1973:194). El poder de los militares era grande en el gobierno local y en el proceso político. Los militares no tenían sin embargo una influencia similar en todos los ministerios. De esta manera, la Comisión Nacional de Planificación (CONAPLAN) tenía una independencia relativa de estas estructuras (White, 1973:194). CONAPLAN desarrollaba entre otros programas con financiación internacional. Desde los años sesenta surgió una diferencia entre los gobiernistas (miembros del PCN) y personas que pertenecían a la oposición (principalmente miembros del PDC). La oposición enfrentaba no sólo al otro partido, sino también al gobierno y al papel desempeñado por los militares en la política nacional. Llama la atención que los líderes del PDC usaran frecuentemente en los años sesenta y setenta la palabra 'revolución', mientras enfatizaban que se trataba de una revolución 'pacífica'. El PDC creía en la posibilidad de una vía progresiva.

### *La militarización del campo: servicios de seguridad y paramilitares*

La apertura política en los años sesenta produjo pocos cambios en el campo y se dio paralelamente con una creciente militarización. Esta militarización se fundamentó no solamente en el control y la represión, sino también en la conformación de un trasfondo político y en el control de los servicios públicos por parte de los militares. Ya a comienzos del siglo veinte se había conformado un aparato represivo que mantenía el orden en el campo. Los servicios de seguridad funcionaban en el marco de una legislación separada, la llamada Ley Agraria, vigente en el campo y que existiría hasta los años ochenta. Esta ley prohibía no sólo la formación de sindicatos, sino que se refería también en términos especialmente negativos a los trabajadores agrarios (McClintock, 1985:124-126).

Las funciones de policía fueron ejecutadas hasta 1992 por tres servicios de seguridad: La Policía de Hacienda, la Policía Nacional y la Guardia Nacional. Estos servicios hacían parte del aparato militar y su dirección estaba integrada corrientemente por militares. Los soldados que habían terminado servicio estaban además obligados a participar durante un cierto período en patrullas civiles en sus lugares de residencia. Las patrullas (patrullas cantonales o escoltas militares) estaban dirigidas por comandantes locales que hacían parte del Servicio Territorial, un departamento del ministerio de Defensa (Walter & Williams, 1993:817). Eran civiles con una tarea militar (Blutstein 1971: 191-197. En la práctica se ocupaban no sólo exclusivamente de asuntos militares. Podían también desempeñar un papel en la política o el gobierno locales. Tomando como base el contingente de reservistas que alguna vez había prestado servicio en el ejército, los militares crearon en 1964 con ayuda norteamericana la Organización Democrática Nacionalista (ORDEN) (Montgomery, 1995: 55-6).

ORDEN hacía parte de la *Guardia Nacional*. La organización estaba integrada por una red de informantes activos en el campo, que mantenían informados a los comandantes locales y a la Guardia Nacional sobre las actividades políticas en los pueblos. Según cálculos, entre 50.000 y 100.000 personas en el campo habrían sido miembros de esta organización. La información obtenida por medio de la red de ORDEN era suministrada al Servicio Nacional de Inteligencia o SNI (convertido posteriormente en la Agencia Nacional de Seguridad Salvadoreña, ANSENAL). Una parte de los miembros de ORDEN estaba armada y disponía de un carnet de miembro que garantizaba un tratamiento suave por parte de los miembros de los servicios de seguridad (McClintock, 1985: 253). Ser miembro de ORDEN daba además determinadas ventajas, como el acceso a créditos. Por esta razón, ORDEN era más que un simple servicio de inteligencia; se desarrolló como movimiento político que combinaba un discurso de democracia liberal y progreso con un violento anticomunismo (Castro Hernández, 1976: 99-100). El movimiento existía ya antes de que se diese alguna rebelión armada con algún significado. Fue fundado con la idea de detener la difusión del comunismo. El ejército tenía a su cargo desde los años sesenta la prestación de algunos servicios públicos. Esto ocurría por intermedio de la denominada acción cívica, a través de la realización de cursos de alfabetización, consultas médicas en los pueblos y campañas de vacunación. Desempeñó además un papel crucial en la construcción de caminos (Blutstein y otros, 1971: 200). La acción cívica del ejército estaba organizada a nivel nacional por medio de la Dirección General de Acción Cívica, que había sido



fundada en 1963 y hacía parte del ministerio de Defensa (Walter & Williams, 1993: 820). El director de esta sección era aconsejado por un comité nacional en el que estaban representados los ministros de Defensa, Agricultura, Salud Pública, Educación y Obras Públicas. A nivel departamental existían comités similares, que tenían a su cargo la supervisión de los proyectos otorgados a la provincia (Blutstein y otros, 1971: 198-201).

*Surgimiento de una sociedad civil en el campo: iglesias y movimientos populares*  
Alastair White (1973) describió El Salvador a comienzos de los años setenta como un país tranquilo, donde sus habitantes no parecían rebelarse contra el gobierno y con una población campesina pasiva. Algunos años después El Salvador se había polarizado fuertemente. Surgió en corto tiempo un movimiento popular combativo que puso bajo presión al régimen salvadoreño. Al menos dos factores pueden explicar este desarrollo. De un lado, los desarrollos económicos y políticos en el período 1960 - 1975. Del otro, la movilización exitosa en el campo de campesinos y trabajadores agrarios adelantada por la iglesia católica y las organizaciones revolucionarias, en lo cual profundizó en seguida. Muchas explicaciones sobre la movilización de la población en el campo comienzan con razón con el papel desempeñado por la iglesia católica. Bajo la influencia del Concilio Vaticano Segundo (1962-1965) y de la Conferencia Episcopal Latinoamericana, celebrada en Medellín en 1969, soplaron nuevos vientos sobre la iglesia católica latinoamericana. La Conferencia Episcopal de Medellín tuvo sobre todo una gran importancia. La Conferencia proclamaba la defensa de los derechos de los oprimidos y el estímulo a las diferentes formas de organización, o bien una 'opción preferencial para los pobres' (Montgomery, 1995: 83).

También en El Salvador surgió un movimiento dentro de la iglesia católica que trabajaba con esta visión. Los seguidores de la denominada teoría de la liberación se concentraban especialmente en el arzobispado que (en ese tiempo) estaba conformado por cuatro provincias e incluía al 40% de la población. Surgieron diferencias políticas entre los obispos, la mayoría de los cuales se manifestó en contra de la teoría de la liberación. Pero también entre los seguidores de esta teoría surgieron diferencias de opinión. Sobre todo los sacerdotes jóvenes se mostraban partidarios de una toma de posición política y veían en el marxismo un instrumento para analizar la sociedad. Otros sacerdotes y religiosos más moderados manifestaban enfáticamente que la tarea de los sacerdotes consistía en guiar a los pobres, sin tomar ellos mismos una posición política (Montgomery,

1995: 81-9).

La organización de creyentes en comunidades de base fue un intento de romper con la tradición autoritaria de la iglesia católica. Los creyentes eran estimulados a discutir la relevancia de la biblia en el marco de su propia realidad. También eran estimulados a ponerse al servicio de la comunidad. Se calcula que en el periodo entre 1970 y 1976 fueron entrenadas 15.000 personas que se ocupaban tanto de asuntos religiosos como de salud pública, educación y agricultura. Esto no ocurría en todo El Salvador. La teoría de la liberación tenía una gran influencia en los municipios de Suchitoto y Aguilares (Cardenal, 1985; Pearce, 1986: 102-3). Este también era el caso en algunos municipios de Chalatenango, como en la ciudad de Chalatenango, La Palma y Dulce Nombre de María, al igual que en los municipios en la zona oriental de la provincia (Pearce, 1986: 112,117).

El surgimiento de las organizaciones revolucionarias (llamadas también organizaciones político-militares) actuó como segundo factor en la movilización del campo. Estas organizaciones desempeñaron un papel importante en la creación de los movimientos masivos. Los primeros movimientos revolucionarios surgieron a comienzos de los años setenta. Estos fueron el Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (ERP) y las Fuerzas Populares de Liberación Farabundo Martí (FPL). Posteriormente se sumarían tres organizaciones más. La Resistencia Nacional (RN) se desprendió del ERP en 1975 después de un conflicto sobre la línea política. En 1976 se fundó el Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores Centroamericanos (PRTC) y en 1977 el Partido Comunista decidió pasar también a la lucha armada. Todas estas fracciones tenían un ala militar que cobijaba diferentes organizaciones populares. Chalatenango estaba casi completamente controlada por las FPL. Esta organización comenzó sus actividades en 1971 con ocho personas, bajo la dirección de Salvador Cayetano Carpio (alias Marcial). Marcial se había separado del Partido Comunista a finales de los años sesenta, donde había actuado durante varios años como presidente del partido. El debate en el PC se había concentrado en la aceptación, o el rechazo, de la lucha armada. Marcial estaba a favor, la mayoría del PC, en contra. Durante los primeros años esta organización recientemente fundada se dedicó a los entrenamientos militares, la educación, la construcción de una estructura de células, mientras cometía atracos bancarios para proveerse de recursos. La organización se dio a conocer en agosto de 1972, con motivo de un atentado con bombas perpetrado contra la embajada argentina. En sus años iniciales las FPL pensaban sobre todo

en el desarrollo de una lucha urbana, ya que en la montaña de un país tan densamente poblado como El Salvador, la guerrilla difícilmente podía ocultarse. Aunque las FPL no creían en la posibilidad de poder desarrollar una clásica guerra de guerrillas, el movimiento consideraba sin embargo a los campesinos como un apoyo importante. Las FPL establecieron desde el comienzo una diferencia entre la lucha política y la militar. Después de haberse consagrado en un comienzo sobre todo a la lucha militar, las FPL decidieron en 1974 dedicarse por completo al trabajo con 'las masas' (Harnecker, 1991: 91). El énfasis radicaba en la lucha política, una guerra popular prolongada que debería llevar a una toma (armada) del poder. Este cambio tuvo una gran importancia para el desarrollo de las FPL. Sobre todo en el campo las FPL lograron conseguir un apoyo importante. La estructura de las FPL se componía de un número relativamente limitado de miembros, alrededor de los cuales estaba un grupo mayor, conformado a su vez por los grupos de apoyo y los simpatizantes. El trabajo de los maestros y los estudiantes (al lado de los religiosos o conjuntamente con estos) tuvo al parecer un papel destacado en la movilización de los campesinos. Muchos educadores participaron activamente en la ANDES, la Asociación Nacional de Educadores Salvadoreños, que a finales de los años sesenta y comienzos de los setenta logró convertirse en poco tiempo en un actor protagonista en el teatro de la política salvadoreña (Lungu, 1987: 62). Justamente en los años sesenta aumentó la inversión estatal en la educación, lo cual llevó a un aumento del número de educadores y escuelas en el campo. Ya desde los años sesenta los estudiantes trabajaban activamente en el campo. Un sacerdote contaba que en ese tiempo un muchacho había declarado durante la confesión ser guerrillero. En encuentros realizados en las iglesias la gente también manifestaba conocer todo lo referente al socialismo y a sus 'variantes' rusa, cubana y china. Para este sacerdote esto era la consecuencia de las actividades de los estudiantes que llegaban al campo los fines de semana, procedentes de San Salvador. Sobre todo entre los estudiantes de finales de los años sesenta existía el convencimiento de que la lucha política era una necesidad (Castañeda, 1993: 114).

Tanto la Universidad de El Salvador (UES) como la Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas (UCA) contaban con muchos estudiantes que estaban ligados al trabajo de la iglesia católica y a otras actividades políticas. Estudiantes de ambas universidades se hicieron miembros de los movimientos rebeldes. Muchos ya estaban relacionados con las actividades en el campo y probablemente se habían incorporado ya en un estadio temprano a las FPL. Lo mismo ocurría con

los maestros. Harnecker (1991: 119,121) escribe por ejemplo que los (ex)estudiantes, los maestros y los miembros de las FPL trabajaban conjuntamente. Los puntos de contacto eran los catequistas formados por la iglesia, los cuadros del PDC y también los líderes municipales. Estos pudieron adelantar su trabajo basados en parte en las experiencias de la iglesia católica. No resulta irreal afirmar que muchos chalatecos y también sacerdotes no sabían precisamente quiénes eran miembros de las FPL, ni en que consistía la estrategia de este movimiento o incluso si las FPL tenían una estrategia. Muchos miembros de las FPL no se daban a conocer como tales y se ganaron la confianza de la población durante su larga permanencia en los pueblos. Trabajaban (como se ha enunciado antes) conjuntamente con líderes locales que tampoco eran miembros de las FPL y que en muchas ocasiones no sabían que trataban con miembros de las FPL. A la larga muchos líderes locales fueron incorporados en las estructuras de las FPL. De esta manera las FPL se infiltraron en organizaciones locales de Chalatenango, sin manifestarse como FPL. Este movimiento tuvo una base local y se mostró capaz de influenciar la forma de organización local. La formación de la Unión de Trabajadores del Campo (UTC) fue un ejemplo importante. Según Harnecker (1991: 98), esto fue el producto del esfuerzo de algunos líderes eclesiásticos, líderes de la asociación sindical de educadores (andes) y algunos miembros de las FPL ocupados en un trabajo político de base. El marco directive de la unión estaba directamente relacionado con las FPL, pero para muchos campesinos miembros de la unión esta relación no resultaba nada clara, hasta bien entrados los años setenta. Mientras que las FPL jugaban un papel en la formación de la UTC, manteniéndose después en contacto con su marco directivo, este movimiento supo en otros casos comprometer consigo al marco directivo de sindicatos ya existentes. Desde sus inicios las FPL habían reclutado miembros que operaban en otras organizaciones, donde a menudo habían escalado posiciones importantes. El ejemplo más claro lo constituyó la incorporación de Mélida Anaya Montes (alias Ana María), quien continuó como presidenta de la entonces poderosa andes, a pesar de haberse afiliado a las FPL. Debido al hecho que las FPL afiliaban en sus filas a líderes en funciones, este movimiento pudo formar una extensa red que incluyó toda clase de organizaciones populares y sindicatos.

Las FPL no solamente mantenían contacto con estas organizaciones, sino que también las influenciaban. De la misma manera las FPL comprometieron consigo a un número de movimientos ya existentes, entre ellos el Movimiento Estudiantil Revolucionario de Secundaria (MERS) y la organización campesina Federación

Cristiana de Campesinos Salvadoreños (FECCAS). Esta última organización se convertiría, junto con la UTC, en un importante movimiento campesino y el apoyo más importante de las FPL. Después de un tiempo las dos organizaciones se fusionaron, pasando a convertirse en la Federación de Trabajadores del Campo (FTC). Hacia 1976 feccas tenía aproximadamente 3.000 miembros y la UTC, según cálculos, 10.000 (Pearce, 1985: 163). A comienzos de los años ochenta la FTC logró movilizar miles de campesinos que reclamaban el derecho a la tierra y un aumento de salario. Las FPL tuvieron en 1975 un papel protagonista en la formación del movimiento de masas Bloque Popular Revolucionario (BPR), con FECCAS, UTC MERS y ANDES como las principales organizaciones participantes. También en este caso vale aclarar que no todos los miembros de estas organizaciones estaban enterados de la relación entre el BPR y las FPL (Harnecker, 1991: 108).

Las FPL eran a mediados de los años setenta un motor importante en la formación de un movimiento de masas. La organización estaba conformada por un grupo relativamente pequeño de personas, pero era al mismo tiempo un factor importante a nivel local, aunque invisible (y semiclandestino). La ideología de las FPL fue así 'transmitida' a los líderes locales, algo que se expresaba entre otras cosas en el análisis marxista y la terminología usada por los movimientos campesinos (Cardenal, 1985: 452). Pero las FPL incorporaron también un número de líderes locales en sus filas, que habían sido formados por el PDC y la iglesia católica. De esta manera surgió una vía doble, con efectos fructíferos, entre las FPL y el movimiento campesino FTC. Un factor que facilitó el trabajo de las FPL en el campo radicó en que el grado de organización casi no existía allí y en que, en contraste con las ciudades, no había necesidad de luchar para conseguir esferas de influencia en detrimento de otras organizaciones (Pearce, 1986: 174).

### *Represión y fraude*

La movilización política en el campo fue respondida a finales de los años setenta por los militares y los servicios de seguridad con una represión creciente. Esta estaba dirigida en primer lugar a frenar las actividades políticas de la oposición. Líderes sindicales, catequistas y sacerdotes se convirtieron en sus víctimas. Las actividades guerrilleras en el campo apenas existían en este tiempo. La UTC tuvo sin embargo desde su fundación en 1975 milicias armadas, encargadas de la seguridad durante las manifestaciones. Se dieron además, a partir de aproximadamente 1977, ajustes de cuentas con miembros de ORDEN. Pero en la

estrategia de las FPL el énfasis radicó sobre todo en la guerra popular prolongada y en la lucha armada en las ciudades. Las elecciones presidenciales de 1977 se constituyeron en un momento importante de la escalada que habría de seguir. Al igual que en 1972, el PDC formó una coalición con dos partidos políticos más pequeños, esta vez bajo el nombre de Unión Nacional Opositora (UNO), apuntando a una segura victoria electoral. Sin embargo, debido al fraude electoral, le fue imposible llegar al poder. Las posibilidades de realizar reformas por medio de la vía electoral parecieron agotarse.

### *La guerra civil*

Los años siguientes al fraude electoral se caracterizaron por una polarización creciente. La oposición contra el nuevo régimen del general Carlos Humberto Romero (quien había sido candidato del PCN) crecía. La represión por parte de militares y paramilitares también aumentaba (Montgomery, 1995: 72-3).

El período que va de las elecciones de 1977 hasta finales de 1979, al inicio del gobierno de una nueva junta favorable a las reformas, se considera en retrospectiva como el período en que germinó la guerra civil. Esta se convirtió en 1979 en un hecho, después del fracasado golpe militar de ese mismo año. Los movimientos revolucionarios formaron el FMLN y se orientaron a la lucha armada. Los Estados Unidos se involucraron activamente en el conflicto, apoyando una coalición formada por los militares y el PDC.

### *El golpe militar de 1979*

El 15 de octubre de 1979 (tres meses después de la revolución sandinista) un grupo de militares favorable a las reformas dio un golpe militar, en un intent de evitar la guerra civil. Se formó una junta conformada por miembros de los partidos de oposición y por militares. También participaron en ella miembros de organizaciones ligadas con las organizaciones revolucionarias. La junta quería poner fin a la caótica situación del país por medio de una serie de reformas políticas y económicas. Como consecuencia de las permanentes violaciones de los derechos humanos por parte de los militares, todos los miembros de la junta y los integrantes del gabinete se retiraron a finales de 1979, con excepción de dos militares. A pesar de los fuertes indicios que mostraban el nuevo dominio del aparato militar por parte de los seguidores de la línea dura, los demócrata-cristianos formaron una coalición con los militares (la denominada segunda junta). Esta alianza produjo una polémica dentro del Partido Demócrata-Cristiano

(PDC) y ocasionó una gran división. Los miembros del PDC que siguieron a la junta tenían sus esperanzas puestas en las reformas propuestas, esperando controlar la ola revolucionaria y evitando una guerra civil. En marzo de 1980, sin embargo, renunciaron algunos miembros como consecuencia de la creciente represión. Napoleón Duarte, quien para entonces ya había reingresado a la ARENA política, se convirtió en presidente de la tercera junta. Las organizaciones revolucionarias habían aceptado pasivamente en un comienzo a la junta, pero manifestaron rápidamente su pérdida de confianza en el gobierno, pasando definitivamente a la lucha armada. Este paso fue en primer lugar una reacción ante la represión en las ciudades y en el campo, debido a la cual las actividades de los movimientos de masas se convirtieron en algo peligrosísimo y de hecho imposible. El cambio de estrategia había sido dado también por la idea que El Salvador, después de Nicaragua, estaba maduro para la revolución. Para esto era necesario formar un ejército guerrillero. La idea de organizar la lucha armada había sido propagada al mismo tiempo por Cuba, que desempeñó un papel importante en la formación del FMLN. Los cinco movimientos revolucionarios formaron en octubre de 1980 el Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). La metamorfosis de los movimientos de masas en movimiento guerrilleros comenzó a finales de 1979. Las organizaciones revolucionarias se retiraron al campo. Los cinco grupos guerrilleros se organizaron en territorios más o menos delimitados, donde habían desarrollado anteriormente trabajo de base o donde existían contactos (clandestinos) con organizaciones ya existentes. El Salvador fue repartido de esta manera en zonas estratégicas que eran controladas por fracciones del (futuro) FMLN. El movimiento revolucionario adquirió un carácter eminentemente militar. Los miembros de los anteriores movimientos de masas (tales como los sindicatos campesinos UTC y FECCAS) se unieron a la guerrilla o prestaron sus servicios en el campo logístico. Esta militarización de la lucha no careció de efectos para la estructura interna de las organizaciones revolucionarias, que a partir de entonces fueron organizadas mucho más fuertemente en base a un molde militar. Castañeda (1993: 120) anotaba que los movimientos revolucionarios se vieron obligados a metamorfosearse en un ejército con un brazo político. Por esta razón estos movimientos ya no eran más lo que siempre habían querido ser: un movimiento político con una base en la población (las masas), que participaba también en la lucha militar. Después de que Duarte accediera al poder como líder de la (tercera) junta, se ejecutó a gran velocidad una serie de reformas: los bancos privados fueron nacionalizados, al igual que la exportación de café, algodón y azúcar. La

reforma más importante la constituyó la reforma agraria a gran escala que iría en contra de las posesiones de la oligarquía y que había recibido el apoyo de los Estados Unidos, país que además la había financiado y preparado en parte. Los planes de expropiación iniciales abarcaban aproximadamente el 50% de las tierras de cultivo. Finalmente sólo fue expropiado el 20% (posesiones con más de 500 hectáreas). Estas tierras fueron asignadas a las cooperativas de los trabajadores del campo que habían trabajado antes en ellas. La reforma agraria tuvo sin embargo lugar bajo el estado de sitio. Aunque los militares apoyaban a los demócrata-cristianos en la implementación de la reforma, dejando de lado su tradicional alianza con la oligarquía, la represión en el campo continuó sin cesar (Montgomery, 1995: 136-140).

Sectores ultraderechistas de la oligarquía y del ejército veían sus intereses amenazados por las reformas adelantadas por la junta. Roberto d'Aubuisson, un mayor retirado del ejército, desempeñó un papel protagonista en su estrategia. Con la ayuda de salvadoreños ricos residentes en Miami y asesores de Guatemala, Taiwan y Argentina, d'Aubuisson formó una organización político-militar de extrema derecha. El Frente Amplio Nacional (FAN) puede ser visto como la rama política de la organización y resultó de hecho el antecesor de ARENA, el partido político fundado posteriormente. El FAN tenía secciones para la juventud, las mujeres y los latifundistas y consiguió movilizar a cerca de 20.000 personas en una manifestación a finales de 1979 (Pyess, 1983:52-3).

Junto a estas actividades políticas, se emprendían actividades militares. A ORDEN se le inyectó nueva energía y se formaron escuadrones de la muerte (Montgomery, 1995:132) Aunque la junta había abolido ORDEN, al igual que el servicio de inteligencia ANSENAL, d'Aubuisson fue capaz de poner a salvo una parte de los archivos y bancos de información de estas organizaciones (Stanley, 1996:149-150). Con esta base, la extrema derecha organizó de nuevo una red nacional que más tarde serviría para la fundación de ARENA. Los escuadrones de la muerte eran grupos armados que operaban en la clandestinidad y estaban conformados por militares y civiles. Estos escuadrones adelantaron sobre todo en los años ochenta campañas de terror a gran escala (Byrne, 1996:58; Grupo Conjunto, 1994:866). Habían sido formados ya a finales de los años setenta y funcionaron en los ochenta tanto desde dentro de los servicios de seguridad y de inteligencia, como fuera del ejército. La represión alcanzó en el período 1980 - 1982 un clímax macabro. El terror desarrollado por el ejército y los escuadrones



de la muerte estaba dirigido contra todo aquel que fuera relacionado con la oposición. Cientos de líderes de los movimientos populares fueron asesinados, al igual que miles de activistas, simpatizantes y personas sospechosas de adelantar actividades políticas. No se hacía ninguna excepción, como lo demostró el asesinato del arzobispo Arnulfo Romero en marzo de 1980. Según la Comisión de la Verdad, d'Aubuisson fue el autor intelectual de este asesinato (Comisión de la Verdad, 1993:269). Con todo, el golpe militar de 1979 no llevó a la pacificación del conflicto salvadoreño, sino que por el contrario aumentó el caos en el país.

### *Guerra de baja intensidad*

Los Estados Unidos desempeñaron un papel protagonista en la guerra civil salvadoreña. La estrategia estadounidense fue aquella de la guerra de baja intensidad, dirigida a la ejecución de reformas políticas y económicas y al debilitamiento de la guerrilla salvadoreña. Sobre todo durante la presidencia de Ronald Reagan los Estados Unidos se propusieron acabar con los movimientos de liberación en la región (Barry & Castro, 1993; Moreno, 1990). Para esto resultaba necesario apoyar a los militares salvadoreños. Los Estados Unidos apoyaron al mismo tiempo el proceso hacia la transición democrática que había sido anunciado en marzo de 1981 por la junta, haciendo énfasis en la celebración de elecciones libres. Esta estrategia fue un intento de estabilizar la situación política nacional y al mismo tiempo una manera de presentar a El Salvador como una 'nueva democracia' ante el público y el congreso norteamericanos, como un país donde disminuían las violaciones de los derechos humanos. Los Estados Unidos operaban como el factor de unión en una coalición formada para 'combatir la subversión'. Tanto los militares como el PDC tenían cada uno sus propias razones para trabajar conjuntamente con los Estados Unidos. Los militares necesitaban el apoyo de los Estados Unidos para derrotar a la guerrilla y salvar su propia institución (Byrne, 1996:75). El PDC veía en la nueva coalición una manera para continuar adelantando las reformas, con las cuales disminuiría el apoyo social a las alternativas revolucionarias. Los Estados Unidos se mostraron en contra de un posible golpe de estado dado por la extrema derecha junto con algunos sectores del ejercito (Byrne, 1996:63). La influencia de los Estados Unidos no llevó a la abolición de los escuadrones de la muerte, pero sí a la decisión de la extrema derecha de fundar un partido político propio para participar en las elecciones de 1982. Bajo la dirección de Roberto d'Aubuisson fue fundado a comienzos de 1982 el partido de extrema derecha Alianza Republicana Nacionalista (ARENA).

Bajo la presión creciente de los Estados Unidos, que deseaban reformas políticas, se celebraron elecciones desde comienzos de los años ochenta y se dictó una nueva constitución. Desde 1982 se celebraron elecciones parlamentarias y para los concejos municipales cada tres años. Las elecciones presidenciales se celebraron desde 1984 cada cinco años. A finales de 1983 se dictó una nueva constitución, que fue aprobada por el parlamento. En 1986 se dictó una nueva ley que concernía a los municipios, en la que se les otorgó una mayor autonomía. A pesar del título de 'joven democracia' o 'nueva democracia' dado a El Salvador a nivel internacional como consecuencia de estas reformas, en la práctica el país era una 'democracia electoral' (Munck, 1993). El gobierno de Napoleón Duarte (1984 - 1989) apenas tuvo poder real durante este período. El ejército, los Estados Unidos y el FMLN eran los actores principales en el campo de fuerzas salvadoreño de los años ochenta. El apoyo americano al ejército salvadoreño llevó a un aumento en el número de soldados: de 10.000 en 1980 a 56.000 en 1987, además de un fuerte mejoramiento en la calidad del material militar. La estrategia del ejército después de 1984 consistió en separar la guerrilla de la población civil, instalar defensas civiles y ejecutar programas de ayuda nacional, lo que a menudo ocurría en colaboración con ministerios u otras instancias gubernamentales (Byrne, 1996:130).

El FMLN fue sometido a presión durante el transcurso de 1984, como consecuencia de un cambio de táctica. El ejército decidió realizar más bombardeos aéreos. Esto tuvo como consecuencia un cambio drástico dentro del FMLN. La estrategia predominantemente militar dio paso a una estrategia más política. El ejército guerrillero, conformado por grandes unidades, fue dividido en pequeños grupos móviles de guerrilleros que en caso de necesidad podían reagruparse en corto tiempo. El énfasis no radicaba ya en la realización de acciones militares a gran escala, sino en la ejecución de operaciones más pequeñas y en el sabotaje económico. El FMLN trasladó además la guerra hacia todo el país, en especial hacia la capital, San Salvador, donde aumentó fuertemente el número de miembros de comandos urbanos. Un punto clave en la nueva estrategia lo formó sin embargo la atención dada a 'las masas', o sea la estrategia para conseguir un amplio apoyo entre la población, que a la larga debía ser movilizada en una ofensiva final (Byrne, 1996:88,132-3). En el campo se luchaba por el debilitamiento del gobierno estatal, que se expresó sobre todo en el derrocamiento o asesinato de alcaldes. El FMLN hacía también énfasis en la construcción de una red de relaciones clandestinas con la población civil que

participaba eventualmente en milicias o podría ser movilizada en un futuro (la denominada estrategia de la doble cara).

El apoyo de la población en las zonas de guerra, y fuera de ellas, resultó de gran importancia, tanto para el ejército como para el FMLN. Ambos desarrollaron programas y estrategias para ganarse 'los corazones y las mentes' de la población. Tanto el FMLN como el ejército reconocían que la guerra era en gran parte una lucha política. Byrne (1996:121) sostiene que este era sobre todo el caso en el período entre 1984 y 1989, cuando surgió una situación de jaque entre el ejército y la guerrilla.

### *Arena política y sociedad civil*

ARENA y el PDC se enfrentaron desde 1982 en la ARENA política. El PDC se reveló hasta 1985 como el partido más fuerte en las elecciones, aunque en 1982 ARENA obtuvo junto con el PCN la mayoría en el parlamento. Duarte ganó en 1984 las elecciones presidenciales y el PDC obtuvo en 1985 la mayoría en el parlamento. A partir de 1988 declinó la influencia del PDC. ARENA ganó en 1988 las elecciones parlamentarias y el candidato de ARENA, Alfredo Cristiani, ganó en 1989 las elecciones presidenciales. La política de gobierno de ARENA, con Cristiani como presidente, se enfocó a la liberalización de la economía y al desmonte de la reforma agraria de 1980. Como consecuencia de la militarización y la guerra, la democratización en El Salvador no se había completado, pero la 'democracia electoral' inició un proceso de cambios de gobierno basados en las elecciones. Esto era un fenómeno nuevo en El Salvador. Algunos partidos que formaban parte del FDR, ligado al FMLN, decidieron además después de algunos años aprovechar las oportunidades que ofrecían las elecciones. Tres partidos políticos formaron la lista conjunta Convergencia Democrática (CD) para las elecciones de 1988 (Montgomery, 1995: 208). Después de la victoria electoral de Duarte en 1984 hubo de nuevo un poco más de espacio para el desarrollo de actividades políticas. Debido a la represión de comienzos de los años ochenta, las organizaciones sociales habían prácticamente desaparecido. La iglesia podía manifestarse en cierto sentido, aunque ésta había tomado un rumbo más moderado después del asesinato del arzobispo Romero en marzo de 1980. Hacia 1983 la organización popular más grande era la Unión Popular Democrática (UPD), que tenía en el campo a la mayoría de sus seguidores, se había beneficiado de la reforma agraria y apoyaba a Duarte (Montgomery, 1995:176). El número de nuevas organizaciones sociales creció desde 1984. Estas incluían sindicatos,

organizaciones privadas de ayuda para el desarrollo, organizaciones defensoras de los derechos humanos, organizaciones de refugiados y organizaciones femeninas. Casi ninguna de estas organizaciones se podía ver independientemente de los contrastes políticos en el país, estando todas ellas ligadas a uno u otro partido político (PDC o ARENA) o al FMLN. Las fuerzas sociales apenas podían escapar a la antítesis insurgencia - contrainsurgencia, dominante durante la guerra. Un ejemplo de esto lo constituye la radicalización de un número de movimientos urbanos en 1986. Esto llevó a la creación de la cúpula sindical unts, que estaba fuertemente ligada al FMLN. Para ofrecer un contrapeso fue fundado poco después unoc, ligado al PDC. Estas organizaciones recibían a menudo financiación internacional, tal como se tratará extensamente en el capítulo siguiente. La apertura política de los años ochenta tuvo sin embargo consecuencias mínimas para el poder de los militares. Bajo los gobiernos de Magaña (1982 - 1984) y Duarte (1984 - 1989) se redujo en algo la influencia de los militares en la administración pública. El ejército ganó sin embargo más autonomía y su rol político no terminó, ya que los militares combatían un enemigo nacional. El poder y la red del ejército en el campo se mantuvieron además en gran parte. Después del traspaso de poder a ARENA aumentó el número de militares en funciones públicas y se acabó con los pocos cambios realizados durante los gobiernos anteriores (Walter & Williams, 1993: 825).

### *El proceso de paz y last res transiciones*

En los años anteriores al acuerdo de paz tuvieron lugar cambios importantes a nivel regional e internacional que hicieron posible las conversaciones para lograr la paz. El acuerdo firmado el 7 de agosto de 1987 en Esquipulas, Guatemala, por los presidentes centroamericanos tuvo en este contexto una gran importancia. Los presidentes de El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras y Costa Rica acordaron en el denominado Acuerdo de Esquipulas II que ninguno de estos países se inmiscuiría en la guerra de otro y que cada gobierno iniciaría un diálogo con la oposición armada y llamaría a la celebración de elecciones libres. Este acuerdo resultaba original debido a la mínima participación de los Estados Unidos en su formación. Los Estados Unidos habían perdido temporalmente cierta influencia durante este período, sobre todo como consecuencia del asunto Irán - Contra, pero continuarían desempeñando un papel importante en Centroamérica e influenciando el curso del proceso de paz (Barry & Castro, 1991; Durkerley, 1994).

No fue el presidente Duarte quien logró adelantar negociaciones serias con el FMLN, sino el gobierno del presidente Cristiani, quien había llegado al poder en 1989. Cristiani hacía parte del ala moderada de ARENA y había prometido en su discurso inaugural adelantar conversaciones con el FMLN. Dentro de ARENA se produjo a este respecto una gran polémica. Después de que se realizaron las primeras conversaciones en octubre de 1989 entre el gobierno y el FMLN, en las que también estuvieron presentes los militares y el arzobispo, los militares declararon no estar dispuestos a permitir negociaciones que socavaran el aparato militar. Cristiani declaró estar de acuerdo con ellos. Las negociaciones fueron interrumpidas a raíz del atentado contra las instalaciones del sindicato izquierdista FENASTRAS. Como consecuencia de esto, el FMLN decidió acelerar los planes para perpetrar un ataque aún mayor a la capital. El FMLN inició el 11 de noviembre de 1989 una ofensiva que llevó a la guerrilla hasta San Salvador. La dirección del FMLN se había sin embargo convencido que sólo las negociaciones que llevaran a la democratización, podrían producir algún resultado. Pero para una mayoría de los guerrilleros 'la revolución' había sido siempre la meta esencial y era todavía la motivación más importante de su lucha. La ofensiva contra la capital mostró que el FMLN era todavía militarmente fuerte y que éste no había ido a las negociaciones como consecuencia de su debilidad (como afirmaban los militares) sino como resultado de la situación de jaque en que se encontraban los dos bandos. Esto fortaleció la posición del FMLN en las negociaciones. Luego de la ofensiva, los Estados Unidos aumentaron su presión sobre el gobierno salvadoreño para que iniciara negociaciones serias. El asesinato en noviembre de 1989 de los seis jesuitas que trabajaban en la UCA, su criada y la hija de ella, motivó a los Estados Unidos a suspender su ayuda militar al gobierno salvadoreño (Acevedo, 1992; Dunkerley, 1994; Montgomery, 1995).

Los desarrollos internacionales se reflejaban en este proceso. Sin la caída del Muro de Berlín y la distensión política entre las dos potencias, las negociaciones en El Salvador no se habrían formalizado tan rapidamente. Los Estados Unidos permitieron por esta razón la mediación de las Naciones Unidas. Luego de la derrota electoral de los sandinistas en febrero de 1990, aumentó en los Estados Unidos la confianza en el proceso de negociaciones y elecciones libres, que podía llevar a resultados satisfactorios. La mediación de las Naciones Unidas tuvo importancia sobre todo en lo que se refería al contenido. Entre abril de 1990 y comienzos de 1992 se adelantaron negociaciones bajo la dirección de Alvaro de Soto, la mano derecha del secretario general de la ONU, Pérez de Cuéllar (ONU,

1995). Estas negociaciones mantuvieron la tensión hasta el último día, debido a que sobre todo los militares se mostraban cada vez opuestos al acuerdo. La presión de la comunidad internacional y de los Estados Unidos llevó a finales de 1991 a la firma de una importante declaración, en la cual se estipuló a grandes líneas el acuerdo de paz. El 16 de enero de 1992 se firmó el acuerdo final en el castillo de Chapultepec, en Ciudad de México. Con este acuerdo se cerraron finalmente los acuerdos parciales firmados anteriormente. El 1 de febrero de 1992 se inició la implementación de los acuerdos.

### *Acuerdos de paz*

Las medidas más importantes en el acuerdo de paz debían llevar a la desmilitarización y la democratización de la sociedad salvadoreña. Este proceso comenzó con un cese al fuego que entró a regir a partir del 1 de febrero de 1992. El FMLN desmontaría sus estructuras militares y destruiría sus armas. Una parte importante del acuerdo trataba sobre el papel de los militares y los servicios de seguridad. Los militares perderían muchas de sus funciones y quedarían sujetos al control de las fuerzas civiles. El ejército sería reestructurado y saneado. Junto a esto, los conocidos servicios de seguridad como la Policía de Hacienda y la Guardia Nacional serían abolidos para dar paso a una nueva policía civil, la Policía Nacional Civil (PNC). En los acuerdos se había redactado también una serie de párrafos sobre las reformas del sistema judicial y electoral. En el campo económico y social los acuerdos fueron notablemente menos ambiciosos. Se había decidido la formación de un foro donde se encontrarían los trabajadores, los patrones y el gobierno, y la ejecución de un plan de reconstrucción nacional (Acevedo, 1992; PRN en ECA 519-520). Se acordó que militares, guerrilleros y gente que se había posesionado ilegalmente de tierras (en su mayoría simpatizantes del FMLN) podrían acceder al reparto de tierras (ver capítulo 3). Se estableció una comisión nacional (COPAZ) conformada por representantes de los partidos políticos, el gobierno y el ejército, que tendría a su cargo la supervisión de la ejecución de los acuerdos. El control del cumplimiento de los acuerdos de paz quedó en manos de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas en El Salvador, una organización especial de la ONU en El Salvador (ONU, 1995).

### *Transiciones*

El proceso de la posguerra en El Salvador puede ser analizado con base en tres transiciones (Torres Rivas y González-Suárez, 1994), a saber: (1) la transición de la guerra a la paz; (2) la democratización de la sociedad salvadoreña y (3) la

liberalización de la economía salvadoreña. Todas estas tres transiciones tienen una dinámica propia, pero están estrechamente relacionadas. La transición de la guerra a la paz y la pacificación de la sociedad salvadoreña están relacionadas con los cambios económicos y políticos en el país. Con la finalización de la guerra civil se rompió con una dinámica de polarización y confrontación político-militar. Esta dinámica había surgido en la segunda mitad de los años setenta y tenía sus raíces en un sistema político autoritario y en una economía organizada en torno a una pequeña oligarquía. La finalización del conflicto armado fue un proceso en sí mismo: los militares se retiraron a sus bases y los guerrilleros a los campamentos levantados especialmente para ellos; la Comisión de la Verdad investigó las violaciones de los derechos humanos, mientras que los aparatos militarizados de la policía debieron dar paso a un aparato de policía civil. ONUSAL desempeñó un papel de mediadora en este proceso y estuvo presente hasta 1995 en todas las anteriores zonas de guerra en el país. El contraste entre el gobierno y la oposición, que había determinado hasta entonces el campo de fuerzas político, se mantuvo, pero como consecuencia de la desaparición de la dinámica de guerra se crearon espacios para nuevas iniciativas políticas y civiles. La segunda transición, que marcó el paso de un régimen autoritario y military hacia una sociedad donde los mecanismos democráticos desempeñaban un papel principal, recibió un impulso a través de los acuerdos de paz salvadoreños. Ya en los años ochenta se había iniciado la democratización, en la cual se le daba una gran importancia a las elecciones. Tal como ya se anotó en este capítulo, este proceso de democratización fue limitado. El proceso político después de 1992 se diferenció substancialmente del que se llevó a cabo antes de y durante la Guerra civil, debido a la desmilitarización del sistema político salvadoreño, el respeto por los derechos humanos y una serie de reformas constitucionales. Las elecciones de 1994, en las que se eligieron presidente de la república, nuevo parlamento y concejos municipales, fueron denominadas por esta razón 'las elecciones del siglo' (Spence y otros, 1994). El FMLN participó en ellas como partido político y sin haber cambiado su nombre, teniendo la posibilidad de adelantar abiertamente una campaña política y movilizarse por todo el país.

El desarrollo más importante en esta transición democrática lo constituyó el encuentro de los anteriores enemigos en la ARENA política. En las elecciones de 1994 el FMLN obtuvo el 25% de los escaños en el parlamento, así como 48 de las 262 alcaldías. ARENA fue el gran ganador de las elecciones. Su candidato, Armando Calderón Sol, fue elegido presidente y sucedió a Alfredo Cristiani. Este

partido, que en el pasado había sido relacionado con los escuadrones de la muerte y que tenía una gran influencia entre la élite económica del país, ganó entonces las elecciones por distintas razones: ARENA disponía de suficiente dinero para financiar la campaña electoral, se mostraba con éxito como 'creador de la paz' y combinaba esto con la ideología nacionalista que había acogido desde su fundación. El partido utilizaba en su beneficio la desconfianza en las capacidades políticas de la ex-guerrilla. Había además problemas en el registro de población en las zonas ocupadas hasta 1992 por el FMLN. ARENA utilizaba de manera moderna los medios de comunicación de masas, explotaba los sentimientos de temor por la guerra y la violencia y continuaba con una cultura política en la cual los electores se identificaban con el partido 'de gobierno' o con el partido de oposición.

Las elecciones de 1997 para el parlamento y los concejos municipales mostraron un cambio importante. El FMLN mostró que podía contar con un apoyo mayor, convirtiéndose en un serio rival para ARENA. Las fracciones de ARENA y el FMLN en el parlamento fueron casi igual de grandes a partir de junio de 1997 y el FMLN obtuvo resultados especialmente positivos en las grandes ciudades del país, entre ellas San Salvador y algunas ciudades aledañas. El FMLN, que luego de las elecciones de 1994 había sufrido una crisis interna, se convirtió en un factor de poder real, ya fuera solo o en combinación con pequeños partidos del centro. Poco antes de las elecciones de 1997 ARENA sufrió una profunda crisis interna. Los escándalos de corrupción, la estructura jerárquica de su organización y el descontento sobre la situación económica le hicieron perder votos. ARENA se recuperó sin embargo para las elecciones de 1999, que fueron ampliamente ganadas por el candidato moderado Francisco Flores. Como resultado, los viejos rivales tuvieron que encontrarse en la ARENA política, disputándose el poder político. Estos desarrollos pueden considerarse como una ruptura revolucionaria con el pasado. La guerra civil produjo indirectamente un sistema político liberal-democrático, aunque esta no hubiese sido la intención inicial del FMLN. Debido a que estas reformas políticas fueron impuestas por un movimiento revolucionario, este proceso puede ser considerado como una democratización 'desde abajo' (Paige 1998:330-7).

La tercera transición es aquella de una economía agraria con un sector industrial relativamente pequeño y protegido que pasó a convertirse en una economía abierta en la que se intentó promover y diversificar la exportación a través de una



(nueva) integración con la economía mundial. El gobierno de Cristiani adelantó una política económica neoliberal y limitó la influencia del estado en la economía. Puso término al monopolio estatal en la exportación del café y el azúcar y privatizó de nuevo el sistema bancario. Las cooperativas que habían surgido como resultado de la reforma agraria de 1980 fueron presionadas para dividirse en pequeñas empresas particulares. Los bancos quedaron de nuevo en manos de familias que pertenecían a la vieja oligarquía, lo que llevó a una fuerte concentración del capital bancario (Briones y Ramos 1995:22). Este nuevo sector bancario orientó sus intereses, junto con el sector comercial, hacia las consecuencias económicas de la emigración salvadoreña hacia los Estados Unidos. Cerca de un millón de salvadoreños (una quinta parte de la población) trabajaba a mediados de los años noventa en los Estados Unidos y enviaba regularmente dólares a sus familias en El Salvador. Estas transacciones bancarias superaron paulatinamente los ingresos tradicionales provenientes del café. Junto con el dinero llegado por concepto de ayuda para el desarrollo, estas transacciones formaron cerca del 20% del producto nacional bruto (FUSADES, 1996). La nueva élite financiera obtuvo los beneficios de este desarrollo y una posición influyente, en parte a costa de los sectores agrario e industrial (Mena & Arriola, 1995). Como consecuencia de estos desarrollos, la producción de café ya no es la columna vertebral de la economía salvadoreña. El café sigue constituyendo el principal producto de exportación agrario y formó en 1995 el 36% del valor total de las exportaciones (FUSADES, 1996).

La política neoliberal de los gobiernos de Alfredo Cristiani y Armando Calderón Sol resultó beneficiosa para la nueva élite financiera. Las consecuencias de esta política parecieron en un primer momento favorables. Produjo (también en los últimos años de la guerra civil) un crecimiento del PIB, mientras la inflación se mantenía a un bajo nivel y se limitaba el déficit presupuestal (FUSADES, 1996). Ante este crecimiento surgieron sin embargo interrogantes desde distintos lados. Se critica sobre todo la dependencia de la corriente de dólares que entraba al país (Boyce, 1996; Umaña, 1997). La gran corriente de dólares hacia El Salvador mantiene bajo el precio del dólar, lo que hace poco atractivas las exportaciones. Por esta razón se desarrollan insuficientemente la agricultura y la industria. Existe la pregunta si este desarrollo puede generar a largo término un suficiente crecimiento económico. Aunque las cifras oficiales sobre la pobreza solo han bajado ligeramente y el reparto de ingresos sigue siendo muy desigual, la emigración de salvadoreños hacia los Estados Unidos ha tenido sobre todo un

efecto suavizador.

### *Conclusión*

Una élite pequeña con intereses en el cultivo y la exportación de café dominó la sociedad salvadoreña desde comienzos del siglo diecinueve hasta la guerra civil. A pesar de la modernización de la economía salvadoreña después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, el café siguió siendo la columna vertebral de la economía. En este período también tuvieron lugar algunas reformas políticas, que fueron desmontadas cuando la oposición (moderada) se hizo demasiado fuerte. Esto se demostró sobre todo con los fraudes electorales de 1972 y 1977. La falta de oportunidades para traducir en reformas y por la vía parlamentaria la oposición y el descontento crecientes, estaba estrechamente relacionada con los intereses de una pequeña élite de latifundistas. La concesión de más libertades políticas y de un espacio para la oposición hubiese llevado a la larga a una reforma agraria, que iría en contra de los intereses oligárquicos. Los militares no permitieron hasta 1980 que esto sucediera. El último medio que utilizaron fue la represión y el fraude. Pero los militares intentaron también consolidar su poder de otras maneras. Participaron ellos mismos en política (PCN) y organizaron a la población en el campo (ORDEN). Los movimientos revolucionarios intentaron comprometer consigo a los movimientos sociales o fundaron ellos mismos sus propios movimientos. Aunque la estrategia y los objetivos de estos movimientos diferían en muchos puntos de los expuestos por los militares, existía también aquí un encadenamiento de estructuras políticas y militares. En términos de 'associational cultures', los años setenta y ochenta se caracterizaron por la politización y la militarización de la sociedad civil. Las distintas organizaciones y los movimientos sociales estuvieron casi siempre ligados con uno de los partidos en lucha. Las tres transiciones discutidas en este capítulo están estrechamente relacionadas entre sí. La estructura económica cambió durante la guerra civil, la oligarquía cafetera perdió importancia y esto permitió la democratización. Resulta paradójico que la democratización haya comenzado ya durante la guerra civil. El año de 1992 fue sin embargo escenario de un cambio importante. Se rompió entonces definitivamente con la dinámica de la confrontación político-militar, que tenía sus raíces en el sistema político autoritario y en la estrategia de lucha contra la rebelión desarrollada por los Estados Unidos. Los militares se retiraron a sus bases y dejaron de desempeñar el rol político que se habían atribuido desde 1931.

En combinación con una serie de reformas constitucionales, la desmilitarización

le dio un contenido al proceso de democratización. Las organizaciones de ayuda para el desarrollo tuvieron que orientarse hacia estas nuevas relaciones. En el capítulo siguiente trataré el rol desempeñado por la ayuda internacional durante la guerra civil y los años que siguieron.

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# Awareness Is Power: Tactics For Staying Safe In Violent Spaces



Unfinished Structure -  
Photo by author

*Violence is everywhere* (Lindiwe, Hector Peterson Residence).

In order to understand the concept 'awareness', Hastrup's (1995) explanation of consciousness is invaluable, especially to identify with people's behaviour in violent situations. She explains that our patterns of thinking are not subject to paths of practical reason, but that we rather constantly reformulate our whole existence through our actions; a reconsideration of our ideas of consciousness is thus necessitated (ibid.: 99). Hastrup reminds us that we are inarticulate and that expression is not limited to the verbal. Expression, rather, takes place in various

forms (ibid.).

Given Hastrup's suggestion to understand consciousness from multiple angles, we approach a field within which questions of ontology and methodology join: how do people think and how do we know? (ibid.; Ross 2004: 35). What tools should anthropologists use to access these forms of consciousness that are so intertwined in social space, affecting it, being affected by it and being its defining capacity? In an environment of violence, students are affected, they can potentially have an influence on this through the tactics they use to stay safe and, at the same time, can become the defining capacity of such an environment. These are among the dynamics involved in conceptualising 'awareness' of potential danger in potentially dangerous areas. This awareness is positioned on various levels.

We cannot fully comprehend other people, except through structured imagining or 'intuition', perhaps deducing part of their implicit reasoning from its ('intuition's') various expressions. Knowledge is not directly and exclusively expressed in words. Situating knowledge in experience rather than in words and, consequently, in the recentred self rather than in the floating mind, changes the location of knowledge. It is largely unexpressed and reserved in the habit-memory, and not exclusively in the brain. Even when they are conscious of the environment of which they are part, this involves a degree of inarticulacy on the part of human agents (Hastrup 1995: 99-100). I argue that knowledge of a violent environment (informed by experience, stories or witnessing) becomes inscribed in students' bodies through habituation; the tactics used to stay safe are thus relocated in expressed, and (very importantly), unexpressed consciousness. Therefore, bodily experiences (in addition to the exchanging of stories, investing in a technology of safety, and exchanging gossip in social networks) of being in the world inform our knowledge of violence and the way we distinguish between the safe and unsafe (Lindegaard and Henriksen 2004: 46). It is in this light that the concept 'awareness' is employed throughout this chapter.

### *Space, violence and resistance*

Former notions of space regarded it as merely an area which is permeable, neutral and accessible to all. But more recently ideas of space suggest that it is never neutral, and even, as the history of South Africa's spatial planning proves, that spatiality is overwhelmingly ideological (Ross 2004: 35). According to Michel De Certeau (1988, cited in Ross 2004: 35), to understand a place is intimately

related to one's own position in it. This suggests that the views of onlookers or passers-by will differ from those of people who more permanently occupy the space 'looked onto'. Ross thus argues that employing spatiality entails an engagement with the emotion and the sensual in everyday life, which would otherwise be 'alien' (see also Clifford 1998: 35). Moreover, these spaces are also very fluid and experiences of them differ from person to person. What can be a space of opportunity for a robber is a space of threat and potential loss for another person. While some use the space for calculating escape in situations of robbery, others use it to confront and retaliate. Furthermore, gender and age do not necessarily occupy space in the same ways - movements are moulded by (unwritten) social rules dictated by violence and fear. Space also mutates with time. The scene of laughter can be a scene of murder the next moment, and the same spaces are experienced differently by different people who occupy them. 'The encoded body and killing zone bec[o]me sites of a transaction where residual historical and political codes and terror and alterity [a]re fused, thus transforming these sites into repositories of a social imaginary' (Feldman 1991: 64). Spaces of violence may also expand, given the involvement of witnesses or people who come to the assistance of somebody who is being violated.

This brings me to how the concept 'tactics' will be employed in this section. There is a number of ways in which the 'powerless' employ tactics in negotiating ideologies (notions of who should stay away from certain spaces and when) of proper living. With respect to the definition of 'tactics', De Certeau explains:

*A tactic is a calculated action, determined by the absence of a proper locus. No delimitation of an exteriority, then provides it with the condition necessary for autonomy. The space of a tactic is the space of the other. Thus it must play on and with a terrain imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign power ... (1984: 36-7).*

Later on, he elaborates that:

*Tactics are procedures that gain validity in relation to the pertinence they lend to time -to the circumstances which the precise instant of an intervention transforms into a favorable situation, to the rapidity of the movements that change the organization of a space, to the relations among successive moments in an action, to the possible intersections of durations and heterogeneous rhythms, etc. (1984: 38).*

Ideology, he argues, is a product of power, a strategic practice, which is used by the weak. The weak or the marginalised resist ideology through tactics and reproduce it to new ends, although for moments at a time. Although they resist, they do not change the broader structural order. As a result of restrictions imposed by for example race, class and gender, they must manage within an ideological space and within broader structures of power. This is achieved through everyday practices of appropriation and consumption, with which people create room to move. These practices take place in a realm divided into two fractions: one where strategy and production occur (powerful/apartheid/segregation) and one where consumption and tactics (weak/segregated/victims/survivors) occur, as a result of which the differentiations within the group of the weak – or the strong, for that matter – become indistinguishable. For instance, in the vicinity of the University of the Western Cape elements of violence (e.g. robbers or murderers) use tactics in relation to the broader structural order – state institutions – and engage in strategic practices toward other people (student victims of violence). The ideology is the existing segregated townships known as the Cape Flats inherited from the apartheid regime which forms part of the broader structural order. Hunted and troubled by intense state interventions, the elements survive through the strategic domination of territory (the vicinity of campus) (Jensen 2001: 32).

Strategies, on the other hand, are the ‘forces’ (structural violence, e.g. racial segregation that caused poverty and crime) that place the people on the Cape Flats in positions where they need to protect themselves (Jensen 2001: 31). Tactics are thus used to resist the strategies (structural order), which is expressed in the forms of violence students are exposed to in the vicinity of UWC.

Lindegard and Henriksen (2005: 44), on the other hand, use the word ‘strategy’ instead of ‘tactic’, and use it similar to the way Bourdieu (1990) does. According to them, strategies are acts of awareness which are rarely deliberate and reflected upon. Although the term is potentially confusing given its strong connotations to rational choice theory, it refers to social agents’ continuous construction in and through practice (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 129). On the one hand strategies of safety are rational since they make perfect sense to the agent, yet on the other hand, these acts are not necessarily expressed or well-planned. I use the word tactic instead, especially to emphasise structures surrounding the university that students resist. In addition, although these tactics

are used daily, they do not necessarily change the general social order (poverty, unemployment, crime and so forth). It is here where the significant distinction lies that I make.

### *Experiences of violence*

The violence experienced by students who stay in Hector Peterson Residence and Belhar mostly takes place *en route* to campus. Students from Hector Peterson Residence are more prone to experiencing violence than those who stay on campus because they move around in places that are considered dangerous, especially the route to campus. At Symphony Way and between the hostel and campus, students have been robbed and stories of rape and attempted rape are told about this area. Furthermore, taxis in the vicinity of Belhar pose additional safety hazards by being the sites of robberies and by being linked to drivers known to be reckless. Students tell stories about their experiences and this serves as a warning to others.

*When I took a taxi from the hostel to Delft one Sunday afternoon, I got a great shock when a man sitting in front of me pulled out a gun and demanded money from the taxi guard at gunpoint. Other people in the taxi looked at the man and he asked them what they were looking at, probably to avoid them looking at his face. The money the man received from the guard was probably enough because he did not harass the other passengers. The driver sped off after the incident and then stopped to tell another taxi driver along the way what happened, in Afrikaans. I cannot really understand Afrikaans, but gathered from their conversation that they wanted to get hold of the man (Peter, Hector Peterson Residence).*

Whether they stay in Hector Peterson Residence or in on-campus residences students generally may experience violence in taxis since all residents need to travel to Bellville or other surrounding areas for shopping, religious reasons, research or extra-mural activities. Lindiwe also found herself in a situation which could have led to gun violence:

*Violence is everywhere and just the other day when I took a taxi from Bellville, the guard instructed somebody to sit in a specific seat in the taxi. An argument ensued and the guy next to me pulled out a huge gun. I demanded to get out of the taxi, but the guard asked what happened. I told him to open the door first and then ask questions. I got out as fast as possible. The guy with the knife ran away*

*but his friend sat in the front of that taxi. Because the guard got hold of the friend, he was beaten up (Lindiwe, Hector Peterson Residence).*

Viewing violence as omnipresent is a way of staying safe because it reminds students to be on guard all the time as it might happen at any time and in any place. If they are not constantly aware of their environment they can become unsafe. Thus students continuously draw on tactics of safety to keep out of harm's way.

#### *The question of safety when in a crowd*

The safety perceived to ensue from being in a crowd, for instance in a confined public space like a taxi, was shaken in the examples of Peter and Lindiwe. When a number of people are together in a small confined space, they tend to feel safe. The presence of others sets aside danger and sociability works to ease fear (Ross 2004: 39) – until a gun is pulled out. Yet the supposed safety found in a group can be largely imagined. The safety felt when in a crowd of people is based on the assumption that others will come to one's assistance when needed. Accordingly, when people are alone they feel more powerless against potential violence (Lindegaard and Henriksen 2004: 55). Yet in this study it was evident that students often do not come to the assistance of others who they perceive to be under threat. This is mostly because they are afraid that by intervening they might become violated themselves. This is especially the case with female students who see it as risky to get involved since intervening may be to their own detriment.

*I heard a desperate cry coming from my neighbour's room in HPR early one evening. I was unsure from which room the cry came so I stepped out into the corridor to see if I could spot the room. Standing in the corridor I was uncertain whether I should intervene out of fear for the perpetrator turning on me. Instead I decided to retreat to my room and fortunately the security staff came and I later heard that it was a guy beating his girlfriend in her room. What led to my uncertainty to intervene is the xenophobia I often experience in taxis. When people are treated badly by the drivers or taxi guards, I noticed that other passengers simply ignore it. This gives me the feeling that if I should intervene to help a victim and the perpetrator turns on me, other people will not support me (Synthia, Hector Peterson Residence).*

Awareness of the possible consequences of intervention therefore holds Synthia



back and keeps her safe. She does, however, feel torn between not helping and intervening and in a different setting (Malawi) she would be more willing to intervene. Testing the level of safety in situations is therefore necessary, although students may be more willing to take risks when a significant other is in danger. Mary also fears that when she is in trouble people around will not help her.

*I fear that when someone rapes me nobody will intervene while it happens. In Nigeria this will not happen, because other men will run after the offender and beat him up (Mary, Eduardo Dos Santos Residence).*

A sense of camaraderie in Nigeria therefore contributes to a feeling of safety for Mary, as well as the fact that she knows justice will be served because offenders will pay for the consequences of their actions. Men act as protectors and the bearers of justice. Because she fears that bystanders in Cape Town will not help her should something bad happen to her, she always walks with fellow students when she goes to her department on campus at night, again confirming that the mere presence of people, especially people who are not complete strangers, is a tactic of safety.

Phumzile experienced an incident where her bag was snatched from her in a public space. Bystanders did not intervene. The bag-snatching took place in Symphony Way where taxis drop off passengers or pick them up.

*I saw two guys sitting on the opposite side of the road and it looked to me as if they were waiting for a taxi. When I stepped out of the taxi I saw the two guys move toward me, but I thought they were crossing the road because they were walking to Extension. But then they came toward me, one guy with his hand under his top as if hiding a knife or a gun (I did not see him with anything while he sat waiting) and walked to me as I walked backwards but he then got hold of my bag. I shouted and one guy ran away, but I held onto my bag the other guy held and there was a struggle. At one point the bag was on his side and I held onto the straps. He managed to get hold of the bag and ran off. I followed the guy and ran closely behind him. The guy couldn't even run. My adrenalin was pumping and I was determined to get my bag, but the guy managed to escape. I told a traffic officer who came by that I had been robbed, but he just went off on his own after I thought that he would help me see if I could get hold of some of my belongings. People passed by asking what happened, but nobody would come up with a solution. My cellphone, cards, ID were in the handbag and it meant that I*

*had to start afresh* (Phumzile, Hector Peterson Residence).

Belhar is a predominantly coloured area and racism is often rife in such communities especially towards blacks (see Adams 2005: 9; Du Preez 2005: 14). It is possible that the traffic officer and bystanders did not help Phumzile because she was a black woman. Studies show that whites in America are more likely to help whites in emergencies than blacks (Bryan and Test 1967; Gaertner 1971; 1973; Piljavin, Rodin and Piljavin 1969; Levine *et al.* 2002). This is not conclusive in the decision not to intervene, however, since other factors may play a role as well. Bystanders may also decide against helping victims depending on the costs involved (Gaertner 1975: 95). On the other hand, Levine (1999: 12) explains that bystanders also interpret incidents a certain way and that the incident needs to be contextualised. People's accounts of their interpretations of incidents shed light on their decision not to intervene. Not helping a victim, especially when a weapon or threat to be physically harmed oneself is involved, can also be a way to stay safe.

*While making a telephone call in Parow one Saturday morning, a guy held a friend of mine at gunpoint. She called me to draw my attention, and thinking she was teasing and not turning back immediately, I turned around eventually to see what was happening. The guy holding the gun was very nervous because his fingers were trembling on the trigger. I thought that I could easily fight the guy, only if the lady were not there. I simply handed my cellphone over. Other people walked by without offering any support and Saturday mornings are very busy around shopping malls. If I were alone I would have held the guy's hand up to empty his cartridge, and then would have beaten the guy up* (Collin, Hector Peterson Residence).

At the same time the response by a group of people against someone who offers violence can equally help everyone to keep safe, as is mentioned by Bulelwa. She said that in Johannesburg, where she comes from, people stand together against violence.

*Everybody has this idea that Jo'burg is rough but people can talk on their phones when walking in the streets. Even in the townships. Hillbrow and Yeoville are rough where the Nigerians are though. At the taxi rank near home the taxi drivers will beat someone up if they steal a cellphone. Here people can get away with it and the others will do nothing. So back home there is more unity* (Bulelwa, Coline

Williams Residence).

In Nigeria, according to Collin and Mary, and in Johannesburg, according to Bulelwa, bystanders would fight the perpetrator. According to Chekroun and Brauer (2002), people are more likely to exercise 'social control' in high-personal-implication situations. They define social control as 'any verbal or nonverbal communication by which individuals show to another person that they disapprove of his or her deviant (counternormative) behaviour' (Chekroun and Brauer 2002: 854). Put differently: if people feel a personal threat in situations where they see someone else being held at gunpoint, they are more likely to intervene, and thus contribute to restoring order in a sense.

Latané and Darley (1970) cite instances where victims of murder and other offences were left unattended even after the assailant had already left. In one instance a switchboard operator who was raped and beaten in her office in the Bronx ran outside the building naked. Forty people surrounded her and watched how the assailant tried to drag her back into the office and none of them interfered. Two policemen happened to pass by the incident and arrested the assailant (Latané and Darley 1970: 2). The authors conclude that if bystanders fail to *notice*, *interpret* and decide that they have *personal responsibility* toward the victim, they are less likely to intervene. In addition, the presence of other people is more likely to keep a bystander from rescuing a victim. These explanations help understand the possible thinking processes involved in people's decisions to intervene when seeing something bad happen to somebody.

*When drastic situations call for extreme tactics*

Using the train to commute around Cape Town is known to be risky and many commuters have experienced violence of one or other form (Marud 2002), leading to protests against the absence of security on trains. A number of participants in this study also told of frightening experiences they had on trains. Other stories tell about people who were robbed in trains, especially trains that run along Cape Flats lines. Such stories are part of the symbolic order students create to stay safe. Because of such stories students avoid commuting by train. Here follow stories told by two students who survived after they had no choice but to jump from the train.

*At every station stop I raised my head from the book I was reading to check who get on and off and at one stop 4 guys boarded the train. Although I found it*

*strange that they were standing since there were vacant seats, I resumed reading. A commotion and people scurrying drew my attention to those 4 guys. I had heard about gangsters who rob people, but it was clear that these guys were not interested in people's belongings, so they must have been out to kill. It was very surreal, and even seeing one of the guys stabbing an old man repeatedly with a knife, seemed like a dream to me. Women ran around in the carriage and it dawned on me that I needed to do something fast. The window behind me was fortunately broken and I told myself that I needed to jump because the guys were coming my way. I told myself this continuously to convince myself and looked out the window to scan the railway track in search for poles. I previously heard that when people jump from trains, the poles along the tracks are what kill them. Fortunately there were no poles. I knew that the same knife that killed the old man was what would kill me. The train fast gained momentum and as it did so, I moved out of the train through the window frame, held on the outside and jumped. Fortunately there was no oncoming train otherwise I would have been killed. I moved as I fell so as not to do too much damage to one part of my body especially, my head, but could not avoid bashing my forehead. I lost consciousness from the fall. Security guards patrolling the tracks found me and they took me to the next station. Later I learned that people in that train were thrown off by those guys (Peter, Hector Peterson Residence).*

Because Peter had to use the train to commute, he had his own safety tactic while he was doing so – he looked at the doors at every stop, making a ‘mental’ note of potentially threatening people who boarded. This tactic was informed by stories he heard about what happened to other commuters who were robbed in trains and he used it to stay safe. His tactic was also based on a tacit embodied response to what made him feel uncomfortable or raised a feeling of potential threat in him. His first clue was that the four men remained standing although there were seats available. When he saw the men stab someone his response was almost wholly embodied, initially making it seem like a bad dream. When he realised that jumping out of the train might be all that could save him, he drew on other peoples’ stories, informing him that, 1) he could jump and might survive, and, 2) that hitting a pole might kill him. Before jumping he scanned the railway tracks for poles. Grabbing onto the window frame and hanging outside for a moment was apparently almost instinctual, as was the realisation that he should try to fall in a way that would not damage his head. As Lindegaard and Henriksen (2005) argue, the body is socially informed – one perceives and experiences the world in an

embodied way, while at the same time also 'learning' how to behave and respond in bodily ways, albeit often without thinking about it consciously (cf. Csordas 1994; Bourdieu 1990).

Phillip also had a horrible experience on the train. He traveled first class on the train – another tactic of safety since the tickets are more expensive, and therefore a 'better class' of people will supposedly travel first class. According to Philip:

*The train was full of passengers and I was in a first class carriage. Then at Belhar Station most of the people got off and there were only three remaining, me and two other passengers. At that point I was busy reading a letter my brother sent from home and was not paying much attention to my surroundings, but four guys stepped onto the train when it stopped. The next thing I saw was those guys pulling out knives and they started stabbing people. People rushed to each other so that they could be together and my hand was stabbed because I tried to stop one guy. Then the guys started throwing us off the train through the windows. One man died instantly as his head hit the ground, but I and two others survived. This happened below the bridge at Spa and men were playing cricket close by. I could not get up after the fall and told the guys about what happened without realizing that I was bleeding. Metro Rail Security then came and called the ambulance who took me to Delft clinic, while the others went to Groote Schuur Hospital. Staff at the clinic was not very helpful and did not even x-ray me. They just stitched me up. I did not even bother taking it up with them because it would not help, so I just returned there to have the stitches removed (Phillip, Hector Peterson Residence).*

In extreme situations such as the one in which Peter found himself, people in the area of Belhar and students at UWC particularly, are forced to think fast to save their lives. After Peter's traumatic experience, he never used the train again. Since Collin (see his story further in this chapter) and other students learned of Peter's experience, they never take the train anymore. I also hardly use the train unless someone accompanies me. The few occasions on which I actually used the train, I felt very uncomfortable. As I sat in a deserted carriage in front of broken windows it conjured up stories I had heard about robberies and of outsiders throwing bricks at passengers through broken windows. Yet, for some students the train is the only reliable form of transport and they are comfortable using it. Bulelwa, who comes from Gauteng said:

*Commuting by train feels very normal. Even wearing my chain and bracelet is fine. I even use my cellphone in the train. At the moment the train is my only means of transport. The train is also cheaper although it is not very reliable because one can be late for an appointment* (Bulelwa, Coline Williams Residence).

My own gendered expectation was that Bulelwa, rather than Collin, would be particularly careful of the train. Besides being aware of the possibility that something might happen to her on the train, Bulelwa also behaves with confidence. For her Gauteng is more violent than Cape Town and she feels and behaves as if she is 'tough'. This is very similar to how I generally behave when walking in the vicinity of the university. Lindegaard and Henriksen give similar examples, but of men who adopt 'feminine' strategies of safety, that is, they move together in groups or run fast to cover potentially threatening spaces. Bulelwa and I use more 'masculine' tactics and at the same time we also obtain a sense of safety through the idea that bad things only happen to 'other' people. By behaving in this way, consciously or unconsciously, we both create a space in which we feel safe, but it may also make us more vulnerable.

The following section looks at the influence gender roles have on the way people create safety for themselves. Information gathered at a workshop at the university helped explore how students relate to each other in terms of gender.

### *Gender roles*

Attending a workshop run by the HIV/AIDS Unit of the University of the Western Cape, it was very interesting to learn what perspectives peer facilitators of workshops hold about what it means to be a man and a woman respectively, especially concerning HIV/AIDS. More interestingly, the men attending the workshop were part of MAP (Men As Partners), and were being trained to facilitate HIV/AIDS workshops on campus. At one point during the workshop men and women formed separate groups and listed things about their gender they were proud of. The women struggled for a long time to think of things they could be proud of, as opposed to the men, and only after a long time managed to list some. Taking a look at the discourses around gender is important when studying violence, since they impact on how women and men view themselves, and each other, in relation to violence. Although their lists might not have been the same had the context been different, or perhaps did not reflect what they would have stated individually, this was what each group listed:

### *What it means to be a woman*

They are able to express emotions without being ashamed of it; give birth; are more sensitive and caring; do not have to pretend that they are strong; can take advantage of men; are happy about affirmative action; make better parents than men; can do anything without being stigmatised, e.g. have a man's name and not be called a *moffie*.

### *What it means to be a man*

They were born to lead; can physically dominate; when they speak people listen; have better opportunities and salaries; do not live in fear; can protect; women depend on them.

During this group exercise, women and men took pride in stereotypes pertaining to their respective genders without even realising it. The outcome of this exercise not only mirrors gender roles in broader society, but also the way most of the participants deal with and think about violence. Unlike the men, the women failed to see themselves as initiators, leaders, protectors, speakers, and as being able to physically dominate or protect.

When women and men were asked to say what they *could* do if they switched gender roles, it was interesting that women failed to see their value as women as opposed to their value if they were men. Men valued themselves both as men and as women. Each group listed what they *could* do if they were members of the opposite gender:

### *What women could do if they were men*

They would not worry about sagging breasts; could wear the same shirt the whole week; do anything they want to and go anywhere; respect women; break the silence around women abuse; have the physical and financial power to start a war; leave responsibility of children to woman (and just pay the money); have sex with anybody; teach sons not to cry but to 'be a man'.

### *What men could do if they were women*

They could express their emotions; get their pension at the age of 60; share affection; look after their partner; be open about sex issues to other women; spend more time with the family; be open and honest; get away with lots of things; be loving and caring; break the silence; be conscious about nutrition.

Apart from the fact that women felt they would be freed from sagging breasts if

they were men, women also imagined having freedom of movement, sex and action; they identified with being men who respected women, taking the initiative, starting war and fighting against abuse. Fighting against abuse comes across more as a wish in this context and this would likely not have been among the responses in a different situation where MAP was not the focus of the workshop. The men's responses also formed part of gender-stereotypes about women and the idea of breaking the silence seemed more of a wish, especially given the fact that women themselves did not mention that in the first round of the exercise. Such '*... discourses inform tactics of safety*' (Lindegaard and Henriksen 2004: 58) and are generally the ideas women have of men in danger and *vice versa*. If women for instance feel restricted in their movements and actions and feel that they need to stay indoors to stay safe as opposed to what they described men's experiences are, their perceptions of women and safety inform the way they keep themselves safe.

Although the students in the workshop were aware of changes that have taken place in South Africa with regard to social mobility for women (for example, the significant presence of women in parliament), their responses suggested that dominant gender stereotypes still affect their thinking. Culturally defined beliefs about what it means to be female or male thus still persist (Golombok and Fivush 1994: 18). '*Males are stereotypically considered to be aggressive or instrumental; they act on the world and they make things happen. Females are stereotypically relational; they are concerned with social interaction and emotions*' (Bakan 1996; Block 1973, cited in Golombok and Fivush 1994: 18).

Education influences how strongly people adhere to dominant discourses (Golombok and Fivush 1994: 19). During the workshop women with university degrees nevertheless agreed on gender stereotypes and regarded male traits more highly than their own. If women value themselves less than men, this will affect the relationship between them (Bammeke 2002: 76) and their attitude towards violence.

### *Gender and violence*

#### *Women and violence*

Men and women in this study had different experiences of violence based on gender. Because women are viewed as 'soft targets', they are violated through robbery, rape and other forms of violence. For women, living in a potentially



violent situation can be difficult, not only because they fear victimization, but also because it is difficult to speak out against it.

*Women also should learn to speak about violence, because when they talk, others will hear their stories and will also want to talk. In this way women can then build networks and fight against violence (Liz, Hector Peterson Residence).*

Men have power over women partly because of the dominant discourse and expectation that women are weak and vulnerable (Boonzaier and de la Ray 2004). This reinforces the subordination of women who fear being violated.

*Being a woman makes one feel vulnerable because one does not have the strength to fight and one does not have a voice to talk. The threat of something happening to me is always real. Not a day passes when I do not feel conscious of security. [Practicals in] Nyanga [Nyanga, meaning 'the moon', is one of the oldest black townships in Cape Town. It was established in 1955 as a result of labour migration from the Eastern Cape and was a site of protests against the 'pass laws' in apartheid in the 1960s and 1970s. Black-in-black fighting allegedly perpetrated by corrupt police in the early 1980s made Nyanga well-known] is the closest place I could choose [to conduct my research] but it poses quite a danger because of hijackings that take place there. I am conscious walking around there every time and not speaking the language puts me at greater risk. I am told at different times to go home and not take up South Africans' jobs. The speed at which taxi drivers drive is very careless and as if there is no tomorrow. I just feel unsafe (Synthia, Hector Peterson Residence).*

A number of things make Synthia feel insecure as a woman in the midst of possible violence. She is not strong and fears she will not be able to ward off an attacker. Hijackings that take place in the vicinity of her research site are threatening and she fears exposure to this. The language barrier between her and the people in Nyanga, the xenophobia directed at her and the speed at which taxis drive also make her feel unsafe. This is even more harrowing since Synthia needs to pass through this space every day. Yet Synthia refuses to stay silent about violence and after the recent attack on her, close to Hector Peterson Residence, she pursued the fact that the residence staff acted very imperturbably in that regard.

Expectations about how women should behave in dangerous places affect their

responses in potentially violent situations. Female passivity is viewed as second nature, *'but it illustrates that emotions as other forms of practice are informed by discourse'* (Lindegard and Henriksen 2004: 55).

*... men usually weigh up the situation and see what they should do, if they should confront the perpetrators. Women can't weigh up the situation, they should avoid it at all costs and that is what I do* (Melanie, Hector Peterson Residence).

Women express a double vulnerability – they fear being mugged but also being raped.

*Men have advantage because they think that women are the weaker sex. So women feel scared that they are women because men would not only take away women's purse, but could also rape them. But things are a bit level now because guys should also be scared that they could get raped. Things are a bit safe now because there are security staff at the hostels and they are trying their best. We also have to think about not walking around late because that makes a person an easy target. This Kenyan guy who was killed during the vac[ation] must have gone to a shebeen. The Barn was closed and they should really think about keeping The Barn open* (Lindiwe, Hector Peterson Residence).

The murder of a Kenyan student from Hector Peterson Residence near the hostel triggered awareness of the danger students face outside the hostel. Unlike in the past, the rape of males is increasingly feared.

Women nevertheless feel vulnerable and in need of protection by men; female students who cross the field (see figure 1.1 A-C) to campus get a sense of safety from the presence of security staff who stand watch at an unfinished structure on the field. Since men are viewed as protectors, they stand guard, irrespective of whether they are equipped or even trained to deal with violence. If anything should happen to a student, security is supposed to release the dog to chase the perpetrator off. Yet in one instance where a student was attacked the security staff member held onto the dog – probably as a means of self-protection.



Fig.1.1.A - The field between UWC and Hector Peterson Residence

Often security staff do not stand watch on the field between campus and HPR. Students who cross the field at midnight run the risk of attack because the field is deserted. The unfinished structure seems to be a good place for muggers to hide and catch their 'prey' unguarded, which is exactly why security staff are placed there. It is also one of the places both males and females have identified as a dangerous space. It makes them feel very vulnerable and they only feel at ease once they passed it.



Fig.1.1.B - Unfinished structure

Thando feels safe once she gets to campus, and those years when she stayed in

the hostel, she felt safe once she passed that unfinished structure. *'People just hide away behind that structure and appear very unexpectedly. It is that unexpectance that catches people off-guard'* (Thando - used to stay in Hector Peterson Residence).

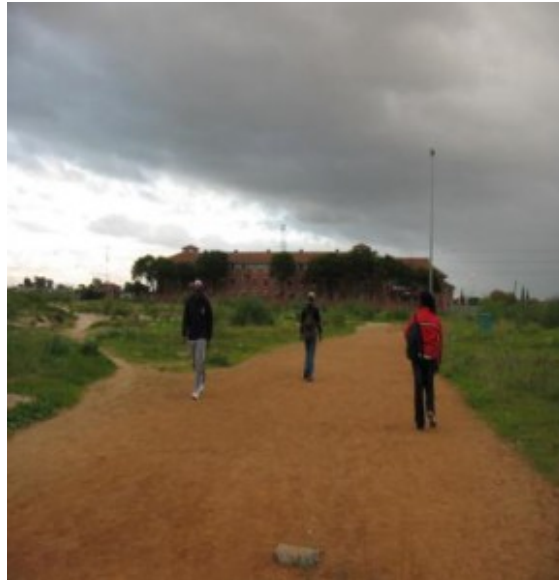


Fig.1.1.C – Path to Hector Peterson Residence

#### *Staying safe through confrontation or escape*

Women who do not respond to situations of violence in the way Phumzile did in the example given earlier, rather run away or simply do nothing. This is often caused by the fact that they have been socialized and are expected to be passive. Women who are socialised into fulfilling traditional roles of 'submissiveness' tend to sustain such behaviour because that is how things are supposed to be (Bourdieu 1977). There are usually other significant similarities among women who are abused, such as low income, low level of education and residence in a village (Faramarzi, Esmailzadeh and Mosavi 2005: 5). Studies conducted among wealthier, highly educated women from affluent areas might show different results. Once women are exposed to stories that contest such passive notions, for example, of an abused woman who took her children and left the house, they behave differently. Examining women's exposure and responses to domestic violence is very helpful in understanding their responses in relation to community violence.

What factors contribute to women either fighting or taking flight in situations of violence? This can be illuminated by comparing two participants in this study.

*It was after four in the afternoon and I walked to my previous home which is close to the University's train station. It was very windy that day. As I walked I saw two guys walking in my direction but they passed me. I continued walking but then something told me to turn around. It was really windy and when I turned one of the guys grabbed at my bag. The guy was caught off guard as he was not expecting me to turn around before he had taken my bag. Immediately, he said that he was only looking for a R5. I replied that I did not have a R5 even though I had money as well as my cell-phone in my bag. The second guy then approached. The first guy insisted that he was only looking for a R5 as if a R5 was of little value to a university student. When I again replied that I did not have any money, the first guy then rudely demanded that I give him my earrings. As I attempted to pull the earrings from my ears, I insisted that I remove them myself. At this time, the second guy seemed extremely irritable as I was still trying to assert myself under the circumstances. He threatened to kick me. The earrings were not such a concern because they were old. After giving them the earrings, the guys noticed my tekkies. I noticed this and subsequently realised that they were not done with me yet. The two guys then walked with me to a nearby park where I could sit down to remove my tekkies. I decided that I would not allow them to take my shoes, and starting to think about possible ways to prevent this. At the park, the two guys sat down on poles situated towards the end of the park. I stood between the two poles (that they were sitting on) at this time, and while they looked down the road in one direction to watch for any oncoming people, I ran in the opposite direction. I ran towards a road where I saw another guy and other people who were building on one of the houses in that road. I knew that if the two guys chose to follow me, they would have to deal with those builders. I managed to get away safely (Jo-Anne, lives slantly opposite Hector Peterson Residence).*

Jo-Anne did many things - she looked out for men (who are viewed by women as a potential threat), and, when she passed them, she turned around. Although she lied about the contents of her bag, she gave them her earrings, but tried to maintain control by taking them off herself. As soon as she saw an opportunity she ran away - towards other people. Although in a distressing situation, she planned her escape and waited for an opportunity to do so. Afterwards she became even more careful and hardly ever walked home alone again. She rather waited for her mother to come from work in the evening to pick her up from campus than leave campus earlier. She now also avoids spaces that she thinks will place her in a compromising position. These fears are spread throughout

other areas in her life:

*I recently obtained my driver's licence, but even so am very afraid to drive on routes unfamiliar to me. My fear is inadvertently encouraged by my mother's bad experience with driving. When my mother took my father to work one evening she took the wrong turn on her way back home. She ended up in a very dangerous place and could not even get out of the car to ask for directions in fear that something might happen to the car or to her. Since then my mother sticks to routes she is familiar with and where she can maintain a sense of safety. Due to the fact that my mother displays this behaviour, I fear that something bad might happen to me should I dare to drive on unfamiliar routes (Jo-Anne, slantly opposite Hector Peterson Residence).*

This example is one of many that reflects how Jo-Anne's socialisation in her family impedes the way she faces threatening situations. Because I encouraged her to drive to a mall she had never driven to before, she said she would think about it, but later that night called me to ask if I would accompany her. This was the first time she drove outside of the area where she stays. Although she decided to drive to the Mall, she asked to be accompanied.

Jo Anne had heard stories about potential danger and had been exposed to it. She is aware of tactics to stay safe and actually behaved in a very calculated way when she was confronted by thieves, but she generally responds in a more 'feminine' way in terms of safety tactics - she tries to avoid danger by staying in safe spaces or by looking for the company of people she knows and trusts. It must be noted that stories involving danger may also induce fear, but still informs people about what might otherwise not be experienced. In other words, hearing stories of what other people do in situations of danger informs people of what to do in such situations. 'Naiveté' could also put people at risk and they may even be blamed for their 'ignorance' especially in instances where people believe our actions are 'unintelligible' (Richardson and May 1999: 313). Still in other situations where people are inundated with stories involving danger, they may shut off to the stories.

*Everyday I walk down that road I am very anxious because of the robbery before and I would rather have my mother pick me up from campus after work and wait an extra hour than walk home. Otherwise my brother would wait in front of the house and watch that I walk safely. But that road to campus is very dangerous*

*because it is isolated and surrounded by bushes. Subsequently, you cannot see when someone is hiding behind these bushes. Even though there are security guards, one hardly sees them as they tend to focus more on the students walking towards the Belhar residence. I feel safer on campus because there are other people around. Walking down that road with anxiety may be a bad thing because the robbers will sense the fear and will prey on that, is what my brother told me. If one walks boldly they will wonder why the person is so bold and assume that the person is carrying a weapon. And when my mother informs me that she will not be able to pick me up from campus I worry about getting home that whole day and have butterflies in my stomach. If I were a man I would have felt confident in my ability to protect myself. Men usually have some or other experience with violence either on school or elsewhere which enables them to protect themselves. Women on the other hand, usually do not get into fights and I am one who stays in the house most of the time and therefore do not feel confident in protecting myself (Jo-Anne, lives slantly opposite Hector Peterson Residence).*

Women like Jo-Anne mostly follow passive tactics, especially when dominant figures in their lives like mothers or brothers reinforce their understanding of themselves as potentially 'acted-upon' females. According to Lindegaard and Henriksen (2005) staying inside the home is a female tactic of safety, and is often explained as being a result of women's weaker physique and lack of ability to defend themselves. Greater culpability is attributed to women, partly because of the assumption that they run a higher risk of being confronted with violence. Women are expected to stay inside the home because being in the 'wrong' place at the 'wrong' time makes women vulnerable to violence (Richardson and May 1999: 313). This tactic reinforces gendered behaviour – Jo-Anne does not move around by herself because she feels vulnerable, while this tactic also confirms that she is a female. What is also evident in Jo-Anne's story is that she would value being a man because she would have more confidence then – similar to the women's responses in the workshop discussed previously. Such notions aid passivity and perpetuate the idea of women being the weaker sex. Lindiwe, however, because of her exposure to stories that counter notions of women as passive and complacent, responds differently to the threat of violence.

*Someone in Bellville asked me if I had a cellphone and someone else wanted it, what I would do. I said that I would tell him to buy his own. He then asked me what I would do if the guy had a gun and wanted my cellphone. I said that I would*

*let it fall to the ground so that neither of us could have one. The guy told me I'm crazy. It is not as if I am not afraid of violence, but I feared it for a long time. When people tell me that they have been robbed, I tell them to be glad their life was not taken away from them. Some people would count their possessions more valuable than their lives (Lindiwe, Hector Peterson Residence).*

Lindiwe had been exposed to potential violence in her home for many years. She eventually decided that she had lived in fear for too long and needed to have a sense of control in her environment. Lindiwe had a friend who defended herself in a near-rape situation. Being surrounded by people who confront threats, I suggest can empower women to do the same. Daring the attacker was used by Lindiwe's friend to reduce the power the attacker had over her as a potential victim, thus confronting potential danger, and can be a tactic to stay safe.

*If someone should try to rape me I would tell him to go ahead and rape me. My friend did this and they [the assailants] wondered why she said so, and walked off thinking that maybe she had HIV and would pass it on to them (Lindiwe, Hector Peterson Residence).*

In Lindegaard and Henriksen's (2005) scheme of possible tactics to stay safe, this would be a more masculine strategy (seen in the example of Colin at the train station, discussed further below), although used by a woman.

### *Men and violence*

As noted earlier, men feel responsible for women in unsafe areas, take on roles of protectors and will more often than not fight in situations of danger. Yet women are supposed to be protected from men. The following incident illustrates how men respond in ways similar to the tactic used by Lindiwe's friend, thereby reducing the power they feel potential attackers might exert over them.

Women on the other hand will not necessarily fight but will try a different tactic to avoid dangerous situations by either waiting for another person to walk with, or by turning back. In addition, women might also say something to their potential attacker to keep him from attacking, like screaming or speaking aggressively to hold on to their possessions, as in Phumzile's case.

*As I neared Unibell Station I saw a guy rushing across the bridge to say something to another guy on the other side of the station, while looking in my direction. I then walked to one guy of really big build and stood in front of him*



*chest-to-chest looking him four-square in the eyes. The guy then greeted me. I told the guy: 'You're crazy', and walked away (Collin, Hector Peterson Residence).*

What happened in Collin's instance was that he could see the two men on both sides of the station planning something against him. It was December vacation and the area around the station was deserted. The two men obviously communicated with each other and the big man smiled at the other as he crossed the bridge towards Collin. This was Collin's clue. He faced the bigger man and because of his boldness the two men were caught off-guard. One of the stories that circulated among students and people who have experienced violence, is that robbers detect their potential victim's fear and capitalise on that - this was also what Jo-Anne's brother told her. Behaving boldly is accordingly seen as a good defence mechanism.



Fig. 1.2 Unibell Station Unibell Station, which is the train station between UWC and Belhar. This was where Collin confronted one of the men he suspected was conspiring to rob him - Photo by author

Collin comes from Nigeria and from a university where violent student uprisings are rife, and the cause of many fatalities (Bammeke 2000). He had been in the army and was trained to sense and act on any suspicious behaviour of people who pose threats. Being socialised and trained to be aware of his environment thus help him to keep safe, while it also masculinises him (Lindegard and Henriksen 2005: 49).

According to one of my participants, women become distraught in situations of

danger and therefore are easy targets. ‘... women tend to be overtaken by their emotions more than men. Therefore, men would be able to separate themselves from the situation and will act swiftly’ (Graham, Hector Peterson Residence). Without neglecting to mention that masculinities are fluid over time and in different places (Barker and Ricardo 2005), men tend to grow up in environments where they need to be able to defend themselves. Boys tend to play roughly in school grounds and are expected to pick fights with other boys as part of learning to be a man. Exactly because of these discourses about what it means to be a man, police tend to laugh at men when they report sexual assault. The views men have of women have implications for gender-based violence (Barker and Ricardo 2005: 19).

Like men, some women also behave in a confrontational manner or will resist when threatened. When two men tried to grab Phumzile’s bag from her, she screamed and held to it tightly. One of the men ran off while she continued to fight to keep her bag from the other. He managed to thrust the bag under his armpit while she held onto the sling, but eventually he tore it out of her grip.

#### *Man or moffie?: Hierarchical masculinities*

As discussed earlier, men are often seen as protectors against, or initiators of violence. *Moffie* is a derogatory term referring to gay men, but is also a term used to refer to males who display ‘feminine’ traits by talking in a feminine voice, or moving in ‘feminine’ ways, or who, in relation to danger, would run away instead of fight. A *moffie* would not be able to defend himself when in a confrontational situation with another man. When a man is referred to as a *moffie* this is very insulting because it constructs him as a lesser man. This might happen, for example, when mothers pamper boys too much – they are told that the boy will grow up to be a *moffie*. Such boys are teased at school. Khaya would be referred to as a *moffie* among coloured men, or *isyoyo* among Xhosa-speakers. His safety tactic is not necessarily to stay inside or to avoid unsafe spaces, but to run away when he senses or sees a threat.

*At one big fight in front of Chris Hani Residence I was told that I am a betrayer, but I went to call for help while they fought. Fighting is something I avoid at all costs. I am short-tempered and would just throw something at a person* (Khaya, Eduardo Dos Santos Residence).

Tactics to stay safe (in this case running away from danger and calling for help)

communicates what kind of man Khaya is. Challenging the 'feminine' or 'masculine' tactics for safety therefore makes a person less of a woman or man in the eyes of others (Lindgaard and Henriksen 2004: vi). Gender discourses inform tactics of safety. Men are socialised to respond to threats of violence with anger; no signs of vulnerability must be seen when men are on their own, walk to campus, to Symphony Way and so forth. Men are protectors and potentially violent; when they speak people listen. Men deal with violence either in protective or aggressive ways (ibid.: 58). In the words of Simpiwe, 'violence makes me feel very responsible to people who are vulnerable in such (violent) situations', the 'people' being women and children. However, as we have seen in this chapter, these engendered tactics for safety are sometimes contested, as when a woman resists robbers, outwits them and calculates a safe escape.

In contexts of South African prisons and labour compounds where masculinity is renegotiated, the 'weaker' male inmates are claimed as 'wives' of the stronger male prisoners. The dominance of the stronger man is sustained through fear evoked by violence (Niehaus 2000: 81; Lindgaard and Henriksen 2004: 61). These roles as 'husbands' exaggerate men's masculinity enabling them to be 'real' men (Niehaus 2000: 85). Masculinity is not the only factor to consider in understanding how men deal with perceived threats.

Issues of connectedness and race further compound spatiality. The space around the university campus is different from the spaces occupied by the adolescents in Lindgaard and Henriksen's research. Since students staying in residences may not originally be from Cape Town or South Africa even, there is no sense of belonging to the area, particularly among men. There is no attachment to a place as there would be when one lives there. These students like Simpiwe come from other parts of the world, and when they walk into 'danger zones' Belhar or Bellville, they 'know' they 'should not be there' in the first place.

*Bellville is kind of scary, especially the coloureds. I have nothing against coloureds but there are strange characters around there. There is just a feeling that tells me that I have to be alert. If I need directions, I would rather find the place on my own. The taxi rank area is especially unsafe* (Simpiwe, Cassinga Residence).

At the same time Simpiwe's statement seems to hint at a homogenisation of coloureds. Jensen (2001: 4) explains that the homogenisation of coloured men is

so forceful that each and every coloured man on the Cape Flats is under persistent suspicion of being a gangster. Even men coming from townships (both coloured and black) in Cape Town are 'aware' of the racial boundaries between coloured and black townships. This means that blame is not only directed at gender when treading in 'wrong' places, but at people of 'other' races, too. In addition blacks cross these racialised boundaries more often than the other races to go shopping, or to university – basically due to economic inequities.

### *Storytelling*

*Knowing the power of a story heard is that the story occurs within the listener* (Simms 2001).

As indicated earlier, people's experiences of violence are informed by the exchange of stories about violence. Storytelling informs tactics of safety and makes people aware instead of conscious of violence. Tactics are in other words people's means to avoid, escape or confront danger, which they do not necessarily consciously reflect on (Lindegaard and Henriksen 2004: 46). Storytelling also creates a feeling of solidarity among group members and may not necessarily be based on actual events that occurred in a specific place. It might have the purpose of reinforcing feelings of mutuality – a group feeling. Stories of danger may also be based on what might possibly happen to a person. Such feelings are then associated with preconceived ideas of a violent situation someone else was in, and, based on these feelings, we employ tactics to keep safe. We do not know if walking in a 'dangerous place' at a specific moment will result in our belongings being snatched from us or in being held at gunpoint. But it is stories that inform us not to walk in certain places at certain times of the day – when such places are deserted, when we have valuable things with us, or when we are alone. This does not, however, make danger less real or less likely to happen.

When foreigners come to South Africa they are unable to distinguish between the safe and unsafe because they are not informed through stories or by witnessing people being held at gunpoint, for example, apart from the stories they may have read in the news media. They are not a part of the formation of a symbolic order. This might make foreigners easier targets. In addition, foreigners are perceived as having money on them and are therefore targeted for robbery.

### *Recognising 'shady characters' – Tactics for staying safe*

*One should also always listen to one's instincts as Oprah Winfrey says, because in those situations they are women's best bet! (Melanie, Hector Peterson Residence).*

As argued previously, storytelling, in person or via the mass media, about violence informs our tactics of safety. These stories could also inform foreign and/or first-year campus residents to distinguish between the safe and unsafe, and also help them to recognise 'signs' of people and places that are potentially unsafe. Although I discussed this awareness briefly through Collin's experience at the train station, this section tries to unravel how participants 'recognised' 'shady' characters and used tactics to escape dangerous situations. The characteristics described by the participants cannot perfectly determine who is dangerous or not, but nevertheless aid them in creating feelings of safety.

*I waited at the bus stop not far from the residence. I saw two guys approaching the bus stop and they looked very suspicious. What makes them look suspicious is the way they walk, their behaviour and especially the way they look at a person - intimidatingly! A woman walking in front of them crossed the road to walk to the garage. A year ago the garage did not exist. Then I planned that if they came too close to me I would run across the street to the garage as well and I moved toward the pedestrian crossing. The guys then saw my plan and stopped in their tracks. They started telling me things like 'Do you think we want to rob you?' They tried talking to me saying all sorts of things and then the one guy tried to get closer to me. I said 'Don't you dare get closer!' The guy saw I outwitted them and then started walking away from the bus stop in the direction they were walking and I returned to the bus stop. The other woman who crossed the road then walked to the bus stop when the guys had left and the woman told me 'They would have robbed you now!' I said I knew what their intentions were but was prepared for them. But they also saw that I did not have valuable things on me otherwise they would have made the effort to rob me. I only had my bus fare and bank card on me, but they could have taken my cellphone which is what they often target. Another woman approached the bus stop with an expensive gold watch, which is foolish in that area (Melanie, Hector Peterson Residence).*

The bus stop where Melanie was nearly robbed falls directly on the threshold between Hector Peterson Residence and the Belhar community. Robbers regularly dwell there. They sometimes disguise themselves as school pupils since a school is nearby, but can also wear balaclavas.

According to Melanie, who grew up in Belhar, suspicious characters look at their victims intimidatingly, as if to make them docile. Robbers also stare at their potential victims thoroughly – looking for possessions on their bodies before they strike. The woman who walked in front of them apparently perceived the same danger and crossed over to the other side of the road. Melanie instead moved to a place where she could more easily escape if the men came too close to her. The men noticed what was happening and remarked that she was wrong – but because they were outwitted, they walked away.

Awareness of a suspicious person is evidently important in staying safe. Due to students' awareness through stories and exposure, many are able to outwit their 'predators' and escape.

*Two Fridays after my first arrival in Cape Town in 2003, I walked from campus around 5pm. When I left the station's side, 6 students walked in front of me but I overtook them because I walked fast. The field was very bushy and as I approached the intersection to the main path that leads to the hostel, I considered which route I should take. As I contemplated this, two guys appeared from behind a bush where they were hiding. I then weighed up the situation and thought it would be best if I walked back in the direction of campus and fortunately there were guys coming from campus walking my way and the two guys ran off into the bushes. They ran off because I told the group of students what I suspected the two guys were up to and pointed at them (Graham, Hector Peterson Residence).*

Two men who hid behind bushes on the field were immediately viewed with suspicion. After many complaints from students about the height of the bushes, they are now regularly mowed. Graham's case emphasises the point that awareness of suspicious behaviour is a tactic of safety. Following 'instinct', as Melanie stated, is viewed as a reliable way to stay safe. This was what Graham relied on although he was new to the area. When he told others about the men they disappeared.

In situations where students are uncertain of whether or not a suspicious-looking person may pose a threat, they tend to look for a sign from the oncomer to either confirm their suspicion or refute it. Graham 'tested' a suspicious oncomer by greeting him to see what the response would be.

*One Saturday evening walking from campus, I was about to swipe myself out of*

*the gate and saw someone sitting close to the entrance with a cellphone. The person looked suspicious and I felt uncomfortable. Weighing up the situation I wanted to stay inside campus, but then just swiped myself out and greeted the guy. The guy returned my greeting and I just walked by. Other times in situations like that I would just start up a conversation with a security guard at the gate until things are settled for me to pass (Graham, Hector Peterson Residence).*

Because the oncomer responded by greeting, Graham felt assured that it was fine to proceed, and thus continued walking. Graham generally greets passers-by because it gives him a feeling of control in environments which make him feel unsafe – such as crossing the field or using taxis. His sunglasses also help him to scrutinise oncomers without them realising it.

To Phumzile, oncomers who do or do not greet her also serve to confirm or refute her suspicions – this is in addition to the type of clothes the person wears. However, other types of behaviour also serve this purpose.

*As we walked, a guy walked behind us. He wore tekkies, ¾ shorts, a t-shirt and a jacket. We slowed down allowing him to pass. As he passed, I greeted him because people usually greet in return, but this guy did not. So when he was in front of us, he continuously turned back to look at us, and this made him very suspicious. We then walked in such a way as to see if we could get rid of him and walked to Sasol garage. When we came out of the garage, we saw him standing where we had to pass to walk to the hostel. Then some other students who walked with suitcases came and he followed them closely. It was as if he was trying to see what they had on them. I then went to tell someone inside the shop about this guy and they called the police. After that I accepted a lift to the hostel (Phumzile, Hector Peterson Residence).*

The clothes someone wears are not a determining factor of present danger. In this case, what was more prominent as an indicator of danger was the man's strange behaviour: not greeting Phumzile and her friend in return and turning back to look at them continuously. His behaviour was thus out of place for someone not interested in harming them. When he followed them he confirmed their suspicions.

### *Distinguishing between safe and unsafe spaces*

People generally identify violence as occurring in specific places and spaces.

Potentially violent spaces tend to be associated with 'public spaces'. Outside of the 'public' domain, that is in 'private' spaces, it seems to be more difficult to make sense of violence (Richardson and May 1999: 312). In relation to this, some of the participants felt safer when in the confines of the campus. Phillip experienced being on campus with some ambivalence.

*Being on campus does not even feel safe because a friend of mine was stabbed on campus one night. There was even a joke that I heard once, that anybody who walks around late at night is a foreigner and will be killed. This implies then that the locals do not work until late. Even at the gates on campus, people who are not students are let in so easily, while students who occasionally forget their student cards are harassed, even if security staff know the student passed by for years. This makes campus a very unsafe place (Phillip, Hector Peterson Residence).*

Being on campus does not necessarily make Phillip feel safe, despite the security staff that patrol regularly. The stabbing of a friend heightened Phillip's feelings of unsafety. His status as a foreigner and experience of xenophobia strengthened this sense of being unsafe. Furthermore, easy access allowed to outsiders onto the campus increases the risk of the presence of violent people who come to The Barn and to Condom Square, which often results in fights.



Fig.1.3 - The Barn, where students go for drinks and to dance. Fights are known to occur outside after people vacate The Barn

*Walking past Condom Square on a Friday night is particularly dangerous because people smoke dagga, get drunk there and loud music is always heard playing*



*there. If anything should happen to me there and I scream, nobody would be able to hear because the music will muffle the sound. One day I even saw condoms and a pair of panties lying there (Catherine, Eduardo Dos Santos Residence).*



Figure 1.4 - Condom Square, which is adjacent to The Barn. According to rumours, a woman student was raped here - Photo by author

To the stranger's eye, The Barn and Condom Square may look like places of relaxation which offer extra-mural activities to students. On weekends one might get a different picture due to the rowdiness, the loud music, the smell of alcohol and marijuana and the poor lighting at night, all coming from the direction of those two places. As a result of this, students feel unsafe, especially when fights break out. Catherine's fear that if something happens to her nobody will hear, makes her feel unsafe whenever she passes by *en route* to campus. The sight of a pair of panties and condoms gave her the feeling that forced sex had happened and that she might be in danger. A reported instance of attempted rape also took place on Condom Square when a number of men jumped from the trees and tried to rape a woman student. She managed to free herself. Stories about Condom Square, although not corresponding with what Campus Protection Services report, may also make students feel unsafe. Avoiding such a space is a safety tactic.

*The place on campus which seems unsafe to me is the area in front of The Barn, that whole area is unsafe. Last year a lady was raped there by guys who jumped out of the tree (Catherine, Eduardo Dos Santos Residence).*

A staff member from Campus Protection Services stated that it was an attempted rape, not a 'real' one. The student's mother wrote a letter to the university in which she made clear that it was an attempted rape case. But students feel unsafe in the area of Condom Square because people get drunk there and become aggressive. Because 'outsiders' come into The Barn, students feel unsafe. Women also get drunk and once they leave The Barn, men follow them to their rooms and may 'take advantage of them'.

*I mean you can see people, even if we go there (The Barn) now. ... people who, there are those people who do not have cards to go to the tavern, so you don't know. You can just feel that these people they might do something to me (Khaya, Eduardo Dos Santos Residence).*

Coming from Gauteng Province, being in the Western Cape makes Bulelwa feel uncomfortable, especially in the townships. Additionally, Bulelwa feels that being asked on a date may pose danger to her as well, as Xhosa-speakers in the Western Cape ask women out on dates, with sex as their motive. Aware of what happened to her friend when she consented to a date with a man, Bulelwa declines going on dates outside of her sphere of safety.

*It is very rough here in Western Cape and there are skollies. When one goes to the townships one cannot talk on the [cell]phone during the day outside in the streets. People cannot wear Levi's or expensive clothes. This life was never dreamed of. People rob with a knife. People put steel pipes on their faces probably because something happened to them. I usually go to Guguletu to braai there with her friends (Bulelwa, Coline Williams Residence).*

Bulelwa's tactic for safety is to be extra careful when asked out on dates. What happened to her friend refined her ability to distinguish between safety and unsafety.

*Men around here (Western Cape), when they take a woman out, especially the Xhosas, they expect sex. They wanted to do this with her but she refused. If men take women out they want to chow them. One friend went to Century City with a man and she did not want to go home with him so he left her there. He then came to fetch her the next day, slapped her and broke her phone. The guys back home will take women out and take them home without chowing them. But a lot of women want to be chowed. If a man wants to get a woman for the night he must*

*take her to the pub and then chow her. This is how men see girls now* (Bulelwa, Coline Williams Residence).

### *Conclusion*

This essay addressed various issues around living in a violent environment. Its main argument was that being aware of dangerous spaces and people who may pose threats aid in maintaining safety. At the same time, being aware of potentially dangerous spaces and 'shady' characters, may also cause fear among students. In light of this, students use tactics to restore a symbolic order, so that despite the fact that they may be fearful whenever treading in those potentially dangerous spaces, they can use tactics to keep themselves safe. I investigated the idea that there is safety in numbers especially since evidence suggests that group dynamics often influence whether or not bystanders of violence will intervene to help the victim. I found that it is the imaginary safety when in a crowd that creates feelings of safety among students and not being in a group *per se*. Awareness of dangerous places such as trains that pose danger to commuters often forces students to survive through drastic measures, but prior information helps to reduce chances of fatality. Students would, for example, stay away from broken windows in trains and spread stories which help other students identify potential danger. Of course gender roles and stereotypes influence how people respond to violence since they cause people to behave in certain ways in relation to them. I argue that the environments women grow up in and the absence of messages that counter the perceived 'weakness' of women, perpetuate and may exacerbate violence toward them since they challenge and curb potential perpetrators of violence. Women tend to favour the value of male characteristics above their own, which certainly has implications when dealing with violence especially when women are raised to believe they are vulnerable and weak in relation to violence and should rather stay indoors because they are at risk as women. Men on the other hand are taught to believe that they are more powerful in relation to violence and that they will be able to defend themselves. This proves that the social construction of violence is a highly gendered process. Furthermore, stories people hear about violence also increase the awareness of danger and inform the tactics people use to stay safe. Finally, recognising 'shady' characters alerts students to oncoming danger and allows them to use tactics for escape or retreat to a safe space. The markers of potentially dangerous characters include strange behaviours, when for example someone continuously turns back and looks at you, or does not greet in return. Recognising such clues

helps students escape from potential dangers, but these clues are not static since students may also misrecognise such clues. While this chapter focused primarily on the tactics students use to stay safe in the vicinity of the university, the following chapter addresses the university's contribution to a safe environment for its students.

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# **From The Web - University of Oxford - Podcasts from The School of Anthropology & Museum Ethnography**

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# **Efficacy of Tourism as a Tool for Local Community Development: A Case Study of Mombassa, Kenya**



Mombassa Market  
Hall

Having unique indigenous cultures, nature-based attractions, beautiful landscapes, and pleasant weather conditions, local communities in Africa, and other Third World countries, are increasingly being promoted and marketed in major tourist generating countries, particularly in Europe and North America, as offering immense touristic and recreational opportunities. Particularly, indigenous communities in the Third World are perceived as providing abundant opportunities for rich tourists from the North who have got the financial resources to spend in adventure and exotic recreational activities. As a consequence, an increasing number of international tourists are travelling to different tourist destinations in Africa and other less developed regions of the world. In 2001 for instance, over 28 million international tourists, mainly from Europe and North America, travelled to different destinations in Africa. It is further estimated that with the current international growth rate of the tourism industry, over 77 million international tourists will visit Africa by the year 2020 (WTO 2004).

Neo-classical economists and development experts contend that unlike factor driven technology based development, local communities in Africa and other parts of the Third World have a comparative advantage in the development of tourism and other non-technology based economic sectors. The development of tourism amongst local communities is, therefore, perceived as fitting quite well with the 'natural process of development based on comparative advantage' (Brohman 1996). This argument is based on the premise that local communities, particularly in Africa, should mainly specialise in primary exports, including tourism, where they have comparative advantage rather than depending on technology based economic sectors that do not conform with the principles of comparative advantage in the global market demand.

Particularly, local communities in sub-Saharan Africa are usually perceived as having a comparative advantage in the development of tourism. This is due to the fact that they possess unique indigenous cultural and nature-based attractions that the Western tourists lack in their transformed and urbanised environments (Butler and Hinch 1996; Cohen 1996). Many Western tourists are haggling for these forms of touristic attractions in order to escape from the perceived monotony of everyday life in the often over-crowded and congested urban conglomerates. In this regard, tourists want to travel to other places, albeit temporarily, in order to escape from the monotony of routine life and are, therefore, looking for alternative environments that are perceived as having fascinating indigenous cultures and pristine nature attractions (Smith 1995; Sharpley 1999).

Further, it is also argued that the development of tourism, particularly the development of community-based tourism in Africa and other Third World countries will, in the long run, assist in the promotion of cross-cultural understanding and social harmony amongst local host communities and tourists (Richter 1994; Nash 1996; Harrison 2000). Tourism will, therefore, assist in minimising existing stereotypes and misrepresentations of indigenous cultures. It is therefore assumed that as tourists visit and experience indigenous cultures, their overall understanding of those cultures will be enhanced and, thus, existing stereotypes and misrepresentations will be minimised (De Kadt 1979; Butler and Hinch 1996). In this regard, tourism can contribute to the promotion of international harmony and cross-cultural understanding.

### *Indigenous communities*

However, tourism researchers (Bachmann 1988; Debbage 1990; Agarwal 1997) contend that in most instances, local communities in Third World countries, particularly in Africa, are not appropriately represented in the planning, design, development and management of their respective indigenous cultural and nature based resources for tourism. As a consequence, members of respective indigenous communities are usually not appropriately represented in the commodification process in which local cultural or nature based resources are transformed into tourism products to be presented and sold to tourists. Thus, there are a number of critical issues as concerns the development of tourism in most developing countries, particularly in Africa, which call into question the efficacy of tourism as a tool for socio-economic development. These issues include foreign domination and dependency, inequitable distribution and development, cultural and environmental degradation, and loss of control and cultural identity, as well as the over-arching role of the state in the control and management of tourism resources (Bachmann 1988; Sinclair 1990; Sindiga 2000; Akama 2004).

The lack of representation of indigenous local communities in the commodification process raises fundamental questions, particularly, as pertains to the control of cultural tourism products and the ownership of natural resources. This inevitably leads to the question of equitable distribution of the revenues that accrue from the presentation of indigenous cultural attractions to (non-consumptive use) or the exploitation of natural resources (both consumptive and non-consumptive use) by tourists.

These forms of tourism development may lead to an increased reinforcement of the colonial images of Africa as a '*dark continent*' inhabited by belligerent and savage tribes which form additional anecdotes for international tourists haggling for exoticism and adventure in the African wilderness (Akama 1999; Wels 2000; Sharpley 1999; Sindiga 2000). Thus, in line with the above observations, it can be argued that if the development of tourism has to contribute to sustainable local community development and cross-cultural understanding, there is urgent need to rethink the manner in which tourism is being developed in Africa in order to come up with alternative development strategies which put local African communities at the centre of tourism development initiatives.

Moreover, the development of unplanned mass tourism that mainly responds to short-term exogenous socio-economic and political factors that are not connected with the needs of local people usually leads to a high leakage of tourism revenues.

This results in lower linkage and a minimal multiplier effect that may not lead to long-term sustainable socio-economic development and an overall stimulation of economic growth within local African communities (Britton 1982; Oglethorpe 1984; Sinclair 1990). In this regard, it should therefore be stated that the initiation of alternative tourism strategies that put the interests of local communities at the centre of the tourism development process is highly likely to enhance an equitable distribution of tourism revenues. Also, these forms of alternative tourism development may lead to the reduction of high leakage rates and increase the multiplier effects of tourism. This in particular will also stimulate the overall development and economic growth and will also lead to a reduction in levels of poverty amongst local people.

### *Grassroot level*

Furthermore, it should also be stated that, in most instances, the debate on the efficacy of tourists as a tool for sustainable local community development is mainly conducted in the international and/or national arena, whereas there is minimal analysis that is conducted on tourism development at local community grassroots level. Particularly, there is a paucity of information on socio-cultural and economic impacts of tourism development on local communities in Africa and on the existing forms of interaction between tourists and host communities. This scenario should be of major concern when realising that tourism has become a major socio-economic and cultural phenomenon affecting local communities in Africa and other parts of the Third World.

For instance, it has been observed in different parts of the world, particularly in many Third World countries, that the rapid development of mass tourism can overwhelm local communities and the environment having far-reaching negative socio-ecological and economic impacts. Moreover, tourism can contribute to the exacerbation of the already existing socio-economic division and inequity by widening the gap between the beneficiaries of tourism and those who are already marginalised by the current forms of development.

Consequently, to be of any meaning to marginalised local communities and individuals, especially in developing countries such as Kenya, tourism development should be viewed as being part of a broader alternative policy framework that is designed to achieve a sustainable society. Tourism development should, therefore not be seen as an end in itself, but should be viewed as one of several alternative development strategies that can assist local communities in



overcoming their socio-economic and developmental weaknesses, preserving their strengths and enhancing their developmental opportunities. Furthermore, in order to put in proper perspective the role of tourism as a tool for sustainable local community development, it is important to analyse the forms of tourism employment undertaken by the local people.

### *The Mombassa case study*

This research uses the case study of Mombassa and adjacent townships in Kenya's coastal region to analyse the role played by tourism as one of the options for sustainable local community development. Mombassa is a leading tourist destination in Eastern Africa with the highest concentration of tourism and hospitality facilities and infrastructure. Moreover, Kenya provides a good example of an African country that has embraced tourism as a tool for socio-economic development. In recent years, Kenya has increasingly become a popular tourist destination for visitors from Europe, North America and other emerging tourist generating regions, particularly Southeast Asia. Currently, the country receives over 6% of the total international tourist arrivals to Africa, and the relative importance of tourism to Kenya's economy has risen steadily over the last 40 years (Kenya Government 2002: 140).



The Kenyan government continues to spearhead the development of tourism as a reliable source of socio-economic growth and local community development. As a consequence, due to direct government involvement and foreign capital investment, Kenya's coastal region, particularly Mombassa Resort Town, has experienced a rapid development of tourism facilities and infrastructure in recent years. Thus, for instance, of the over 1000 registered high-class tourist hotels in the country, over half are located on the coast. Along the Kenyan coast itself, the location of the tourism facilities and infrastructure is mainly concentrated within a few central locations such as Mombassa, Malindi and Diani. It has been estimated that Mombassa and the adjacent townships receive over one third (about 500 000 per annum) of the total international tourist arrivals to Kenya. It has been noted that most of these international tourists book all-inclusive tour packages. In this form of travel arrangement tourists prepay for most components of travel including accommodation, catering services and transport to overseas tour operators and travel agents. Thus, there is minimal expenditure in the

destination, estimated at less than US\$100 per day (Kenya Government 2002: 50).

The collection of data and information used in this research was conducted in two distinct stages. The first stage involved a search and compilation of relevant information and data regarding critical issues on tourism development and the industry's role as a tool for local community development. The information was mainly acquired from primary and secondary sources including university libraries, government and tourism related NGOs. The second stage of data collection involved conducting field interviews and surveys in different locations in Mombassa (i.e., Old Town, and city centre) and adjacent townships (i.e. Kisauni, Likoni and Changamwe). This was undertaken over a two-month-period (June to July 2002). In total, 227 local residents were interviewed, and in addition to this, scheduled dialogue and discussion was conducted with selected private and public sector representatives, local community leaders and politicians. Finally, the data and information were organised, tabulated and analysed using computer statistical packages.

### *Data analysis and presentation of research findings*

#### *Economic benefits of tourism to the local residents*

Interestingly, an overwhelming 91 per cent of the local residents stated that tourism has, over the years, benefited the people of Mombassa and the adjacent townships. When asked, specifically, to state the forms of benefits that accrue to local people from tourism, a significant 58 per cent of the respondents listed employment opportunities, followed by 34 per cent who listed the availability of business opportunities (see table 5.2, end of chapter). In this regard, it is generally accepted that the development of tourism creates employment and business opportunities for both the local community and other tourism investors. Moreover, proponents of tourism contend that since the industry is labour intensive, it has great potential in creating employment opportunities, particularly in economically depressed regions. As a consequence, many developing countries such as Kenya that have serious problems of unemployment and increasing levels of poverty, the tourism industry is usually perceived as a major source of much-wanted employment and income generation.

However, in order to put in proper perspective the role of tourism as a tool for sustainable local community development, it is important to analyse the forms of tourism employment that are usually undertaken by local people. As will be shown

later, in most instances, the majority of local residents who are working in the tourism industry in Mombassa and other tourism centres in Kenya tend to occupy unskilled, servile and low-paying job positions like waiters, gardeners, porters, janitors and security guides, whereas, in most instances, the well paying job positions, at supervisory and managerial level, are taken by expatriates. Furthermore, it has been estimated that over 60 per cent of the tourism and hospitality establishments in the coastal region are under foreign control and management, with the remaining 40 per cent mainly owned by the government and upcountry people.

When asked to state whom they thought benefited most from the tourism industry, a significant 56 per cent of the local residents listed the private firms (i.e. hoteliers, tour operators and travel agents); this was followed by 36 per cent of the people listing the central government. Only 6 per cent of the respondents listed local residents as benefiting most from tourism. Also, when asked specifically to state what they thought was the most serious problem confronting the local people, an overwhelming 70 per cent of the interviewees listed poverty and poor living conditions, followed by unemployment and increasing levels of school dropout among the youth respectively.

#### *Forms of interaction between international tourists and local residents*

About 30 per cent of the respondents stated that it is the pristine tropical beaches that mainly attracts tourists to Mombassa, while 26 per cent of the respondents listed the pleasant weather conditions. Only 5 per cent of the local residents listed culture as a main attribute that attracts the tourists to the town (Table 2). Consequently, it can be suggested that, probably, the local residents are not even aware that the unique cultural attractions are a main attribute that attracts tourists to the town. A significant 50 per cent of the local people stated that they interact with the international tourists on a regular and/or daily basis, whereas 44 per cent stated that they, occasionally, interact with the tourists. When asked to list the main locations in the town where they usually interact with the tourists, 64 per cent of the respondents listed their workplace. This was followed by 33 per cent of the interviewees who stated that they mainly interact with the tourists in recreational and entertainment centres. However, only 2 per cent of the local people stated that they mainly interact with the tourists in the residential areas. This confirms the fact that, in most instances, tour guides rarely take tourists for scheduled excursions to residential areas of the town.

Interestingly, an overwhelming 75 per cent of the sample of local residents stated that they relate well with the international tourists. The people said that, quite often, the international tourists are appreciative of the local people's lifestyles (i.e., local music and dance, indigenous cuisines and the friendly demeanour of the local waswahili inhabitants). Although this observation may need further investigation, this is an important perspective as far as the development of tourism in Mombassa in particular and Kenya in general is concerned. It appears that a majority of the residents are receptive and friendly to international tourists.

In this regard, it can be argued that it could be to the advantage of the tourism industry to take the tourists closer to the local residents (i.e. by organising scheduled excursions to residential and indigenous cultural sites. A number of cultural activities and sites can be developed and managed by the local people where tourists can visit at a stipulated amount of fees; thus generating much-sought-after income for the local people. Asked to state some of the vices that are brought about by the tourism industry, 16 per cent of the respondents listed prostitution, and 10 per cent listed drug taking and drug trafficking. Also, 10 per cent of the respondents stated the high price of commodities due to an increased demand for goods and services, whereas 7 per cent mentioned pimping and hustling, and increased crime rates, and 5 per cent listed harassment of vendors by the local police.

### *Discussion*

The total population of Mombassa and the adjacent townships of Likoni, Kisauni and Changamwe is about 1 million people. Mombassa town in particular, and the Kenyan coastal region in general, is classified by the government as one of the regions in the country with high poverty rates and poor living conditions (Kenya Government 1999). It has been estimated that over 50 per cent of the residents of Mombassa live below the poverty line – earning less than Kshs.100 (ca. 1 euro) per day. The indicators of poverty among the local people include the inability to afford daily basic needs to support life including clothing, shelter and food. In addition, the local residents are more and more unable to access and control basic resources and services such as education, health, water and sanitation. It has also been estimated that over 60 per cent of the residents of Mombassa and the adjacent townships live in slum environments that lack basic infrastructure, amenities and sanitation services. Paradoxically, some of these slum settlements have in recent years sprung up in areas adjacent to the luxurious tourist hotels

and condominiums.

However, as shown above, most of the local residents who were interviewed perceive the development of tourism as being beneficial to the local people. They stated that the tourism industry has created employment and business opportunities. These local perceptions as to tourism's role in local community development should be put into proper perspective. It can be argued that in a socio-economic environment where most of the people live in extreme poverty and resource deprivation, the development of tourism may be perceived as a source of much-wanted employment. This is much in the same way as the national government perceives tourism as the source of much desired foreign exchange revenues.

However, it should be stated that the job positions in the tourism and hospitality industry that are taken by the local people are mainly menial and low-level unskilled job positions. These menial job positions include labourers, gardeners, genitors, guides, porters, drivers and waiters. Whereas, in most instances, the skilled high-paying managerial job positions are mainly occupied by expatriates. It has been argued that most of the foreign and multinational investors in the tourism and hospitality industry tend to hire expatriate staff for high-level supervisory and managerial positions because of the preconceived belief that a large number of expatriates assures higher quality service (Dieke 1991). As Sindiga (2000) states, this view is fallacious; nonetheless, it is a misperception that denies well-paying managerial jobs to indigenous people.

In this regard, it should be asked if tourism is a main economic sector in Mombassa and other tourism centres in Kenya, what role is the industry playing in the improvement of the living conditions of the local people? How come there are increasing levels of poverty and poor living conditions among most local residents of Mombassa after over 40 years of tourism development? Who benefit most from the tourism industry and why? Is tourism an appropriate tool for sustainable local community development? What strategies can be put in place so that the development of tourism benefits the local people directly? These are the core questions that are addressed in this study.

#### *The nature of Kenya's tourism industry*

Over the years, the Kenyan government has mainly promoted the development of large-scale tourism and hospitality projects such as beach resorts, high-rise

hotels, lodges and restaurants in Mombassa and other tourism centres in the country. Most of the large tourism projects have been initiated with the assistance of foreign and multinational capital investments (Dieke 1991; Sindiga 2000; Akama 2004). These forms of capital-intensive programmes have tended to preclude local participation in tourism project design and management. As a consequence, the local people do not directly participate in the provision of the core tourism and hospitality services (which generate most profit) such as transportation, accommodation, catering services and management of the tourism attractions. Most of the local residents mainly engage in peripheral and informal business activities (which generate minimal or no profit) such as hawking and vending of souvenirs and other goods along the streets. Thus, the provision of core tourism and hospitality service is mainly under the control and management of foreign and multinational tourism investors.

Furthermore, the promotion and marketing of Kenya's tourism products in tourist-generating countries is mainly controlled by overseas tour operators and travel companies (Sindiga 2000; Akama 2004). In order to maximise their profit margin, overseas tour companies mainly market inclusive tour packages to Kenya. In these forms of travel arrangements, prospective visitors pay overseas tour companies for a complete travel package. The payment arrangements include almost all travel components, such as air tickets, food, accommodation and recreational activities.

It has been estimated that in these forms of tour packages leakages of tourism revenues to overseas companies may range from 40 to 70 per cent (Sinclair 1990; Kenya Government 2004). Consequently, there is external control in almost all aspects of the Kenyan tourism industry, including the design and packaging of the tourism product, the provision of hospitality services, transport and accommodation arrangements, and product promotion and marketing. These forms of tourism development, with substantial ownership and management of tourism establishments by foreign and multinational investors, have resulted in high leakages of the tourism revenues to external sources (Sindiga 2000; Akama 2004).

Moreover, recent global economic trends indicate that the economies of developing countries, particularly African countries such as Kenya, are highly vulnerable and are increasingly being affected by processes of economic globalisation and increasing dominance and control by multinational corporations

of global markets. As Debbage (1990: 515) postulates, 'the increasing oligopolistic structure of the international tourism industry indicates the intrinsic value of the profit cycle in explaining how oligopoly can shape product-cycle of a resort'. In consequence, the development of tourism in most African and other Third World countries is increasingly being influenced by unpredictable processes of global oligopoly (i.e. the increasing control of the international tourism market by a small number of multinational companies). The multinational tourism and travel companies can, for instance, shift the international tourism demand among various undifferentiated destinations in developing countries, depending on emerging profit considerations. This may cause unforeseeable disruption to tourism development in developing countries, particularly in Africa (Debbage 1990; Sinclair 1990; Akama 1999, 2004).

As a consequence, the marketing and promotion of Mombassa's tourist attractions are mostly under the control of overseas tour companies and their local subsidiaries with minimal or little say from the local residents on how the attractions should be marketed in tourist-generating countries. These tour operators have over the years specialised in the design and development of promotional and marketing images of various destinations in developing countries such as Kenya (Dieke 1991; Rodricks 2001). The tourism promotional and marketing information is usually aimed at communicating particular messages and information on various tourist destinations and/or tour packages that are marketed to prospect tourists. For instance, magnificent pictures of grandeur beach hotels, lodges and condominiums, and splendid sand beaches without a trace of local people may be presented in advertising brochures and other marketing channels with the aim of creating an aura of idyllic pristine and unspoilt glittering tropical sand beach destinations that are ideal for relaxation.



Moreover, in most instances, overseas tour operators and travel agents have preconceived ideas on the forms of marketing and promotional images of developing countries that they would like to present to prospective tourists in tourist-generating countries in order to promote market sales and increase their profit margins (Sinclair 1990; Morgan and Pritchard 1998). Thus, for instance, although Mombassa and its surrounding environs have diverse cultural and nature-based attractions, only a limited image of Mombassa is presented to prospective

tourists. This includes the grandeur tourist hotels and condominiums that are owned by foreign investors, the pristine beach attractions, Fort Jesus (a seventeenth century military fort that was built by the Portuguese explorers), and Haller Park (a nature trail that is owned by a multinational company). In fact, sometimes scenes of the pristine tropical sand beaches, the imposing structure of Fort Jesus and Haller Park are presented in promotional and marketing brochures without any mentioning of the local people and the existing diverse indigenous cultures.

It can therefore be argued that the local people have been disenfranchised in the commodification process and marketing of local tourism resources. The local people are, usually, not involved nor are they represented in the commodification process of transforming and packaging existing nature based and cultural attractions into tourism products that are presented and sold to prospective tourists. This lack of involvement and representation of local communities in the commodification process and tourism product development raises serious and fundamental questions, particularly pertaining to the authenticity of cultural tourism products, and equitable distribution of the revenues that accrue from the tourism industry.

Indeed, when the international tourists arrive in Mombassa and other places in the country, they already have preconceived ideas and expectations of what they are going to see based on how they have been informed by overseas tour operators and travel agents. Thus, a trip to Mombassa for most international tourists is usually a routine and predictable affair. It mainly involves spending most of their time on the beaches adjacent to the tourist hotel and may include organised brief excursions to Fort Jesus, Old Mombassa Town and Haller Park (lasting for a few hours), before leaving Mombassa for more extensive wildlife safari excursions in the inland wildlife parks and reserves.

Moreover, quite often, international tourists are given inaccurate and exaggerated information concerning the local security situation. For instance, the tourists may be informed by tour guides that areas with high concentrations of local residents, particularly the residential areas, have high rates of crime and mugging; this is intended to scare and discourage tourists from venturing into any other areas of town apart from prescribed sites. However, this may be contrary to the real situation on the ground. The over-cautiousness of tour guides has a bearing to the nature of their training in which they have been oriented to take



security issues and the safety concerns of visitor quite seriously in order to pre-empt any likelihood of putting tourists in arms' way. Also, most tour itineraries are structured in such a manner that they, mainly, earmark major touristic landmarks such as Fort Jesus, Haller Park and wildlife attractions for visitation, thus excluding other unique cultural features involving local people, such as the rich Swahili culture.

### *Policy implications and conclusion*

Over the last 40 years, the state has mainly promoted the development of large-scale tourism projects such as beach resorts, high-rise hotels, lodges and restaurants in Mombassa and the country's other tourism centres. Most of the large tourism projects have been initiated with the assistance of foreign private and multinational capital investment. As discussed in this study, large-scale, capital intensive programmes have tended to preclude local participation in tourism project design, management and ownership of the tourism resources and facilities. Most of the tourism establishments in Mombassa in particular and Kenya in general are externally oriented, and mainly respond to exogenous socioeconomic factors. Consequently there is a high leakage of tourism revenues (ranging from 40 to 70 per cent of the gross tourism revenues) resulting in lower linkage and multiplier effects with other domestic economic sectors to stimulate local, regional and national economic growth.

Consequently, for the tourism industry to contribute to the long-term sustainable development of the local people in Mombassa and other tourism centres, an alternative tourism development strategy is required which addresses issues of external control and management of the tourism industry, and the inequitable distribution of the tourism revenues. In this regard, the principal objectives of the alternative tourism strategy should include: enhancement of equitable distribution of the tourism revenues; increasing local participation in tourism decision-making processes; reduction of the high leakage rates and increase of the multiplier effects of tourism; and minimization of the social and environmental impacts of tourism.

Policies and institutional mechanisms need to be put in place that encourage local participation in the design, implementation and management of tourism projects and local use of the tourism resources. For local participation in the tourism decision-making processes to succeed, local people need sanctioned authority to enable them to implement local tourism projects responsibly. This has to include

authority for tourism and cultural resource proprietorship to determine and sanction user rights including the right to determine the types of tourism projects to be initiated and the right to benefit fully from the local tourism resources. The authority should also include the right to sanction access to the local cultural and nature-based tourism resources and protection from any external encroachment of powerful interest groups including local elites.

At least, local communities should be empowered to determine what forms of tourism projects they want to be developed in their respective communities, and how the tourism costs and benefits are to be shared among different stakeholders. To achieve this, socio-political changes will require the decentralization of tourism authority and decision-making processes from the national level to democratically elected local and grassroots institutions and organizations, such as municipal councils, welfare societies and local cultural groups.

In Mombassa and the adjacent townships, for instance, the design and development of alternative tourism projects can be done in concert with existing resort tourism activities. Here, integrated tourism projects can be developed which will assist in moving tourists away from the concentrated beach resorts and a few tourism sites to other underutilized tourist attractions, particularly the rich and diverse local cultures. Integrated tourism projects can be developed, for instance, that incorporate the hospitable local culture, historical monuments, and contemporary African handicraft and art. In addition, aspects of ecotourism and visits to the mangrove forests, bird-watching and sport-fishing in the coastal creeks and lagoons can be incorporated in the integrated tourism projects. Community-based local tourism projects that are designed and implemented through community consensus, other than centrally planned (top-down) tourism programmes may also enhance the opportunity for spontaneous, rather than contrived, encounters between the local people and tourists, such as stage-managed troupe dances and the provision of servile services to tourists. Also, local community based tourism projects will possibly lead to increased linkages and multiplier effect with other local economic sub-sectors.

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# **When Congo Wants To Go To School - Educational Organisation In The Belgian Congo (1908-1958)**



Classroom rear view, Nsona Mbata (Matadi), 1920

*Contexts*

The first part of this study will concentrate on the wider environment within which daily practice of colonial education is situated. It progresses in three stages in accordance with the aim of the research. Three chapters correspond with these three stages. The general, macro-institutional context of the phenomenon of colonial education is considered in the *first chapter*. This includes a discussion of the organisational development and politico-strategic factors that influenced this phenomenon. The development of the educational structures is indicated from the angle of the interaction between state intervention and the Catholic initiative. Within that framework the major themes in the content and emphasis of colonial lesson plans are also considered, as are the opinions on these subjects. Finally, figures are given to allow an estimate of the quantitative development of education in the colony. The *second chapter* shifts the focus to Belgium. The preparation, training, ideas and worldview with which the missionaries left for the Belgian Congo will be considered more closely. This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part considers a number of broad social and historical factors that played a part in the formation of the missionaries' general intellectual baggage. Mainly results of existing research are presented and discussed in this part. The second part takes a closer look at the people who are of specific interest to us, covering the preparation and training given to the Sacred Heart Missionaries in Belgium and using specific source material. In the *third chapter* we make the journey to the Congo together with these missionaries. A number of elements are given in a short outline that also constitute the direct context of their work. Firstly, a description is given of the creation and growth of the mission region in which they were active. Then follows the introduction of the other missionary congregations, with which the Sacred Heart Missionaries cooperated. Finally, quantitative data are brought together with regard to the development of education, both for the mission region as a whole and for the various mission posts separately.

### *Educational organisation in the Belgian Congo (1908-1958)[1]*

Before attempting to create an image of the educational development in the vicariate of the MSC on the basis of figures and other concrete data it is perhaps useful to consider the official educational organisation in the Belgian Congo.[2] The term 'official' should be taken with great circumspection in this. After all, the interaction between the state, which would logically be associated with the term "official" and the (catholic) missions, proved a constitutive element in the development of the colonial educational system. As a result an attempt has been

made in this chapter to give an overview of Belgian colonial education from an organisational and politico-strategic angle, in which the relationship between the government and the missionaries is considered. The most extensive study of the development of the school curricula and school populations can be found in Pierre Kita's *Colonisation et enseignement*.<sup>3]</sup> Although his study is clearly much more extensive, gives a general overview and also emphasises the initial impulses of the development of education in the early years of Belgian colonisation, this chapter approaches from a different angle, namely the increase in state intervention in education and the development of the school network. In this way an attempt will be made using contextual (and statistical) data on the development of primary education to sketch a representative framework for the regional trends which are then described.<sup>[4]</sup>

Traditionally it is assumed that the colonisation of the Belgian Congo was the result of a convergence of three players: church, business and state. Each had its own interests and relied on the two others to support it. In order to understand the educational organisation properly it is only necessary to focus on two of these three players. The relationship between the state and the missionaries was certainly not unambiguous. The missionaries were divided into two large groups, the Catholics, by far the majority in the Congo and the Protestants, traditionally well represented in Africa. This is unlike the situation in Belgium where the catholic church had developed to become the official state religion since independence and completely controlled education. The colonial administration was the requesting party for the collaboration with the missionaries, which does not mean that the relationship with those missionaries was always free from criticism or unchanging. In time different currents, preferences and political opinions started to become clear in relation to the colonial educational issue. For practical reasons the remainder of this thesis almost exclusively considers Catholic missionary education. Both non-denominational and protestant education disappear from sight in the following which does not however mean that there was no education other than Catholic education, let alone that it was of no importance.

## *1. First period: starting up education*

### *1.1. The principle: the State proposes, the mission disposes*

The earliest form of colonial education was based on an agreement between the king and the *Propaganda Fide*<sup>[5]</sup> in Rome and with certain congregations of

missionaries. The political organisation of the colony was minimal in the initial period and it was centralised in Brussels. The king established his own colonial government that was responsible for the accounting for his company and contacts with the Congo. From 1885 a department of *Affaires étrangères, Justice et Cultes* was established. This does indicate that the missions immediately occupied an important place in colonial politics. The new administration of the Congo Independent State only had three departments (the other two were the Ministry of Home Affairs and Finance).[6] With regard to education a distinction was made between official schools founded by the state, for which missionaries were relied on and independent education, that was based on the personal initiative of the missionaries and the financial support of which was given by the government. The official schools were the original school colonies, institutions under a quasi-military regime, where children were given practical training under the guardianship of the government. These were also run completely by missionaries.[7] The first step was placed organisationally in 1906 when the predominantly informal agreements between the king and church resulted in the first official text: *"On 26 May 1906, the Holy See and the Independent State signed a Treaty according to the terms of which the Catholic missions, almost completely Belgian, were granted the land required for their work, under a set of conditions, notably the obligation of ensuring general, professional and agricultural education."*[8] It is hard to assess the concrete importance of this Treaty, but according to Pierre Kita it should certainly not be considered the beginning of systematic state intervention. On the contrary, he claims, education was left completely to the initiative and means of the missionaries nor was the quantitative development of the schools stimulated by it. The importance of this treaty is consequently also much more at a political level because it indicated the direction in which education policy would further develop.[9]

On 15 November 1908 the Congo was officially declared a colony of the Belgian state. The administration of the state of Congo now fell under its own ministry, under the direction of a minister who, like the other Belgian ministers, was governed by the Belgian Constitution. After this transition the authority for education and missions remained in the same package, namely in the first general directorate of colonial management. After the First World War the administration was decentralised to the colony. This was accompanied by a reorganisation of the central services in Brussels, in which 'worship' and 'education' formed a separate directorate. The *Charte Coloniale*, to be considered the Founding law of the

Belgian Congo, included the principle of freedom of education from the Belgian Constitution and the authority over education was placed completely on the governor-general: *"He protects and promotes without distinction between nationality or religion, all religious, scientific or charitable institutions and enterprises formed and set-up for this or intended to educate the natives and to allow them to understand and value the advantages of civilisation."*[10]

The concrete provision of education was left *de facto* to the people in the colony. It may be concluded from this that the Belgian government preferred to continue the informal method of Leopold II and to rely completely on the missionaries for the development of a network of schools, that was considered necessary to make it possible to deploy the population in the economic development of the colony. A general assessment for this first period is that education, and more specifically missionary activity, was considered important in the strategy for conquering the colony and the occupation of the territory. The statement from 1916 by the Minister for the Colonies Renkin in a letter to the governor-general is telling in this regard:[11] *"If we could manage to replace the white staff by committed and skilled blacks, the progress would be incredible from a financial, political and economic point of view."*[12] Education may have been presented as a means to bettering oneself, in reality very utilitarian intentions were also involved. However, this double standard was not expressed explicitly. As such, education was not placed on the foreground. It was not made into an issue. It appeared as though education and politics formed a singled discourse. They thought they were both important, needed each other and reinforced each other. Nevertheless at some points major negotiating took place between certain congregations and the government. For example Jules Marchal extensively considered the conflicts relating to financial and organisational problems.[13] And within the administration itself a number of assumptions, prejudices and preferences were maintained, including in relation to the quality of education from certain congregations.[14] The cooperation between Church and State was not however questioned in itself, even though it functioned in a very implicit way, as there was no real legal basis for it. People supported each other: the Catholic missions did not desert Leopold II during the campaigns that arose against his regime and the government relied on the missions, if not from conviction, then at least on economic grounds. The rights of the strongest consequently played an important part in this.[15] The government prospered, the church could use this to the full and the government profited from that in its turn.

## 1.2. Beginning of government involvement

### 1.2.1. The Franck Commission

The '*laissez faire*' attitude that characterised the government's attitude to a great extent was really broken for the first time after the First World War by the liberal Louis Franck.[16] After the initially dismissive attitude of the Belgian government to take over the colony, this was the first time that a person at a government level saw a need also to invest in "the Congo" instead of simply extracting money from it. An economic and social development plan was also developed for the colony under his impetus. Education was also a part of that. Franck brought a commission of experts together to give shape to the colonial educational structure. On 10 July 1922 the "Franck Commission" as it would later be called, was formed. It comprised leading civil servants, people from the educational sector and delegates from various missionary congregations. As shall be shown below, the influence of the Catholics was very great in this commission. More generally, the question may arise as to what encouraged a liberal politician to support and develop catholic education. Numerous reasons have been given for this. Firstly there were grounds of a general political nature. In this way the liberal party was more than prepared in this period to compromise in relation to enduring government participation.[17] In addition there were personal political motives: Franck wanted to secure his own ministerial seat and had to stay on good terms with the Catholics. In the early twenties there had been a serious incident between the governor-general appointed by Franck, Maurice Lippens,[18] whose ideas, e.g. relating to indirect management, conflicted severely with the forces of conservatism among the missionaries.[19] Franck's consideration and the influence of the missionaries may also be partly explained by that.[20] However, these political motives are not enough. One of Franck's most quoted statements relating to colonial education was that "*When concerned with the moral education of the natives, it is important to ensure that we do not transfer our European conceptions to Africa. (...) If Europe has perhaps passed the age of religions, Africa is certainly in the age of religions. No factor exists that may act with more energy and more power on the moral education of the natives than the religious action. (...) Consequently, we shall protect the evangelisation in Africa, without moreover establishing a distinction between the Christian religions.*"[21] Whether this truly related to a personal conviction or the simple far-reaching influence of the administration on the Minister will probably never be completely clear. A combination of both seems most likely. The fact is that it was already generally assumed at the time that this influence existed: the



conventions that arose from the activities of the commission were called the “De Jonghe Conventions”, referring to the director-general at the ministry for the Colonies. Finally, there were certainly also financial considerations in the proceedings. The cooperation with the missions was considered much cheaper than setting-up a complete own educational network.[22]

### 1.2.2. Edouard De Jonghe and his influence

If one person can be indicated as the defining influence on the development of “colonial education”, both in the colony and in Belgium, it is Edouard De Jonghe.[23] De Jonghe was very industrious concerning the colonial curriculum from the end of the First World War. He published a few articles relating to the issue of the further orientation of the education even before the Franck Commission. Already in April 1922 he published an article in the periodical *Congo*, entitled *L’instruction publique au Congo belge*. [24] This article was probably inspired by the criticism that had been given by Lippens with regard to colonial education. De Jonghe even stated in the introduction that criticism could be heard from all sides because the government had done nothing for education and that there was no curriculum in the Congo. He also took responsibility for ensuring more publicity for what he described as “*l’importance et la diversité de leurs oeuvres d’enseignement*”, which was clearly referring to the missions. In the same article he gave a summary of the educational initiatives then existent in the Congo. He assumed the principle of a dichotomy between schools with a utilitarian aim and schools that attempted to perfect the Congolese. He did not want to use the then apparently already common division into ‘official’, ‘subsidised’ and ‘independent’ schools (*écoles officielles, subsidiées ou libres*). In his opinion this division did not have any official or legal basis but was a pure question of facts. Moreover the terms used were apparently also too unclear to base representative statistics on them. However, later in his article another, more strategic reason emerged. Citing the objectives of the Colonial University, De Jonghe assumed that a successful colonisation was only possible if the colonised people got equal or more advantages from it than the colonists. This then allowed him to indicate that the schools that did not have a directly utilitarian use for the coloniser were in fact almost all run by missionaries.[25]

De Jonghe would later also publish extensively on educational issues. A number of those publications shall be considered later in this study. It is clear that a number of De Jonghe’s ideas, put forward in these articles, were finally also included in

the school regulations. This is clear for example in relation to the use of language. Another element that must have contributed and that is not mentioned as such in any of the literature consulted, is the study trip De Jonghe made in the Congo, from July 1924 to January 1925. The trip took place at a time when the provisional *projet d'organisation* already existed. De Jonghe announced his trip to the rector of Leuven University, Mgr. Ladeuze in a letter from June 1924: *"I will end by informing you that Mr Carton would like to entrust me with the task of inspecting the education in the Congo with a view to the organisation of this and the remuneration of the national missions working in education in the Congo."*[26] The fact that this trip was announced barely a month before De Jonghe's departure, while De Jonghe and Ladeuze were in regular contact with each other, indicates that there was some urgency in the matter. However, it is not clear what the exact reasons or causes were for this.

De Jonghe kept a relatively detailed account of the entire trip.[27] It contains a wealth of information on a very extensive number of schools that he visited throughout the country. Occasionally, he also mentioned something about his meetings with specific people, usually missionaries. The report clearly shows that De Jonghe did not hesitate to defend the missionaries and that he did not try to hide his own Catholic inspiration. At one point the account mentions a considerable increase in secular rural schools in the East province, financed by the receipts of the native courts. De Jonghe reacted categorically by stating that the territorial administration was not qualified to supervise the teachers in this type of school and that the education and training of the Africans presupposed the Christian faith, an element that was missing from the secular schools. He also added that the creation of such schools would necessarily result in conflicts with the missionaries.

The general considerations at the end of the account make it possible to deduce that this did relate to a type of inspection visit and that De Jonghe had been given the task of testing what people in the field thought of the project text and how it could be implemented. He described his objectives as follows: *"My objective was to collect general documentation on the schools in the Congo by visiting the schools established on my route, consulting the archives of the General Government and the provincial Governments, conferring with the religious authorities in order to see whether the adoption project for the schools of the national missions is feasible."*[28] It is striking that De Jonghe mentions *projet*

*d'adoption* [adoption project] here, something that was not done in the public discourse relating to the project. It is consequently not surprising that the first conclusion of De Jonghe related to the enthusiasm of the missionaries concerning the financial side of things (the substantial increase and systemisation of the subsidies). Nor would he be stopped by less enthusiastic reactions. A number of smaller congregations expressed objections against the project because their material situation could not fulfil certain subsidy conditions. De Jonghe proposed to offer them a transitional period, so that they could get themselves in order and to give them a higher subsidy in the meantime. Furthermore he emphasised the need further to develop girls' education and consequently schools in the hands of female religious. A different bell was sounded in relation to the training of Congolese teachers. The missionaries felt that the demands set were too high in relation to their level of education and that they could not be expected to fulfil higher demands than Belgian teachers. In this De Jonghe wrote, "*Experience has shown that the black is not able to produce continuous effort. Left to himself, he will easily return to practices condemned by civilisation.*"[29] Partly as a result of this he believed it was better to have the schools run by missionaries instead of by lay people. Furthermore the missionaries mainly insisted on a regulation that could be adapted very easily to local needs. For instance, the language used when teaching and the time schedules should be adapted in relation to the local situation. (Read: it was not desirable to teach French everywhere and the subsidies should certainly not be made dependent on teaching French). Finally it was also greatly desirable to provide more subsidies for so-called 'urban' schools (*écoles urbaines*) than for rural schools, because they had to comply with higher requirements and because they had to pay their teachers more because of competition with other employers.[30] That account would effectively be taken of these and other remarks, is finally apparent from the last sentence in the account: "*Some other remarks, suggested by the missionaries, have been recorded in the form of amendments to the project (attached) for the organisation of independent schools with the assistance of the national missions.*"[31]

### 1.2.3. Antecedents

However, starting the history of the official school programmes with the activities of the Commission or Louis Franck's commission would not be exact. Although it is true that there is only a question of real organisation in the field from that moment, regulations on the matter had been discussed much earlier. In his work, Pierre Kita mentioned various initiatives, conversations and research that were

launched from various directions during the period before the First World War. He also refers to the educational survey that was carried out during the war, originating from the ministry for the Colonies. It was aimed at company directors, government agents and missionaries. Fabian also refers to this survey in *Language and Colonial Power*. Based on what both authors say it may be concluded that the survey was rather indicative of the way in which colonial education was conceived in the metropole. The questions were apparently rather directional and a great preference was indicated for utilitarian education to the service of the colonisers.[32] Pierre Kita claims that the results of this survey were certainly an instrument of the Franck Commission. However I could not find any solid evidence of this. According to the information given by Fabian, the results of the survey were moreover much too disparate to allow any general conclusions to be drawn. Perhaps it did exercise some indirect influence via the proposals of the colonial administration in London.

In any event this 'London project' appears to be the most important of the proposals from the 1908-1918 period. During their exile in London the members of the ministry for the Colonies maintained negotiations with the mission superiors, that concluded in a proposal for a curriculum which would be applied throughout the colony. Primary education of twice two years was central in this, possibly as a preparation for a number of 'special schools' (clerical school, teacher training or technical school) and a very strong emphasis was placed on manual labour: *"Two hours shall be spent per day on manual labour in both the teacher training school and the primary school. In the other schools 24 hours a week. Manual labour is obligatory to all pupils."*[33] For clarification: the planned total number of hours taught per day was four hours in primary education and five in teacher training. For the rest, concerning curriculum content, there would be a striking similarity between this project and the *Projet d'organisation de l'Enseignement libre au Congo Belge* published by the Ministry for the Colonies in 1925 and that was the first result of the activities of the Franck Commission.

The scheutist Rikken, who wrote a master's thesis on educational organisation in the Congo, quoted extensively from minutes of meetings of church superiors, both in Belgium and the Congo during the period 1918-1919, from which it is apparent that minister Renkin was responsible for belling the cat. He wanted to search for new and preferably more general systems of subsidisation. According to Florent Mortier,[34] who was chairman of the meeting of missionary superiors in

Belgium, Renkin wanted to find a system that “(...) could satisfy any government of any political leaning whatsoever. Moreover he wanted to take the number of missionaries, works undertaken and results obtained into account. Finally he considered that the State and the Government had a duty to subsidise the missions more extensively, this, with regard to the work in the peaceful penetration of education under all the forms undertaken by them. He believed that this measure was all the more necessary as the war had significantly reduced the resources of the missions and the alms of the faithful.”[35] In any event that seems to fit well with a statement by Renkin himself in a memo of January 1918 that stated, “Granting subsidies is based on a simple promise. A political upheaval – this war is an example – may dry up this source. It is essential to ensure a more solid basis for this important work.”[36] That again indicates that there was an issue very early on regarding the concern for the position of Catholic education in the colonial context. That attitude was also apparent at a meeting of the church superiors in the Congo itself: “It would be better to ask the question today even under favourable conditions rather than exposing ourselves to a new struggle for schooling in African territory.”[37]

However, that did not mean that people were willing to accept any system. The missionaries specifically strongly resisted any interference by the state with regard to content. The fact that the missionary-inspector would have to comply with changes in the syllabus, timetable and methods imposed from above, as intended in the London project, was too much.[38] The first intention of the missionaries at this stage was to preserve their absolute authority and their absolute freedom with regard to education. The bishops in the Congo also assumed a much more combative and uncompromising attitude than the church superiors in Belgium.[39] Mortier tried to keep the church in the centre in a letter to the Congolese meeting: “We believe that it must be noted that the meeting at Kisantu seems to have been mistaken of the true scope of the unofficial and confidential positions by the ministry under the administration of Mr Renkin. We would like to point out that it simply relates to starting talks preliminary to a project for a new division of subsidies and to lead the superiors of the missions to formulate their proposals in complete freedom. It would be a mistake to consider this as a sign of less respect for the work of the missions as such or as a risk to the freedom of education. The offices have already revised the document on multiple occasions after our own suggestions and they have shown themselves willing to follow up on any later observations.”[40] In any event it indicates that up

to that point any form of general inspection or systematic regulation had been missing and that the financial support for missionary activities was realised unofficially via individual contracts and requests.

This is confirmed by other sources, cited by Lefebvre.[41] He claimed that the school convention of 1924 did not result in the first state intervention, or the first subsidisation of missionary education. This statement is not strictly incorrect but some of the conclusions Lefebvre drew in relation to the organisation existing at that point do make it possible to reduce the scope of that statement to the correct proportions. With regard to the system of 'acceptance' (and consequently of subsidisation) mentioned by the various parties involved and also by minister for the Colonies Renkin, he claimed: "*A first condition for acceptance was the acceptance of the curriculum drawn up by the State. It may be assumed that this only related to an approval of the curriculum, as the curricula of the various accepted schools were not identical. ... That is even clearer from a letter from Reverend Fr. Declerck, who submitted a curriculum for approval and from a letter from the Minister to Mgr. Roelens in which the Minister approved a curriculum.*"[42] Even if, when interpreting them, strong account must be taken of the context in which such statements were made (Lefebvre was himself a scheutist, and the thesis was written in the fifties and consequently in the midst of the school struggle), it may still be deduced from it that strategic reasoning was present very early on with the Catholic missionaries in relation to their position in the colony.[43] Education then seemed an efficient lever to reinforce that position. The critics of the colonial regime and the missions consequently also emphasised the fact that the main intention of the Catholic missionaries consisted of evangelisation and not education, which was, moreover, not denied by them, ...

Whether the London project proposal consequently had a decisive influence as such on the activities of the Franck Commission is not clear as yet. However it was cited by De Jonghe, who was clearly one of the decisive figures in the commission, in texts that were used as basic material. Except for this project text there was also a text written by De Jonghe himself and another project text by Florent Mortier,[44] a text that was drawn up following the colonial congress of 1921 and the report by the *Phelps Stokes Fund* on education in Africa.[45] This not only confirmed the predominance of catholic opinion within the commission. It also makes it clear that the supporters of adaptionism could make their influence count in relation to the concrete, contextual form of education. The *Phelps Stokes*

report included an intense plea for adapting education to the concrete living conditions of the Africans: *"The wholesale transfer of the educational conventions of Europe and America to the peoples of Africa has certainly not been an act of wisdom, however justly it may be defended as a proof of genuine interest in the Native people."*[46] The term 'adaptation' as defined in more detail in the report rather meant that account must be taken of problems set by the specific context and the specific environment, than that one had to use and show respect for traditions and customs, characteristic of the local population. The introduction of good hygiene, thorough training in agricultural techniques and the development of a healthy and good housekeeping fitted in that picture. For example emphasis was also placed on the fact that the participation of girls in education was much too low and that girls' schools were urgently needed, which would be primarily geared to the preparation of food, and then to 'household comforts' and thirdly to caring and feeding children *"and the occupations that are suited to the interests and the ability of women."*[47] The report also considered a number of concrete cases, including that of the Belgian Congo. De Jonghe had a French summary drawn up of that section and also had it published in the periodical *Congo*. [48] In the report that was published on 'the education and training of blacks' in the report book of the second colonial congress of 1926 and that was undoubtedly also seen by De Jonghe, the readers were referred to the *Phelps Stokes* report with the reference *"They will see there that the English committee recognised an educational policy conforming to that which has been summarised above."*[49]

In the light of the other texts used and which were limited according to De Jonghe to four texts (*Phelps Stokes*, 'a' text of his own, the report of the permanent committee of the Belgian colonial congress and the London proposal), that statement must be interpreted with great circumspection. Recent research has indicated that there were real contacts between Louis Franck and Jesse Jones, the editor of the *Phelps Stokes* report. [50] They met in 1920, in Sierra Leone, before Jones travelled to the Congo. Franck supposedly used that opportunity to mention the idea of education in the native language, an idea that was allegedly later adopted by Jones and which was also present in the report. The adaptionist approach in general was also common to both. It consequently also seems that the guidelines from the foreign report were referred to on numerous occasions to give more weight to personal political choices.

The Franck Commission would finally make a number of recommendations

relating to the principles on which Belgian colonial education should be based. The education was to be attuned to the environment of the Congolese and was not to start from a European perspective; moral education was much more important than (technical) education; education was to be given in the native language as much as possible; the cooperation with the missions with regard to education was to be given absolute priority.[51] The missions were clearly the means, *par excellence*, on which the government wanted to rely for the development of education in the colony. As De Jonghe stated: *"This policy should be preferred to that which would consist of organising an official educational framework. The latter would be very expensive for the Treasury, would not ensure continuity in educational practice, continuity which is an essential component for success and on the other hand, as the budget available is limited, would not succeed in reaching the majority of the natives."*[52]

The conclusions of this commission were published in a project text in 1925, *projet d'organisation de l'enseignement*. [53] However a final version of the curriculum was only produced four years later. As indicated the work of the commission also resulted in the conclusion of conventions between the state and the 'national missions', which assured these of subsidies for twenty years in exchange for the provision of education. Because they had to comply with a number of conditions it almost always related to catholic missions in practice.[54] Protestant missions were, after all, almost without exception, foreign of origin and could consequently not comply with the nationality requirements imposed. This conclusion met the preoccupation already mentioned that was formulated by the Catholics immediately after the First World War to minister Renkin. The missionaries were concerned with truly securing the financial means made available to the missions. Until then there had only been a verbal undertaking to subsidise, which was indeed to be brought in line with the general obligations for the protection and development of evangelisation, as resulting from the international legislation. However any true legal basis was lacking. Ironically the liberal Louis Franck would consequently provide this basis, through the De Jonghe conventions.

### *1.3. The educational curriculum in 1929*

The curriculum that resulted from the work of the Franck Commission, contained a rather modest educational structure which predominately provided for primary schools. A distinction was made between schools in the *centres européens* and



rural schools. The latter were given a minimal curriculum and a duration of two years. This could be longer in the *centres*. The brochure in which the curriculum was published would quickly become known as the *Brochure Jaune*, a term that was also used for the curriculum itself.[55] The text of the *Brochure Jaune* is clear: *"The educational curriculum in rural schools must be based on generalities so that it does not restrict the scope of application. In a vast country like the Congo, a detailed, precise and restrictive curriculum could not be enforced uniformly. An average curriculum must only be given, which may be adapted to different environments. It may be brought into practice under the direction of a teacher with a barely developed literary training, provided that he is truly earnest about his educational vocation. In primary schools established in centres and close to the teacher training colleges, the part played by literary education may be more important.. Here it relates to preparing the pupils for more advanced studies."*[56]

Schools in city centres or at central missions could also be given a second grade, where motivated pupils from the lower grade could continue their education. *"Pupils in contact with a European element will have a greater ambition to become educated; often their ascendants are in the employ of the Europeans and they will encourage their children to go to school."*[57] Furthermore the curriculum clearly shows that the members of the commission were conscious of the fact that they were creating a number of problems themselves by arranging education in this way. Specifically selection, which really had a purely utilitarian objective, was approached with some concern. The authors assumed that everyone would not finally end up in those *études plus avancées* and that there would consequently be a kind of surplus of better-qualified young people. That was to be absorbed by ensuring that the training could also be useful for those people and that was possible by emphasising willingness to work and practical skills: *"Consequently they must be given an education that is useful in itself and that will prepare useful men in the native environment. The habit of regular activity shall be a valuable tool for all. The same importance must also be placed on practical exercises as in the rural schools."*[58]

In addition these schools had to serve as preparation for further specialised studies. The pupils which started those would in any event have to work with Europeans and the brochure emphasised that they had to be prepared properly for that: *"The recommendation is to insist even more here on the respect due to*

*authority, to the European residents and to their property. The headmaster would do good work by stimulating feelings of mutual assistance and cooperation by means of causeries (rhetoric) and written assignments. Group role-plays should be organised and aimed at the same objective. It is best if theoretical precepts are used to develop honesty and propriety; they give the ability to make prompt decisions and encourage self-esteem.”*[59] Schools that continued beyond the usual two or three years provided in the curriculum, were called *école spéciale*. These schools were intended to educate people who could work in sectors for which too few white workers could be found: office clerks, teachers and craftsmen.

The main lines of the content of the curriculum for all these schools were also set down in this publication. The subsidies and inspection, active intervention by the government in this educational structure were considered here. In any event the comment added to the detailed content of the school curriculum is telling: *“Designed as they are, the curricula appear applicable in all schools. In cases of need it would nevertheless be permissible to deviate from them. The Government inspectors, in agreement with the missionary inspectors, shall decide on any changes to be made to the Curriculum. They will in any event ensure that the modifications would not be such as to remove specific sections of the curriculum or significantly to reduce the quantity of matter to be taught.”*”[60] This assessment follows almost directly from comments relating to the smooth application of the curriculum indicated in the account of De Jonghe’s travels. In other words a significant amount of space was left for interpretation and the concrete execution and there was no absolute authority from the state with regard to the implementation of the curriculum. The cooperation and agreement of the missionary inspectors was required for that.

Consequently, the system of inspection also showed the considerable power to of the missions. It has already been stated that inspection and control had been the biggest problem in the realisation of general regulations. This is expressed in the concrete organisation. An official state inspection was introduced: one general inspectorate in Léopoldville, together with provincial inspectorates in every province (four at that time) and in the mandate regions. In addition, at least one missionary inspector was appointed per ecclesiastical circumscription. The state inspectors were responsible for direct inspection in the official schools for the Congolese. In the other Congolese schools the inspection was carried out in the

first instance by the missionary-inspector, who would then have to report to the state inspectorate. In reality the official inspectorate did not amount to much: after administrative reforms in 1933 the department was reorganised to such an extent that only three regional inspectors remained in office in addition to the central chief inspector and his deputy.[61] Liesenborghs, who was (had been) a state inspector himself but was also clearly in the Catholic camp, wrote in this regard in 1940: *"It may be hoped that the establishment and organisation of the official educational inspection, which is an essential element for progress in the field we are concerned with, may be the object of special concern of the Colonial authorities. In the same way, the missionary inspectors must be chosen with extreme care and must receive suitable preparation for the delicate task entrusted to them."*[62] It is difficult to establish whether this really implied a very subtle criticism of the operation of the inspectorate. In any event it is clear that the missions had succeeded in integrating a buffer in the system which made it very difficult for the state to intervene directly in their education and schools.

What were the main accents in this curriculum? The basic subjects were religious education, arithmetic and reading. In addition most attention was given to so-called *leçons d'intuition*, intended to familiarise the pupils with the most divergent subjects (parts of the body, flowers, tools, etc.) and which was based on question and answer patterns. In addition there was *causeries* (rhetoric) and the more specific subject *hygiène*, which were both to be considered *leçons d'élocution*. The following didactic guidelines were also given in the brochure: *"In general, the teacher shall start by a concrete and dramatised account. For example, he may choose a child, who becomes the hero of all the narratives and who sees and does everything the teacher wants the pupils to see and do. He shall increase the adventures in such a way as to give his stories new matters of interest. After the narrative, he shall proceed to an analysis and summary, graduating his questions in the same way as he does in intuition lessons."*[63] In addition the subjects 'Singing' and 'Gymnastics' were also included in the curriculum.[64]

Two subjects must finally be mentioned separately. Remarkably enough the curriculum also provided a course in *Français* for the first year of the first grade, but it was optional. The brochure does not consider it in detail but references may be found here and there. The language in which teaching was given was already a problematic issue at this stage. De Jonghe had already stated in his article in

Congo that the educational language used should be dependent on the concrete environment.[65] The reactions from the missionaries in the account of his travels also leaned that way. The proposed curriculum from 1925 assumed that the Congolese should be taught in their local language (*dialecte indigene*) insofar as possible. The *lingua franca* could replace that local dialect if it was close enough to it.[66] It was claimed that education in a European language was against all principles of educational theory. Teaching one of the Belgian national languages (as a part of the curriculum) was finally only foreseen in schools for the second grade. It was only considered obligatory for urban schools, but was optional for rural schools. The issue of the educational language was dealt with in a single sentence in the final curriculum from 1929: "*Education may only be taught in a native language or one of the national languages of Belgium.*"[67] It may also be concluded from this that the freedom and space for interpretation for people in the field was extended considerably. However, a lot of confusion arose from the fact that the introductory remarks with the curriculum also stated: "*Even slightly developed literary education to children from rural regions would be of little use. It is sufficient to teach them reading, writing, arithmetic in their dialect.*"[68] This only related to rural primary schools and the formulation does not seem to imply any obligation. In any event it is clear that French was not supported as the educational language.

Furthermore, it is striking how much attention was actually spent on manual labour and agriculture. It seems to have been a foregone conclusion that the education of the Congolese would include a considerable amount of manual labour, in any event, regardless of the situation or specialisation of the schools. The principle in the curriculum was that at least one hour must be spent on manual labour each day (and as already mentioned a school day was no longer than four or five hours) and that was usually an agricultural activity. However, that requirement also had to be met in the more urban areas. For that reason considerable attention was paid in the text of the curriculum in relation to the material infrastructure which the schools had to provide.

In any event this was a first curriculum implemented generally and imposed on the schools from above. This was the first time the state acted in a regulating way even if we may reasonably assume that the catholic missions were able to exercise considerable influence via the administration which was almost completely of the Catholic persuasion. Looking at the composition of the Franck

Commission is sufficient for this; seven of the eleven members were clearly of the Catholic persuasion. Four of them were direct representatives of the missions.[69] We may assume that there was a *de facto* consensus on the existence and content of this curriculum. After all, the missionaries had been involved to a great extent in defining the content. Explicit financing undertakings were concluded for the first time between missions and state. Moreover these undertakings were explicitly linked to the nationality condition and consequently implicitly to the Catholic character of the missions.

#### *1.4. Application and consequences: quantitative development of education*

Taken together these elements ensured a very favourable context for the missions. Consequently a considerable flow of money was quickly initiated from the state to the missions. Four million Belgian Francs were already allocated in subsidies in 1926, thirteen times the amount allocated in 1924.[70] Missionary education gradually expanded during the thirties. Quantitative data relating to the evolution of education must however be considered with care. That will be shown clearly from the overviews given below. It is predominately difficult to find correct, complete and general data for the period preceding the introduction of the conventions and regulations. Reference may be made in that context to the statistics from the N.I.S. (National Institute for Statistics) which did refer to the situation of colonial education from 1926 but only gave a few general estimates in relation to Catholic and Protestant education.[71] In the edition of 1927-1928 reference was made to the agreements concluded (the De Jonghe conventions), but apart from that only a few very incomplete figures were given. The consequences of the De Jonghe conventions were already making themselves known, in the sense that the comment was made that no account was taken either of schools that no longer complied with the curriculum (i.e. "*rural schools for which the curriculum is limited to teaching the rudiments of reading and writing in addition to religious education*"), or with schools run by foreign missions.[72]

In 1938 the N.I.S. published detailed figures relating to colonial education for the first time. No data is available for a number of the war years after that and figures were only published on an annual basis from 1945. Other figures were given in the *Annuaire des missions* and in a number of independent articles in the specialised press.[73] Some of these figures are given in appendix 1. There are a lot of differences in the presentation and composition of the groups and/or data presented, which makes it exceptionally difficult to draw up general

overviews over longer periods.

Even if their accuracy must be handled circumspectly, the overall trend that becomes apparent from these figures for the thirties is relatively clear. Catholic education, if it needs to be said, made a great jump forward. This must be related to a great extent to the huge increase in the available budget. As already mentioned this was the immediate effect of the conclusion of the De Jonghe conventions and that is again illustrated in the figures cited by Liesenborghs in this regard, from which it is clear that the share of the total colonial budget that was paid in educational subsidies from 1926 was one percent higher on average than in the previous decade. Where the share of subsidies had risen by 0,85 percent between 1912 and 1925 to 2,33% and was approximately 1,6% on average, it suddenly jumped to over 3% in 1926. Despite a reduction in the mid-thirties, their share continued to be almost 3% on average until the war.[74]

## *2. Further development of the educational system*

### *2.1. The thirties*

This school curriculum was quickly modified and a new version was written in 1938 but was only applied after the Second World War. Traces of correspondence between the Brothers of the Christian Schools and the minister for the Colonies Rubbens,[75] indicate that there was some insistence for modifications and reform of the education available.[76] Following this insistence a certain Brother Melage was sent on a study trip, and this trip and the report he made about it were used to legitimise the draft of a new curriculum.[77] This draft planned the further division of the types of schools. Paradoxically two different directions were taken: on the one hand the further implementation of generalisation, on the other side specialisation. The minimum curriculum was simplified even further. In addition a so-called 'selected' second grade was introduced in addition to the ordinary, one in which the education would become more theoretical, where teaching would be given in French and where it would be possible to prepare for secondary education.

This draft was only applied after the Second World War.[78] In the meantime the development of the catholic mission schools continued unabated. The catholic authorities in the Congo strongly resisted anything that could break their monopoly of education.[79] This also indicates that they were conscious of the fact that this was an exceptional position, which could be attacked. In a previous study I have already stated that the demand for education outside the catholic

network had already been on the agenda before the Second World War.[80] Yet at that time little could be seen of that in practice. With the exception of a few disparate initiatives, the monopoly of the missions remained intact. Nevertheless the decision-makers were considerably concerned in that period by possible initiatives against this monopoly, as is apparent, amongst others, from the correspondence within the administration. It had already been noted in the Parliamentary Commission for the Colonies that there was a lot of appreciation for the work provided by the missions but that an important marginal note should be made: *"It should be understood however that this adhesion in principle may not be considered a road to the monopolisation of education by the missions. It is our country's duty to seek and further develop the assistance which it receives from independent education in the colony. But this is only a part of its duty. It must on its part increase its personal initiatives for public instruction and must, while avoiding a spirit of competitiveness, pursue the development, which now seems in a terrible state there, of official education in addition to independent education."*[81]

However for the time being the catholic missions could rely sufficiently on their entente with the colonial administration and secure their position of authority in that way. This position of authority could in theory be threatened on two fronts. On the one hand there were the Protestant missions which had also been present in the colony from the beginning and had even taken the lead in the initial period in the evangelisation of the Belgian Congo. On the other hand there was the fear of the establishment of an official and neutral educational system that would drain some of the financial means available to institutions not under the influence of the church.

### *2.1.1. The Protestant threat ...*

In the first instance it appears that the Protestants were not really considered a great threat. They were sidelined by the De Jonghe conventions, which had actually also ensured that their presence in colonial education stagnated, while Catholic education grew exponentially. Although a *de iure* monopoly was never explicitly mentioned, this was certainly what the Catholic missions had considered. This is proven by the opposition to awarding equal rights, which Minister Godding had intended to introduce in relating to subsidies after the Second World War. The Protestant missions had, nonetheless, opposed the *de facto* discrimination against their people with relation to the Catholics long before

the Second World War. The joint spokesman for the Protestant missions, the *Conférence des missions protestantes au Congo Belge*[82] had already expressed the wish, in the early thirties, to be recognised and treated on an equal basis with the Catholic missions. Correspondence on this matter makes it clear that the administration had, for a long time, taken the same line as the catholic missions and that they simply continued to refuse to remove the discrimination. In 1932 the then Minister for the Colonies Tschoffen[83], was confronted when visiting the Congo with a memorandum on behalf of the Protestants which asked for a review of the policies of the Belgian government with respect to the Protestant missions and their task in the colony. When the representative of the Protestants wanted to come and defend this memorandum personally to the Minister, in Brussels, he was, in fact, promptly referred to the head of the administration. The administration refused to review its position. The question was finally laid before the King himself in 1934, through Emery Ross, the chairman of the *International Missionary Council*. [84]

In internal memoranda Edouard De Jonghe strongly emphasised the fact that no obligation existed to subsidise the Protestant missions. The argument made by the Protestants, arising from the obligations set down in the Colonial Charter and the Charter of Berlin, was disregarded in the interpretation of the Colonial administration, these texts only contained an obligation to encourage mission work in general. It could not in any way be inferred from this that an obligation existed to treat everyone involved in mission work in the same manner. The consideration of such questions or not was completely under national sovereignty. And although there was therefore absolutely no obligation, the government could change to supporting foreign (and therefore also Protestant) missions. But, as De Jonghe put it, the government had then to understand that it took a large risk: *"If we were to yield to these two desiderata, it would then result in us subsidising foreign missions. And such a policy could seriously compromise the Belgian influence on the Congo. Belgium and its national missionaries are not powerful enough to fight with equal weight against the combined forces of foreign educators. Our educational organisation is still rather weak and imperfect."* [85]

#### 2.1.2. ... actually a foreign threat.

The administration, and particularly De Jonghe, was therefore clearly very apprehensive that Belgian sovereignty would suffer, even a considerable time after the Congo had been taken over by the Belgian state. Indeed, it did not seem



illogical that a territory eighty times larger than Belgium was hard to defend against possible foreign interests or aggression. Moreover, the bond, which existed between the Protestant missions and the Anglo-Saxon world, only added to this distrust. Great Britain was interested in the Congolese territory from the first and this interest continued after the First World War. According to De Jonghe: *"The periodic blooming of similar movements is always to be feared in the Protestant milieus because the Anglo-Saxon Protestants cannot get away from three characteristics that form their origins, namely: Free examination of dogma, the scriptural basis of their moral education, i.e. the Old Testament where the prophets rail against the oppressors of the chosen people take a major place and finally, the spirit of opposition against the work of Leopold II which is still traditionally the case with the Anglo-Saxons."*[86] It was sometimes embarrassingly clear that the local administration in the Congo also took a dismissive and even disapproving attitude towards the foreign missionaries. In a memo from 6 January 1931 the inspector-general for education wrote to the vice-governor-general: *"There would moreover be a means of freeing ourselves from the requests from the Protestant missions: introduce a condition for obtaining subsidies in teaching French and in French from the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. The majority of the Protestant missions are dissatisfied people without any culture and who shall never know any French."*[87] We can also refer to the 'Belgianisation', which was organised in Katanga, because of the considerable influence of the English language exercised there through the large *compagnies*. [88] In any case it was clear that the colony must remain free of foreign influences, and must receive as much Belgian influence as possible: *"The colonial government must affirm its right to reserve government subsidies only for those schools committed to teaching subjects that are loyal and faithful to Belgium."*[89]

### 2.1.3. Secularisation

We have already referred to the attitude of the permanent committee of (Catholic) heads of the missions in the Congo, from which the concern for the Catholic character of education is clearly shown. The continuation of a system of subsidised education was greatly preferred to a parallel network of official schools, even though the leadership was systematically entrusted to congregations of religious. Here too, the message was that the existing system could be put at risk by a turning of the political tide.[90] The government had to be discouraged from organising official education, populated by religious orders ("brothers"). The fact that the government at that moment, in 1919, had already

asked four congregations of religious to lead official schools, was in itself alarming enough to decide: *"The government is gradually embarking on the road of public education."*[91]

This total freedom incidentally ensured that the missionaries opposed every form of interference. Inspection by authority was also considered a bad thing. The government must give them money and then leave them alone, trusting that education was in the hands of experts. It is very significant that this expertise in no way rested on any educational qualities. This was also stated quite plainly. If the government was to provide lay teachers, then these would place much too much emphasis on sound character from a theoretical and educational point of view of education (which in their eyes would come down to emancipated education). And that was just what the Congolese did not need: *"It is important to draw the government's attention to the excessive tendency to educational theory in some administrative minds who believe they can see the secret to new prosperity in the colony through education. Education should be encouraged, certainly, but it must be done so with care. (...) Uprooting the native from the soil and manual labour would be to ruin the Colony and commit the native to misery. Education is almost always educational theory at excess."*[92]

Thus, two movements were already visible before the Second World War. On the one hand there was the increasing concern of the government, who went from giving absolute *carte blanche* to the missionaries, to a more programmatic attitude. This was logical, because the budgets also began to rise, and the motherland was groaning under an economic crisis. On the other hand, from the Catholic side, there was very conscious consideration of how to strengthen and maintain the position of power that had been built up. This monopolistic attitude was questioned by the Protestants above all, and to a lesser extent by the freethinkers. The fact that matters did not lead to open conflict was due to several factors, of which the first is certainly – and it must not be overlooked – the limited interest for the colony on the home front. Apart from that, every protest still bounced off the wall of Church and State, which worked together in union, not least because of an administration predominately made up of Catholics.

## *2.2. Reform of the curriculum of 1938*

### *2.2.1. Reform*

In addition to the political and economic necessities, of which the importance for the evolution of the educational system is not to be underestimated, there was

naturally also the implementation of the content of the 1929 curriculum. Melage's report from 1936 contained a number of remarks concerning educational practice. Among these, it was pointed out that the curriculum taught at that time was above the capacity of the Congolese. As far as language education and mathematics lessons were concerned, both had to be more practical and concrete and one had to move away from the excessively theoretical concepts being taught, for the Africans did not understand them at all. After all, it was said they were intuitive beings, who reasoned instinctively. That did not mean that it should be assumed that the Africans could not be educated, that they were unable to do any studying. The few exceptions who made it to priest or *moniteur* proved that it could be done. The blame for the relative failure of education had to be sought in the content and interpretation of the curriculum. The curriculum applied was reported to place much too much emphasis on instruction instead of training. This message seems rather contradictory, but can probably be explained on the grounds of the more general point of view that the reporter made with respect to the Congolese or Africans. He did not consider them immediately equal to the whites. For example, whenever he talked about 'native' art, according to him too much value and meaning was ascribed to it. According to him the plastic art of the Congolese did not succeed in expressing feelings in a successful manner. What some people called expressionism, he just considered failure. The African was, in his view, a born imitator and had no higher feelings or ability for abstract thought.[93] That this opinion was widespread, and also shared, for example, in the administration, is apparent from the statements that Depaepe and Van Rompaey collected.[94]

The newly developed curriculum was already introduced into the field in 1938. That is apparent because of, among other things, the fact that a circular was then sent, signed by governor-general Ryckmans and the *chef de service* of the education department Welvaert. That memo, addressed to the heads of the missions, asked that they should gain knowledge of the new project and to let him know by return whether they were in agreement or not. Clearly the first reason for the curriculum not being applied immediately can be found here: probably not everybody could or would simply agree to this text and in this way they drifted into the war period. Nonetheless, this text was known. In the thesis by van Steenberghen which has already been cited, a (partial) comparison is made between the texts of the 1925 project, the 1929 curriculum and the 1938 text. This last text is described as a "*rewriting of the brochure jaune which was*

*provisionally tested and undoubtedly finalised then.”[95] The ambiguous status of this new document is also evident from a remark of the scheutist father Maus in an article in *Congo*, at the end of 1938.[96] He first remarks that the *Gouvernement Général* had just published a new curriculum, and names the 1938 curriculum explicitly. At the same time he indicates a remark in a mission newspaper of 1936 from which it is apparent that there was already a new curriculum being applied then, ‘as a replacement for the *Brochure Jaune*.[97] The phrasing used by Liesenborghs in 1940 makes it possible to deduct that this was not the case officially, and that a new curriculum would only officially come into force in 1948: “*The organisation currently established (1929, JB) still governs public education for the natives in the Belgian Congo. Some modifications to detail are currently planned. They have been pompously called a reform. This description is at least exaggerated as it apparently does not in any way effect the general economy of the system that will be studied in this article.*”[98]*

This remark could at that moment have been a correct evaluation of the facts but with hindsight this seems to be a sort of intermediate phase towards the post-war changes to the education system. What were the most important changes in this proposal, and how were they regarded? The most important changes were indicated in the circular to the heads of the missions. With regard to the duration of the education and types of school, the duration of primary school education was kept to five years. A sixth, preparatory year was indeed created, for middle school education. Furthermore, the distinction between rural and urban schools was maintained, moreover with a new division into central and ‘subsidiary’ schools (dependent on the presence or absence of a mission). The education in the rural primary schools remained preferably ‘restricted to generalities’. From the second grade a strengthening in existing curricula was provided for, as a preparation for the so-called *écoles moyennes* or middle schools, which now received a broader scope than the already existing *écoles spéciales*, where only administrative assistants were educated. These schools were now given a longer curriculum (four instead of three years), but that did not apply to the teacher training colleges where the fourth year was optional.

In theory these new provisions substantially lengthened the maximum school time; instead of a maximum of eight there was now a maximum of ten years.[99] But the intention was certainly not for this to be general for the whole population. The main point of attention of the curriculum reform was with the primary schools

of the second grade. According to the new brochure the best pupils from the first grade in the rural schools, together with the pupils from the urban schools should be brought together here (consequently provision was literally made for a first selection in the rural schools, while that was not so for the town schools). There was, however, an important reservation: not everyone who began the second grade would succeed in getting into middle school education later. This was why it was necessary to make sure that the school would give good preparation for the others, who were expected to be the majority,[100] for a life that was supposed to be lived in the region of origin.[101] For those who succeeded in getting into the second grade, education was provided that was aimed at providing a good general development, on the one hand and to provide a direct preparation for concrete tasks on the other, which were described as "*junior office positions in the employ of administrative, industrial and commercial bodies in the Colony.*"[102] And as far as the *écoles moyennes* were concerned it was assumed that the pupils who successfully proceeded to and finished at these schools, would come into common contact with Europeans. Consequently it was also necessary that they would look decent, and that they would have good deportment. They had to be Europeanised to a certain extent. They were then supposed to wear European clothes and eat at a table with a knife and fork.[103]

Girls' education was handled separately in the new brochure. That was really the most important difference with the 1929 curriculum. A certain differentiation between the curricula was created from which it seemed that education for girls would be systematically less broad than that for boys. For the first grade schools the boys were systematically referred to with the remark "*The same curriculum as for the boys' school, except for the following points,*" where then only the course on handicrafts was indicated, which was filled in differently. This was also the case in the first year of the second grade, with the understanding that for a number of subjects a more limited curriculum was provided for girls (*arithmétique, système métrique* and *leçons d'intuition*). In the second year that difference became more outspoken. For example boys had to learn to count to a thousand, girls only to one hundred; boys had to learn measures of area, girls did not... The French course also differed at that level, in the sense that a broader vocabulary had to be learned for the boys from the second year on so that they could be given certain courses (such as arithmetic) in French from the third year. In the third year of the second grade the difference became greater still and while yet a sixth preparatory course was organised for the boys, this was the end of the

ride for most girls. Besides the more general system of middle schools for boys there was only the domestic studies school for girls, an education of three years consisting only of subjects that had to do with learning domestic skills. The teacher training college also had a separate section for girls and here a similar system as in primary education was being applied: for a number of subjects the curriculum for boys was indicated, for a number of courses (those regarded as difficult or 'literary') a more limited curriculum was provided.

### 2.2.2. Reactions

The scheutist father Albert Maus, who was known as a fervent advocate of the adaptation principle, was the only person who publicised a thorough analysis of the new curriculum, not coincidentally in the periodical *Congo*. His point of departure was that retaining and developing the difference between mass education and elite education was a very good thing. In this context he found it very good that the curriculum literally took over a number of principles from the 1929 curriculum. In fact he really regretted that the original text from 1924, directly based on the text of the *Phelps Stokes* report, was not implemented. According to him, this still contained the most crystal clear arguments for the civilising role of the school in Africa that could be found at that time. The following passage was the relevant one, as it appeared in the summarising article in the periodical *Congo*: *"It would be futile to transport the Belgian educational organisation to Africa... The Congo requires a special educational organisation, properly adapted to the environment. In Belgium the school is predominately required to instruct. In the Congo it must above all educate... The principal aim of the educator must be gradually to improve native morals; this is more important than the dissemination of instruction itself... The formation of character through religious morals and customs of regular work must be given precedence in all schools over literary and scientific branches... Education must be limited to concepts which the natives may find useful in their economic environment... It must reach the greater majority of children."*[104] Elsewhere Maus stated that primary education of the Congolese had to comply with three qualifications: *"universal, uniform and in the native environment"*. [105] Unfortunately the 1929 curriculum had posed far too high demands. Happily the new curriculum, according to Maus, simplified the syllabus of a number of subjects in the first grade. Concretely he referred to 'Grammar', 'Metric system', 'Drawing', the disappearance of French as a subject, the concretising of the arithmetic lessons, the expansion of 'Causeries' (rhetoric), and the introduction of 'Modelage'

(modelling) lessons.

In the case of agriculture, however, he found just the opposite to be the case, and he found that it would be better that some theoretical lessons could be given in the lower grade, which was now almost completely limited to practical applications. Maus reasoned as follows: seeing that agriculture was traditionally a female occupation, the men were very contemptuous about it. The idea was to make agriculture more interesting by associating it with a certain reward in the form of one's own yield. Whether this was realistic is another matter. On the basis of the description which was used it seemed more to do with yields which in the first place would benefit the mission, and not directly the pupils themselves. Further, the author drew parallels between the intellectual level of the Congolese and that of the masses in nineteenth century European society; to show that too intellectual an education was to be avoided. Maus himself nevertheless considered himself a moderate, and as a conciliator between two extreme tendencies, of which the one stood for a much more theoretical, and the other for an education directed exclusively towards agriculture (the professor at Leuven Leplae was used as an example of this).[106]

The author again found it a good thing that the more intellectual education should now be further limited to the schools situated in towns. The old brochure had also provided for this broadened education in the lower levels of the teacher training colleges, but since these were often situated in the countryside, it was really superfluous and even counterproductive to provide too complex subject matter. After all, most of the pupils there would surely not come into contact with Europeans. Even at that time the more advanced education was still systematically designed to meet European needs. Maus's criticism of the new curriculum was mainly directed towards the internal contradictions. On the one hand a noticeable strengthening of the subject content was provided (for a number of subjects more subject matter was provided, or the subject matter was much more comprehensive or better structured). On the other hand the curriculum proposed that the pupils should get an education which would make it possible for them to fit in with the traditional social structures. Maus considered this nonsense and he was probably right in this criticism. The double aims that were demanded of the second grade education were clearly contradictory.

His criticism was really not directed towards the basic principles of the curriculum. The option to make a distinction between mass and elite was not

questioned, unlike the hybrid character of the second grade as it now existed, because this would preclude being able effectively to attain the goals set. Maus proposed to move a number of subjects from the second grade to the first and *vice versa*. Supplementary to this he also suggested for the new second grade to split *de facto* into a 'heavy' and a 'light' version. The light version had to follow on from the simple first grade, directed at the masses, the heavy version would then serve those regions (particularly the urbanised areas) where streaming the pupils towards higher education was more in line with expectations. The principle of selection was very close to Maus's heart here. To avoid as much waste (literally "*déchets*") as possible, the selection had to be applied as strictly as possible between the first and the second grade. Concomitant with that, the qualities reached by the pupils must be taken into account, but also the preset quotas. He did feel instinctively that such a selection mechanism would lead to problems: "*We will not be able to stop the rise of a schoolboy who has done 2 or 3 years of primary education, it will be even harder after a complete 5 year cycle.*" But the intended elite training must in any case remain limited to a certain (and limited, above all) number of people.

Objections to the hybrid system to be organised also came from others. The fact that further education would be limited led to problems, as was said by scheutist fathers working in the province of Kasai.[107] It was assumed that people would be attracted to the central schools and would try to avoid the subsidiary schools. As a result the school age would increase again, because in order to allow their children to go to a central school where there was more chance of further education, many people would let their children travel greater distances, so they would wait until they were old enough. Perhaps it is indeed significant that Maus represented an opinion quite different from the ones in Belgium; He assumed that the Congolese were fatalistic and obedient. If there was no selective education or further education for the people in the countryside, the people would learn to live with it, he supposed. If one only decided soon enough where someone was to be allowed to study, he would be satisfied with it: "*Seeing a rare opportunity for emancipation definitively escaping him he would leave it, undoubtedly a little discontent, but not bitter or demeaned.*"[108]

These sorts of critical opinions about the school curriculum are important, for they remove the impression that the ones making the criticisms were progressives in the sense that would be used today (that they would assume the principle of



the equality of blacks and whites). To quote Maus one last time, in his criticism of the curriculum for the teacher training colleges that went too far: *"We confess we do not understand why an increase in these studies was considered opportune. On the contrary it is known that the native teacher has a habit, by ostentation, of teaching the subject above the ability of the children and the prescriptions of the Curriculum and an excessively broad knowledge would only push them more onto this unfortunate path."*[109] Or concerning women and education: *"Woman has no position to search for in the European centres by virtue of knowledge acquired at school, but she is to follow her husband and this obligation is imposed on her as indisputable."*[110] In the overview of the education system that was given by Liesenborghs in 1940 it certainly seemed that at that moment no changes had occurred following this new curriculum. He was also certainly of the opinion that not too many intellectuals should be educated, and above all that the production of 'waste' should be avoided in the more advanced second grade. In this text too, which for the rest was rather businesslike and neutral, the view appears that the white man, in this case a colonial administrator, had of the relations between colonists and Congolese: *"It is not manual work ... that attracts young men. It is 'intellectual' work, that pays better, that allows them to strut about in beautiful clothes, to 'ape' the prestigious white, who fascinates them."*[111]

It sounded quite different in an article which appeared right after the Second World War in the colonists' periodical *Les Vétérans Coloniaux*. Van Riel, a member of the *Commission pour la Protection des Indigènes*, criticised the false propaganda that the Minister De Vleeschauwer[112] had made during the war, according to him, by publishing a brochure in which it was said that more than a million children went to school in the Congo. He added subtly that if someone who had the official statistics in his head should visit the Congolese bush, he would quickly accept the same opinion. *"In effect it is a fact that the term primary school evokes something in the mind of a European or an American that is entirely different to that present in the Congo, both with regard to local schools and the educational material, the worth of the instructor, the quality of the education. As one travels further from the centres, it is unfortunately too often the case that only rudimentary instruction is taught in the rural schools."* The assumptions of the author were very different to that of the sources cited earlier: here he spoke of emancipation, a word that was very expressly taboo for the pre-war writers. That did not preclude that educational principles were to be modified to the primitive mentality, which he called 'prelogical'. Modern civilization had to

use the means it had available in this. By means of education in a European language and the use of cinema and radio as educational aids, it was possible, as it were, to tow the primitive people out of their old state, “*separate from the major movements of human history*”.[113]

### 2.3. Further political developments

After the Second World War the political tide turned, including at the ministry for the Colonies. The Catholic missions biggest fear since 1919, now became reality: in the post-war governments of national unity, a freethinking liberal, Robert Godding became Minister for the Colonies.[114] The decisions he took concerning colonial education, which must be mentioned here, were of a dual nature. Firstly, he changed the subsidy programme established by Louis Franck 20 years earlier. Subsidisation became possible for all missions, without having to satisfy the nationality requirement. Secondly, during his term in office, construction work began on the first official state schools for whites.

As far as the subsidisation policies are concerned, as mentioned earlier, a considerable effort had been made before the war to convince the Belgian government of the necessity to treat both trends equally. The Catholic missions, however, watched scrupulously and became defensive as soon as they suspected their privileged position to be in danger. An expression of this is the (hilarious) description given in the biography of Pierre Ryckmans, afterwards known as the war governor of the Congo. In 1937, Ryckmans, a good Catholic, suggested taking measures in certain areas with relatively more Protestant families, to make it possible to organise enough Protestant schools. The Catholic camp promptly set up all possible means of resistance. Aid for Protestants was not legal (which was correct according to legal provisions, considering the nationality requirement) and, moreover, it was simply *not done*. The bishops argued the question to the minister for the Colonies and the King. Especially Mgr. de Hemptinne, bishop of Katanga, inflated the case until it took on the proportions of a conspiracy against Catholics.[115] Ryckmans finally had to back down, withdraw the announced funding and justify himself before the King and the Pope![116]

Matters that had inexorably met resistance from the Catholics at that point, seemed to work during the war. The Protestant Council was heard, by the socialist deputy Camille Huysmans among others, who did not fail to address certain issues.[117] After the war the pressure, where possible, became even bigger and the governments for national unity then complied with the Protestant

demands. Godding adapted the regulations for subsidies in such a way that 'nationality requirements' evolved into 'sufficient guarantees for the national character of the education'.<sup>[118]</sup> The Protestant missions could satisfy these new conditions far more easily. As far as the arrangement of neutral education is concerned, Godding took an important step, even though the missions did not contest the decision. For the first time, after all, the government was not limiting itself to the establishment of schools, but was actively engaged in the organisation of education. To populate these schools with lay teachers, Godding reached an agreement with the minister of education. In this way it became possible solely to allow staff in the Belgian state education to transfer to the 'neutral' education in the Congo.<sup>[119]</sup> The 'school funding controversy' about education in the Belgian Congo, which broke out from then on, has been discussed extensively elsewhere.<sup>[120]</sup> These would reach its zenith during Auguste Buisseret's term in office in the red-blue coalition of 1954 to 1958.<sup>[121]</sup>

There is no intention of considering the details of all these events here. What is important here are the consequences of this school funding controversy on the political decision-making concerning education. On the Catholic side there was heavy mobilisation from that time. I have already referred to the particularly energetic reactions from the missionaries towards political decision-making and the allergy they displayed against any infringement of the absolute freedom given to them from the beginning in their missionary activity in the colony. Both the bishops in the Congo and their representatives in Belgium took up the cause for the mission schools, though it must be said that there was an important difference of nuance between the reactions of both groups. The bishops continued to demand complete freedom concerning education. The government was not permitted to intervene; it was that simple. For the political representatives in Belgium such a radical stance was far less obvious. They had to take the balance of Belgian politics into account and could not start from a protected area of authority, as in the Congo.

#### *2.4. The new curriculum of 1948<sup>[122]</sup>*

The 1938 curriculum was consequently never actually enforced. Van Hove suggested that the Service for Education of the General Administration made a new proposal in 1945, and that this proposal was enforced by the departments in Brussels, becoming effective on 1 January 1948. Not much is known of the circumstances under which this new, or at least adapted curriculum was realised.

Its introduction was paired with a certain dissatisfaction from the missionaries, and there was a disagreement between the more progressively minded wing of the Catholic Church and the conservative circles inside the missions. The opinions had, however, been evolving since the thirties, even in the missions. Someone like Mortier, who was still very averse to the establishment of higher education in the thirties, would now argue for such a possibility.[123]

In August 1948 the new school curriculum came into force. The norms for the establishment of schools became considerably stricter and state inspection was expanded. The curriculum was further expanded and space was made for secondary education, following the Belgian model. It is certain that the government's grasp was effectively increased: inspection was expanded and subsidisation was subjected to stricter regulation. The mission superiors in the Congo immediately started to lobby against the, in their opinion, excessively far-reaching influence the government was acquiring over the missionaries. They demanded the minister to grant Catholic education a special status, comparable to the 'accepted education' in Belgium. The Protestants should of course not receive the same status. From 1950 the Catholics had more room for their demands, under the homogeneous CVP governments of Duvieusart, Pholien and Van Houtte. The ministers for the Colonies Wigny[124] and Dequae[125] would also have to take into account the constant demands from the camp of the missionaries on the one hand, and the attentive and close inspection from the united opposition on the other.[126] In 1952 a new adjustment of the curriculum was introduced, which did partly answer the complaints of the Catholic missions. However, there was not much actual change as far as curriculum content was concerned.

#### *2.4.1. Reform*

Kita sees two fundamental characteristics in the reform of 1948. The map of the elite education was now drawn (as had already been the case partially in 1938), and the selection mechanisms were put in place. The latter element was already in place in 1938. The separation of the various levels was carried through in the teacher training, which the teaching staff had to participate in for the various types of schools.[127] The volume of school regulation increased considerably: as well as general regulations, separate brochures were published with regulations for boys and girls schools respectively.[128] In the brochure with general regulations, information concerning the new division of the education system was

given. Concerning boys' education, the principle of the double aim was again expounded (general education and preparatory for further studies). This took the fact into account that there had to be a diversification at a certain point, where a clear choice had to be made between final education and preparatory education. In 1938 the idea was launched for a more thorough education in the second grade for possible further studies. This, however, would not at that time have led to a separation of the curricula. This separation was now carried out. This implied that after two years of primary education, the decision would be taken whether the students could continue studying or not.

As Kita expressed it, these students were being conditioned for a life in the fields. The official text posited that the emphasis in the second grade should, more than elsewhere, be on farming activity, and on the development of willingness to work. The essence of this education should lie, the text went on, in the formation of an adapted mentality, more than in learning practical skills. Whether it be farming or craft activities, the intention was not to train specialists in the given discipline, but to instil "*le goût et l'habitude du travail manuel*". Furthermore, it was very emphatically stated that the teachers should engrain the conviction in the students that their work was as valuable as any other.[129]

Concerning the 'selected' second grade (the classes the better pupils were sent to) far less explanation was given. It was stated that manual labour need not receive so much attention as in the ordinary second grade, but should none the less not be forgotten. The schools with this kind of second grade should preferably be run as boarding schools, unless they were situated in sufficiently populated centres that would attract enough children from the area. A quota restriction was also introduced, with a selection procedure in two phases: the first assessment of the suitability of the students to go on was in the hands of the missionaries who were authorised for the inspection of the schools involved. A second selection was carried out on the basis of an entrance examination. The results of this had to be presented to the missionary-inspector, and then the provincial inspector, "*with a view to verifying the importance of the quota*", upon whom the provincial governor would exercise another inspection. The possibility of opening so-called *classes de liaison* was left available, in case there should be a need of it, to allow children to go from the normal second grade to the 'selected' second grade. All together, the choice made after the first grade seems to have been almost entirely irreversible.[130]

#### 2.4.2. Types of education offered

In addition to primary education a more extensive range of training subjects were now offered, the difference in level between these varied, which was also the intention. It is not easy to find the way in this after the facts; the following overview is mainly based on the description given in the curriculum brochures.

Two education courses were provided in the curriculum:

- the *cours d'apprentissage pédagogique*, lasting two years, was intended to resolve the lack of teachers at that time insofar as possible. The entry conditions were: completion of at least two years of education in the second grade (ordinary or selective) and being considered old enough to be put in front of a class. People who had completed this training were consequently generally placed in classes in the first grade of primary education.
- the *école de moniteurs*, lasting three years, was intended to deliver teachers for the first grade and the ordinary second grade but due to the shortage of people this curriculum was temporarily also extended to the selective second grade. Entry depended on completion of a selective second grade, followed by the fourth preparatory year. Emphasis was again placed on manual labour and agriculture in the curriculum for this course.

In addition a number of other types of schools were also operational:

- *écoles pour auxiliaires*, lasting two years, accessible for anyone who had completed the second year of the ordinary second grade. The aim of this school was to train lower office workers or members of staff. The brochure described the curriculum itself as follows: "*The curriculum of studies shall provide pupils with general knowledge skills without pretension but sturdy; It will initiate them into the principal organisation and practice of various intellectual professions of local interest which may be offered to them.*" The theory consequently also had to be limited to a minimum in favour of practical skills.[131]
- *écoles moyennes*, lasting four years, were also accessible for those who had followed four years of the second grade of primary education. They aimed slightly higher than the schools of the previous type: "*An education likely to provide pupils with a satisfactory general training and efficient preparation for the practice of occupations of junior office employment.*" A number of sentences from the 1938 curriculum were copied, for example in relation to contact with Europeans and the rules arising from that in relation to the pupils' behaviour. Manual labour also remained mentioned here as an important factor in the

education.

The *écoles secondaires* were one step higher and were an innovation in comparison to 1938. This related to a cycle of education of six years and the intent, at least as stated in the brochure, was resolutely oriented to the future.

Four aims were listed:

1. providing a good general education
2. making the majority of pupils able to gain access to what were described as "*des emplois intellectuels intéressants*"
3. preparing a proportion of the pupils for higher education "*de développement modeste*"[132]
4. preparing an elite of pupils for university education that was to be established once circumstances allowed it.[133]

Considering that this relates to a true innovation a little more explanation was provided. This illustrated the considerable circumspection with which this new chapter in educational development was initiated. The emphasis was on the fact that the further educational opportunities, for which this type of education could be the preparation, did not exist at that time. The foundation of higher and university education even depended on the existence of a solid secondary education. In short, the gradualism, which had really been the guiding principle in the Belgian attitude towards the colony and its emancipation since the Second World War, could be found completely in this. Finally secondary vocational education and adult education was also included in the curriculum.

This organisation only related to education for boys. A similar but more limited scope was drafted for the girls. Although this curriculum brochure started the chapter on girls' education by emphasising its importance the possibilities offered to them were considerably more restricted than those offered to the boys. Following tradition reference was made to native traditions and culture as an explanation and also to the less developed receptiveness of the girls in comparison to the boys even if it is not clear what that meant exactly. Like the boys the girls were given primary education made up of two grades. The first grade was similar to that in the boys' education, the second grade was new however. There was no use in making a distinction with the girls between an ordinary and selective grade. The reasons just mentioned played a part in that. In addition the main objective of girls' education was to train good mothers and housewives, who would still have a minimum of general knowledge. A further

detailed intellectual development was not really mentioned in the curriculum.

The main form of so-called post-primary education, accessible to young women, remained the *école ménagère*. The entrance conditions, set for this type of school, give away to some extent how flexibly girls' education was approached. As a general rule the condition was set that at least five years of primary education had to have been completed to be allowed entry. But, as many girls only started school at an older age, a transition was made possible for those who were slightly older after the first grade of primary school. The *école ménagère* itself comprised three years and almost exclusively offered practical subjects. Practical skills and strong moral principles were the main objectives of this education. In addition educational training was provided at two different levels, as for the boys. The *cours d'apprentissage pédagogique* and the *écoles de monitrices* worked in a similar way as their male counterparts, naturally under reserve of the necessary modifications to content. These courses were for the same duration.

In accordance with the 1938 curriculum a more complex regulation was stipulated for the use of language in education than was the case in the original curriculum. One *langue véhiculaire* and one or more languages to be taught were set for each level of education. That indicates that there was still no unanimity in relation to the use of language: the *linguae francae* and *idioms locales* were still being debated, and *souplesse* (flexibility) in application was still the much-used term in these texts. A resolute choice was made with both the boys and girls for the native language in primary education. French was much more present than before: from the first grade in urban primary education it was authorised as an optional second language. From the second grade it was introduced as an obligatory second language. The explanation given indicates the extent to which the new curriculum was already a balancing exercise, under pressure of the growing awareness of the Congolese. Moreover it is representative of the ambiguity in the attitude of the colonial authorities in relation to this social development: "*By mercilessly eliminating French from the 2nd grade rural primary school, we shall reduce the value of the education given there in the eyes of the Blacks; ultimately there could only be advantages to teaching our future citizens or village craftsmen some notions of a language which will give them the impression of social advancement and which would moreover form a true link between the European and the native. It goes without saying that the French course given here would only give a very modest development.*" This quotation



not only expresses the intrinsic reticence to allow the population to 'develop' further but also the counterpart to that or the concern to keep that same population calm and not to antagonise them unnecessarily. Finally this statement also shows how limited the abilities of the Congolese were still considered at a time when striving for emancipation was gradually gaining shape. They were given a little French, under the assumption that this would keep them satisfied, while the intention was clearly to prevent large numbers of them acquiring sufficient knowledge and continuing their studies.

#### *2.4.3. Reception of the curriculum*

The highlights of the 1948 curriculum are consequently the development of post-primary or secondary education and the doubled second grade in primary education. The ideas of Albert Maus, already mentioned, again resurfaced here and there are indications that the text of the curriculum could also actually have been influenced by him.[134] Critical considerations were already being formulated at the time it appeared in relation to the selection process. Amongst others from Felix Scalais, the bishop of Leopoldville, who remarked that a doubled second grade was superfluous. Scalais was much more reserved and thought that primary education should also continue to provide real elementary education. He was moreover convinced that the system in which a uniform second grade was implemented, had worked, contrary to the claims in the new brochure. The existence of so-called 'relegates' was minimised and he emphasised that a further generalisation of elementary primary education could only resolve that problem. Putting this system into practice seemed rather infeasible. There was the bureaucratic section of the proposed procedure, the psychological unrest and disruption it would cause with the unselected and the excessively young age at which the selection had to take place. Finally those selected would also have to cover too great a distance if they wanted to attend a school with a selective grade.[135] In this and in his own opinion he agreed with the comments of the bishops in the Congo, who had already considered the curriculum reforms in preparation in 1945. They had already argued for the preservation of the five-year structure, divided over two grades. However their report only stated with regard to selection that it should either be done at the end of primary education or even a little earlier but then in consultation with the Department of Education. The minutes of the meetings moreover stated that the bishops disagreed amongst themselves in relation to the correct moment at which the selection should be carried out. Some wanted to wait until the end of primary school, others preferred

to see selection carried out sooner.[136] Hence the rather confusing conclusion, which was clearly cited by Scalais a few years later in support of his own opinion.

However, in any event, Mgr. Mels agreed with Scalais.[137] He also spoke out for a less utilitarian educational system in primary school and for postponing selection. He specifically felt that the new system would ensure that the central schools would invest more and more in primary education. That would be both a fatal blow to the rural schools (precisely the specialism of the Catholic missions) and remove the desire from pupils to return to the place of their birth. Which would consequently result in an even larger group of *déclassés*. [138] That was precisely one of the major points criticised in the previous curriculum. Mels already considered a primary school that wanted to educate people 'for life' as a utilitarian school, which clearly defines his criticism somewhat better. Paul Coppens, professor at Leuven University, was also extremely critical with regard to doubling the second grade and the early selection time.[139] That would even be too early in Europe, so it was definitely also the case in the Congo. He also remarked that the doubling and consequential increased complexity of the curriculum would be continued in post-primary education. A distinction was also made here between general and special education and that also only caused more difficulties. The criticism he voiced would also be formulated later by Pierre Kita: Coppens talked of "*ces subtils compartimentations*", which was confirmed by Kita when he noted that "*This selection would, in fact, introduce social segregation. (...) The colonial will to stratify Congolese society would find support from the educational organisation in this way from 1948.*"[140] A few sections of education suffered in that development. In a recent study Kita claimed that the *écoles d'auxiliaires* and *écoles d'apprentissage pédagogique* established in it were less developed forms of education than their respective counterparts, the *écoles moyennes* and *écoles normales*, which could consequently be seen to fit perfectly in the framework of a stratification strategy or at least to be based on a strongly imperialistic inspiration.[141]

## *2.5. Further development of the curriculum after 1948*

### *2.5.1. The Plan Décennal*

Many authors speak of the 1948 curriculum in the same breath as the 'ten year plan' (fully titled the *Plan Décennal pour le développement économique et social du Congo Belge*) that was announced and published by the minister for the colonies Wigny in 1949.[142] However, it is not the case that the educational

restructuration came about in the framework of the ten-year plan. There was one chapter of the plan dedicated to education, in the context of the section on social development.[143] In the framework of that plan a number of statements could be noted that made the government's aims and attitude towards the missionaries clear. Cooperation with the missions, it was estimated, saved the treasury 600 million francs annually, when compared to the price of working exclusively with lay staff. It was further argued that higher education needed development, as well as education for girls in general. The ten-year plan called unequivocally for education in French, although that privilege was saved for the elite.[144] The introduction to the chapter concerned also repeatedly emphasised that the economic situation of the colony in the post war period made further expansion of the education network a vital necessity. Even though it was said that the education of young people until then had been put far too much in the perspective of the expected economic return, the arguments in reply were very clear: the general dissemination of education would ensure that the population's standard of living would increase noticeably and would make that population more prepared to deliver economic efforts as well as generating higher incomes; mass education would increase the productivity of the entire population; industrial expansion was being held back by a lack of qualified staff; the curricula that were considered by the government (in the framework of the ten-year plan), presupposed a large number of specifically trained help. The text clearly stated: "*The educational curriculum is intended gradually to fulfil these needs created by the Ten-year Plan itself.*"[145] Concretely the plan especially looked forward to additional financial means. Around 7 % of the total budget, almost two thousand million Belgian francs, went to the educational section.[146] But the plan did not interfere with the educational content. The most significant concrete aim was the substantial expansion of the number of schools, more specifically the technical and vocational schools.

### 2.5.2. *The 1952 curriculum*

Besides the considerations on content Mels, Scalais, and many other church dignitaries also voiced a lot of politically charged criticism on the 1948 curriculum. The protection of their own position was often talked of and particularly the stipulations concerning subsidisation and inspection could raise tempers in that context. Criticism from the colony was also passed on more and more systematically to the metropolis and, in a context of ideological oppositions and political mobilisation, the new school curriculum, along with other elements,

arrived in the currents surrounding the Royal Question and the Belgian school funding controversy. In the meantime the local population had become aware of the educational issue. From the end of the forties the demand for officially neutral education for the Congolese began to develop very clearly. Now this also became visible in the colony where the Congolese were represented, to a limited degree, in the provincial and government councils.[147]

Auguste Buisseret, who would conduct a very active education policy from 1954 onwards, already noted in 1947 that the Congolese asked him personally during a senatorial mission in the colony for the organisation of a "*secular education for the natives*".[148] The pressure grew together with the increasing consciousness of the Congolese population. The left, in the opposition, did not refrain from eagerly playing to this.[149] Buisseret himself would also switch to a higher gear later. Where Godding's action was limited to equal rights for Catholics and Protestants and the creation of some secular schools for whites it was clear from the start that Buisseret had principles that would have much further reaching consequences. His judgement in the report of the senatorial mission left no doubt about that. In it he gave candid criticism of the government's policy there. His analysis is familiar to the ears of the present day reader. He branded the policy that was followed a selective and controlled transfer of knowledge. The Belgians taught the Congolese what they wanted to teach them and what was needed in the interests of colonisation. The existing education was not sufficiently inspected and the weaker groups in the population, namely the girls, were generally just left to their fate. In the same report he said explicitly that it was time the government finally showed some real initiative and that the role of the missions needed to be limited: "*Finally, we hope to reach a monopoly of state education for black secular people above the level of minor degree of the middle schools. In any event, we will announce that the right of the Blacks in the Congo to access the higher middle culture and the university courses is a right for pupils with the required talents and skills. But primarily, as for the education of administrative assistants and native chiefs, it is a matter that interests public authority and involves its responsibility. It cannot be left to competitions that could risk to lower the educational level and to submit, in fact, the leading black elite to unilateral influences.*"[150]

After the Belgian elections of June 1950, that brought a homogenous catholic government to power, the bishops in the Congo got the chance to apply

themselves much more freely to their complaints about the challenged educational restructuration. And the Catholic camp organised itself immediately: in 1951 the synod of bishops decided to set up a permanent consultative body towards the government, the *Comité Permanent des Ordinaires*, and more specifically concerning educational opportunities, the *Bureau de l'Enseignement Catholique*. These matters would lead to a number of modifications to the 1948 curriculum, made by the Catholic ministers for the colonies, Pierre Wigny and Andries Dequae. Albert Brys, another Scheutist, played an important role in the organisation and mobilisation within Catholic missionary education after the Second World War.[151] As the founder of the *Centre d'études, de documentation et d'informations congolaises* he also coordinated a large part of the demands and complaints from the missionaries in the field and was one of the contact points with the authorities. In the extensive documentation remaining of the *Centre* several traces can be found of criticism and lobbying formulated to the ministers concerning the curricula.[152] A first set of modifications was made by Wigny in the form of an appendix to the 1948 convention. These modifications did not have any real consequences with regard to content. The disagreement over the new clauses was conditioned much more by politics than by content and the modifications should also be situated in line with this. The period allowed to the missions to comply with these new clauses and consequently to be able to keep their subsidies, was not reduced.[153] The job description of the inspection, that is the state inspection, was also heavily negotiated although it is unclear exactly what changes were brought about in this by Wigny.[154] With regard to the selection, the main stumbling block in terms of content, the transition between the two types of second grade was made somewhat more flexible in 1949. In practice this meant that students who wanted to go from the ordinary to the specialised grade would have to repeat a year, which did not constitute a solution in the eyes of the missionaries.[155] They thought it much better to unify the second grade again with the addition of a preparatory year in relation to secondary education.[156]

In a letter Brys himself announced his audience with Dequae in 1952 concerning the future policy the government would follow in terms of education. During this the minister is said to have assured him that the state would only set up its own schools in areas where missionaries could not manage and apart from this would only concentrate on some institutions for specialised education.[157] The new convention, which had been sought after since Wigny had been minister, arrived

in 1952. The most important differences in comparison to 1948 can be summarised as follows. In primary education the selective grade was kept but a sixth and seventh year were introduced alongside it. These supplementary years were given a function in the framework of a more shaded form of selection. From then on there were three different possibilities for dividing primary education:

- either the students went from the first grade to the selected second grade, as before;
- or they went from the first or second grade to the ordinary second grade, in which case the principle was still that they would repeat the year in the selected grade;
- or they could be selected after the third and last year of the ordinary second grade and would then complete a sixth and seventh year in which subject matter was taught corresponding to the third and fourth year in the selected second grade.

The so-called 'quota system' of the students remained the prerogative of the missionaries themselves in the first instance, over which the government inspection only had a kind of judicial review.[158]

The remaining changes of content were generally smaller and less noticeable. In the section on primary education there was one noticeable passage added that stated that primary education, although mainly a way of making a rough first selection, need not strive for a strictly utilitarian purpose. After which there was, strangely enough, reference to particular aesthetic principles that should be taught to the young Congolese.[159] Furthermore, extra attention was also requested for the technical education that students could undertake after the ordinary second grade. It may be deduced from the following passage that there were problems with the psychological effects of selection on the Congolese: *"No opportunity may be missed to emphasise the value of the professions and the professional education institutions for which the ordinary second grade schools constitute a preparation."* With a by now classical pragmatism it was stated that this could be solved without much trouble: *"As an example natives could be referred to - preferably those from the region or those known to the pupils - who enjoy a certain level of prestige or are considered as having succeeded in life even though they did not attend secondary schools. In any event comparisons between the careers of those who left secondary education to those who only completed primary education or only received summary professional training*

*must be systematically avoided.*“[160]

The girls now also received a selected second grade in primary education, and, witness to the changing customs and growing independence of the Congolese, the first *écoles d’auxiliaires* for girls were provided, which were to prepare them for such jobs as *office employee, shop assistant, cashier*. This training could be followed after primary school, as a modest level of education was sufficient for the companies, according to the curriculum.[161] The evolution of the attitude towards the French language in education is also striking. It is true that the discussion remained over the large amount of diversity concerning the use of language in education and particularly the relative importance of the use of European languages as opposed to native languages. But a newly added paragraph stated: “*The principal objective we must attend to in this field relates to teaching the subject matter stipulated by the curricula for French fully and effectively in the schools*“, which clearly indicated the increasing need to learn French.[162] A final innovation of importance was the presence of *abbé-inspecteurs* in the regulation, besides the traditional *inspecteurs-missionnaires*. The church education in the colony had in the meantime evolved to such a degree that Congolese priests could be sent out who could also work in education. That was a logical progression: over a long period of time the seminaries and major seminaries had been the only form of education on the same level as Belgium secondary school education.

A number of cases in this new brochure clearly betrayed the increasing ‘presence’ of the Congolese in their own society. From the end of the forties the so-called *évolués* began to receive a voice in government institutions (provincial councils, albeit in a purely consultative role) and in the press.[163] From 1945, the ‘evolved’ Congolese could voice their opinions and the fruits of their pens in *La Voix du Congolais*, even if there was an editing council to ensure that what was published was not offensive to the Belgian colonisers. They could undoubtedly make a number of demands heard which would then influence the changes recorded here in some way. The growing presence of the Congolese within the Catholic Church undoubtedly played a role in this as well. It is likely that everybody was not as sympathetic, but there really were missionaries who listened to the demands of the Congolese.[164] With regard to the content of the education, as stipulated in the 1948 brochures, nothing was mentioned.

### 2.5.3. Buisseret

Two years later the political roles in the metropolis were reversed. The CVP-government lost the elections, in the middle of the school funding controversy. In the red-blue coalition that came to power, under the leadership of the socialist Van Acker, the liberal Auguste Buisseret of Liege received the Colonies portfolio. In fact state intervention really only took shape during his four years as minister. From that moment on the government would take systematic initiatives for instituting and providing education. We can say that the most important achievements lay in two fields. Firstly, there was a significant expansion of the school population, although it is still hard to place a precise figure on this. Based on N.I.S figures it seems that between 1954 and 1958 the increase in the number of students was approximately 400 000. This was an increase by one third.[165] Secondly, the availability of education increased in several ways. Buisseret removed race segregation, among other things by introducing a transfer programme that would allow the Congolese to go to school with European children. In September 1955 the first interracial grammar schools were opened, in Leopoldville, Elisabethville and Luluaburg. This effort was continued over the following years and more new school complexes were opened, dispersed across the country.

In addition it was emphasized that higher education must be made accessible to everyone. However, the initiative for establishing higher (university) education did not come from Buisseret. The plans for a Catholic university had already progressed a long way when he became minister and he had moreover formerly shown a very dismissive attitude to this initiative. The Lovanium university in Leopoldville opened its doors in 1954 and was followed a year later by the 'free-thinking' university in Elisabethville.[166] The figures publicised on this subject clearly show that participation of the black population in higher education remained minimal until the end of the colonial period.[167] This should not be surprising moreover as there was still insufficient secondary education available. The impulse for the development of a real secondary education was only put on the curriculum in 1948, six years before Buisseret came into office. An attempt was also made at qualitative modernisation, in official education at least (in a first period there was also talk of secular education, *enseignement laïc*). This came down to a generalised introduction of the Belgian curriculum, including French as the educational language. It seems that Buisseret realised that the position of the Catholic Church in the colony was much too powerful to confront directly and, for this reason, attempted to create a parallel education circuit. His experience had



shown that the representatives of the missions resisted far-reaching attempts to interfere with the work of their missionaries. Their freedom was sacred to them. All events between 1954 and 1956, that are known as 'the school funding controversy in the Belgian Congo', had convinced him sufficiently of this.

In a nutshell it can be stated that this school funding controversy related to the fact that a fairly abrupt and particularly public end was made to the position of absolute power the Catholics had had in colonial education. The creation of an official network of schools over a very short period, together with the very public criticism and sometimes-aggressive policy of the administration often caused very strong criticism from the Catholic missionaries. Yet it can be said that Buisseret himself rarely abandoned the consensus model, that was also used as a crucial analysis model in the Belgian school funding controversy. Several commentators have said that this school funding controversy was more a battle of words than on the field. Buisseret did not touch the content of the curricula for independent education either, at least not directly. The discussions mainly centred on administrative badgering, subsidising regulations and more general ideological oppositions. Yet the influence of state intervention was not limited to the existence of its own mini-educational system in the shade of the giant that was missionary education. Kita has emphasised that in places where both were available a very clear influence was seen from the state schools (he mentions the *métropolisation* of education). The independent schools took over the curriculum of the neutral schools by necessity since they held such a great appeal to the city's population.[168] The fact that Buisseret's approach had changed is illustrated by the fact that the independent subsidised (meaning 'Catholic') schools were invited to accept this curriculum in a circular letter of 17 September 1956, but no obligation was put on this since this would have infringed on the missions' cherished freedom.[169]

## *2.6. Quantitative data on education after the Second World War*

### *2.6.1. Sources*

As has been said several times already it remains difficult to quote precise numbers with reference to colonial education. Here again the N.I.S. statistics are referred to, which give a more complete picture for this period than for the pre-war period.[170] When reading this table it is important to bear in mind that four different types of schools are under consideration here:

- official state education, that was in principle maintained entirely by the state;

- 'congregational' education, referring to official schools under the direction of the missionaries;
- subsidised education, which should in principle include the Protestant missions;
- non-subsidised education, which should be a collection of company schools, private schools and mission schools that did not fulfil the subsidy requirements.

As far as the war period is concerned it is probably useful to add the numbers that were published in the *Plan Décennal* to these statistics.[171] They show an evolution between 1930 and 1948, and so exactly cover the period which roughly coincides with the application of the first school conventions. The conventions, which were signed from 1925-1926, did indeed have an application field of twenty years, but we have already stated already that this period was somewhat extended due to the war. The figures in this survey are divided into three categories:

- official schools,
- subsidised schools
- 'Independent', so actually private schools.

### 2.6.2. Trends

The most noticeable trends to be observed in these data series are the following: from the *Plan Décennal* figures it seems that the increase in the number of students in the forties is mainly due to subsidised education. This is mainly Catholic missionary education, but between 1945 and 1948 there is quite a steep increase in the number of schools as well as the number of students, that can only be explained by a change in the subsidy regulations, by which more Protestant schools are included in these numbers. It is noticeable that the school network stagnates in the period 1940-1948. This is probably the result of the politics of abstinence taken on by the government, as far as organising schools was concerned.[172] In addition the unsubsidised schools also develop strangely enough, but much less than the subsidised schools that had caught up a significant amount of their arrears by 1948. The difference in the number of schools and, as a result, the average number of students per school is striking in this. A small comparison, on the basis of the *Plan Décennal* figures:[173]

P.E. (primary education)	number of schools 1940	number of students 1940	average st/school 1940	number of schools 1948	number of students 1948	average st/school 1948
official schools	7	3 624	518	5	3 464	693
subsid. Schools	5 096	243 361	48	8 001	406 652	51
independent schools	17 910	463 950	26	19 072	513 049	27

Table 1 – Average number of students per school in the different networks, 1940-1948.

The evolution of the period between 1948 and 1958 can be seen clearly in the N.I.S. statistics.[174] The official education for the Congolese grew exponentially from 1948. Over a period of ten years it went from 11 to 225 institutions. I already determined in an earlier study that the most noticeable post war trend was the regression of unsubsidised education. This regression is probably to be explained for a large part by the changed subsidy regulations, since the number of students and schools peaks directly following the war years (1947) and the regression is most outspoken during the five following years (1948-1953). From 515 000 students and slightly over 19 000 schools in 1947 it went to approximately 370 000 students and 12 000 schools in the fifties. Consequently it is also clear that the quantitative expansion of subsidised education was not slowed under Buisseret, despite all real or imagined opposition on financial and material grounds.

### 2.6.3. After independence

Finally, a third set of numbers is placed beside this, dating from directly after the independence and collected by the *Bureau de l'Enseignement Catholique*. [175] These figures already form a transition to the third chapter, as they take data for the entire country and for the region of Coquilhatville (now Mbandaka), which shall be focussed on further. They also form the final piece of this section since it concerns figures from directly after independence, that continue where the preceding statistics stop and are then, in a certain sense, to be regarded as the quantitative result of colonial education policy.

This final set of figures gives an image of the state of Congolese education between 1962 and 1963, a few years after independence. That is the time of the first educational restructuring within the independent republic of Congo. Namely, the restructuration of the secondary education beginning in the school year 1961-1962, with the most distinguishing characteristic being the introduction of the *cycle d'orientation*. [176] The structure of primary education was unchanged at that time. The image given here still shows a great dominance of Catholic education: approximately 75% of all students were in what is described as “le

## NOTES

[1] This chapter is based on my article "De rol van de staat in de onderwijsorganisatie in Belgisch Kongo (1908-1958)", published in Boekholt, P., Van Crombrugge, H., Dodde, N.L. & Tyssens, J. (2003). *Tweehonderd jaar onderwijs en de zorg van de Staat, Jaarboek voor de geschiedenis van opvoeding en onderwijs 2002*. Assen: Van Gorcum. p. 185-203.

[2] MSC is the official abbreviation for the congregation of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jezus (Missionarii Sacratissimi Cordis Jesu). Both to the congregation and the members of it, who are mentioned often in this thesis, will systematically be referred to by this abbreviation. The congregation was founded in 1855 in Isoudun, a village in the centre of France. The founder was the priest Jules Chevalier. The development of the Flemish province and the beginning of missionising in the Belgian Congo shall be considered more deeply in the third chapter.

[3] Kita, P. (1982). *Colonisation et enseignement*. Bukavu: Editions du Ceruki.

[4] For the readability of the text, the majority of figures in this and the following chapters have been included in the appendices 1 to 7.

[5] The "Sacred Congregation for the Dissemination of the Faith," the institutions within the catholic church responsible for mission activity, founded in 1622 by Pope Gregory XV.

[6] Van Hove, J. (1968). *Histoire du Ministère des Colonies*, Bruxelles: ARSOM, Classe des sciences morales et politiques. p. 9.

[7] Delathuy, A.M. (= Marchal, J.) (1992). *Missie en Staat in Oud-Kongo (1880-1914) Deel 1. Witte paters, scheutisten en jezuïeten*. Berchem: EPO and Idem (1994). *Missie en Staat in Oud-Kongo (1880-1914) Deel 2. Redemptoristen, trappisten, norbertijnen, priesters van het H. Hart en paters van Mill-Hill*. Berchem: EPO. Jules Marchal(1924-2003), graduated as a doctor of arts from the K.U. Leuven. He was district commissioner in the Belgian Congo from 1948 to 1960. After independence he was technical advisor in the Congo for another seven years and then active as a diplomat in a number of African countries. From 1975 he published a number of historical works on Independent Congo and the Belgian Congo, firstly under the pseudonym Anne Marie Delathuy, in which he tried to bring a number of abuses to light, specifically relating to forced labour and financial exploitation. He also wrote a work in two volumes, stated here, relating to the beginning of mission activity in the Congo.

[8] Van Hove, J. (1968). *o.c.* p. 17. [Original quotation in French]

[9] Kita, P. (1982). *Colonisation et enseignement*. p. 153.

[10] Law relating to the administration of the Belgian Congo of 18 October 1908, article 5, in Piron, P. en Devos, J. (1960). *Wetboeken en Wetten van Belgisch Congo*. Bruxelles: Larcier [original quotation in Dutch].

[11] Jules Renkin (1862-1934), doctor of law, barrister. Member of the Christian-democratic wing of the Catholic party. He became a member of parliament in 1896, which he remained until his death. He became minister of Justice in 1907. When the Congo was taken over by the Belgian government in 1908 he became the first minister for the Colonies, a position he held until the war in 1918. He became minister of Railways immediately after the First World War and he was Prime Minister from June 1931 to October 1932. cf. Dellicour, F. (1954). Renkin (Jules-Laurent-Jean-Louis). In *Bibliographie Belge d'Outre-Mer*. 747-753.

[xii] Fabian, J. (1986). *Language and colonial power, the appropriation of Swahili in the former Belgian Congo, 1880-1938*, Cambridge: University press. p. 50 ; Kita, P. (1982). *Colonisation et enseignement*. p. 161. [Original quotation in French]

[xiii] Delathuy, A.M. (1992). *Missie en Staat*.

[xiv] For example, the presence of the Trappists was not very obvious in the region of the present-day Equator province. *Ibidem*; African Archives Brussels, "Fonds Missions", nr. 635, "Trappisten in Coquilhatville 1914-1940". And other orders, like the Dominicans, also experienced similar problems. A district commissioner wrote in 1925 to the central administration in Brussels that they were "*ne pas préparés pour l'enseignement*" and he explicitly asked for more specialised congregations to be sent to the Congo. KADOC, De Cleene - De Jonghe Papers, nr. 95. "Nota's van de districtscommissaris van Niangara, Uele, over onderwijs en missionarissen, 1925".

[xv] Depaepe, M. & Van Rompaey, L. (1995). *In het teken van de bevoogding. De educatieve actie in Belgisch Congo (1908-1960)*, Leuven: Garant. p. 48. (cited below as Depaepe & Van Rompaey).

[xvi] Louis Franck (1868 - 1937). Lawyer, barrister, Flemish radical. He was the first liberal minister for the Colonies from 1918 to 1924. He later became the director of the National Bank of Belgium and the Bank of the Belgian Congo. He was also the co-founder of the colonial college of further education in Antwerp. Probably partially as a result of his interests in relation to international maritime law and trade law, he was already interested in colonial politics before the Congo was taken over by the Belgian state. Franck made two study trips to Africa. One

in 1914, which he was forced to curtail due to the outbreak of war in Europe and one in his capacity as minister in 1920, during which he visited a number of English colonies in addition to the Congo. Walraet, M. (1952). Franck (Louis-Marie-François). In *Biographie Belge d'Outre-Mer*, III, 325-343.

[xvii] De Groof, R. en Tyssens, J. (1994). *De schoolkwestie in België*, Brussel: VUB-press. p. 36.

[xviii] Count Maurice Lippens (1875-1956). Doctor of law, barrister, liberal politician. After his first steps at a local and provincial level he became chairman of the board of directors of the Compagnie du Congo pour le Commerce et l'Industrie. After the war he became the governor of the province of East Flanders. In 1921 he was appointed to the position of governor-general of the Belgian Congo by the new minister for the Colonies Franck. For as yet unexplained reasons he came into conflict with the Catholic opposition in early 1923 and finally also with Franck which resulted in his resignation. After that he was Transport Minister, Minister for the Arts and Sciences, senator and also director of a number of large companies. Van der Straeten, E. (1964). Lippens (Maurice-Auguste-Eugène-Charles). In *Biographie Belge d'Outre-Mer*, VI, 664-672.

[xix] And at a certain point resulted in the publication of a leaflet by the Committee of missionary-superiors, against Lippens: Comité des Supérieurs de missionnaires au Congo (1922). *M. le Gouverneur général Lippens et les missions catholiques du Congo*. Brussels: Vromant.

[xx] See e.g. Depaepe & Van Rompaey; Markowitz, M. (1973). *Cross and Sword. The political role of the christian missions in the Congo*. Stanford: University Press.

[xxi] *Handelingen*, Senaat, 1922-23, p. 318. Note that Franck does not make any distinction in this statement between the various religious trends. [Original quotation in French]

[xxii] Van Laere, M. (1986). *De schoolstrijd in Belgisch Congo onder Auguste Buisseret (1954-1958)*. Unpublished master's thesis K.U. Leuven.

[xxiii] Edouard De Jonghe (1878-1950). He studied in Leuven, where he achieved a degree of doctorate in philosophy and letters and where he also came into contact with Cyrille Van Overbergh, who involved him in the *Bureau internationale d'ethnographie*, an institution that was founded in the aftermath of the *Congrès international d'expansion mondiale* in Mons, which is mentioned again later in this study. At the formation of the Ministry for the Colonies in 1908, De Jonghe became the personal secretary to the Minister Jules Renkin. He

successively became *chef de bureau* (1909) and *directeur-général de la deuxième direction générale* in 1928. That was the department which was responsible amongst other things for education. He also taught at the University of Leuven from 1908 and would continue to do so until his death. Amongst other things he lectured in general courses on ethnology, ethnography and more specific courses on the Congolese tribes, habits and cultures. In addition he was the founder and active contributor to two scientific colonial periodicals: *La revue congolaise* and *Congo*. He became general secretary of the Koninklijk Belgisch Koloniaal Instituut [Royal Belgian Colonial Institute], which he had also co-founded in 1929 and in which he accepted the important position of reporter to the publication commission. He was also connected to the Koloniale Universiteit [Colonial University] in Antwerp, which was founded in 1923 and was a member of the *Institut colonial international*, the *International African Institute* and the *Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, amongst others. Furthermore De Jonghe was also a committed Catholic and that is an important element in this context. In combination with his key position at the Koninklijk Belgisch Koloniaal Instituut he was awarded the title of “*principal artisan métropolitain de l’ethnologie missionnaire*” [Principal metropolitan architect of missionary ethnology]. See Poncelet, M. (1997). *Une histoire sociale du siècle d’Africanisme Belge*. Lille: Atelier national de reproduction des thèses. p. 465-466; for biographical mentions by contemporaries: De Cleene, N. (1966). De Jonghe, Edouard. In *Bibliographie Belge d’Outre-Mer*, VI, 551-560; De Cleene, N. & Malengreau, G. (1950). In memoriam Edouard De Jonghe. In *Zaire*, 2, p. 118-121.

Cyrille Van Overbergh (1866-1959). Doctor of law. Sociologist, professor at Leuven University. He was the chairman of the *Société belge de Sociologie*, and secretary-general of the *Congrès d’expansion mondiale* that was organised in Mons in 1905. Van Overbergh was also chairman of the *Institut d’ Ethnographie* mentioned here. In 1908 he became the closest assistant to Prime Minister Schollaert involved in the annexation of the Congo. See Gerard, E. (1990). Overbergh, Cyrille Justin, Médard van. In *Nationaal biografisch woordenboek*, XIII, 607-619.

[xxiv] De Jonghe, E. (1922). L’instruction publique au Congo belge. In *Congo*, 1922, III, p. 501-530. The article was also published separately in Dutch: De Jonghe, E. (1922). *Ons beschavingswerk in Belgisch Congo. Opvoeding en onderwijs*. Antwerp: Van Riet.

[xxv] Which was naturally a strategic distortion of reality as the other schools

were usually also run by missionaries.

[xxvi] K.U.Leuven Archives, Paulin Ladeuze Papers, farde "école commerciale". Letter from De Jonghe to Ladeuze, 18 June 1924. The Catholic Henri Carton succeeded Louis Franck from 11 March 1924 as minister for the colonies. [original quotation in French].

[xxvii] KADOC, De Cleene - De Jonghe Papers, nr. 247. "Rapport de voyage (22 juillet 1924 - 21 janvier 1925)", typed, signed Edouard De Jonghe. 62 p. A critical edition of this text was published in Briffaerts, J. & Vinck, H., *Les écoles au Congo belge en 1924. Le rapport De Jonghe. Présentation et Texte*. In *Annales Aequatoria* 25 (2004), p. 451-492.

[xxviii] Ibidem, p. 59.

[xxix] Ibidem, p. 64. [original quotation in French]

[xxx] I use the terminology as used in the curriculum handbooks and literature from this period. In the 1929 curriculum a distinction was only made between *écoles rurales* and *écoles urbaines*, depending on whether a school was situated in the country or in an "urban" area. In 1948 the terminology had expanded considerable and become more complicated. The most frequently used categories were *centrale - succursale* (whether or not situated in a central mission) and *rurale-urbaine* (whether or not situated in a "European" centre).

[xxxi] Ibidem, p. 65. The account of his travels is filed in the archives together with a text that was typed on the same machine and annotated by De Jonghe. That text is the report of Florent Mortier, and is dated (in writing) on 1 August 1922. Depaepe & Van Rompaey claim that a first proposal was already drawn up in 1924. It is apparent from correspondence in the Scheut archives, also mentioned by them, that discussions relating to the project text were already in progress in 1924. Considering the annotations on the document in the De Jonghe archives, it does however seem likely that this is the *project* referred to. In any event the "final" project text was only published in 1925 or after De Jonghe's travels. [original quotation in French]

[xxxii] Fabian, J. (1986). *Language and colonial power*. p. 49-69; Kita, P. (1982). *Colonisation et enseignement*. p. 163-165.

[xxxiii] Cited in Rikken, B. (1957). *De Eerste Schoolconventie tussen Staat en Missie in Belgisch-Kongo*. Unpublished master's thesis K.U.Leuven, p. 27-37. [Original quotation in Dutch]

[xxxiv] Florent Mortier (1877-1963). Scheut missionary and orientalist. Ordained a priest in 1903. A missionary in China from 1905 to 1908. After his return to Belgium in 1909 he was appointed the general superior of Scheut (until 1920). In



that capacity he also became a member of the Colonial Council and a member of the administration of the Colonial University, both until 1926, the year in which he left the congregation. He would then develop his career in Orientalism, in which he became a member of a whole series of scientific societies. Mortier spent the First World War in London and was in contact with the government. He was also a member of the Franck Commission. See Van Hecken, J.L. (1971). Mortier (Florent-Albert-Jozef). In *Belgische Koloniale Biografie*, VII A, 357-360. [Original quotation in French]

[xxxv] Rikken, B. (1957). *o.c.* p. 80. [Original quotation in French]

[xxxvi] See Kita, P. (1982). *Colonisation et enseignement*. p. 168.

[xxxvii] "Verslag van de vergadering van kerkelijke oversten in Kisantu, juli 1919." Archives of the Scheut missionaries. Quoted in Rikken, B. (1957). *o.c.* p. 81. [Original quotation in French]

[xxxviii] Rikken, B. (1957). *o.c.* p. 81-82.

[xxxix] The fact that this really concerns a strategy is also apparent from a later statement by Mgr. Van Ronslé, who was part of the *comité permanent des ordinaires* in the Congo: "*The impossibility of being subsidised without inspection was clear for everyone at the meeting, only we wanted to start by taking a very reserved attitude in order to maintain as much freedom as possible.*" Letter of 8 December 1921 from Mgr. Van Ronslé to father Rutten, superior of Scheut (the successor to Mortier). Quoted by Rikken, B. (1957). *o.c.* p. 101. [Original quotation in French]

[xl] Letter from Florent Mortier, superior of Scheut, to Mgr. Vos, chairman of the *comité permanent* dated 12 December 1919, from the Scheut archives, quoted by Rikken, B. (1957). *o.c.* p. 95-96. [Original quotation in French].

[xli] Lefebvre, R. (1955). *De voorgeschiedenis der schoolconventie met de nationale missies in Belgisch Congo*. Unpublished doctoral thesis K.U.Leuven.

[xlii] Lefebvre, R. (1955). *o.c.* p. 153. [Original quotation in Dutch]

[xliii] The author specifically found it difficult to remain objective when mentioning the influence and activities of the Lodge, and "anti-clericalists" in general in the context of colonisation. Nevertheless he does his best to represent the ideas of the different parties in the debate. In particular the socialist Emile Vandervelde is relatively given a lot of attention with his criticism of mission education existing before the First World War.

[xliv] KADOC, De Cleene-De Jonghe Archives, nr. 247. "Ecoles agréées", typed document, signed "Fl. Mortier, dated 1 August 1922". See footnote 31.

[xlv] Jones, T.J. (1921). *Education in Africa. A study of West, South and Equatorial*

*Africa by the African Education Commission, under the Auspices of the Phelps-Stokes Fund and Foreign Mission Societies of North America and Europe*. New York: Phelps-Stokes Fund. At the request of the British missions and in consultation with the British government a research commission was sent to the colonies in Western Africa in 1920. The commission was financed by the Phelps-Stokes fund, a private philanthropic society in New York. The Phelps-Stokes fund that still exists today financed a series of similar commissions in the same period, which studied the social issues in the black population in Africa, the Caribbean and the United States. Collins, R. et alii (1994). *Historical Problems of Imperial Africa*. Princeton: Markus Wiener. p. 195.

[xlvi] Jones, T.J. (1921). *o.c.* p. 16.

[xlvii] Jones, T.J. (1921). *o.c.* p. 24.

[xlvi] The full title of the periodical was *Congo: Belgisch koloniaal tijdschrift* or *Congo: revue Belge coloniale*. The article concerned was published in September 1925. III, volume II, p. 193.

[xlix] Congrès colonial Belge (1926). *Ile Congrès colonial Belge. Bruxelles, 6 et 7 février 1926. première partie: rapports*. Brussels: Lesigne. p. 230. [Original quotation in French]

[l] Seghers, M. (2004). Phelps-Stokes in Congo: Transferring Educational Policy Discourse to Govern Metropole and Colony. In *Paedagogica Historica*, XL, 4, p. 69-113. **Thomas Jesse Jones** (1873-1950) was the director of the Hampton institute in Virginia, USA, and a supporter of Booker T. Washington, the advocate of the so-called Industrial Education for Afro-Americans. He would later write "Negro Education", in which he spoke out against academic studies and in support of teaching practical skills to the Afro-American population in the USA, as a means to better integration in society. Also see Depaepe & Van Rompaey, p. 59; Crocco, M. & Waite, C. (2003). *Fighting Injustice through Higher Education*. Paper presented at the British History of Education Society Annual Conference, December 2003.

[li] De Jonghe, E., *L'enseignement des indigènes au Congo Belge. Rapport présenté à la XXIIe session de l'institut colonial international à Paris, mai 1931*. Bruxelles. 1932.

[lii] *Ibidem*, p. 15-16. [Original quotation in French]

[liii] Complete title: "Projet d'organisation de l'enseignement libre au Congo Belge avec le concours des Sociétés de Missions nationales".

[liv] The national missions were missions that could show a number of ties with Belgium. More specifically the headquarters of the mission society had to be

located in Belgium, the mission had to be directed by Belgians and the majority of the members had to have Belgian nationality.

[lv] The official and complete title of the brochure was: *Organisation de l'enseignement libre au Congo Belge et au Ruanda-Urundi avec le concours des Sociétés de Missions Nationales*. Bruxelles, 1929. In the footnotes it will be further referred to as *Organisation ... 1929*.

[lvi] *Organisation ... 1929*. p. 2-3. [Original quotation in French]

[lvii] *Organisation ... 1929*. p. 3. [Original quotation in French]

[lviii] *Ibidem*.

[lix] *Ibidem*. [Original quotation in French]

[lx] *Organisation ... 1929*. p. 11. My underlining. [Original quotation in French]

[lxi] Liesenborghs, O. (1940). L'instruction publique des indigènes du Congo Belge. In *Congo: Revue générale de la Colonie Belge*. XXI. n°3, p. 255.

[lxii] *Ibidem*. [Original quotation in French]

[lxiii] *Organisation ... 1929*. p. 12. [Original quotation in French]

[lxiv] With regard to these subjects of education see the following texts: On singing: Kita, P. & Depaepe, M. (2004). *La chanson scolaire au Congo Belge. Anthologie*. Paris: L'Harmattan; Kita, P. (2003). La chanson scolaire dans l'éducation coloniale au Congo Belge: Référentiel théorique. In Depaepe, M., Briffaerts, J., Kita, P. & Vinck, H. *Manuels et chansons scolaires au Congo Belge*. Leuven: Universitaire Pers. p. 197-227; On physical education: Van Rompaey, L. (1992). Mission et éducation physique dans le Congo belge (1908-1960). In Monés, J. & Solà, P. (eds.), *Education, physical activities and sport in a historical perspective*, Rapport XIVE ISCHE Conference, Barcelona, 307-312.

[lxv] De Jonghe, E. (1922). L'instruction publique au Congo belge.

[lxvi] The term *linguae francae* designated four languages that, in the coloniser's opinion, were dispersed as a commercial language that exceeded the regional level. Concretely these were Tshiluba, Swahili, Lingala and Kikongo. For the origins of linguistic policy, the issue of the use and the artificial character, or not of these languages, cfr. Yates, B. (1980). The origins of language policy in Zaïre. In *The Journal of Modern African Studies*. XVIII, 2, p. 257-280; Ceuppens, B. (2003). *Congo made in Flanders? Koloniale Vlaamse visies op "blank" en "zwart" in Belgisch Congo*. Gent: Academia Press. p. 429-512; Nkongolo, J.J. (1998). Quelle langue d'enseignement pour la République Démocratique du Congo? Une enquête à Kinshasa. On *DiversCité Langues. En ligne. Vol. III*. [www.quebec.ca/diverscite](http://www.quebec.ca/diverscite).

[lxvii] *Organisation ... 1929*. p. 45. [Original quotation in French]

[lxviii] *Organisation ... 1929*. p. 1. [Original quotation in French]

[lxix] De Jonghe, E. (1932). *L'enseignement des indigènes au Congo Belge*, p. 12.

[lxx] Depaepe, M., Debaere, F., Van Rompaey, L. (1992). Missionary education in the Belgian Congo during the colonial period (1908-1960). In *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft*, 48, p. 268.

[lxxi] "Education is either taught in the official schools or the mission schools." ... "Education taught by the missions relates to a number of pupils that could be estimated at 130 000 in 1925 (95 000 in 1924) for the Catholic missions and at 100 000 for the Protestant missions (82 000 in 1924). These figures do not in any event indicate the total school-going population at the missions, as some of these failed to provide the requested registrations ; it may in any event be accepted that approximately 250 000 children were taught reading, writing and arithmetic in 1925." *Annuaire Statistique de la Belgique et du Congo Belge*. 1925-1926. CXIX. [original in French]

[lxxii] *Annuaire Statistique de la Belgique et du Congo Belge*. 1927-1928. CXIX. [Original quotation in French]

[lxxiii] There are two different sources with this name, both are important on the subject of this thesis. Both contain detailed administrative and statistical information on the missionary congregations active in the colony (colonies). The first edition is the *Annuaire des missions catholiques au Congo belge*, a book that was published three times. The first two editions in 1924 and 1935 by the Jesuit Corman, the third in 1949 by his successor Van Wing. The *Missiejaarboek van Belgie / Annuaire des missions de Belgique* is another yearbook, that was only published annually in the period 1952-1960, the publication of which was realised by Father Ceuppens, C.I.C.M., who was also the founder of a Catholic press agency in Leopoldville, the D.I.A. (Documentation Internationale Africaine). However the information in this is rather more condensed and less detailed than that in the Jesuit publication.

[lxxiv] Liesenborghs, O. (1940). *L'instruction publique des indigènes du Congo Belge*. p. 266. Included in appendix 5.

[lxxv] Edmond Rubbens (1894-1938). Doctor of political and social sciences. Member of parliament for the Catholic party from 1921. Chairman of the Christian Workers' Movement from 1927. In 1934 he became minister for Labour and Social Services and in 1935 minister for the Colonies. In that capacity he died suddenly at 44 year of age. With regard to the missions Rubbens maintained precisely the same policy as his predecessors.

[lxxvi] Depaepe & Van Rompaey, p. 94.

[lxxvii] Melage [Frère] (1937). *Les écoles du Congo Belge. Rapport rédigé à la*

*demande de M.E. Rubbens, ministre des colonies*. Manage: Masquelier-Tinsy.

[lxxviii] Reasons for the long delay in the implementation of the curriculum were not shown clearly at any point. According to Julien Van Hove the Department of education of the Gouvernement Général was only able to complete the planned reform in 1945 and the department for the Colonies could only set the implementation as of 1 January 1948. It is possible that this relates to the Senatorial mission to the Congo which was organised in 1947 and which also produced a report on the state of education in the field. Presumably the ministerial office of Godding did not expedite the approval process. Van Hove, J. (1954). *Belgisch Congo en Ruanda Urundi*. In D'Espallier, V. (ed.), *Katholieke encyclopaedie voor opvoeding en onderwijs*, 's Gravenhage: Pax, vol. 1, p.228-237.

[lxxix] Depaepe & Van Rompaey, p. 96-97.

[lxxx] Briffaerts, J. (1999). *De schoolstrijd in Belgisch Congo (1930-1958)*. In Witte, E., Degroof, J. en Tyssens, J. (ed.), *Het schoolpact van 1958. Ontstaan, grondlijnen en toepassing van een Belgisch compromis - Le pacte scolaire de 1958. Origines, principes et application d'un compromis belge*, Brussel: VUB PRESS. p. 331-358.

[lxxxi] KADOC, De Cleene - De Jonghe Archives, nr. 107. "Extrait du projet de rapport de la commission coloniale à la Chambre, sur le projet de budget de 1926-1927 par m. Matthieu.", dated December 1926. See also Depaepe & Van Rompaey, p. 93, and Briffaerts, J. (1995). *Over Belgische politiek en Congolese scholen*. Unpublished seminar paper Vrije Universiteit Brussels. The "Matthieu" mentioned must be Jules Mathieu (B.W.P.-Member of Parliament from 1919 to 1937). [Original quotation in French]

[lxxxii] As early as 1902 missionaries from different protestant missions came together in conferences, which were organised every two or three years, and where the problems with which the missionaries had to reckon in their work of conversion were discussed. Irvine, C. (1978). *The church of Christ in Zaïre. A handbook of Protestant churches, missions and communities, 1878-1978*, Indianapolis. Introduction.

[lxxxiii] Paul Tschoffen (1878-1961). Lawyer. From 1919 he was Member of Parliament for the Catholic party. From 1924 he was senator. Tschoffen was successively Minister of Industry, Labour and Social Care, Minister of Justice. He was also Minister of the Colonies twice, from October to December 1929 and from May 1932 to November 1934. Tschoffen would, after the Second World War, also play a role in the Belgian Military Mission that represented the conservation of

the parliamentary and legal regime, together with, among others, Walter Ganshof Van der Meersch.- (1930). Tschoffen, Paul. In *Le Parlement Belge*. Brussels: Editions Kryn. p. 239-241; Koller, F., De Maeyer, T. & Taylor, S. (ed.) (1959). *Who's who in Belgium*. Brussels: Universal Editions. p. 599; Vaute, P., L'euphorie avant l'épreuve. In *La Libre Belgique*, 1 September 2004.

[lxxxiv] The overarching organisation of protestant mission congregations.

[lxxxv] KADOC, De Cleene - De Jonghe Archives, nr. 251. "Note pour monsieur le Ministre", confidential memo, 17 October 1934, typed and annotated by Edouard De Jonghe. Even after the Second World War De Jonghe continued to insist that it was a risky decision to work together and support foreign missions, because a small and militarily weak country could not afford to give financial support to the missions of great powers (Ibidem, n°169, *Nota*, 31 October 1946). [Original quotation in French]

[lxxxvi] KADOC, De Cleene - De Jonghe Archives, nr. 169. "La politique scolaire coloniale. Exposé théorique.", Internal note P.S.C, Commission des colonies. Sous-commission enseignement colonial, 3 December 1946. This note is composed in the same words as other notes composed by De Jonghe which can be found in the same dossier. [original quotation in French]

[lxxxvii] KADOC, De Cleene - De Jonghe Archives, nr. 251. "Nota J.B. Hautefelt aan Vice-Gouverneur-generaal Postiaux", 6 January 1931. [original quotation in French]

[lxxxviii] See concerning this, in the context of language policy, Fabian, J. (1986). *Language and colonial power*.

[lxxxix] KADOC, De Cleene - De Jonghe Archives, nr. 169. "Note pour M. le ministre des colonies", 8 June 1945. [original quotation in French]

[xc] Scheut Archives, Rome, E.I.b.8.0.3, "Note concernant une base nouvelle à la repartite des subsides aux missions", Kisantu, 1919, as cited in Depaepe & Van Rompaey, p. 56.

[xci] Ibidem.

[xcii] Scheut Archives, Rome, E.I.b.8.0.3. "Note concernant une base nouvelle à la repartite des subsides aux missions", Kisantu, 1919. [Original quotation in French]

[xciii] Melage, [Frere] (1937). *Les écoles du Congo Belge*.

[xciv] Among other things the reference to the pronouncements of Schmitz, director at the Ministry of the Colonies, and others, in Depaepe & Van Rompaey, p. 120.

[xcv] Steenberghen, R. (1944). *Les programmes de l'école primaire indigène*

*rurale au Congo Belge*. Unpublished Master's thesis K.U.Leuven. p. 46. [Original quotation in French]

[xcvi] Maus, A. (1938, 1939). Le nouveau programme de l'enseignement libre. In *Congo: Revue générale de la Colonie Belge*. XIX, 10, p. 490- 525 & XX, 1, p. 1-20.

[xcvii] In the article concerned, published in the *Bulletin des Missions*, a Benedictine magazine, there was indeed a reference to a primary school where a curriculum of six years was taught: "*The complete primary school, consequently comprising six years, forms the second section, it follows a completely new curriculum implemented during this year in order to replace the 'Brochure Jaune' which had been applied until now.*", and further: "*The year 1935 shall see this school of committed candidates transformed in a complete medium school requiring four years of studies (...) Four Fathers, including The Reverend Father Headmaster, are concerned with this school and follow the curriculum recently development for this type of institution.*" [original quotation in French]. It seems very unlikely that this was related at that time to official instructions, but the origin of the stipulation is unclear in any case.

[xcviii] Liesenborghs, O. (1940). L'instruction publique des indigènes du Congo Belge. In *Congo: Revue générale de la Colonie Belge*. XXI, 3. p. 246. [Original quotation in French]

[xcix] Ten years therefore amounted to a first grade of two years, followed by a second grade of three years, a preparatory year, and then the middle school lasting four years.

[c] Circular Ryckmans 1 July 1938, p. 3.

[ci] *Organisation de l'enseignement libre avec le concours des missions nationales*, 1938, p. 8.

[cii] *Organisation*, 1938, p. 10. [Original quotation in French]

[ciii] *Organisation*, 1938, p. 10.

[civ] Maus, A. (1938). Le nouveau programme de l'enseignement libre. p. 497 (ellipsis marks by the author). [Original quotation in French]

[cv] Maus, A. (1940). Raisons et modalités de l'enseignement aux indigènes. In *Grands Lacs*. DVI, 4-5-6, p. 48-57.[Original quotation in French]

[cvi] Edmond Leplae (1868-1941). Received the diploma of agricultural engineer at the University of Leuven, in 1891. Quite soon after receiving his diploma he was appointed as lecturer at the Agricultural Institute, where he gave courses in entomology and rural engineering. He became ordinary professor from 1898, and continued to give lessons until 1938. From 1910 he became responsible for the development of the agronomic services in the colony. Under his initiative the

cultivation of cotton was strongly developed in the Congo.

[cvii] Archive Scheut Rome, P.II.b.10.1. Nota "Organisation scolaire au Kasai face au nouveau programme", 1948, s.l., s.n.

[cviii] Maus, A. (1938). Le nouveau programme de l'enseignement libre. p. 523. [Original quotation in French]

[cix] Maus, A. (1939). Le nouveau programme de l'enseignement libre. p. 3. [Original quotation in French]

[cx] Maus, A. (1939). Le nouveau programme de l'enseignement libre. p. 8. [Original quotation in French]

[cxi] Liesenborghs, O. (1940). L'instruction publique des indigènes du Congo Belge. p. 258. [Original quotation in French]

[cxii] Albert De Vleeschauwer (1897-1971). Catholic Minister for the Colonies from April 1939 to February 1945. Was one of the ministers of the government in exile in London. After the outbreak of war he received the full lawmaking and administrative responsibility over the colony as administrator general of the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi. In this function De Vleeschauwer was co-responsible for signing the war conventions with the United States and Great Britain, which among other things arranged for the use of Congolese raw materials by the allies. This helped to make the production of atomic weapons by the United States possible. Later he became, among other things, Minister for Home Affairs and Agriculture. cfr. Gaus, H. (ed.) (1989). *Politiek Biografisch Lexicon 1960-1980*. Antwerpen: Standaard. p. 366-374.

[cxiii] Van Riel, J. (1946). La réforme de l'enseignement indigène. In *Les Vétérans Coloniaux*. XVIII, 10, p. 17-18. [Original quotation in French]

[cxiv] Robert Godding (1883-1953) was 62 years old when, in August 1945, he became minister for the Colonies in the Van Acker administration. At that time, he already had a considerable career behind him, which he had divided between politics and the colonies. Moreover, Godding was a nephew of Louis Franck, in whose footsteps he began his career as a lawyer and subsequently as a politician and colonialist. Godding, J. (1976). Godding (Robert Georges Constant). In *Biographie Belge d'Outre-Mer*, V, 175-181.

[cxv] Jean-Félix de Hemptinne (1876-1958). Benedictine missionary. Over 48 years he was first apostolic prefect, then apostolic vicar and finally bishop of Katanga. Léon Pétillon described him as "one of the ultimate pioneering disciples of Leopold II". Undoubtedly this refers to his conservative beliefs concerning colonisation and evangelisation. He was considered one of the most influential people in the church, and in the colonial establishment in general. Pétillon, L.



- (1972). de Hemptinne (Jean-Félix). In *Biographie Belge d'Outre-Mer*, VII (a), 291-299.
- [cxvi] Vanderlinden, J. (1994). *Pierre Ryckmans 1891-1959. Coloniser dans l'honneur*. Bruxelles: De Boeck Université. p. 365-371.
- [cxvii] See Depaepe & Van Rompaey. p. 132-133.
- [cxviii] To claim subsidies as a mission-congregation the following conditions were imposed: knowledge of one of the official country's languages, the 'national' character of the education given, approval of the schoolbooks used and a minimum residence of six months in Belgium with an accompanying training in education. The verification of these conditions was the duty of the state inspectors. *Handelingen*, Kamer, 1946-47, 5 December 1946, p. 11. [Original Dutch]
- [cxix] Briffaerts, J. (1999). *De schoolstrijd in Belgisch Congo*. p. 341.
- [cxx] The schools funding controversy in Belgian Congo, and certainly during the period under Buisseret, has been the object of several more detailed studies: As well as the aforementioned article, reference can be made to Van Laere, M. (1986). *De schoolstrijd in Belgisch Congo*; Block, J.P. (1992). *La guerre scolaire au Congo Belge sous Auguste Buisseret (1954-1958). Ses prémices et développements*. Unpublished master's thesis Université Libre Bruxelles; Briffaerts, J. (1995). *Over Belgische politiek en Congolese scholen*. See also, only partially: Cleys, B. (2002). *Andries Dequae. De zelfgenoegzaamheid van een koloniaal bestuur (1950-1954)*. Unpublished master's thesis K.U.Leuven. (this thesis is published on the website <http://users.skynet.be/st.lodewijk/e-thesis/index.html> ).
- [cxxi] Auguste Buisseret (1888-1965) was a lawyer from Liege and a liberal politician, successively active in local and national politics. He occupied several ministerial positions and was minister for education in the government of Van Acker I (February 1945 until March 1946), under which the ministry for the Colonies was led by Robert Godding from August 1945. This also explains his participation in the Senatorial mission to the Congo in 1947, where he led the "section" on education. He was subsequently minister for Internal Affairs (March 1946- March 1947), for public works (August 1949- June 1950). From 1954 to 1958 he was the last person to fulfil a complete term in office as minister for the Colonies. In 1959 he became mayor of Liege, but resigned from that post due to illness in 1963. Cuyvers, J.B. (1966). Buisseret, Auguste, Dieudonné, Eugène. In *Bibliographie Belge d'Outre-Mer*, VI, 136-145.
- [cxxii] See appendix 6 for the diagram of the education structure in the 1948

curriculum.

[cxxiii] Mortier, F. (1953). *L'université Leopold II au Congo Belge*. Bruxelles: Imprimerie Louis.

[cxxiv] Pierre Wigny (1905-1986). After his legal studies he became secretary of the *Centre d'Etudes pour la Réforme de l'Etat* established by Paul Van Zeeland in 1936. After the Second World War he and Robert Houben together formed the basis for the "Christmas curriculum" of the new CVP. From March 1947 to August 1950 he was minister for the Colonies in three administrations: the Rome-red administration. Spaak II, the Rome-blue Eyskens I and the first Unitarian CVP-administration Duvieusart, which was only in power for two months. From 1958 to 1961 he was minister of Foreign Affairs and from 1965 to 1968 minister of Justice and French language culture. Wigny was also one of the founders of the European Coal and Steel Community. cf. Harmel, P. (1999). Wigny, Pierre, Louis, Jean, Joseph, baron. In *Nouvelle Biographie Nationale*, Bruxelles: Académie royale des sciences, des lettres et des beaux-arts, V, p. 386-389.

[cxxv] Andries Dequae (°1915-2006). Studied economics at Leuven and became active in the Kortrijk textile industry shortly before the Second World War, more specifically within Catholic patronage. Through these posts, he was placed on the CVP-list for the lower chamber in 1946. In June 1950 he became first minister for reconstruction in the Duvieusart administration. When this administration fell after two months he became the minister for the Colonies in the new homogenous CVP-administration and he would remain so until the election defeat of the CVP in 1954. He later successively became the minister for Foreign trade, for Economic coordination and of Finance and was also the vice-chairman and chairman of the House. At the end of the fifties he started a second career within the Belgian Farmers' Union, which he was chairman of from 1977 to 1981. Cleys, B. (2002). *Andries Dequae*. The information quoted here is given under the section "Andries Dequae, een biografische schets", that may be consulted at the following website: [http://www.ping.be/~ls003528/dequae/dequae\\_inhoud.htm](http://www.ping.be/~ls003528/dequae/dequae_inhoud.htm) (5/2004).

[cxxvi] Also described in detail in Depaepe & Van Rompaey, more specifically on p. 136-153.

[cxxvii] Kita, P. (1982). *Colonisation et enseignement*. p. 214-218.

[cxxviii] Under the general title *Organisation de l'enseignement libre subsidé pour indigènes avec le concours des sociétés de missions chrétiennes* published in three brochures: *Dispositions générales*, 1948. Léopoldville: Service de l'enseignement; *Enseignement gardien. Enseignement général pour filles. Programmes d'études*, 1948; *Enseignement général pour garçons. Programmes*

*d'études*, 1948. Léopoldville: Service de l'enseignement. Referenced below as "Dispositions générales 1948", "Garçons 1948" & "Filles 1948".

[cxxxix] Dispositions générales 1948, p. 11-12.

[cxxx] The comments and criticism by Kita are also along these lines (1982). *Colonisation et enseignement*. p. 201-203.

[cxxxix] Dispositions générales 1948, p. 16. [Original quotation in French]

[cxxxix] This description was explained later in the brochure. Education was conceived as "*very specialised conceived on the foundations that more or less reflect the organisation of higher education*". [original quotation in French]

[cxxxix] Dispositions générales 1948, p. 19-21.

[cxxxix] Gevaerts, F. (1952). *De zedelijke Vorming en Selectie in de inlandse Lagere School van Belgisch Kongo*. Unpublished master's thesis K.U.Leuven. The author of this thesis remarks in this regard (p. 164): "*The war from 1940-1945 prevented the development of the 1938 plan and the situation in the Congo had changed to such an extent in the meantime that a new one was drawn up. A. Maus clearly influenced this new draft both in the selection and organisation of girls' education and the language used for teaching in the schools, the latter is even taken literally from one of his articles.*" Reference is made to an article by Duperoux, the director of education of the Union Minière in Katanga in support of this claim. However no evidence of this can be found in the article concerned. Dupérourx, A. (1950). Education et formation professionnelles au Katanga. In *Bulletin du CEPSI*, V, 14. p. 153-168.

[cxxxix] Scalais, F. (1950). La réorganisation scolaire au Congo Belge. In *Zaire: revue congolaise*, IV, p. 421-428. The Félix Scalais scheutist would become the vicar apostolic from 1953 for Leopoldville, succeeding Mgr. Six. He was the archbishop of Leopoldville from 1959 to 1964.

[cxxxix] Van Schingen, H. (1945). Instruction généralisée et progrès de l'enseignement des Noirs. In *Troisième conférence plénière des Ordinaires des Missions du Congo Belge et du Ruanda-Urundi, 25 juin - 8 juillet 1945*. Léopoldville: le Courrier d'Afrique. p.147-162.

[cxxxix] Bernard Mels (1908-1992), scheutist, was the vicar apostolic of Luluaburg from 1949 and archbishop of Kananga from 1959.

[cxxxix] KADOC, Brys Papers, nr. 185.17. Memo from Bernard Mels to Félix Scalais relating to the new school curriculum, probably 17 November 1948. Also cited by Depaepe & Van Rompaey.

[cxxxix] Paul Coppens (1892-1969) was a fellow student and friend of Pierre Ryckmans (1891-1959), probably the best-known of the governors-general of the

Belgian Congo. Coppens was a lawyer, like Ryckmans, and lectured courses on colonial law and other colonial issues at the law faculty and the “*école commerciale et coloniale*” at Leuven university. He would be substituted by Ryckmans while staying in the colony for a few years. When the latter left for the Congo in his turn to take on the position of governor-general, his teaching duties in Leuven were then taken over by Coppens. Stenmans, A. (1975). Coppens (Paul). In *Bibliographie Belge d’Outre-Mer*, VII B, 67-86; Vanderlinden, J. (1994). o.c. p. 1-260.

[cxl] Kita, P. (1982). *Colonisation et enseignement*. p. 215. [Original quotation in French]

[cxli] Kita, P., Depaepe, M. & Briffaerts, J. (2002). *Lente éclosion de l’enseignement secondaire au Congo Belge: Histoire d’un enjeu politique*. Texte proposé au Congrès ISCHE à Paris, juillet 2002. p. 9.

[cxlii] See Kita, P. (1982). *Colonisation et enseignement*. p. 193; Coppens, P. (1950). Le programme de l’enseignement d’après le plan décennal. In *La revue coloniale belge*, IV, 104. p. 79-81.

[cxliii] *Plan décennal pour le développement économique et social du Congo Belge*. tome I. Bruxelles: Editions De Visscher, 1949. p. 62-82.

[cxliv] Wigny, P. (1949). *Plan décennal pour le développement économique et social du Congo Belge. Introduction*. Bruxelles: Editions De Visscher. p. XXIII-XXIV.

[cxlv] *Plan Décennal*, p. 62-63. [original quotation in French]

[cxlvi] This was the amount provided in the planning, to be allocated over a ten year period. Vanthemsche, G. (1994). *Genèse et portée du “Plan décennal” du Congo belge (1949-1959)*. Bruxelles: ARSOM. Classe des Sciences Morales et Politiques, Mémoires in-8°, Nouvelle Série, Tome 51, fasc. 4. p. 38.

[cxlvii] In reference to this see also: Block, J.P. (1992). *La guerre scolaire au Congo Belge sous Auguste Buisseret*.

[cxlviii] Buisseret, A. (1947). L’enseignement au Congo Belge et au Ruanda-Urundi, in *Rapport de la mission sénatoriale au Congo et dans les territoires sous tutelle Belge*, Senat Belge, Bruxelles, p. 79-130. [original French]

[cxlix] Block, J.-P. (1992). *La guerre scolaire*; see also Depaepe & Van Rompaey, p. 152.

[cl] Buisseret, A. (1947). *L’enseignement au Congo Belge et au Ruanda-Urundi*, p. 92. [Original quotation in French]

[cli] Albert Brys (1900-1973). He was active in the colony (in the apostolic vicariate Nieuw-Antwerp, to the north of the MSC mission area) from 1927 to

1937 and from 1939 to 1946. Back in Belgium he occupied a series of posts, all in a colonial sphere. Apart from being director of the CEDIC he was also secretary general of the SIBELAC (*Service Interfédéral Belge de l'Enseignement Catholique au Congo*). In this capacity he was responsible for recruiting Belgian teachers for colonial education. Besides this he was also a member of the study commission for colonial affairs of the CVP. Storme, M. (1976). Brys (Albert-Jozef-Antoon). In *Biographie Belge d'Outre-Mer*. VII B. 40-42.

[clii] The following paragraphs are partially based on documentation from the Brys Papers, which are kept in the KADOC in Leuven. This documentation was consulted by myself during my research on the school funding controversy in the Belgian Congo, and by Lies Van Rompaey in function of the research for “In het teken van de bevoogding”.

[cliii] These conditions had a lot to do with the lack of educational training of the majority of the missionaries. Buisseret had already pointed this out in his report in 1947. The new curriculum also imposed degree requirements on the missionaries, which they had to meet within a particular period.

[cliv] Van Laere, M. (1986). *De schoolstrijd in Belgisch Congo*. p. 50-60. In this reference is made to the so-called “Addendum à la convention d'intérêt scolaire passé entre le gouvernement de la colonie et les associations missionnaires”.

[clv] KADOC, Brys Papers, nr. 185.17. “Note au sujet de certaines modifications apportées à la convention scolaire”, Lisala, 25 mei 1950; Ibidem, Letter Permentier, W., missionary-inspector in the vicariate of Rwanda, to Albert Brys, 11 September 1950.

[clvi] KADOC, Brys Papers, nr. 185.17. Van den Bergh, R., apostolic vicar Lisala, “Note relative à l'addendum”, in preparation for the general conference of apostolic vicars, 27 December 1950.

[clvii] KADOC, Brys Papers, nr. 185.17. Letter from Brys, addressee unknown, 7 November 1952.

[clviii] Service de l'enseignement (1952). *Organisation de l'enseignement libre subsidié pour indigènes avec le concours des sociétés de missions chrétiennes. Dispositions générales*. p. 15. Referred to later as Dispositions générales 1952.

[clix] Dispositions générales 1952, p. 10.

[clx] Dispositions générales 1952, p. 13. [Original quotation in French]

[clxi] Dispositions générales 1952, p. 32.

[clxii] Dispositions générales 1952, p. 36.

[clxiii] The word “évolué” shows a junction in the relationship between the colonisers and the colonials in the Belgian Congo. In her book “Congo Made in

Flanders?" Bambi Ceuppens clearly shows the content but also the ideological meaning that the concept always had: *"Until the Second World War the term "évolué" is exclusively used in its original function as an adjective, for instance, to refer to noirs évolués. As the number of "evolved" Congolese grows, as a consequence of the move to the cities before and during the war, the word is used more and more as a noun. From a Belgian point of view the "évolué" is the black man (women are never spoken of) who, by his actions, shows an honest desire to attain a higher level of civilisation. The criteria for receiving the official status of "évolué" are ambiguous and subject to change; the most that can be said is that a minimum of a few years of post-primary education is the lowest criterion."* Ceuppens, B. (2003). *Congo Made in Flanders? Koloniale Vlaamse visies op "blank" en "zwart" in Belgisch-Congo*. Gent: Academia Press. p. 148. From 1948 the évolué would be placed in a type of judicial framework The *carte de mérite civique*, introduced by the Decree of 12 July 1948, gave a kind of recognition of the fact that someone was "civilised". In the preamble of this decree the following passage was taken as the foundation of the law: *"Considering the evolution level of most of the natives, on an intellectual as well as moral level, their assimilation has not yet become possible; In expectation of a statute being created for the civilised Congolese population, the existing laws and regulations will bestow certain special rights on the natives whose level of civilisation justifies such. (...)"* There were however no legal advantages attached to this. Piron, P. & Devos, J. (1960). *Codes et lois du Congo Belge. tome I. Matières civiles, commerciales, pénales*. Bruxelles: Larcier. p. 152-153. On the other hand, the "matriculation", introduced by the Decree of 17 May 1952, intended a real change. Those who had a *carte d'immatriculation* came under the same civil law as the white. This was however preceded by a strict selection procedure, in which a thorough investigation of the persons' private life took place. The civil statute book literally stipulated: *"In order to attain matriculation they must (...) show through their education and way of life that they have reached such a level of civilisation as to be competent of enjoying the rights and fulfilling the duties stipulated by the written (as opposed to the unwritten law, applicable to natives, JB) legislation."* This stipulation was intentionally formulated vaguely and very generally as it was desirable for it to be adaptable in its application. The preparatory works foresaw that the administration of the law would have to complete the terms concretely. Piron, P. & Devos, J. (1960). *o.c.* p. 55-56.

[clxiv] It is sufficient for now to refer to the complaints of Jozef Malula, the later cardinal, to one of Brys' colleagues, besides other examples cited by Depaepe &

Van Rompaey, p. 181-183. Malula complained that the évolués were not taken seriously by the Belgians.

[clxv] See the survey graph in appendix 2. Copied from Briffaerts, J. (1995). *Over Belgische politiek en Congolese scholen*, and based on the *Annuaire Statistique de Belgique*.

[clxvi] The university of Lovanium actually grew from the departments that Leuven professors had founded in the twenties in the Kwango region: FOMULAC (Fondation Médicale de l'Université de Louvain au Congo) and CADULAC (Centre Agronomique de l'Université de Louvain au Congo). The foundations only got a meaningful role in terms of research and education after the Second World War. cf. Poncelet, M. (1997). *o.c.* p. 384-385. University education that was available to everyone, both Belgians and Congolese, had to be awaited for another ten years. At the time of writing this thesis there had not yet been a systematic historical investigation into the foundation, preparation and operation of the university. See Mantels, R. (2007), *Geleerd in de tropen. Leuven, Congo & de wetenschap 1885-1960*, Leuven, Universitaire Pers, 352 p.

[clxvii] Depaepe & Van Rompaey, p. 209-215 gives a good overview of the case. Through the fragmented sources and the quasi-impossibility of verifying the validity of certain figures, putting together correct statistical surveys of the student numbers is a job that has barely started.

[clxviii] Kita, P. (1982). *Colonisation et enseignement*. p. 223-240.

[clxix] Circular of 17 September 1956, see Kita, P. (1982). *o.c.* p. 231.

[clxx] See appendix 2.

[clxxi] See appendix 3.

[clxxii] Another terminological problem is posed here. It is unclear whether the term "official schools" is still used in the *Plan Décennal* referring to what used to be called "official congregational education". In the N.I.S. statistics numbers of the same size order were given for the amount of schools and the amount of students, but there was no separate category allocated for "congregational education" until 1949. From then on a distinction was made between "official" and "congregational", which makes it clear that the last category designates the schools that were not run by the missions, because the announced numbers were not high enough.

[clxxiii] See appendix 3. Only the figures for primary education were withheld. Before 1948 the subsidised education includes the "sixièmes préparatoires".

[clxxiv] See appendix 2.

[clxxv] Bureau de l'Enseignement National Catholique, *Annuaire Statistique*

1962-1963. Kinshasa: BENC. See appendix 4.

[clxxvi] Omakoko, A. (1999). *L'enseignement de l'histoire en République Démocratique du Congo (ex-Zaïre). Diagnostic (1960-1980)*. Bern: Peter Lang. p. 59-62. See also in this sense Kita, P. (1982). *Colonisation et enseignement*.

[clxxvii] See appendix 4, table 1. These figures come from the *Ministère de l'Education Nationale*, as cited in the publication of the *Bureau de l'enseignement* (p. 19).

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# When Congo Wants To Go To School - The Missionaries And The Belgian Congo: Preparation, Ideas And Conceptions Of The Missionaries



Primitive School, Mission area MSC,  
location and date unknown

*"I have been interested in the Congo all my life, because I always wanted to be a missionary in the Congo, even as a little child. And so in a way I paid some attention to it, but only the achievements of my heroes at the time - a number of*



*family members were missionaries and the mission exhibitions, the missionary action. The Congo came to us through missionary work and it was very heroic. ...I remember the moment to the minute when I discovered the background or the 'depths' of the colonisation of the Belgian Congo. And then I got the feeling, which I still have today, that during my training, my education, I had been deceived about the Congo.*"[1]

Flemish and, by extension, Belgian missionaries left for the Belgian Congo in droves. The Statistical Yearbook of the N.I.S., which had a separate section for the colony, recorded a few tables with data about the 'white' population. As well as divisions on the basis of nationality, gender and place of residence, for a number of years it also included a "*class division*". In this table, the population was divided into three categories: 'civil servant', 'missionaries' and 'general public'. The presence of a separate category for missionaries points to the fact that they were very important in colonial society. On the basis of the available figures it can be posited that during the interbellum period, religious workers comprised 10 to 15% of the white population. This percentage was certainly not only men, the proportion of female religious workers was fairly stable throughout the colonial period and amounted to over 40%.[2]

The above quote, from an '*experienced expert*', indicates that the conceptual world of the missionaries was not an empty page, that they did not leave without expectations and that they did not work in a vacuum. The colonial attitude in general has frequently been the subject of analysis. The question raised in this chapter is more specific: what can be said about the conceptions and attitudes with which the missionaries left for the colonies? A number of aspects of missionary life have been the subject of research in recent years. Jean Pirotte, who wrote an important work on the mission periodicals in Belgium, gives a good overview of relevant research questions about the missionaries during the colonial period.[3] He divides these questions into a number of categories, more specifically: the interest in the missions, the 'agents' of missionary work, the support on the home front, the use of time and space, the missionary 'conscience' and the dialogue between societies. Further, a number of works have recently appeared which try to capture the missionary spirit, at least partially. It is certainly not the intention to deal with all these questions systematically in the framework of this thesis, let alone to answer all of them.

In any case, it is with the necessary reservation and some caution that we attempt

the assessment of the 'intellectual baggage' of the missionaries who left for the colonies. Indeed, the difficulty with which this specific theme is dealt in the existing scientific literature is striking. When Depaepe and Van Rompaey discussed the ideas of the missionaries they talked predominantly about the appreciation of the black intellect and character and they supported themselves, necessarily, with the views of a pair of figures considered influential, namely Pierre Charles and Gustaaf Hulstaert.[4] Thus when, by way of conclusion concerning the missionary attitude after the Second World War, they make a pronouncement like "*Even so, most missionaries could still only muster very little appreciation for the traditional milieu*",[5] this can serve as the necessary correction to the still dominant view of the missionary as the 'friend of the Congolese'. Even so, the statement must at the same time be interpreted itself. The reality was, after all, more complex than that. It is not appropriate to paint all missionaries as uncompromising, dogmatic people, who did not want to learn about their surroundings, or at least did not try to understand them.

Moreover, it appears from the available literature that it is very difficult to pursue certain conclusions or hypotheses to the level of daily practice. Concretely, scientific literature about missionary work and mission history speaks a lot about 'missiology' itself. Missiology counts as the scientific approach to missionary work, which itself developed during the colonisation of Belgian Congo. This scientific transformation occurred at the University in Leuven as a result of the Jesuit Pierre Charles' initiative and the *Semaines missiologiques de Louvain*, which he organised. The question of whether these theories and ideas actually found their way into the field is far harder to answer.

As an example: the CREDIC (*Centre de Recherches et d'Echanges sur la Diffusion et l'Inculturation du Christianisme*), connected to the University of Lyon, organised a colloquium in the early nineties of the twentieth century on the subject of the training of missionaries.[6] In the different contributions offered in the presentations of the colloquium, however, no clear link was established between the missiological science and work in the field. The question of whether there was an influence from the Missiological Weeks on the formation of missionaries is only formulated explicitly by one participant: "*Ultimately, what influence could the Missiological Weeks in Leuven have had on the preparation for missionary work given to the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa? It is truly very difficult to establish this. Perhaps it may be labelled 'vital interaction'.*"

The mission sister in question subsequently posited that the possible influences that came from missiology or from the themes discussed during the Missiological Weeks were, in any event, very indirect. In any case, they are not to be found explicitly in the archives.[7] There were various training initiatives covering the needs in the field but the same author mentioned that even after the Second World War *“the people responsible for training realised that all the Sisters had little culture: years of study were required before they could carry out the profession: nursing diplomas, primary school teachers, domestic education, English (necessary in Anglophone Africa). There was a sense of an immense need for training.”* Taking into account that these assertions were made in the framework of a French congregation of sisters, which was active in other parts of Africa, we must ask ourselves if this tendency also recurs in the information and documentation about the formation of (primarily) Belgian missionaries in congregations which were active in the missionary region of Coquilhatville.



Lesson by a Father in the Equator area

Closer to home, it also appears from recent research that the truth is certainly not to be found in the missiological discourse. Carine Dujardin, who did extensive research into the missionary work of Scheut in China, asked a number of former missionaries about the influence of the *Semaines Missiologiques*, which seemed to have been of national and even international renown at the time.[8] The answers she received confirm that this influence was almost non-existent. Dujardin cites a number of reasons for this: the rather more elitist character of the missiological movement, the isolation of most active missionaries, the seniority principle which obliged new missionaries to adhere to certain rules of obedience and the practically focused and even anti-intellectualist profile of most missionaries. She also gives a fifth reason: the education of the missionaries

themselves, which was usually very elementary.[9]

If it is thus already clear that there is no necessary connection between the scientific mission discourse and that of the people in the field, how is a researcher to try and deal with this problem concretely? He or she can try to observe these people themselves and to look at their ideas in detail. I have in this case chosen to work in two phases. In the first phase, the situation with which the missionaries were confronted in the period preceding their 'career choice' was analysed. Firstly, as an introduction, I will give a short general sketch of colonial conceptualisation in the mother country. The image formed by a person about an *in se* unknown, distant and removed phenomenon will after all be greatly influenced by the ideas about it circulating in the society in which he or she lives. Secondly, a more specific examination will be made of the image that was entwined with that situation: the image of the missionaries themselves and of their activity. From this, presumably, it will be possible to deduct in a general way which considerations formed the basis for a person to leave for the Congo as a missionary. Logically, the question of where these images and ideas come from must also be asked. The answer to this question leads to the second phase: considering that conceptualisation is fundamentally influenced by education and training, the analysis of the general situation is followed by the analysis of the specific context in which the aspiring missionary was educated and trained. As part of this subject, a more specific examination will be made of the education of the people working in the vicariate of Coquilhatville. Furthermore, an attempt has been made to complement and complete the written documentation as much as possible by means of personal testimonies.

### *1. The broader societal context as an influential factor*

#### *1.1. Promotion of the colony and missionary activity in Belgian education[10]*

In any case, conceptualisation about the colony and missionary activity was clearly related to training at school and in particular with the intellectual framework given with this training. In his research into the origin of the vocation of missionaries, Claude Soetens posits that it was not the school as such that created missionary interest for the majority. According to him, school was an environment dominated by the religious workers. He posits that primarily through this, feelings of responsibility, service and selflessness could be developed in the young. That these values played a big role in choosing a missionary vocation can hardly be denied, although this statement, in our opinion, does not put enough

emphasis on the power of societal pressure. The connection between the two is therefore not an automatism. As the Jesuit Joseph Masson said when asked in an interview about his memories of the beginning of the Missiological Weeks: *"In 1923, I was a pupil in third year Latin at the St-Servais College in Liège. I was undoubtedly already enrolled for the missions: sorting out stamps, collecting and dragging away old paper to help them."*[11] This statement suggests that the environment in which people lived influenced the children to develop in a certain way, without this having to be decisive as such.

#### *1.1.1. The government and the promotion of the colony at school*

We can assume that the missionaries received the same schooling as the majority of other children and consequently also concerning their vision of Africa, the colonies and the Africans. There are clear indications that conscious effort was made early on to 'steer' the Belgian population in its view of Belgium's presence in the Congo. One of the themes discussed at the *Congrès colonial national*, organised in 1920, was how to imprint the population with a favourable stance towards the colony. It was posited: *"In order to educate the nation, encourage vocations, in short to form public opinion in a colonial regard, it is of primary importance to organise colonial education in the schools of all levels in an interesting and intuitive way."*[12] Much earlier, in 1905, Leopold II had made his own attempt to impart more international sensitivity to his subjects via education. In that year, the Belgian government organised an international scientific conference in Mons on *L'expansion économique mondiale* (so-called 'world expansion') and this at the instigation of the King.

Colonial politics as part of a broader expansionist idea was one of the central themes of the world expansion conference. One of the sub-commissions at the conference was, in fact, devoted to education. The central idea put forward there was to adapt the school curriculum in such a way as to make people more amenable to everything taking place outside their own direct and limited social environment. The possibility of emigrating abroad was then also included (for example to the colony). That this was not merely a gratuitous remark made at a conference can be seen from the fact that a brochure about the proposed reforms to the education system was published after the conference.[13] The option to make world expansion a permanent focus point in schools fitted a certain tradition.[14] For the time being it remains difficult to ascertain how far the proposed reforms were actually introduced. From the studies available on the

subject it can be concluded that this certainly did not happen as planned by the government. However, it does appear that the colony was placed on the school curriculum. This can be deduced, for example, from the fact that at that time song lyrics about the Congo circulated in pedagogical periodicals on the home front.[15]

### *1.1.2. The Catholic Church and the promotion of the mission at school*

The colony was also present in education via another route. The official mission propaganda was strongly connected to and interested in education. The 'Heilige Kindsheid' or 'Holy Childhood', founded in 1843, was an official organ of the Catholic Church[16] aimed at the education of children to the missionary spirit and cooperation, through prayer and material aid, to relieve the suffering of less fortunate children in mission countries. I refer to it because for years this organisation was responsible for the missionary idea being present very strongly in Belgian society and especially in education. In Flanders, it developed particularly quickly and was present in every Catholic primary school. By means of specific periodicals and pedagogical instructions it certainly had an influence in the classroom: The Priests' mission union, periodicals such as 'Annaaltjes van de Heilige Kindsheid', 'Tam-Tam', mission poems, mission songs, the 'Romereis' (trip to Rome), the 'Hemeltrap' (stairway to heaven), etc. The arsenal of pedagogical aids intended to produce support, respect and money for the missions was impressive. Apart from this, the mission idea was promoted on a large scale.

In a very extensive article in *De Vloed*, a periodical for missionaries in training, the MSC Joris Vlamynck sketched an image of what was happening in Flanders in the field of missionary action in the second half of the 1930's. Vlamynck described both in-school and extra-curricular activities which were organised for the benefit of the missions or the theme of which was at least missionary. In the first part, about the Holy Childhood, it was stated that their proceeds for the Diocese of Mechelen were nearly one million Belgian francs in 1931, an enormous amount for that time. The article refers to the annual membership contribution of the Holy Childhood, to contribution cards, to offertory boxes. Furthermore, aside from the financial information in the article it is apparent that a lot of attention was paid to the missions. Missionary duty was, according to Vlamynck, forced upon educational personnel in pedagogical periodicals and at annual educational conferences.

Situated further outside the school environment were the 'Eucharistische

Kruistochten' or 'Eucharistic Crusades', established by the Norbertines of Averbode in 1920.[17] The aim was, at first glance, primarily to keep the fire and enthusiasm for the missions burning through frequent prayer. However, Vlamynck posits that means other than prayer could be employed: *"Even the material mission action is included in the E.K. (Eucharistic Crusades) life: in the mission sewing circles the crusaders find a way to turn their apostles' spirits into deeds."* The financial aspect was not forgotten either: *"Through the E.K. management collecting boxes were made available from the E.K. departments; the profits, which were deposited by the members, went to the S.P.L. for training native priests in the mission."* The Eucharistic Crusades were apparently a well-structured organisation with 200 000 members at the time of Vlamynck's article. The movement must of course be situated in the broader societal context as part of the Catholic reaction to the progression of moral corruption. The Crusades were aimed at the whole population and had youth divisions and adult divisions, both supported by a solid press infrastructure. Among others, *Zonneland* and other publications from the *Goede Pers* (the editing house of the Norbertines in Averbode) were aimed at children. For the other groups there were also specific publications. Vlamynck furthermore mentions the organisation of divisions in the Congo, for which the Crusades on the home front supplied the necessary materials: *"To ease the task of the missionaries in establishing and leading the movement, the E.C. centrel of Averbode will provide all the necessary information about spirit and method and provides them with rich E.C. documentation and literature: books, brochures, papers, etc."*

## *1.2. The Belgian Congo in schoolbooks*

In the framework of this research the schoolbook can be considered the supplier of relevant information in two different ways. On the one hand, it was a tool used by the 'coloniser' to bring ideas, concepts and values across to the 'colonised'. We will come back to this concept later. On the other hand, of course, the schoolbook was at the same time used in the western education system, also to communicate ideas, concepts and values. Both these cases raise the following question: How much relevant information can we obtain concerning the formation of ideas as a result of the content of these schoolbooks? We will start here with the discussion of the schoolbook in Belgian education as a tool for the formation of ideas about an unknown culture, in this case, the Congolese.

### *1.2.1. Conceptualisation in schoolbooks*

Scientific research concerning the formation of ideas about other cultures using the medium of Belgian schoolbooks is rather limited to date. The most extensive study available is the doctoral dissertation of Antoon De Baets, from 1988, about the influence of history textbooks on Flemish public opinion concerning non-Western cultures, using a study of the content of history textbooks from secondary education in the period 1945-1984. This study is interesting in this context for at least two reasons: Firstly, because it contains an overview of previous research on conceptualisation in history books in Flanders. Information on this subject gathered by the author confirms and strengthens for Belgian Congo what is generally applicable for other regions: very little scientific research has been carried out into conceptualisation in schoolbooks.[18] Secondly, the study is important because the author questions how what is learned at school influences the way people think about other cultures. Here he convincingly shows that research into the influence of a schoolbook on the formation of ideas puts this influence into perspective. On the one hand, it is clear that it is difficult to ascertain how certain ideas are retained from the texts of schoolbooks and the extent to which they are representative for more broadly applicable values and thoughts within a society. On the other hand, the medium of schoolbooks almost vanishes completely when the multitude of other media and influences affecting the children during and after their time at school are also taken into account.[19]

Schoolbooks can only provide information about the transference of values on a general level. The conclusions that can be drawn from the research into schoolbooks are never final, they are only indicative. The manner in which schoolbooks deal with particular themes therefore only reveals something about what the makers of the book think. It does not necessarily tell us what the pupils who used the book did think. It can be assumed, however, that the information given in schoolbooks did, in general, fit with what was thought about those things in a broader social context. The producers of the schoolbook thereby functioned as a kind of mirror, reflecting current ideas via the book. The conclusion may be drawn that the same types of information or the same kinds of messages circulated via other media and other means and thus also reached the pupils.

### *1.2.2. The image of the Belgian Congo*

As far as the Belgian Congo is concerned, there are strong indications that the same types of information circulated in various ways and that particular images and ideas were part of a whole concept that was fairly generally present in



Belgian and Flemish society. This statement can be reinforced, for example, by investigating the ideas and concepts about the same themes in different milieus. For the missionaries, the strong interrelationship of education and church must have unmistakably contributed to the unity of conceptualisation within certain social groups from which the missionaries were recruited. We have already pointed out that the image given of missionaries at school could largely have been created (and maintained) by the missionaries themselves. It suffices to point out parallels between the image given in mission periodicals and that shown in schoolbooks.

There is very little material available on the way in which the colony was presented in Belgian schools. One study was devoted to the aforementioned 'world expansion conference' (a very inadequate translation of *congrès d'expansion économique mondiale*). It is a master's thesis which examines the impact the plans, made in preparation for the conference on world expansion, had on the primary school curriculum. This research was done on the basis of reports from conferences on education and periodicals on education. In another master's thesis the phenomenon was approached on the basis of schoolbooks.[20] This research concerned the manner in which the colonial period was written about in a number of history books used in secondary education in the period between 1900 and 1980. The conclusions of this study, based on the contents of about sixty different textbooks, can be summarised as follows:

In the first period, from the beginning of colonisation until the First World War, hardly any attention was paid to the colony in the fatherland's history books. Some events concerning the King were mentioned, of which the most prominent was about the protection and civilisation of the Congolese, the war against Arabian slave traders, evangelisation and the tapping of new markets. In the interbellum period, the approach changed to a more contextual one, in the sense of heightened interest, and the results of colonial action were further discussed. Devoting entire lessons to the colony only became the norm after the Second World War. A more detached approach to the first years of colonisation was introduced, especially compared to the heroic proportions the deeds of King Leopold II had taken on in earlier periods.[21]

In addition, there is also a study by Edouard Vincke from 1985 on the image of foreign cultures. This concentrated on Belgian French language geography textbooks, published in the period 1880-1980. His research, based on a

representative sample of schoolbooks, also provides information on the image that Belgian pupils received about foreign peoples in distant lands. It is primarily a study about ethnocentrism, tracing the evolution of the concepts of 'race' and 'primitivism' over a period of 100 years. Vincke also researched a number of concepts that concerned the image of the Congolese. Regarding the assessment of the phenomenon of colonisation by the authors studied he states: *"It is possible to follow the changes of position regarding colonisation. During the first period, there is a direct panegyric for the possession and exploitation of riches. Then there is a panegyric for the humanitarian and economic work, the valuation of the spiritual and material welfare. Finally there is a panegyric for development in the modern sense. A fashionable polemicist (P. Bruckner) vehemently criticises Western culpability in relation to its old colonies and the Third World. This is a criticism from which the analysed authors escaped."* [22]

Marc Depaepe also paid attention to data about *'the colony at school'* in the study and exhibition *'Congo, a second fatherland'*. Based on his assertions, I can only draw the following conclusions from the above studies, which correspond strongly in a global sense. Though the emphasis was on progress and the results achieved through the civilising action, the basic position towards the Congolese remained fundamentally racist, even though this position was based on so-called scientific premises. The Congolese were stuck, according to this conceptualisation, between actual progress and inherent inferiority. This justified the continued presence of the colonisers, whose bravery and achievements, of course, were also endlessly praised. The Congolese were also praised insofar as they achieved the image that the colonisers themselves wanted of them.[23]



The Groupe Scolaire Building in  
Coquilhatville

A striking example of this very ambiguous position is to be found in 'Taalwerkboek 5', a textbook in Dutch for the sixth year of primary school, published in 1960. In this textbook, over a total of thirty reading lessons, three texts are devoted to the Congo. The first of the three is entitled "*Pioneering work in the Belgian Congo*" and deals with the creation of the colony, the role played by King Leopold II and the memory of a number of colonial heroes (De Bruyne and Lippens, Dhanis and Jacques). The heroic sacrifice of the missionaries is also discussed. Furthermore, it is posited that Leopold gifted the Congo to Belgium, to fulfil his initial purpose. The second lesson has the title "*A metropolis grows*" and considers the growth and prospects of Leopoldville. Finally, the third text describes a remote mission post. It is entitled "*Where the tam-tams drum*". Through their choice of vocabulary, these last two texts clearly illustrate the contrast created in the depiction of the colonial undertaking. Numerous strengthening adjectives were used in these texts to show this image as sharply as possible. In Leopoldville, at the 'wide' Congo River, 'spacious, beautiful' avenues formed a 'modern' city, with 'tasteful' buildings, 'luxurious' hotels, 'magnificent' bank buildings and 'well-kept' gardens, 'sober' school complexes and 'proper' hospitals. By contrast, many dangers had to be risked to get to the mission post in the bush, over 'winding, narrow' roads. However, the mission post itself was an oasis of civilisation, as literally stated, because "*the remaining, extensive mission territory is located even further away: thick woods along the hills and swamps in the valley. (...) Far away the dull, heavy beat of the tam-tams is heard. Over there, in that mysterious distance it is hard work; the fetish servants and the sorcerers still have great, ill-fated influence over the population. They are the worst enemies of the civilisation of Congo. Slowly we come to understand what mission work means.*"[24] Naturally, this kind of description shows how the authors, consciously or unconsciously, represented Congo as a distant exotic place. It was described as a place where only hardworking, motivated people could go to take part in a heroic but far from completed mission to alleviate the misery of the totally different people who lived there.

An important marginal note here: Congo and everything that had to do with the colony was, of course, only one of the topics considered in these books. Relatively speaking, the attention devoted to this topic was not so large.[25] This realisation also applies to the political interest in the Congo and perhaps to society in general. The colonial idea must have remained strange and mysterious in public opinion, far from the daily reality. Although the colonial propaganda reached even

the smallest villages through education and missionary action, there is no doubt whatsoever that the image of the colony, as it came about through missionary and state propaganda, was essentially ethnocentric and certainly persisted until after independence. This image perfectly corresponds to the descriptions generally spread by the colonial propaganda services.[26]

### *1.3. Where did the missionary vocation come from?*

The concrete situation that brought young people to the point of becoming missionaries can partially explain their intellectual frame of mind and the worldview from which they approached their job as missionaries. Since the beginning of the 1980s scientific investigation in this area has made clear progress in collecting and analysing the testimonies of those involved. However, there are as yet no coordinated studies published.[27] For the period preceding missionary life, including the motivational factors and the surroundings in which those involved grew up, two research projects can be cited in the Belgian context. In the first case there are a hundred testimonies from missionaries that were collected by the *Centre Vincent Lebbe* in French-speaking Belgium during the mid-eighties. This project had a historical nature; the intention was to determine what memories those involved still had of their lives as missionaries. The results of this research were seen as an initiative towards the creation of a 'database' of missionary testimonies. The second case concerns a survey of one hundred missionaries throughout Belgium at the end of the 1980s by Carine Dujardin. She was aiming specifically at the value pattern of the missionary population in the year 1989 and their position in the context of changes made after Vatican II.

In both cases those interviewed were mainly African missionaries. Each time a number of general questions were asked concerning motivation, attitude, descent and such, that can offer us useful information in the context of our investigation. In both cases the researchers reached the conclusion that there are no general lines to be drawn concerning the descent or motivations of missionaries, although there are a few trends. For instance, it was found that the great majority of missionaries came from what was described as 'the higher middle class'. In the second investigation, which was geographically conducted over the whole country, there was also an overwhelming representation of people from the countryside.

The class-bound division of the missionaries may not seem significant but from the results of the two investigations it is apparent that the ideological base was

clearly present in many cases, and this in a variety of ways. The Catholic action, which was fully developed during the interbellum period, was a meaningful framework of reference for very many missionaries during their youth. Catholic action and missionary action overlapped through this. School was also, in a great majority of the cases, taken into account as a stimulating factor when deciding to become a missionary. The Catholicism of the private life seems to connect to this easily in most cases.[28] From Soetens' research it is further apparent that there were many practical reasons to start work as a missionary. In this way the author emphasizes that school is often named as a stimulus in general but that there were mostly other, more exact factors that were mentioned: a particular religious person who exercised a decisive influence; older friends who took the same road; missionaries who came to give talks at school.

For Soetens, one of the most important conclusions is that among the reasons given there was almost nothing said about a broader church project. As a possible explanation he puts forward that the specific missionary training before departure was very brief or lacking entirely. Of course it is also possible that the nature of the research method used could have something to do with this: no doubt interviewees will sooner answer with facts to specific questions. When they are questioned about their motivation they might not spontaneously talk about a system or broader phenomenon but call on an individual person or concrete occurrences. Finally, it is a noteworthy conclusion that school had as good as no influence on religious women. The shorter school career and the fact that most orders of teaching sisters had their own recruiting system and only had missions quite late (or not at all) would have been the cause.[29]

What was the image of the missionaries themselves in society? This too is a complex question. Keeping in mind the influence of the church structures on people's everyday lives, and considering the decisive influence of other missionaries at the origin of new vocations, it is likely that the image of the missionaries was shaped by the actions of missionaries. Also, this kind of literature, including the mission periodicals (and therefore the Catholic propaganda in the strict sense), was itself a part of the influence on the creation of vocations in the younger generations of priests. In his study on the shifting mentality of Belgian mission periodicals during the first half of the twentieth century, Pirotte suggests that few countries had more different mission periodicals than Belgium.

According to Pirotte, the main aims of missionary action that were emphasised in the mission periodicals were proclaiming the message of salvation and establishing the church community in a strange territory. On the subject of the missionaries, Pirotte concluded: *"Firstly, there is an excessive simplification in the presentation of the missionary. This simplification is not only manifested in the absence of profound reflection but also in the dichotomy used between the good and the bad; the missionary, shown as the hero of good, facing the forces of evil represented by the enemies of God's work. A second conclusion is of diffuse romanticism which may be seen in the periodicals throughout the period studied."* From there, he appropriately concluded: *"Undoubtedly, a large number of missionary qualities may be exact and we certainly may not ignore their generosity and endurance; but, in part, this image appears tailored with a view to being shown as attractive to young people avid in their devotion and self-sacrifice"* Nevertheless, at the end of the interbellum period a critical tendency came about in the periodicals that opened themselves to deeper reflection (these were a minority) and turned against the overly sentimental, romantic and heroic image of the missionary and his task in a strange land. These kinds of periodicals are situated on the side of missiological science. After a global quantitative investigation Pirotte decided that in the mission periodicals, in general, the emphasis was sooner placed upon proselytism, the gospel and spiritual welfare rather than moral and humanitarian objectives. This conclusion was even more true of the Catholic than the Protestant periodicals.

## *2. Specific training for missionaries*

### *2.1. General*

Dujardin states that specific training for missionaries in the nineteenth century was very limited and was practically nonexistent. Most congregations only provided the normal priest training consisting of the noviciate, a number of years of philosophy and a theological education. Apart from this a distinction had to be made between the specific mission congregations and other religious congregations. For specific mission congregations, attention was only given to the place and circumstances in which the missionaries would find themselves in the future but this attention was very fragmented and certainly not scientific in nature. In the other congregations, particularly the women's congregations, the level was even lower. The ideas of missionary work and education did evolve over the course of the twentieth century, also influenced by a number of papal encyclicals (namely *Rerum ecclesiae* from 1926, *Saeculo exeunte* from 1940,

*Evangelii praecones* from 1951 and *Princeps pastorum* from 1959). Apart from the fact that three of these four encyclicals could only have had an influence after the Second World War, it must be stated that Dujardin did not announce any changes in the condition of the missionary training and thus it seems that the nineteenth century situation endured in the twentieth. The development at or around Leuven University in terms of missionary training shall be considered in what follows. There are two reasons for this: firstly, MSC will be considered in particular with regard to the treatment of the concrete training initiatives in congregations. They undertook a great deal of their training in Heverlee, close to Leuven. Secondly, as a Catholic university, the University of Leuven was noticeably at the forefront in this regard. Pierre Charles has already been referred to, but to what extent his ideas and the activities he organised were applied in 'the field' will have to be investigated in more detail.

#### *2.1.1. Towards a central missionary training?*



Playground Girls School Sainte  
Thérèse in Coquilhatville, 1950s.

There were several attempts to create a general training institute for missionaries in Belgium. At the start of the colonisation of the Congo by Leopold II an African seminary was founded in Leuven at the request of the King himself as part of the negotiations with and the search for Belgian missionaries. The seminary received the task, analogous to that of the American seminary, to train future missionaries for Africa. It functioned as a general training establishment for missionaries from December 1886 onwards but always suffered from a lack of resources and, particularly, a lack of students. In May 1888 it was taken over by the congregation of Scheut. According to Marcel Storme, courses in theology and the basics of African and Arabic languages were taught.[30] It may be assumed that, considering the early stage of the colonisation and the missionary work in the free state of Congo, there was no place for other subjects. The curriculum also included "*The concepts of hygiene and essential medicine in an equatorial climate.*"[31]

A second attempt to set up a general training for missionaries took place in the 1920s. In March 1923 the so-called 'militia law' was passed in the parliament.

This allowed missionaries to be released in part from military service, on the condition that they “(...) *spent one school year in higher education in a nurse-missionary training programme that is accepted by the Minister of Colonies and whose curriculum has received his approval*”.[32] This centre for higher education was situated in Leuven and opened in November 1923. Strictly speaking the training was not a part of the university curriculum since it was very practical. The principle behind it can be seen from the words of Rector Ladeuze, who noted in early March 1923: “*The house has just voted that missionaries shall be relieved from military service on the condition of doing a year of colonial studies (in addition to a few months in the field). Reason: services that they may provide in the colony during wartime, or in the absence of doctors*”.

It is clear from the existence of a complete curriculum that there were plans for a specific missionary training at Leuven University. This curriculum made a fairly global and wide impression and paid attention to history and languages, ethnology and teaching, agriculture, transport and engineering, besides a more traditional focus on the elements of medicine and hygiene. It was actually a slight extension of an already existing curriculum. Like other universities, the Catholic University played to the demand for staff with higher education when the Congo went over to the Belgian state in 1908. Training in colonial sciences was introduced, as in Brussels and Liege, in the framework of the *Ecole supérieure de sciences commerciales et consulaires*, where a degree in the *Sciences coloniales* could be attained in one or two years. Considering its place in the organisation chart the training was more situated in the ‘*economic*’ or ‘*commercial*’ area.

One of the professors in this training course was Edouard De Jonghe. It has already become clear that he played an important role in shaping the colonial education system. However, De Jonghe was also very taken with colonial education at home in “the metropolis” and undoubtedly played an active role in the decision-making on this subject. At the same time it can be seen from his correspondence with Ladeuze that these two maintained very good relations. The question also arises as to whether the nurse-missionary training was set up following demands from Leuven University. This cannot yet be answered definitively on the basis of the available information.

The education in the colonial sciences mentioned here should also have formed the basis for the new ‘missionary’ study option, which Ladeuze and De Jonghe were aiming for. It appears from the correspondence between them that they had



been planning this for some time. In a letter of September 1922 there was reference to the *programme du cours pour missionnaires* that would go together with the existing curriculum ("*notre programme*", which referred to colonial science), supplemented by current medicine, history of evangelisation methods and psychology, applied to the education of children. The intention was to have the missionaries receive one extra year of training in order to give them a real scientific and practical background: "*If they agree to sacrifice one year of apostolate this would be in view of a truly solid scientific and practical training.*"[33] A number of congregations were positive about this type of training, although there were a number of complaints and uncertainties with regard to founding a general educational course. The Jesuits thought the curriculum too general in intent and too specifically intended for the Congolese situation. After some negotiation and lobbying, in which Ladeuze participated, the coordinating committee of missionary superiors did consent.[34]

The rector of Leuven University was apparently not opposed to such an initiative, although he did emphasise to De Jonghe that everything would have to be feasible, also financially. It was not the first time that De Jonghe found himself in this situation; he was also involved in plans to start anthropological training in Leuven. The key factor in finally deciding against teaching missionary studies at Leuven University is not clear from the few fragments that can be found on this subject in the De Jonghe papers. The only possible explanation that comes out from this exchange of letters is the opposition of Alphonse Broden,[35], the director of the still starting *Instituut voor Tropische Geneeskunde* (Institute for Tropical Medicine) (at that time still in Forest near Brussels). Asked for his cooperation, De Jonghe is said to have received a principle promise from Broden, who was a well-known figure in scientific circles at the time.[36] However, in a later letter Broden showed some objections to founding a tropical medicine training section in Leuven. It is probable that this was due in part to his desire to protect his own department.[37]

Although this missionary training never came about there was an alternative: Broden had already written to De Jonghe in 1922 with a proposal for the education of *missionnaires-brancardiers*. As already mentioned, the work continued in this direction. After the approval of the militia law in 1923 De Jonghe and Ladeuze started work on the creation of the curriculum. It was approved by the Minister for the Colonies, Louis Franck, in August. In the following months

there were negotiations with various professors but to start with the medical training would be almost exclusively provided by one person, Dr. Dubois, who was recommended to Ladeuze by Mgr. Rutten,[38] the Bishop of Liege. The training was started in the 1923-24 academic year, although the year started late on the third of November due to practical preparations and negotiations. Around fifteen missionaries were enrolled, including a number of Scheutists, a few Jesuits and also 4 MSC: Willem Huygh, Jan De Kerck, Paul Trigalet and Edouard Hulstaert.[39] It is also clear that the last three completed the year. All three of them received a distinction. The centre for nurse-missionaries had a wavering start. In the following years there were no more students but halfway through the thirties this changed and the number of registered students went far above fifty.

However, it was clear that there had been more potential. Although the status of the training remained vague, which is clear from the fact that at one time it could be found under 'medical training' in the university curricula brochure and at another occasion under 'economics', it was originally the intention to give this very medical education the title of 'master's'. At the end of the first academic year there was a discussion in which several professors took part and of which there are several visible traces in the rector's correspondence. In a letter of 20 June 1924 to Ladeuze, Professor Michotte questioned whether it was necessary to give a master's degree for a one-year course with an incomplete curriculum at that.[40] Doctor Dubois, who taught almost all the subjects in the first year, declared that he did not want to examine the students on pathology but could just give them a certificate that they had taken the course. He thought the level of the course much too high for them and that they did not have enough prior knowledge, therefore making it impossible to examine them.[41] De Jonghe also took this up in a letter to Ladeuze and said that he had sorted out the matter after a conversation with Dubois and Broden, who supervised the exams as the government representative.[42]

The original concept of a complete area of study for missionaries, rewarded by a 'real' degree, was now fulfilled in a different way. A degree of 'Bachelor in Colonial Sciences' was created in which the nurse-missionary would follow a number of options in addition to the normal courses. During the first period there was the choice between a limited number of subjects that were part of other disciplines. A subject of De Jonghe's, *Ethnologie et ethnographie du Congo - politique indigène*, a history subject *Histoire et législation du Congo* by P.

Coppens, and *Organisation industrielle du Congo* given by P. Fontainas. Apart from these two subjects, the following were provided on education: *Méthodologie générale*, taught by François Collard, and *Organisation de l'enseignement primaire*, taught by Raymond Buyse.[43] Apart from this obligatory package one of the following three topics had to be chosen: *Langues coloniales*, *Géographie physique du Congo* or *Botanique des plantes tropicales*. De Jonghe suggested a further step: the possibility to achieve the title of *Docteur en Sciences coloniales* after a stay of three years in the colony and the defence of a thesis on an adapted topic. This was never put into practice however.[44]

The real impact of the training for the MSC seems to have been limited. The bachelor education, for which a number of non-medical subjects had to be taken, was never really successful. During the peak year of 1938-1939 ten missionaries were awarded this degree. This result was never equalled: the number of graduates constantly fluctuated between zero and ten. Only a handful of MSC achieved the degree over the years. Things were slightly better with the medical training. This could be expected because of the accompanying exemption from military service. However, the number of people that completed the training fluctuated considerably, there can be no definite number given. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that both training programmes gained in popularity during the second half of the thirties. This was the busiest period of participation at the MSC as well. It is no coincidence that this was also the period in which the Catholic missions in the Belgian Congo flourished.

### 2.1.2. Home education

The missionary's preparation for their work in Africa remained essentially a matter for the congregations. In relation to this it can be asked how this took place in the congregations that were active in the MSC mission area. The information available on this is very scarce. Generally, it can be said that there were no strict rules for education and that education was in no sense required. For the majority of these congregations there are only indications that future missionaries were housed together during a certain period, in the nineteenth century tradition of being isolated from the outside world. This was, for instance, the case for the Daughters of the Precious Blood, who had a central house in Holland from 1891 where a noviciate was organised. The Brothers of the Christian Schools were probably an exception as they were specifically a teaching order, with systematic training in a teacher training college.

To illustrate this: even an outspoken and large missionary congregation like Scheut kept to the classical division. An information brochure from 1925 states: *“The trainee missionary first has a noviciate year in Scheut. During the noviciate the scheutists receive their first training, wholly based on obedience and following Jesus Christ. ... Great emphasis is placed on the supernatural in everything: devout piety, independent strength of character, unwavering love for the call and congregation, all encompassing “brotherly love”.* After the noviciate the vows are made and the mission country is made known. In principle, they then stayed in Belgium for another six years in order to complete the usual two years of philosophy and four years of theology in Leuven. The brochure stated that, once arrived in the mission area, the missionary spent a year at the central post where he would *“acquaint himself further with the language”* and was taught the rest of the practical matters.[45] As an extension of what was the case in the African Seminary, the Scheut missionaries already received training in Chinese and Congolese languages in Belgium.[46] The entrance requirements for the candidates were not very high: they had to have completed their studies successfully. However, *“(...) If there was anything lacking in this regard but he was accepted to study philosophy in his diocese – if he had applied for this – then he may still have the chance of also being accepted by us.”*

## *2.2. The education of the MSC*

According to Honoré Vinck, these conclusions largely correspond with the accepted practice of the MSC.[47] The large majority of the MSC working in the Belgian Congo had not received any more education than the aforementioned philosophical and theological training (the normal priestly training). Of those who worked in the Belgian Congo and were still living at the time of my research, to my knowledge only one possessed a university degree: Frans Maes, who had a Bachelor in Education.[48]

### *2.2.1. Philosophical and theological training*

An aspect that is hard to grasp is the influence of the philosophical and theological training of the MSC on their positions concerning missionary work, being a missionary, Africa, the Congolese and everything to do with their future. The MSC organised their own education. This happened in two steps. In the first phase, the aspiring missionaries spent some years in Gerdingen in the province of Limburg, where the congregation had a training house. They received two years of philosophical training and the first year of their theological education.

Subsequently, the students moved to Heverlee near Leuven, where they received three more years of theology. The curriculum (the *Ratio studiorum*) consisted of a number of subjects, although none of these paid any specific attention to foreign cultures. According to Vinck, educational theory and psychology were only studied in a very limited fashion. The vast majority of the curriculum consisted of theological and philosophical material. A course on ethnology was written by Edmond Boelaert but was certainly not used before the end of the 1950s.[49] Boelaert had already taught classes on ethnology when he was in Belgium, such as in the autumn of 1948. They cannot have been systematically organised courses, however, considering that he never stayed in Belgium for long.[50] Information about the Congo and about missionary life was chiefly an extracurricular activity, given during the activities organised by the community.



Classroom front view

The community life in the training house is perhaps best shown through the chronicles kept by the students. These chronicles were summary reports of the most important events in the monastery or training house. They were published under various titles (*Kronijk, Kronieken, Uit ons Leuven*) in magazines that the students made and distributed themselves. In Bree the magazine was called *De Vloed* ('the flood'), in Leuven *De Toekomst* ('the future'). The 'chronicle', usually to be found at the back of the magazine, was almost always signed with a pseudonym, its' tone always flowed well and it briefly sketched the events organised, those that had taken place, who had died and was buried, who had visited, who had been appointed, etc. In the first issue of *De Toekomst* (1927), for example, it was stated: "10 August: Opening of the missiological week, scholars were present from all countries. The papal nuncio opened the first meeting." [51] Whether or not many MSC aspirants were present was not mentioned. Later, active participation in this event was reported: "Missionary work finds eager students at our school, to such an extent that a number of them went to the

AUCAM to brave the conferences of Dr. Rodhain from Brussels about *'La situation médicale au Congo'* and of Mr. Olivier Lacombe from Paris about *'La spiritualité Hindoue'*." [52] In another article about missionary action, another aspirant, Joris Vlamynck, mentioned the AUCAM (*Academica Unio Catholicas Adjuvans Missiones*), which was more or less connected to student life and the university. [53] He found that in student associations there was too little attention for the M.V.S. (*Missiebond Vlaamse Studenten - Mission Union of Flemish Students*), the academic mission union of which professors were also part: *"The number of members, 400 in 1935 went back to 200 in 1937. Too small a percentage of the 1 600 Flemish students at the College of Higher Education in Leuven"*. He was apparently more enthusiastic about the AUCAM about which he said: *"Against the pernicious influence of many modern theories in the scientific milieu, the AUCAM is looking for a way to enter that world and to break the inaccessibility of 'scholarly' heathenism and its prejudices."*

Although Vlamynck considered the working and action of AUCAM fairly extensively, he gave no further indications concerning the possible participation of MSC in this organisation. There are, however, some indications that this was the case in the second half of the 1930s. In June 1935 it was stated that *"Brother Van Kerckhove, using the lessons he had taken with P. Charles, S.J., spoke to us about 'The goal of the Church and the essence of missionary work'"* and two years later the mission club was divided into an ethnological and a missiological department, in which the recently published missiological articles were discussed. During the school year 1935-1936, there were suddenly huge numbers of enrolments for the courses at the university missionary centre. At the start of the school year it was noted in the report that good organisation would be needed because *"(...) half the students would become soldiers and would have their hands full"*. However, during November it was announced there would be no festivities on the occasion of the Mgr. Verius day, *"because of the pressures involved in attending university."* [54] That year there were indeed a record number (17) MSC Members enrolled for the courses. [55]

From the magazine chronicles it further appears that initially a missionary only came by occasionally to talk about the Congo, sometimes with a film or slides. In 1930 the chronicle writer remarked: *"19 May: Understandably enough we welcomed the conference with light images that Father Lefèvre came to give us about our Congo mission - everything about the mission awakens our interest and*

*this also brought immeasurable satisfaction.”[56] There was a great need and demand for information about the future place of work in the Congo. Later, this need also appeared sporadically in the records. In February 1932 the training house in Leuven was visited by a number of missionaries who were on a holiday to the motherland. The chronicle reported: “To our great joy, Father Yernaux arrived here very early. We lived with the ‘charcoal artist’ in Mondombe, we heard about the hard ‘labour’ of the development and establishing of the mission post, of the great expenses and hardships, etc.; We got to know the great heart of ‘Fafa Joseph’ and many a wise lesson for later, among others about our contact with the whites, good confirmation of one of our previous lessons from the mission club.”[57] It was phrased even more strongly in 1945: “On 10 (October, JB), Fr. Moeyens, recently returned to the Congo, gave us a captivating talk about the Watuzi tribe in Rwanda (where he had spend some leisure time); he also spoke to us, as a person with true knowledge, of ‘our’ blacks (those of our Mission) and the depopulation of the Congo. It is useful to state how much such conferences are favourable to the missionary spirit of the Scholastic, which is too long frustrated of the good influence emanating from the direct relations with out dear Missions and those returning.”[58] Here, of course, there was an allusion to the war circumstances, which had reduced the contact between Belgium and Congo to a minimum. The need for more information about the future workplace was also expressed at other times. From the second half of the 1930s, the number of meetings increased considerably and in 1950 Father Standaert, when looking back on the period, noted that: “Ample use is also made of the retired missionaries. Too much sometimes, because our own activity is sometimes forgotten.”[59] After the Second World War, the colleagues were still called on to contribute to the meetings regularly. A report of the mission club from 1948 reported: “This year we were often given the opportunity to hear holidaying missionaries, among others Fr. Van Linden, Fr. De Rijck, Fr. Meeuwese, Fr. Wauters, etc. Others gave us studies about missionary work, Fr. Hulstaert, Fr. Geurtjens, Fr. Boelaert, etc. The striking highlight was reached this year on the grand mission day with the staging of the mission play ‘Under the Cross of Tugude’ by Fr. Boelaert and with the striking lecture of Fr. Jan Cortebeeck about the scholasticate and Mission’.”[60]*

That same Jan Cortebeeck also wrote the foreword to the text of Boelaert’s play, which was published in 1930 by Davidsfonds as the first part of a new series of children’s books. The tone and style of Cortebeeck’s writing, though a barely

concealed attempt at mission propaganda, also illustrate well what the missionaries thought about the mission activity: *"For you, youths, this missionary life is easier to understand than for the old. You have a young, fresh, spring soul that can sympathise and empathise with ambitious, cheerful, daring, creative spirits, who can carve from a rough stone artwork which experts will regard with admiration. A missionary is such a daring force. Going to unknown, foreign lands, not knowing what one will find there except many miseries not yet taken into account, to live there away from all the comfort of modern European civilisation, this European civilisation where nothing is left to coincidence, where there are no unforeseen circumstances and requirements, where all the needs of the spirit can be met with the greatest ease, where there is no more distance, transport no longer necessary, where it suffices to lie, in a comfy chair and to turn a button to see and hear the enchantment of all arts, all over the civilised world."*

The valiant and heroic element was still at the fore here, together with an aversion towards the 'modernisation' that society was undergoing at home. With the presupposition that the missions should thus be different, the question of how the missionaries saw this was of course raised: *"He dreams of a reversal of the heathenism and sees his primitives, his country and people recreated into a cultured society of people singing peace without even one single police helmet; of laughing prosperity and restful sufficiency, where every family can live well on the fruits of their own labour, in their own house, on their own estate without import or export; an ideal society where one is more sustained from lively, fresh virtues than from bread and where one doesn't see or know money: a society with no banks and no poverty, where one lives happily and dies happy and goes straight to Heaven."*[61] This message directly criticises the situation as it was being experienced in Europe. For many people in the period in which this text first appeared, this type of discourse would probably have been experienced as a way out of the bad economic crisis they were confronted with. It is not coincidental that 'banks' and 'money' were named as things to be avoided in a new, ideal society.

Boelaert's own play, which he had already written in 1926, is vaguely situated in the MSC mission in Papua New Guinea and is characterised by heroism and drama. 'Tugude' is about a missionary who is confronted with a number of local customs which he opposes, quite correctly according to the story. The local tribes wish to hold a dance party behind his back. The missionary knows that these



dance parties always end in tribal quarrels and fist fights. He tries to stop the various tribal chiefs from taking part in the party but does not succeed. When the party does end in murder and manslaughter the missionary is threatened with being held guilty of the death of one of the women who must be avenged. Thanks to the level-headedness of the missionary, and the sacrifice of the good, converted primitive, he manages to retain his life. In this the local people are described as primitives who can be dealt with because the white missionary is more intelligent and can confuse them by his faster reasoning. The indecisiveness and inconstancy of the local chieftains is heavily emphasised. The self-sacrificing love, taught by the missionaries, is victorious and eventually converts all the natives.

The chronicles and similar columns only make up a small section of the scholasticate periodicals. The principle part was made up of articles that were almost exclusively written by the students themselves and which dealt with a variety of theological, philosophical, moral or social subjects. The tone of these articles was generally very serious. The subjects were mainly the extension of the training itself and so they were often theological or philosophical in impact. The choice of certain topics makes it clear that the students themselves chose the topics and that the content of these periodicals was not being dictated from above, although they regularly contain devout professions of thanks to superiors. However, it is likely that this would be an established practice in such an environment. The articles are an interesting way of finding out more about the points of view and ideas that the future missionaries generally had, especially concerning missionary activity and colonisation. Before going further into the content it is best to further situate the articles and the periodicals in the context in which they appeared. They are, after all, closely attached to the particulars of the 'mission club'.

### *2.2.2. The Mission Club*

The specific missionary aspect of the education of the young religious students was covered in a number of meetings which were organised around specific topics. This was the so-called 'mission club'. According to the information available there must certainly have been two clubs in the MSC: one in the scholasticate in Leuven and one in that of Bree, where the philosophical training of the missionaries took place (but on which much less information is preserved). The name 'mission club' is perhaps representative of the atmosphere in which this training aspect took place. From the descriptions that may be found in the MSC

Archives they appear sometimes to be meetings of adventurously inclined youths, who came to listen to exciting stories about exotic situations. It will become apparent later that the voluntary and free character of this initiative still has to be somewhat interpreted. In any event, other 'clubs' also existed within the community in the training house, such as the 'Thomas club', a philosophical study club.

Meetings of the mission club began to be organised (again) after the First World War. On this occasion one of those taking part wrote: *"At the start of the school year 1918-1919 we began with setting up the previously flourishing 'mission club' again. This has always had as a goal (and it shall, if it pleases God, continue to strive to meet its goals with diligence) the holy fire of the mission, to awaken the extremely mighty help of the apostolate and to enrich our future missionaries with everything that may be of use to us later in the mission"*[62] From a 'report of the meetings' that was made about this time: *"Every Tuesday after the walk we should come together to talk about the interests of the club, or to attend a lecture, or to practice the English language, since this is so widespread and always comes in useful to the missionary."*[63] Apparently, not everything went without difficulties. At the start of the new academic year in October 1919 the composition of the new club was recorded in the minutes. There were at that moment twelve members, including Hulstaert (who was the secretary) and Boelaert. In December 1919 the reporter finished his report with the announcement: *"After the lecture it was also suggested by our chairman that an association for prayer and fasting should be made of the mission club."* This proposal would also be accepted promptly. The mission club remained for the following years a combination of religious exercise and passing on of know-how. In the following years the subjects covered included the following: *"The attitude of the Catholic missionaries towards the Protestants"; "An interesting study of ethnology, a subject that is relatively neglected by us"; 'The Pygmies'; 'Conference by Fr. Hulstaert on the Dutch East Indies; 'The mission thought'; 'Malaria fever'; 'The actions of the Protestants in their missions'; 'The use of catechists'.*

At the start of the academic year 1923-1924 the club was again suspended, only to start up again after the first term of the following academic year. The activities and the rhythm of the meetings were perhaps very dependent on other preoccupations of the Fathers. Besides this it indicates that, certainly in this

period (early 1920), the club was not really a priority. Again in the early thirties the club went into hibernation from time to time. As has been reported earlier, there were years when only the (scarce) missionaries who were resting were called upon, those who had time enough to recount memories of their time on the missions. During the academic year 1934-1935 the secretary noted after the December meeting: *"Until May A. Cortebeeck addressed the monthly meeting of the club. In rather interesting stories about the Philippines he presented us time and again with real missionary life."* After several years of very low activity from 1930 to 1935, the situation improved again. At the start of the academic year 1936-1937 two sections were set up, one ethnological and one missionary. It is no coincidence that the secretary that year was Albert De Rop, a man who was very interested in ethnology.[64] There were probably also more theologically inspired members of the mission club, though it is not possible to find out right away who these were. It is noteworthy that there was indeed a greater interest for specifically Congolese themes to be seen in the lectures that were organised from now on. The division into two sections clearly only lasted one year but the interest in the 'ethnic' Congolese culture remained prominent afterwards in the meetings. In later years there would be another division, at a time when the MSC were also active in Brazil. During the war years the activities remained reasonably constant, even though it was sometimes impossible to meet together because of the war activities[65] and there were also complaints that the interest of the Fathers themselves was not always what it should be.

### *Framework*

The contents of the subjects that were reported in the periodical of the scholasticate and the subjects reported in the reports of the mission club overlap. The lectures that were held and the subjects that were discussed in the mission club were very often supported by the writings of aspirant missionaries. On the basis of the contributions that were mentioned in the mission writings, some additional nuances can probably be displayed regarding the contents of the articles. The manner in which the subjects treated were assimilated and even simply what had been remembered, is expressed better in these writings. These are notes which form a sort of minutes of the meetings of the mission club, and as such had an archiving function within the group, but which certainly did not have an officially representative function with respect to the outside world or to any higher authority. Only during two years (during the Second World War) did the superior set his signature under the reports, from which it can be deduced that

some form of control existed. Apart from this one instance there is nothing in the way of compulsion or checking from above to be detected concerning the meetings, nor in the periodical put together by the students. The situation in which these writings came to exist was naturally rather specific: this was a relatively small group of people who had a great deal of contact with each other within a closed community outside the context of these specific meetings. There certainly existed a degree of social control and there must also have been the selection of information and data, including those concerning the future activities of the missionaries, though this mostly happened in an implicit way.

In any case, within the mission club and outside it there was close contact with the Fathers, including those who came from the missions. From the manner in which the visits of 'real' missionaries, those who had already been abroad, were spoken of, it can be deduced that the students looked up to these people and although they did not perhaps glamorise them or hero-worship them, they did admire them and took them as examples. The mission club or the events that were organised by the club (Mission Sunday, 'Vénius memorial') were excellent opportunities to "learn something new". A large part of the activities were probably not at all experienced as a duty by those involved, but as something much more logical or automatic. Again, keeping reports would probably have been interpreted in this way. Honoré Vinck, who was secretary of the mission club immediately after independence, put it as follows: they did it because it was part of being a serious association and they wanted to be taken seriously. If they had not kept reports, the superior would perhaps have made some remark about it, not because of the contents of the reports but certainly because it would have been a form of laziness.[66] The qualification 'moral duty' seems to apply here. It indicates that the disciplining of the future missionaries was done comprehensively in a very subtle and implicit manner.

The mission club was part of the new world which one entered as an aspirant, a world with its own rules and fixed patterns, which one did not question. This is supported by the fact that, once the missionaries could leave for the Congo, they were given a task to do and sent to a place to do it by their superiors. They were to take on this task without complaint. Father Frans Maes, whom I interviewed, was an exception in the sense that he knew that he would get an educational task in the Congo and therefore had been obliged to take a degree in education. However, that was also determined by his superiors, "(...) *because the*

*Government required a qualification to be able to teach*". That also was just accepted and done.[67] Maes finally ended up in a school in the mission post of Flandria (Boteke), where a degree was not at all necessary, because it was a private school. This caused Maes to remark: *"So I really could have gone to the Congo two years earlier!"* In any case, he seemed rather unimpressed by what he had learnt during his educational course. To the question of whether he had found much use for his theoretical education, he answered that otherwise he would not have been able to set examinations. He had learnt *that* in Leuven.[68] Again, from talking with other missionaries it is apparent that the future destination of the aspirants, both functional and geographic, was mostly decided by their superiors.

### *Activities*

The idea of the mission club was based, according to the MSC themselves, on two pillars: a spiritual, religious perception on the one hand and a more intellectually moulding activity on the other hand. The two were somewhat intertwined. It was important not only to collect information about the region, the people and mission activities but also to lay a sound spiritual and moral foundation. In fact, it would be more correct to say that the activities of the mission club were on three different levels: moulding, devotion and propaganda. Before going more deeply into the contents of the moulding, the first two elements will be discussed because they were regarded by the missionaries themselves as at least as important in the preparation of the aspirants.

It is clear that the spiritual element always remained an integral part of the meetings. The duties of prayer and religiosity were repeated at almost every meeting. *"Some exercises of virtue and prayer were imposed at the attention of the missionaries, the missions and the primitives. In this way we work on our own perfection. All members should pray a rosary each month for the fellow members."*[69] Every month there was a prayer task; more specifically prayers were dedicated for a certain goal or a certain person (or persons). Expressions such as these (but with changing subjects) are to be seen regularly in the reports: *"The speaker ended with a call to pray well for the intention of the month that our Congo mission should not fall prey to Protestant disunity."* The required devotion, religiosity and piety naturally showed through in the reports themselves, depending on the dedication and diligence that the reporter of the day showed. The war years represent a high point (probably not coincidentally).

It is not an unfounded or ahistorical interpretation when we speak here about the

religious and spiritual element in the training of missionaries. This is shown by the remarks that were made during the first meeting at the start of the academic year, such as this remark from 1943: *“Following our tradition the President wants to talk about the aim and the spirit of our club and also what place these must take in our life at the scholasticate. The aim is to advance mission knowledge, but above all mission love. For the men of Leuven the romantic vision of the missionary life has faded to make way for the conviction that the missionary life is a true life of sacrifice ... What is demanded of a missionary besides prayer and sacrifice? Father Yernaux shared the following with our chairman: A great love of one’s neighbour is more necessary than mission study, so that the ingratitude of the negroes does not put you out of action. Also a reasonable knowledge of French, so as to be always able to get on with the white colonists.”*[70] Prayer and devotion were elements that were systematically present and that are repeatedly mentioned in the reports. It is of course in the nature of missionary life that there is a place for religious aspects. During the reading of the different reports, however, an image appears in which religious inspiration seems to be rather essential, at least in the interpretation of the various authors. This inspiration also seems to be independent of the longing for romance or heroism, though it cannot be denied that the two were very often intertwined. The fact that ‘sacrifice’ seems to be a central concept in the life of a missionary may have something to do with this. This is discussed further in the section about the role of the missionary.



Picture of a Batswa village

Besides this, the mission club was also called upon for the more earthly component of mission work; in propaganda and raising funds for the missions. This certainly fits in with what was said earlier about the presence of the missions in particular and the Catholic Church in general in the broader social context. The mission writings and periodicals of the scholasticate do not say much about concrete initiatives. Above all the ‘missie-foor’, the mission fair, usually with an accompanying ‘raffle’, was an annually repeated event for the purpose of collecting funds on which the aspirants naturally worked. The mission day of 1933 in Bree was extensively described in the mission periodical and was clearly a very popular event. *“For setting up the exhibition the gymnasium of the Noviciate was cleared out. E.P. Van Moorsel, helped by E.P. Vullings, deputy chairman of the*

*Committee for Mission Exhibitions in Belgium, put everything together in a tidy way. The donated objects, along with the mission objects, were an expression of the love that our people have for the missions. The Brothers drew, painted, printed and decorated the halls and rooms with flags and bunting. Helpful young women from the neighbourhood plaited flower wreaths. Helpful friends planted pines and welcoming arches which, decorated with roses, gave our monastery a friendly aspect. In the Novices' garden the fairground stalls and tents were set up. Darts, bar, ice creams, kite flying, knocking bottles over, shooting, fishing and raffles formed a great attraction. The prizes were assembled out of all sorts of objects, including puppies that Fr. Van Moorsel had got for free. (...) The streets leading to the monastery were full of people. The church was visited, balloons donated by the Gazet van Antwerpen newspaper lifted up into the blue sky, the music brought joy, the exhibition was so crowded that stalls and raffles could hardly work. Everyone opened their purses. "really, it's for the Missions' "[71] In the course of the years there were a number of other practical initiatives sporadically reported, such as the collection of old spectacles, making indexes of the mission periodicals, begging hikes and collections of silver paper.[72]*

### *3. The world view of the future MSC*

What positions did the MSC youths take as regards the different aspects of their future lives as missionaries in Africa? The themes that were touched on in periodicals and reports illustrate these opinions. They are grouped together here in a number of themes.

#### *3.1. The market position of the Catholic faith*

##### *3.1.1. Catholics and Protestants*

The position towards the Protestants, as this appears in the reports, was one of superiority and (very) passive tolerance. As early as 1919 a lecture was held about the attitude of the Catholic missionaries towards the Protestants. That there was *de facto* a great deal of animosity between the two groups can be deduced from the advice that was given on this occasion: the Catholic missionaries must not only tolerate the Protestants, they should also help them. That naturally applied only as far as the church allowed it, "*that is to say, everywhere except in the work of conversion*".[73] This mutual tolerance and aid were not prompted by mutual respect but because of the impression that must be given to the Congolese. Appearances must be maintained. After all, external divisions would not give a civilised impression and may even cause confusion concerning the message of belief. In 1925 the subject came up again in a lecture

to the mission club. The reporter retained from the lecture that Protestantism had intrinsically much less nurturing value, that the Protestants moralised less (which was taken as negative) and that they preferred to work with the higher levels of society and were predominately interested in money and riches. Protestantism was painted as the weaker brother of Catholicism which could only compete because of deeper financial resources. In an article from 1930, from Father China, it was stated: *"We do not have to insist on the obstacle that they oppose to the spreading of Truth. Nevertheless, despite their force, the results do not correspond completely to their efforts."*[74] And in 1933, in a discussion on *"The different factors wanting to resolve the social question in the Congo,"* it was stated that: *"Protestantism may possibly also be dangerous and even more so than communism."*[75]

Still, this was not about enemies that had to be fought. One must try to stay out of their mission areas and, if that could not be done, *"(...) one must avoid all public discussions and direct attacks."* This last piece of advice was to avoid disturbing the mood of the local population.[76] Later, too, whenever Protestantism came to be discussed, it was spoken of in a more denigrating manner. Giving a lecture about the Protestant missions was a difficult task, it was said, because: *"it is difficult to understand what Protestantism gives to a human life."* And somewhat less laconic: *"It is difficult to get a clear picture of the conditions of living that lead to a belief in the same Christ, specifically the relationship on theological ground between Catholic missionaries and Protestant missionaries, from which a psychological and social difference grows."*[77] Even in 1957 it was stated: *"(...) the Protestants have always been a good goad for our missionaries and they do a lot of good in the fight against Fetishism but they also do a lot of harm: the divisions in their ranks and the superficiality of their conversions causes indifference."*[78] There was never any question, thus, of a really ecumenical approach between the groups.

### 3.1.2. Catholics and Islam

The relationship with Islam only came into question once. Islam was described as a religion that had always shown enmity towards European Catholicism and for this reason must be pushed back. The approach that was worked out here was that one must go to battle against the influence of Islam. Strangely enough the slave handlers were never explicitly mentioned, though during early colonisation they were used appropriately and inappropriately as a reason to colonise the



Congo. In place of this, the first period of colonisation under the Portuguese was recalled. According to the author they were going to oppose Islam in Africa but did not succeed in their colonisation because they wanted to '*portugalise*' too much. In contrast, the current struggle, in which the Catholic Church triumphed, was a pacifistic one. Because Islam could not occupy any geographically enclosed area as it had earlier, its power was now broken and the danger of it taking over was warded off. Considering that armed struggle was no longer possible, the Church was naturally in the advantageous position because it was superior to Islam. *"There is already a chain of sturdily-formed, fresh-growing Christianities that connects the West coast of Africa with the East coast: Cameroon, Belgian Congo, Uganda, Rwanda, Urundi ... In its turn the Church has now laid a barrier around Islam and placed it in a permanent position of isolation."*[79]

### 3.2. The role of the missionary

In 1933 one of the students, Brother Heyde gave a lecture on the basis of a book he had read: *"Le missionnaire des temps modernes"* by Lesourd. From his lecture of the book it appeared that the missionary should help the local population in all their problems. Included in these problems was certainly the material and social problems that were partly created by economic exploitation. The reaction of the speaker was: *"(...) it is unfortunate enough but the missionary is currently obliged to know something about everything."* This fitted into the picture of the all-knowing father figure that the missionary had to be. Father Vertenten, one of the pioneers and still one of the most influential figures in the congregation, also spoke along these lines. He came to speak in October 1940 *"about the negroes"*. According to him it was the greatest praise that one could get as missionary *"That people say about him: he is a just man, he solves disputes well."* Again, according to him one should *"(...) love the Blacks very much but one should never let him see that one needs him."*[80] When problems in connection with the validity of marriages between natives were discussed in 1941 it was added that the aspiring missionary should therefore be familiar with canon law, since *"(...) in such cases it is the missionary who is the right person to clarify the situation."*[81] This explanation was so well received that the mission club gave much more attention the next academic year to all sorts of practical questions about marriage law.[82]

On the mission day in 1946, during a period in which the tone of the reports was often somewhat exaggerated, gestures were broader and religiosity increased markedly, the role of the missionary came into focus once again. The Brothers

apparently read from other sources, in view of their own lack of experience and lack of anyone who had experience. A romantic picture of self-sacrifice and heroism was revealed: *"How hard a missionary life can be, but how beautiful and noble too, because it is inspired and carried by the love of eternal God."*[83] The contributions on this mission day are very instructive about the spiritual aspects of the missionary existence. The importance of self-sacrifice and of the exemplary function of the missionary were indicated again here as the kernel of the role of missionary. In this, use must be made of a number of aids, particularly prayer, self-denial and the Holy Mass. Ideally a missionary should possess a highly principled personality and be mild of character, which together should put him in a state to become *"a mother for the primitives"*. A second contribution, from Father Moeyens, complemented this and adjusted the romantic image by emphasising that the missionary life was *not* as it was shown in missionary exhibitions or by propaganda in general. It was also a purely practical job, *"Such as the mission sewing circles imagine it, that is to say baptising, reading mass, serving sacraments and clothing Negroes."* Finally, the missionary was also no adventurer, *"free of all rules and monastic discipline"*, nor a *"heroic conqueror"*. The image that Moeyens put in its place was one of 'transitive' activity in which the involved person must give of himself (sacrifice and self-denial again) without becoming poorer but certainly with the intention of lessening the original sin of others.

### 3.3. The image of the Congolese

In the mission club of March 1919 an article from the Scheutist De Clercq was read about missionary work in the Congo because at that time it was already expected that the MSC would establish themselves there. The reporter for the meeting was obviously very impressed by the description of the moral character of the Congolese: The list of characteristics, which he cited, certainly looked impressive: *"The low sunkenness (sic) and blindness of the people ... Then he described the struggle of the converts against their inclinations and customs, long before and after their baptism: all because of their character, customs and poor inclinations. Then he briefly described the character of the natives: their fickleness, superficiality, outward appearance, laziness, childishness, suspicious nature, but on the other hand kindness and trust in their leaders."* The task to go to evangelise such people did look especially difficult and the conclusion was consistent with this: *"The moral lesson for us was: try to develop the good, do not look for ourselves, learn our work subjects, give much and expect nothing."*[84]

An especially surprising piece of commentary is to be found in the report about the club meeting of July 1922, in which there was a discussion about the Pygmies. Smolders, the secretary, noted in an ironic style: *"The ethical situation cannot be better, these must be true saints: the speaker has enumerated the catalogue of their virtues, it was truly believed that they did not have Adam as a common father. The relationship of parents to children, social, political and economic relations. Truth, generosity, chastity, if they would just do a few miracles we would canonise them all. Nevertheless, the speaker believes some of this glory should be removed by stating that they are children and that they have vices! How surprising."* In the preceding part the pygmies were described as *"des paresseux"* (lazybones), something that seemed to determine their whole attitude to life. The remarks cited here give the strong impression that the reporter did not like what he heard from the speaker and could not agree with an overly positive characterisation.

De Rop wrote a contribution for *De Vloed* in 1933 about ethnology. It sets the vocabulary that was used to refer to the Congolese (or other colonised peoples) somewhat in perspective: *"For all missionaries, all natives seem to be in the beginning strange, mysterious beings: after all, the reasoning, imagination, language, customs, religious life - everything seems at first sight so totally different from what one is accustomed to see. It is very tempting then to tell some remarkable fact or another and by way of conclusion to decide that the native is a great child, without seeing in this fact the beliefs and customs of the primitive people."*[85] On the subject of knowledge of the Africans and of local culture and customs there are only references to be found to introductions in anthropological or ethnological concepts. During the academic year 1947-1948 Boelaert came to give an introduction to ethnology. Sadly enough there is only a brief and laconic report to be found in the minutes of the mission club: *"(...) It is the history of the people who as yet have no history. In America, England and Germany it is also called anthropology. All branches of science are involved ... Ethnography describes the cultural history of a people. Ethnology tries from this to form or pose laws of cultural history. E.P. Hulstaert for example is one of the best ethnographs of our colony. - We also get to hear about the important schools of ethnology. The evolutionists - the school of cultural circles - the school of functionalists - fundamentally one only has hypotheses; there is more than enough work for the future. We must not be discouraged. (end of report)"*

Although there was much interest in the life of the Congolese, and the mission club paid regular attention to it, the fact remains that some prejudices about the Africans and their character were difficult to expunge: "(...) *It is certainly a fact that the negroes are very lazy and uncaring about tomorrow. But one should not exaggerate here. So Prof. Leplay (Leplae is meant, JB) gave an example to prove the carelessness and laziness: 'When the negroes of Equator earned quite a lot of money by looking for copal, they generally did not work their gardens any more, but began to feed themselves with preserved food from Europe. A missionary told us this same fact, but according to him it was evidence of exploitation by whites: 'The whites demanded so much work from the blacks that they had no time left to work and had to feed themselves with preserved food if they did not want to die of hunger.'* Which of these two was right?"[86] There was certainly room for a critical approach and they stood open for new knowledge and new data.

However, a number of ideas were not brought into question. In the same article about 'the farmer problem', which also proposed agriculture as the future for the Congolese, some remarkable reasoning was developed about the pros and cons of private land ownership by Congolese. At the time, this hardly existed or not at all. Against the ruling opinion, which stated that the private ownership of land was against the mentality of the Congolese, Wijnants stated that it was not a question of pro or contra, but that the Congolese simply had no knowledge of the concept of individual possession of land. In other words, it really lay outside their mentality. The article said "(...) *that they had not thought of it yet*". The corollary of this was, of course, that this knowledge could certainly be acquired. And even if the laziness of "the negroes" was qualified, the author still came partly back to it at the end of his article. To prevent the Congolese from selling their land at the first and best opportunity, he suggested the introduction by law of a fifty year sale prohibition.

That people were open to new knowledge and that the world of the Congolese certainly did interest the missionaries was already clear. The question naturally remains in what way this world was approached and interpreted. Gustaaf Hulstaert evidently gave talks himself for the mission club at regular intervals. In November 1919, it was reported, he gave "*some practical hints for finding out about the religion of the primitives*". The notes from this talk that are preserved not only give an insight into the manner in which scientific interest and (self-taught?) moulding can be combined with the religious conversion element, at the

same time they give a nice insight into the ruling mentality of this period.

In that year further topics were: *"Kimbanguism"*, [87] *"initiation ceremonies in the tribe"*, *"the matriarchy"*, *"native music in our Congo mission"*, *"marriage in the Nkundo"*, [88] *"the souls of the dead"*, *"the pure spirits"* and also a discussion of an article by Hulstaert about language problems in the Congo. On the mission day in March there was a talk about the advantages that the missionaries could gain by adapting to the use of language and native art forms of the Congolese and by getting acquainted with the religious concepts of the Congolese. All in all, this represented a rather great variety. The attitude that needed to be adopted was described as follows: concerning religion, it was not appropriate to look contemptuously or to scoff at the Africans' customs, only sympathy and love were appropriate and would bring them to the Light. The Truth must be brought, and the missionaries had the Truth. This was not open to discussion. Attention to and a sort of respect for the differences of the Congolese were thus explicitly brought forward as a subject. There grew in all respects a consciousness that two different cultures confronted each other and that the relationship between the two was not purely subordinate, not 'black-white' in any case. The same session included the topic *"(...) how the missionary with his European understanding of art should comport himself towards the understanding of art by the Negroes."* [89] Again, the following year was well provided with ethnologically inspired subjects. It looked very much as if they wanted to effectively reach the double aim set for them: *"enrich mission knowledge by study and be a practical missionary by prayer and sacrifice."*

This knowledge is necessary for the missionary, for he must root out evil – and thus know it; besides that, with it he can also help to defend Belief. One must learn to know religion from the primitives themselves, thus one must know

*1. how one gets to know the primitives*

*2. how one can find out the Truth*

For the first point, in general, the rules of Hermeneutics must be applied and history must be critically studied – Above all, when questioning people one must be cautious. It is best to get advice from the shamans who serve the religion – but one cannot win these over so one must turn to the simple people, it is dangerous to consult the natives who have been in contact with civilisation – Also make sure

that you tell your men nothing but the facts, no explanation or considerations – this also goes for the converted.

## *II. Remarks about finding out the Truth.*

- a. language knowledge is most highly necessary and should be solid*
- b. win the trust of the speaker – do not sow dissent by questioning a whole group, do not pose general questions.*
- c. great danger exists of eliciting such or such answer by your manner of questioning, do not ask for too much explanation..*
- d. write everything down even though you do not see much importance in it.*
- e. avoid offence – especially for new Christians. Curiosity is accepted.*

To make that study work the apostolate speaker referred to a practical point e.g. after a story he could e.g. say that is nice, very nice, we have that in our religion, but much nicer – you can have no better opportunity to set out the truth of our religion. With examples this well worked out and founded lecture was documented.

Extract 1 – “Some practical hints for finding out about the religion of the primitives”. From the minutes of the meeting of the MSC mission club of 16 November 1919 (MSC Archives Borgerhout).

Still, this did not lead to much interest in what the Congolese themselves thought and felt. The interest in knowledge of the Congolese was much more due to utilitarian reasons. Besides that, it had to do with the exciting unknown, which one wanted to know more about and wanted to make more controllable, probably a logical reflex for the young and curious aspirants. In the last meeting of the academic year 1936-1937 a number of texts were passed around to awaken interest in the concrete reality of the mission area. These were a number of copies of *Le Coq chante*, a fortnightly periodical published by the MSC that had just started on the initiative of Boelaert and in which articles mainly appeared in the regional language Lomongo[90] and sometimes in French. The reporter reported this as follows: “A few issues of ‘*Le Coq qui chante*’ (sic) were passed around and also the annual report of Mgr. Above all, the latter was very interesting.”[91] In the annual report of the superior there was of course a general report of what was going on in the mission area, hence his remark. Besides this, it was a text that could be understood by the aspirants, who evidently didn’t understand Lomongo. The new and strange language obviously gave rise to no special

considerations. Only in the late 1950s was it announced: *"It must be remarked that eight of the ten members follow the Congolese lessons with much diligence, these are given by E.P. De Rop."*[92]

However, curiosity very often got the upper hand as is shown repeatedly in the reports. It is often shown by casual remarks: *"Father De Meyst talked to us about all of the things that happen to a missionary. It was a pleasant and enjoyable meeting."*[93] It goes without saying that very often ordinary stories were told and that the exotic and anecdotal won out over other considerations: *"Brother Kemp was captain of the Theresita (the MSC's river boat, JB) for about 20 years. All sorts of adventures happened to him. He does not conceal how he once, in a fit of anger, kicked a recalcitrant Black from the deck into the water. Evidently he still grieves about it."*[94]

### 3.4. Colonial relationships: white and black

The lecture about the relationships between the colonists and the missionaries, which Father Boelaert gave at the start of 1939, did not go unnoticed. The report stated euphemistically: *"directly stated, Father Boelaert did not try to package things nicely, he stated his thoughts straight out and was not soft."* Boelaert clearly said things that the aspiring missionaries certainly felt somewhere but which they could not precisely appreciate or evaluate, since they were *not done*, but it certainly tickled their curiosity. At first glance, Boelaert's opinions seem to be directly opposed to the common opinion: *"The real attitude: we are the guests and the blacks the hosts. The negro can see quite well that many whites stand, in the moral arena, lower than him and he asks himself why the missionaries do not go first to the whites to convert them. This is naturally a great difficulty that holds back the work of conversion."* This is a story that also recurs with others and that seems to fit in well with the position that, among others, Boelaert and Hulstaert had based their attitude to the local culture in part on criticism of their own society. For the youths present in the mission club it must have been a surprising experience to hear that one could see black and white in a reversed hierarchy. An image, by the way, that was not always agreed with in the discourse of other speakers. In the words of Father Vertenten, who came to tell them a year later that "the negroes" were "simple people, still the children of nature really". However, this simplicity was explained by what they were not: *"They do not have this artificial behaviour and therefore do not have the ambiguous, unmeaning, often hypocritical way of life of the Europeans. No, they are as they live. They do*

*not look for any affectation. That explains why they gladly listen to the Gospels, especially to the parables.*"[95]

The contribution of Brother Wijnants in 1938 about the establishment of families in the colony, a problem that caused a lot of discussion at that time, gives a few clarifying insights: the wife moving to the colony was recommended because she would make the husband more stable. Written in very bald language it sounded as if the man would otherwise probably look for the company of black women: *"The whites who give free reign to their instincts can no longer be regarded as suitable for the elevated work of civilising. After all, how would you want such a boss, for that is what the white man has to be, to exercise authority over those which he must lead because of his task; how can such a teacher, for this is the white man also, bring the natives to a higher level when he himself has sunk so deep."*[96] This message was clearly based on the traditional hierarchical model. From the conclusion of the lecture it is clear that this attitude must clearly be situated in the *Zeitgeist*. In this conclusion, the author quoted still more reasons why it was beneficial to let the wives of the colonists come to Congo: she could better round off the sharp edges of her husband, she was also better suited to help the native women and *"Above all it cannot be denied that a Christian home can exercise a beneficent influence on the natives"*. However, the Brother's opinion of the wife was not really very high, as shown by another passage in which he stated that the exemplary function of the wife could only succeed if the wife *"(...) has not merely come to the Congo to sunbathe and go back to Europe with a brown skin."* The wife should perhaps not come to the Congo immediately because she was weaker and more sensitive to a new environment and would therefore perhaps only make it more difficult for her husband.

In 1955 Boelaert came again to give a lecture in the mission club, this time about the *"present-day mission problems in the Congo"*. The context of international politics had evolved quickly in the meantime. The ruling political mood and Boelaert's formulations were, on the surface, certainly converging. Coexistence was no longer a dirty word and people began to talk about Belgian-Congolese communities. Boelaert stated that the Congolese themselves were greatly altered and that there was therefore no longer a real 'mission' in the classical sense of the word. The missionary now had, according to him, three tasks: he must be a representative of the rights of the natives, be a server of the sacraments (and adapt himself in this respect to "our Negroes") and also be a teacher. The last



task was a temporary one because it was meant to “*bring the native up to be a person who can choose for himself*”. One must also respect their culture. “*No cultural imperialism*” was firmly stated.[97] It is clear that the words and the descriptions used here are coloured by the internationally developing discourse about equal rights, anti-colonialism and the struggle for independence of that time. But besides that, these words precisely reflect the view that the missionaries had of the Congolese at that time.

Without realising it themselves, the missionaries took a very contradictory attitude: in the *slipstream* of this international debate they turned away from imperialism. That also fits in with the principles of adaptionism which the MSC held earlier. However, at the same time there remained an almost unconscious form of superiority and as a corollary refined paternalism that was reserved just for themselves. The other whites were treated with much less respect but the missionary himself still took a superior position. He remained, until further orders, an educator. At the same mission day on which Boelaert spoke, Father Theeuwissen also gave a presentation in which he spoke among other things of the “colour bar” (a word that was therefore sufficiently well-known to the missionaries) the future of the colony and the policies to be followed.[98] “*The policy will therefore consist of one trying to bring coexistence into being on the basis of granting equal rights. Difficulties: the white man often has a mentality of self-satisfaction, luxury and superiority. He stands, often, lower on the moral and intellectual plane than the native. These are gradually climbing up the social ladder. Where the lowest level of whites meets the highest level of blacks, there is friction. The white man then implements a colour bar – perhaps not so brutally, not in law, but still as a fact – as a normal process of growth coming out of the first period (of colonisation, JB). The only good solution would be: to learn to respect them because they are people with their own place and their own values (cf. his article in ‘De Linie’ of 24 December 1954).*”[99] That some Congolese were morally and intellectually superior to whites was not a problem but these still were exceptions or extreme cases (‘upper’ and ‘lower’ levels) and the majority of the whites therefore logically stood on a higher moral and intellectual plane than the majority of blacks.

The same subtle distinction can be seen in the following citation from the historic overview of the MSC mission work in the Congo. It also was published in 1954 in the jubilee issue of *De Toekomst*. Sablon, who wrote the article, referred among

other things to the scientific work of Hulstaert and Boelaert but revealed himself at the same time to be a critical follower. Above all, he did not agree with them in the interpretation they gave to the religion of the Mongo, particularly where they stated that the Mongo knew no cult to the honour of God in the real sense of the word. Instead, Sablon agreed with Mgr. Van Goethem, who said that the implicit form of worship, which was made manifest in a number of practical rituals (funeral rituals, prayers, sacrifices) was more important.[100] The writer made the following remarks: *"They naturally do not have a systematically worked out religion, their way of knowledge is concrete and intuitive. No reasoning, with premises and deductions."* The question is of course whether any religious experience happens by reasoning. In this context we must place the following remark by the same author: *"Not thought out, but not unfelt, they carry with them a relatively correct knowledge of God and in the sense of men who do not know the true God they are not even heathens, writes Fr. Boelaert."* This sentence, which is really taken over from Boelaert, shows once again that the missionaries were stuck in an evolutionary, hierarchical context. The others were approached with a great deal of *goodwill* but there remained a fundamental distance, a value judgement and difference in values between 'us' and 'them'. For that matter, this could also be found in Van Goethem, who was cited in the same article in connection with the religious movement of the Mongo: *"Nevertheless, I retain the impression that often poor expression hides the right intentions, which God will be more content with than we are."*

### 3.5. Colonial relationships: the mission and the administration

The attitude that the MSC had to take towards the government is difficult to describe. From previous investigation, it was clear that people such as Hulstaert and Boelaert, once they were in the Congo, dared to go repeatedly into heated debate with the authorities.[101] No conclusions can or should be drawn from this that apply to missionaries in general. Firstly, this is because the attitude of these 'reference figures' is not unambiguous in itself. This refers to the fact that, as leading figures in their congregation and in the MSC mission area in the Congo, they also collaborated with these same authorities and other Belgians on certain matters and in certain circumstances. Secondly, because the other MSC members in practice certainly did not think or do as they did. In the context of this chapter the focus is on the opinions that circulated during the training of the MSC. This theme was not often specifically covered in the reports of the mission club or the articles that the students wrote for their periodicals. In an article from

1934, written by Ulrik Staeljanssens, about the role of education in the colony, it was remarked that moral development must be the most important aim of colonial education. That this moral development must be based on religious education was obvious for the missions, as the author stated, "(...) *but for the state it is much more based on opportunistic reasons.*" Probably the writer of the article was referring to the financial and organisational motives behind the collaboration between the missions and the administration. And, quite in general, he ended his contribution with the remark that there "(...) *must be close collaboration between the state and the institutions of independent education.*"

Other political standpoints were represented in the contribution about "*L'action sociale au Congo Belge*". The author, Brother Declercqs, criticised colonial power relationships in this article, which was mainly inspired by the Jesuit Dubois. Of the three great powers that were at work in the colony (the image of the colonial trinity, which was often used in later years, appears here already), according to Declercqs, Capital was the strongest and most influential: "*Its (= the colony's) law is not written but is dictated (to him) by the 'Banque Générale'. There is no force that can effectively compensate for its action already becoming too much an interference in the other powers. On the contrary it only has already too much interfered and already has too great an influence on political authority. Moreover, the role of the state is in fact only an auxiliary role, even if it is presented in the form of dominance; consequently, action must at least be aimed at the preparation and organisation of a complete social structure.*"[102] Even the missions could not put enough counterweight in the scale against Capital. The limited social action that they could undertake, however, must be aimed at restructuring the whole of colonial society by organising all walks of life, following the principles of the encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*.

The judgement made of the administration was milder in the contribution about "*Native policy*" that appeared in 1938 in *De Toekomst*. The attitude of the administration before 1908 was described as 'a realistic one', which in practice meant assimilation policy. The official policy after the takeover of the Congo by the Belgian State was described as 'evolutionary', which meant a certain respect for the native structures and customs. The earliest period was spoken of very critically: "*The political workers of the early days would have to make the confession that they had lived next to the Blacks without taking their mentality*

*into account. Luckily the workers at this eleventh hour were somewhat wiser and intervened in time in the destructive work of their predecessors.”[103]* A positive judgement was made of the situation at that time, although the work of the missionaries was seen as indispensable for the administration. After all, the state civil servant had other interests and therefore did not always take account of humanitarian concerns. The missions therefore had to soften state policy or keep it on the right path.

The state action and colonisation itself was criticised from the fifties. Sablon, who described the Nkundo (or Mongo)-society in his article on the occasion of 30 years of MSC in the Congo, stated that it was a living, organic community until the moment that the colonists came: *“Although the society was open to all healthy influences and could adapt itself to all reasonable demands of civilisation, at the end of the previous century the young growth of their community was disturbed suddenly by European occupation because it did not correspond to those things that, in our European outlook about civilisation and progress, are so completely wrong: exclusion of all ethnic organs of management, forcing all individuals into line, slave-like subordination to the impersonal and unfatherlike State with its fearful semblance of freedom to be able to do anything that is not forbidden by the State.”*[104] Again, in this citation the ambiguity of ideas about colonisation can be seen: on the one hand a critical attitude towards the administration and its manner of working, on the other hand the lack of fundamental criticism of the idea of colonialisation. Here again, a link is made between the criticism of the colonial administration and the attitude towards social developments in the motherland. The examples given seem to contain a direct criticism of the quickly developing welfare state of that time (the 1950s).

### *3.6. Education and training*



Classroom rear view, Nsona

Mbata (Matadi), 1920

Principles of upbringing were seldom spoken of explicitly. In the context of the science club of Bree the subject of 'education' had sometimes been included but traces are not to be found in the periodical of the scholasticate.[105] There is one clear reference to Decoene and De Hovre, the leaders of 'Catholic educational theory' in Flanders.[106] That can hardly be surprising in the light of the social situation of the missionaries and aspiring missionaries which has already been referred to. Catholic educational theory was a normative pedagogy and fits best in the picture of the restoration of old values and the return to a clear and hierarchically organised society as a reaction to moral corruption and the social crisis.[107] That was also the tenor of the contribution that appeared in *De Vloed* about religious education, written by Gerard Van Kerckhove. Indifference to religion and thus also to religious education was ascribed to advancing technical progress, which led to hedonism and materialism. However, taking a hostile attitude to progress was probably not the most sensible move. What had been wrong in the old system of religious education was excessive intellectualism, the quasi-exclusive interest that is associated with the moulding of reason. In place of this, it must be pleaded for a system of religious concepts bound with human 'basic motivations' to which: "*the notions of race and nation- the brotherhood of all - personal freedom, etc.*"[108] could be easily attached.

A year later *De Toekomst* printed an article by Ulrik Staeljanssens about "*Education in the Congo*". According to him, education should Educate the Congolese and should not serve to benefit the exploitation of the colony. The text was certainly inspired by the texts of the National Colonial Congress and also by the decisions of the *Commission Franck*. The official line comes through very strongly in this text. Concerning the state of the Congolese it was stated that "the negro" must be educated, not only as an individual, as a child, but also as a group, as a 'race'. Without further subtle differentiation it sounds like: "*Moral training is the most difficult and delicate, since one must rid a fallen race of all its faults and bad habits and has to provide completely new (habits, JB) from and for him.*"[109]

The management or exploitation of the Congolese should not be the intention: on the contrary, education should be directed to steering him towards his place of origin with the intention of letting other members of his race enjoy his attained value and to give them a good example. The schooled Congolese was therefore

seen as an extension of missionary activity, considering that a great part of the attained value lay precisely in the fact that he was also evangelised. Here also, 'adaptation' was very much the way to go. Simply book learning would be a wrong choice, for that distorted "the negro" instead of improving him. With a reference to the *negro education* in the United States Staeljanssens cited a certain Blackheard: *"Two gifts can only be given to the Blacks little by little. The first is higher literary education and the second is political influence. He is not prepared to use and appreciate either the one or the other properly; what he must be taught is to work, maintained and efficient work and a habit of working."*[110]

Catholic pedagogy was not explicitly referred to in this article but the approach that Staeljanssens used was nevertheless situated completely in that context. Moral formation was the most important component of education. If this was to be appropriate then it had to have a religious basis. This religious basis could naturally best be supplied by Christianity. The popular slogan *"If we trace the frontiers of Christianity on a map of the world we would see that we have traced those of civilisation,"* was also quoted on this occasion.

Education should be in the native language, again *"according to the rules of modern education"*. The author did, however, admit that there were some advantages to the use of French: *"First and mainly because the French language is the key to science and secondly because a single language of use between Blacks and Whites would be easier, promote unity and simplify the administration."* Still, all the advantages of French as a language of education could not compete with the following observation: *"An education that does not rest on the mother tongue has an artificial character and is doomed to failure."* This summed up Staeljanssens' opinion of the subject.

After the Second World War the subject of 'education' was only handled sporadically in the mission club and in the periodicals of the seminary. In 1950 Father De Rop gave a presentation about teaching in the colony: *"We then called in the help of Fr. De Rop who talked to us for a whole evening about certain problems about which the members had had a few questions. First the school question was handled. Attention was mainly directed to the educational establishments in the Congo, the manner of teaching and the training of teachers. In a couple of short sections some principles about school policy in the Congo also came up; requests for subsidies and suchlike business."*[111] The report gave no more details. A very striking contribution was given in 1952 by Brother Hegt, one

of the French-speaking aspirants. He wrote an article with the title of "*La formation du moi*."[112] He wanted to describe the role that the moulding of the ego played in education. The title and the announcement of the subject sounded heavy and scientific but the approach used was saturated with moral and religious notions. The conclusions drawn by the author concerning education fitted entirely into that context. They were no less relevant because of this, but neither could they be called very original.

Self-respect and a feeling of self-confidence were very important in the training of the youths, as was willpower. He also emphasised the importance of apperception in the training process, interpreted as the assimilation of everything that was newly learnt to the concepts already known. The conclusions of the article ran into a sand of rather general and vague formulations but from the citations and the bibliography with the article it seemed that the Thomist influence predominated. That is naturally not very surprising in the context of a philosophic study circle that called itself the 'Thomas circle'. However, it certainly seems that even in the 1950s the pedagogic influences, if they were such, only went in the single direction of Catholic Pedagogy. Hegt first cited texts by Thomas Aquinas himself. Besides that he referred to the French philosopher (and Thomist) Jacques Maritain and his most influential work *Les degrés du savoir*. Maritain was well-known as an anti-modernist who criticised the enlightenment and epistemology and who clung to the preeminence of metaphysics over epistemology.[113] The three other scientists whom he referred to were all Jesuits: the Dutch pedagogue Nic Perquin, the American philosopher and pedagogue Jaime Castiello and the German psychologist Johannes Lindworsky.[114]

It is clear that many of the cited articles had undergone the direct influence of what the aspiring missionaries had read and studied. This is revealed in the construction of the articles and in the manner that the subjects are treated. Quite often there are also a number of authors, book titles and articles cited. Very many of these articles were clearly seen as a sort of task or homework in the context of the training in the seminary.[115] The impact of this should really not be underestimated. The contents give a view of what was experienced as normal and provide data, facts and pieces of information that belonged to the way the students, and therefore the later missionaries, saw the world.

Finally, in 1954 another article written by Brother Crevaels appeared in *De Vloed*. It was titled "*Education in the Belgian Congo and Rwanda-Urundi*". The article

was about the way in which the Congolese were trained as priests. That is not immediately obvious when reading the article, seeing that in the first instance there is only mention of *“the training of the negro up to a full member of the Church”*. After a short discussion of the two most important factors in that process, namely the ‘environment’ and the reasoning and moral development, an overview is given of the different levels of education. Again, in this article the rhetoric of longing for tradition and opposition to modernity is revealed. The author writes about the common law environments: *“An established grouping of people with their own base, ennobled by an equal, general culture, is a foundation from which people with higher ideals can come forth”*.<sup>[116]</sup> The urbanised environment was described as *“the artificial, native townships around the European centres”*. This could not be ignored. Or as Crevaels said: *“Still, the existence of the extra-common law environment cannot be switched off.”* Also on the subject: *“In connection with that, there is a widespread action taking place that moderates the displacement of people and which keeps the negroes together in well-organised and managed centres.”*

Surprisingly enough, he observed in conclusion that Whites were not behaving logically as long as they did not recognise the equality of Blacks and Whites in practical life. After all, the Africans were, according to him, Catholic because of the belief itself and not because the Europeans were. It was clearly a difficult subject to grasp because in the priestly training the differences in ability between Black and White were very big but still not as big as some people stated. The author was clearly in doubt about what the correct position had to be with respect to the Congolese and their difficulties in education. *“That the negro is by nature simply inclined to satisfy his sensual inclinations cannot be taken as an absolute rule.”* The general lack of civilisation in the past also played a part. Again, it could not be absolutely stated that the Black was more stupid than the White. Again, (a lack of) previous history played a part.

In the second part the author first gave a historic overview of the development of the colonial education system. This primarily served as an introduction to the discussion of seminary education for the Congolese. He was very satisfied with primary education. He found support for this in a statement by Father Brys: *“The distance that divides the elite from the masses in the Belgian Congo is no longer as large as in other African areas. We have, to a certain extent, been able to avoid the reef of a privileged caste, which lives apart from the masses and wishes to*



*rule much more than to serve.*"[117] This was, of course, incorrect. The pronouncement, that dated from 1952 according to the Brother, could hardly be considered realistic hardly four years after the introduction of the new system of selected second grade.

Again, when discussing seminary education the author regularly referred to the environmental factors, which apparently still formed a problem and made it particularly difficult for the Congolese to finish priestly studies. He certainly did not differentiate there between Black and White, but from the turn of phrase it appears that this was, in fact, the underlying idea. From time to time this was revealed very clearly: *"It is understandable that there are currently no independent thinkers and masters among the young priests."* This represented a discourse that was generally present, and had already been developed in the thirties. It emphasised, for example, the importance and the moral value of agricultural activity and handwork. The *"References"* of Crevaels' article certainly did not refer to all of the sources he had used, but the majority of the listed articles were articles from *Kerk en Leven* (a very widespread belgian common parish periodical). It seems unlikely that anything in it diverged strongly from the classical colonial concepts.

### *Conclusion*

From the themes and the commentaries that have been touched on here it can be seen that the missionaries in the scholasticate or the mission seminary had been taught an altogether very traditional vision of the colony and its inhabitants. They cherished a rather traditional worldview. Their attitude towards the Congolese can certainly not be described as aggressive, arrogant or haughty. That has much to do with the religious context in general and the values of humility and neighbourly love that were therefore communicated to the young aspirants. However, there was dissatisfaction with modern Western civilisation and with a number of its characteristics: consumption, materialism, individualism and emancipation. A specific pedagogical training was almost completely absent. Where there are still some elements of educational ideas or principles, these are based on traditional and conservative thinkers.

In this respect, the next conclusion is certainly also relevant. Gustaaf Hulstaert played a great role in providing the seminarians with knowledge about everything that had to do with the Belgian Congo. Vinck states that Hulstaert was still dominant in the priestly training of the MSC in the 1960s. He was already revered

during the colonial period because of his scientific work and was considered, certainly in the seminary, to be 'the one who knew about everything'. The students knew, for example, that Hulstaert had been received by the King alone at a visit to Coquilhatville (before independence). He made an impression on the students and he was respected by the other Fathers, who looked up to him much more than to Boelaert, who was much more modest and had a milder character. The views of Hulstaert, which will be discussed more deeply, therefore must certainly be accounted for as a great influence on the seminarians.[118]

## NOTES

[1] Honoré Vinck, director of the Aequatoria research centre and MSC, interviewed in the "Histories" broadcast "Het rijk van de stilte" (Flemish national television, 11 April 2002). [original quotation in Dutch]

[2] For a graphical representation of these relationships, and supplementary statistics, see appendix 7.

[3] Pirotte, J. & Soetens, C. (2003). Les missions à l'époque coloniale. In Pirotte, J. & Zelis, G. (eds.) *Pour une histoire du monde catholique au 20<sup>e</sup> siècle Wallonie-Bruxelles. Guide du chercheur*. Arca: Louvain-La-Neuve. p. 681. This is for the French-speaking part of Belgium but most of the questions naturally apply by extension to all Belgian missionaries. In fact the French-speakers formed a minority in the total missionary population.

[4] Gustaaf Hulstaert (1900-1990). Born in Melsele, he studied humanities at school with the MSC in Asse before entering the order. He was ordained as a priest in Leuven in 1924. After this, he taught for half a year at the college in Asse, then he took lessons in tropical medicine in Brussels. During his priestly studies in Heverlee he also received missionary training at the University of Leuven. In September 1925 he left for the Congo. Apart from a few holidays in Belgium, he would remain there continuously until his death in 1990. The time he spent in the Congo can be divided into two periods: From 1925 to 1950 he was active in mission work, predominately in education. He was successively a travelling Father (Boende, 1926-1927), mission superior and headmaster of the HCB school in Flandria (1927-1933), mission superior and headmaster of the junior seminary in Bokuma (1933-1935), religious superior and missionary inspector stationed in Bamanya (1936-1946) and again mission superior and headmaster of the HCB school in Flandria (1946-1950). In 1950 he was released from mission activity so that he could concentrate fully on scientific work. In the meantime, it had become clear that he had several interests in the scientific area

in which he would invest much time and that his work would find recognition in broader academic circles. In this respect, the foundation of the periodical 'Aequatoria', together with Edmond Boelaert, was very important. Hulstaert's scientific interests were very broad, and his biography is very comprehensive, with publications in many areas, including linguistics, biology and history.

[5] Depaepe & Van Rompaey, p. 92. [original in Dutch]

[6] Under the title "sciences de la mission et formation missionnaire au XXe siècle".

[7] Fricoteaux, L. (1992). La formation au sein d'un institut missionnaire féminin, les Soeurs Blanches au XXe siècle. Y a-t-il eu une influence des semaines de missiologie de Louvain? In Spindler, M. & Gadille, J. (eds.). *Sciences de la mission et formation missionnaire au XXe siècle*. Actes de la XIIe session du CREDIC. Lyon/ Bologna: LUGD/EMI. p.319-332.

[8] See: Dujardin, C. (1989). Van pionier tot dienaar. Profiel van de Belgische missionaris in historisch perspectief (1800-1989). In Boudens, R. (ed.), *Rond Damiaan. Handelingen van het colloquium n.a.v. de honderdste verjaardag van het overlijden van pater Damiaan 9-10 maart 1959*, Kadoc-studies 7, Leuven: Universitaire Pers. p. 114-187.

[9] By this Dujardin certainly refers to training that specifically prepared for the "material" life as a missionary. As religious workers, the missionaries had already received priestly training after their secondary school studies. This means they were highly educated people of their age.

[10] The next paragraphs are primarily based on research and texts I used for a lecture at the *Annual Conference of the British History of Education Society* in Swansea, November 2002, "Centre and periphery as a framework for the history of colonial education". An English version of this text was published in Dhoker, M. & Depaepe, M. (ed.) (2004). *Op eigen vleugels. Liber amicorum An Hermans*. Leuven: Garant. p. 96-106.

[11] Derroitte, H. (1999). L'évolution des modèles missionnaires. Dialogue d'Henri Derroitte avec le Père Joseph Masson, s.j. In Derroitte, H. & Soetens, C. (eds.) *La mémoire missionnaire. Les chemins sinueux de l'inculturation*. Lumen Vitae: Bruxelles. p. 114-116. Masson was himself one of the main figures in the missiological activity in Leuven and Rome and took on responsibility for the *Semaines Missiologiques* from Pierre Charles in 1954.

[12] Cayen, A. (1920). De la formation d'une mentalité coloniale en Belgique. In *Congrès Colonial National*, s.l. [original in French]

[13] Van Overbergh, C. (1906). *La réforme de l'enseignement d'après le premier*

*congrès international d'expansion mondiale (Mons, 1905)*. Bruxelles: Schepens. 2 v.

[14] World expansion education was one of the faces of 'specific education' organised under the motto "school for life". See Depaepe, M. et alii (1999). *Orde in vooruitgang*. p. 89-90.

[15] Moriau, J. (1976). *Werelduitbreiding. Pedagogisch-didactische vernieuwing in de lagere school 1905-1910*. unpublished master's thesis K.U.Leuven. p. 92. See also Depaepe, M. (1994). 'Kongo, een tweede vaderland'. *De kolonie in het onderwijs en het onderwijs in de kolonie (1908-1960)*. Ieper: Onderwijsmuseum.

[16] It still exists today as one of the three great pillars of missionary activity under the name Papal Mission Work for Children.

[17] The initiative for setting up the Crusades as a movement was taken by three Norbertines from the abbey of Averbode, Blomme, Robberechts and Vanmaele. The contents of the movement was inspired by the well-known priest (Edward) Poppe. See Van Garsse, L. (1982). *De Eucharistische Kruistocht in Vlaanderen (1920-1945). Beschrijving en analyse van een kwarteeuw zedelijk-godsdienstige vorming*. Unpublished master's thesis K.U.Leuven. p. 15-36. See also Depaepe, M.

(2000). *De pedagogisering achterna*. Leuven: Acco. 3<sup>e</sup> editie. p. 218en Quaghebeur, P. (2002). "De Eucharistische Kruistocht." In Ghequiere, R. & Quaghebeur, P. (ed.) *Averbode, een uitgever apart (1877-2002)*. Leuven: Universitaire Pers. p. 92-173. [original quotations in Dutch]

[18] In fact, until a short time ago this was limited to one master's thesis: Boonants, B. (1982). *Het beeld van Belgisch Kongo in de geschiedenishandboeken van het middelbaar onderwijs in België, 1904 tot 1980*. Unpublished master's thesis K.U.Leuven.

[19] De Baets, A. (1988). *Beeldvorming over niet-westerse culturen. De invloed van het geschiedenisschoolboek op de publieke opinie in Vlaanderen 1945-1984*. Doctoral thesis in History, University of Ghent. Concerning other research: p. 45-58. Concerning the general problem of the influence and qualification of the study: especially p. 473-520.

[20] The thesis concerned is an extension of the article by De Keyser, R. (1982). "Belgisch Kongo in den belgischen Geschichtslehrbüchern". In Furnrohr, W. (ed.), *Afrika im Geschichtsunterricht europäischer Länder*. München: Minerva.

[21] Boonants, B. (1982). *Het beeld van Belgisch Kongo*.

[22] Vincke, E. (1985). *Géographes et hommes d'ailleurs. Analyse critique de manuels scolaires*. Centre Bruxellois de Recherche et Documentation

Pédagogiques: Bruxelles. [original quotation in French]

[23] Depaepe, M. (1994). *Kongo, een tweede vaderland*.

[24] Bogaerts, L., Noels, F. & Suetens, J. (1960) Taalwerkboek 5. zesde leerjaar. Lier: Jozef Van In & co. p. 234-255. [original quotation in Dutch]

[25] De Baets, A., *Beeldvorming over niet-westerse culturen*, p. 199.

[26] See Vints, L. (1987). *Kongo made in Belgium. Beeld van een kolonie in film en propaganda*. Kadoc: Leuven.

[27] Besides the studies mentioned here we also mention the Catholic Documentation Centre connected to the Catholic University of Nijmegen, which is probably the most extensive and complete collection of missionary testimonies owned within the Catholic framework of influence. See also Hogema, J.M. (1996). Stories by missionaries from and about Africa. In *Trajecta*, V, 4, p. 403-411.

[28] Soetens, C. (2000). La vocation d'une centaine de missionnaires belges (1904-1965). Premiers résultats d'une enquête orale. In Derroitte, H. & Soetens, C. (1999). *La mémoire missionnaire*. p. 65-66.

[29] Ibidem, p. 69.

[30] Storme, M. (1952). L'abbé Forget (1852-1933) et le séminaire Africain de Louvain. In *Zaire: Congolees tijdschrift*. VI, p. 787-808. Idem (1952). Léopold II, les missions du Congo et la fondation du séminaire Africain de Louvain. In *Zaire, Afrikaans tijdschrift*. VI, p. 3-24. Storme was a Scheut missionary and a teacher in a small seminary in Bokoro.

[31] Etambala, Z.A. (1987). Un centenaire: le séminaire Africain de Louvain (1886-1888). In *Les Nouvelles Rationalités Africaines*, vol. 2, n°6, p. 322. See also *Annuaire de l'Université Catholique de Louvain*, 1887, p. 391-395 & 1888, p. 420-424. [original quotation in French]

[32] Art. 47 of the law of 10 March 1923. [original quotation in Dutch]

[33] KADOC, De Cleene - De Jonghe Papers, no. 70. Memo from Mgr. Ladeuze to De Jonghe, 23 September 1922. [original quotation in French]

[34] KADOC, De Cleene - De Jonghe Papers, no. 70. Memo from Mgr. Ladeuze to De Jonghe, 30 September 1922; letter from F. Willaert, provincial superior Scheut, to Edouard De Jonghe, with a rough draft of De Jonghe's answer to Willaert, 17 October 1922.

[35] Alphonse Broden (1875 - 1929) was active as a doctor in the fight against sleeping sickness in the Free State of Congo and is seen as one of the founders of tropical medicine in Belgium. After his colonial career he became director of the Institute for Tropical Medicine. *Belgische Koloniale Biografie*, II, 102-107; Vandersmissen, J. (2001). De wetenschappelijke exploratie. In *Geschiedenis van*

*de wetenschappen in België 1815-2000. Deel 1. La Renaissance du Livre/ Dexia Bank: Tournai/ Brussel, p. 240.*

[36] KADOC, De Cleene - De Jonghe Papers, no. 70. Letter from F.Willaert, provincial superior Scheut, to Edouard De Jonghe, with a rough draft of De Jonghe's answer to Willaert, 17 October 1922.

[37] KADOC, De Cleene - De Jonghe Papers, no. 70. Letter from Broden to De Jonghe, 19 October 1922.

[38] Martinus Rutten (1841-1927). Flemish priest. He was first a teacher and school principal in Liege and Sint-Truiden and manager of the seminary in Liege. In 1902 he became Bishop of Liege. He played a leading role in the first schools funding controversy, in the foundation of a Christian workers movement and in the Flemish movement. Michiels, G. (1977). Rutten, Martinus-Hubertus. In *Nationaal Biografisch Woordenboek*, VII, Brussel: Koninklijke Academiën van België. 831-836.

[39] A brother of Gustaaf Hulstaert.

[40] Albert Michotte (1881-1965). Studied in Leuven and Leipzig with Wilhelm Wundt, Doctor of Philosophy, among others. In 1908 he became a professor in Leuven, where he was also the co-founder of the Laboratory for Experimental Psychology. After the First World War he started the Research Centre for Psychology, applied to problems of upbringing and education. Together with Raymond Buyse and Arthur Fauville he was at the foundation of the école de pédagogie that opened its doors in Leuven in 1923. Luyten, H. & Vandenbussche, E. (1981). *De onderzoeksapparaten uit het laboratoire de psychologie expérimentale van Prof. A. Michotte*. Leuven: Acco. p. 9-14; Verheyen, J.E. & Casimir, R. (1939). *Paedagogische Encyclopedie*. Antwerpen: De Sikkel. p. 255-256.

[41] Leuven University Archives, Paulin Ladeuze Papers, file "école de sciences commerciales et coloniales". Letter from A. Dubois to Mgr. Ladeuze, June 1924.

[42] Leuven University Archives, Paulin Ladeuze Papers, file "école de sciences commerciales et coloniales". Letter from E. De Jonghe to Mgr. Ladeuze, 22 June 1924.

[43] François Collard (1852-1927). Doctor in Philosophy and Arts at the K.U.Leuven. Named professor in 1875, he taught in the Department of Classical Languages. From 1890 he was also a teacher of *Histoire de la pédagogie et de méthodologie de l'enseignement moyen* and more than likely a pioneer in this subject at the university. Rogiers, A. (1928). *L'oeuvre pédagogique de m. François Collard*. Liège: Vaillant-Carmanne.

Raymond Buyse (1889-1974). Studied at the University of Brussels, at the *faculté internationale pédologique*. In 1921 he became a primary school inspector and from 1923 went to work at the newly founded teaching institute of Leuven University. From the early twenties Buyse regularly worked closely with Ovide Decroly. Van Gorp, A. (2004).

*Gedragwetenschap in de steigers. Het psycho-pedagogisch vertoog van Ovide Decroly ontmythologiseerd?* Unpublished doctoral thesis K.U.Leuven. p. 147; Verheyen, J.E. & Casimir, R. (1939). *Paedagogische Encyclopedie*. Antwerpen: De Sikkel. p. 283.

[44] Leuven University Archives, Paulin Ladeuze Papers, file "centre infirmiers-missionnaires". Typed document with curriculum proposal, "Epreuves pour missionnaires qui ont suivi avec fruit les cours du centre pour infirmiers-missionnaires", s.n., s.d.

[45] *Eenige woorden over de Missie-congregatie van het Onbevlekt Hart van Maria Scheut-bij-Brussel. Stichting en werking. Innerlijke organisatie*. Dirix-Van Riet: Antwerpen. 1925.

[46] *De kapel van O.L.Vrouw van Gratie en het seminarie der missiën te Scheut-bij-Brussel*, Polleunis en Ceuterick: Brussel. 1901.

[47] Verbal communication from Honoré Vinck.

[48] De Rop, A. & Vinck, H. (1971). Bibliografie van de Missionarissen van het Heilig Hart. See also interview with Frans Maes in Borgerhout on 9 July 2002.

[49] MSC Archives Borgerhout, box Boelaert. "Cours d'ethnologie", taught in Gerdingen, Bree, as part of the first and second year philosophy, 1957-58.

[50] According to the biographical information on Boelaert he only definitively returned to Belgium in 1954. He replaced his colleague Albert De Rop in giving the courses in ethnology to the philosophy students in Bree from 1957. De Rop himself had only taught there from 1956 and returned to the Congo in the following year to teach at Lovanium University. <http://www.aequatoria.be>.

[51] MSC Archives Borgerhout. "Kronijk". In *De Toekomst*, vol. I, 1927, no. 1, p. 28. [original quotation in French]

[52] MSC Archives Borgerhout. "Kronijk". In *De Toekomst*, vol. I, 1933, no. 13, p. 442.

[53] MSC Archives Borgerhout. "Jeugd en Missie in Vlaanderen". In *De Toekomst*, vol. II, 1938, no. 27, p. 1011-1019.

[54] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Mission club documents, Meetings October and 13 November 1935. Mgr. Verius is Henri Verius, a French MSC (1860-1892) who was active in Papua New Guinea from 1885. He was appointed as apostolic vicar

of the section of New Guinea under German control. Since the 1930s people have been campaigning for his beatification by the Pope. He was certainly greatly venerated in his congregation and was remembered on the annual "Verius day".

[55] Leuven University Archives, Paulin Ladeuze Papers, file "centre infirmiers-missionnaires". List of C.U.M. registrations written for the 1935-1936 academic year.

[56] MSC Archives Borgerhout. "Kronijk". In *De Toekomst*, I, 1930, no. 7, p. 254. [original quotation in Dutch]

[57] MSC Archives Borgerhout. "Kronijk". In *De Toekomst*, I, 1932, no. 11, p.375. [original quotation in Dutch]

[58] MSC Archives Borgerhout. "Chronique". In *De Toekomst*, III, 1945, no. 33, p. 1224. [original quotation in French]

[59] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Standaert, L., "De missieclub in die 50 jaren". In *De Toekomst*, III, 1950, no. 44, p. 1780-1787.

[60] MSC Archives Borgerhout. "Missieclub". In *De Toekomst*, III, 1949, no. 42, p. 1642. [Original in quotation Dutch]

[61] Boelaert, E. (1930). *Onder het kruis van Tugude*. Leuven: Davidsfonds. p. 5-8. [Original quotation in French]

[62] MSC Archives Borgerhout. No. 3033 Sch. [original quotation in Dutch]

[63] MSC Archives Borgerhout. No. 3033 Sch. [original in quotation Dutch]

[64] Albert De Rop (1912-1980), Missionary of the Sacred Heart. Went in 1937 to the Congo. After his return in 1948 he commenced university studies which led in 1956 to a Doctorate in African Linguistics. From 1957 to 1964 he taught at the University of Leuven (MSC Borgerhout, third series of biographical sketches, p. 50).

[65] In the spring of 1944, for example; Leuven suffered heavy bombardment in the Second World War.

[66] In this sense: written communication with Honoré Vinck, 22 March 2004.

[67] Interview with Frans Maes in Borgerhout, 9 July 2002.

[68] Interview with Frans Maes in Borgerhout, 9 July 2002.

[69] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Minutes of the meeting of 15 December 1919.

[70] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Minutes of the meeting of 11 October 1943.

[71] MSC Archives Borgerhout. "Missie-dag in Bree" In *De Vloed*, I, 1933, p. 334-335. [original quotation in Dutch]

[72] MSC Archives Borgerhout. "Verslag van de Missieclub '33-'34" In *De Vloed*,



I, 1934, p. 508-509.

[73] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Minutes of the meeting of 15 December 1919. [original quotation in Dutch]

[74] MSC Archives Borgerhout. China, J. "Préfecture apostolique de Coquilhatville". In *De Toekomst*, I, 1930, no. 8, p. 265. [original quotation in French]

[75] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Leclercqs, G. "La question sociale au Congo". In *De Toekomst*, I, 1933, no. 14, p. 462. [original quotation in French]

[76] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Minutes of the meeting of 26 March 1925. [original quotation in Dutch]

[77] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Minutes of the meeting of 28 March 1943. [original quotation in Dutch]

[78] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Minutes of the meeting of 5 May 1957. [original quotation in French]

[79] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Van Kerckhove, G. "Katolicisme - Islam in Afrika". In *De toekomst*, 1935, no. 21, p. 745-750.

[80] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Minutes of the meeting in 24 October 1940. [original quotation in Dutch]

[81] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Minutes of the meeting in May 1942.

[82] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Minutes of the meeting of 10 December 1942, 25 January, 5 April, 13 May and 15 June 1943. [original quotation in Dutch]

[83] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Report of the mission day of 20 May 1946. [original quotation in Dutch]

[84] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Minutes of the meeting of 13 March 1919.

[85] MSC Archives Borgerhout. De Rop, A. "Ethnologie en missiënering". In *De Vloed*, I, 1933, no. 11, p. 295. [original quotation in Dutch]

[86] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Wijnants, P. "Het Boerenprobleem in Kongo". In *De Toekomst*, II, 1938, no. 27, p. 1005-1006. [original quotation in Dutch]

[87] Kimbanguism is a religious movement named after the founder. Simon Kimbangu (approx. 1889-1951) was a catechist at a Protestant mission in the neighbourhood of Thysville (a little to the south of Leopoldville). Following a vision he began to preach himself and is said to have performed miraculous cures. He quickly gained a group of followers, who abandoned the Catholic faith. Kimbangu himself behaved as a prophet and as the leader of a new cult. After a

few months the colonial administration took up arms against this religious movement. In the area around Thysville a state of emergency was declared. Kimbangu was condemned to death by a court martial but was reprieved by King Albert. He spent the following thirty years of his life in a prison in Elisabethville. See Chomé, J. (1966). Kimbangu (Simon). In *Biographie Belge d'Outre-Mer*, VI, 576-578.

[88] Nkundo is another name for Mongo.

[89] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Report of mission Sunday on 17 March 1937. [original quotation in Dutch]

[90] The regional language, also often called Lonkundo.

[91] This is about the annual report that had to be composed by the superior of the mission and sent to the superior of the congregation. A number of these reports were included in the source material used for the third chapter.

[92] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Minutes of the meeting of 22 September 1956. [original quotation in Dutch]

[93] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Minutes of the meeting of 6 March 1938. [original quotation in Dutch]

[94] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Report of mission Sunday, October 1948. [original quotation in Dutch]

[95] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Minutes of the meeting of 24 October 1940. [original quotation in Dutch]

[96] MSC Archivess Borgerhout. Wijnants, M. (1938). Gehuwde blanken in Kongo. In *De Toekomst*, II, no. 27, p. 995-1001. [original quotation in Dutch]

[97] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Report of the mission day of 28 March 1955.

[98] "Colour bar" was a word that came from the British colonies and indicates a social and geographic separation of people of different skin colour. In the Belgian-Congolese context there was a colour bar between Belgians and Congolese.

[99] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Report of the mission day on 28 March 1955. [original quotation in Dutch]

[100] Eduard Van Goethem (1873-1949). Van Goethem was anointed as a priest in December 1899. After two years training he left for New Guinea where he became superior of the mission. On the founding of the new Congo mission of the MSC in 1924 he was transferred there and nominated apostolic prefect. On the elevation of the area to a vicariate he became vicar. He held this post until 1946. Hulstaert, G. (1980). Goethem (Van) (Eduard). In *Bibliographie Belge d'outre-Mer*, VII (c), 181-192; Vereecken, J. (1985). *Wij Gedenken. Tweede reeks*

*bibliografische schetsen van MSC van de Belgische Provincie*. Borgerhout: MSC. p. 15.

[101] Zie o.a. Depaepe & Van Rompaey; Vinck, H. (2000). Dimension et inspiration de l'oeuvre de Gustaaf Hulstaert. In *Revue Africaine des sciences de la mission*, 12, p. 206-236.

[102] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Declercqs, G. (1933). La question sociale au Congo. In *De Toekomst*, I, no. 14, p. 465. [original quotation in French]

[103] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Bottelier, O. (1938). Inboorlingenpolitiek. In *De Toekomst*, II, no. 26, p. 967. [original quotation in Dutch]

[104] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Sablon, C. (1950). "Apostolisch vicariaat Coquilhatstad". In *De Toekomst*, IV, no. 30, p. 2122. [original quotation in Dutch]

[105] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Aerts, F. (1933). General report of the work of the science club. In *De Vloed*, I, 5, no. 12, p. 110. It was reported here about "Some pedagogical articles that are in prospect."

[106] In the same issue of *De Vloed* there was also an article about religious education in which De Hovre and Decoene are referred to *inter alia*. Frans De Hovre (1884-1956) and Albéric Decoene (1881-1958), who lived at the same epoch and had similar points of view, both studied neo-thomist philosophy in Leuven. Afterwards De Hovre became pastor in Gentbrugge. Decoene became head of the teacher training college in Torhout and later an educational inspector. Both were mainly known as founders of the Vlaamsch Opvoedkundig Tijdschrift (Flemish Educational Periodical) and were, certainly in the interbellum, considered as very influential pedagogues. See Verheyen, J. & Casimir, R. (1939). *Paedagogische encyclopaedie*, Antwerpen: De Sikkel, I, p. 328-329 & II, p. 86-88. Verheyen wrote the following in it about De Hovre: "*Decroly, a representative of natural science, and De Hovre, a spokesman for spiritual knowledge, are in our opinion the most influential founders of present-day Belgian Pedagogy, which, through their work, has gained international recognition and under their leadership, in depth and in breadth, has grown to a flourishing movement.*"

[107] See Depaepe, M. (2000). *De pedagogisering achterna*. p. 202-206.

[108] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Van Kerckhove, G. (1933). Iets over godsdienst-onderwijs. In *De Vloed*, I, no. 12, p. 337-341.

[109] MSC Archives Borgerhout. *De Toekomst*, 1934, no. 19, p. 706.

[110] MSC Archives Borgerhout. *De Toekomst*, 1934, no. 19, p. 704-706. [original quotation in French]

[111] MSC Archives Borgerhout. Notebooks from the mission club. Report of the Verius meeting, 1950.

[112] MSC Archives Borgerhout. *De Vloed*, 1952, no. 48, p. 2148-2153.

[113] Jacques Maritain (1882-1973) considered one of the most prominent Catholic philosophers of his time. His influence is even noticeable today, for example in the social body of ideas of Pope John-Paul II. Sweet, W. (2004). "Jacques Maritain". In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* ( Spring 2004 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2004/entries/maritain/>>.

[114] For each of these scientists there is an entry to be found in the *Katholieke Encyclopaedie voor opvoeding en onderwijs*, published in the course of the 1950s. 's Gravenhage/Antwerpen: Pax/'t Groeit. Perquin and Castiello have also to be situated in more conservatively-minded circles. Perquin (1897-?) was a collaborator on the *Katholieke Encyclopaedie* cited here. From Castiello (1898-1937) his best known work, "A humane psychology of education" was mentioned as well as a study on Thomas Aquinas.

[115] There were a number of obligatory lecture exercises on the curriculum in the student circles of the seminary. These included an "Augustinus circle" for philosophy and a "Thomas circle" for theology. In philosophy, a strictly scholastic approach was used (strictly applying taught reasoning principles) but theology was approached much more broadly and included short talks, which could also be on mission subjects. For these exercises texts had to be prepared and these were regularly published in the seminary's periodicals. Interview with Honoré Vinck and Jos Jans, Borgerhout, 8 March 2004.

[116] The term "common law environments" refers to an administrative and judicial concept. The administrative division of the country fell into common law areas and extra-common law areas. The extra-common law areas or *centres extra-coutumiers* (C.E.C.) corresponded to built-up areas. The common law areas were thus in the majority. Immediately before independence the Congo was divided into six provinces, each one divided into one (in Katanga two) city areas and a number of districts. Each district was further divided into a number of "territoires" or territories and each territory consisted of a number of "circonscriptions indigènes" or "native areas". The mission area of the MSC extended over two territories, that of the Equator and that of the Tshuapa. "Common law environments" must also be understood as "the places where the common law applies". A small part of the justice system in the colony remained under Congolese common law. The applicability of this was defined by exception, "on all the domains that are not regulated by the written law". Office de l'information et des relations publiques pour le Congo-Belge et le Ruanda-Urundi

(1958). *Le Congo Belge*. Bruxelles: INFOR-Congo, II, p. 44-57. See also Dembour, M.-B. (1999). *Recalling the Belgian Congo*. London: Berghahn Books, p. 17-30.

[117] This is the same Albert Brys already mentioned in chapter 1.

[118] Interview with Honoré Vinck, Lovenjoel, 19 July 2004.

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