

THE EXPANSION OF THE SUDAN INTERIOR MISSION'S RELIGIOUS EXERTIONS IN BAYARA AREA OF BAUCHI EMIRATE, NORTHERN NIGERIA, 1952-1972

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Abstract

Numerous studies have been conducted on the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) in northern Nigeria, but the spread of SIM's religious undertakings in Bauchi town, the centre of the emirate, has been neglected. Hence, this paper examines the beginning and expansion of the Sudan Interior Mission's (SIM) religious activities in the Bayara leprosarium and Bauchi town in the Bauchi emirate of northern Nigeria from 1952 to 1972. Despite the initial displeasure by the Native Authorities (NA) and the provincial authorities not having a mission centre in Bauchi town, the SIM partnered with the NA. It established a leprosarium in Bayara to control the surge in leprosy infection and other minor illnesses in the province. This was done based on SIM avoiding forceful proselytisation in the facility or area. This paper draws from primary data such as archival documents and oral interviews, as well as secondary data, to contend that aside from leprosy control, the SIM, through its evangelistic determinations, utilised the leprosarium as a medium to evangelise the patients and reach out to other places such as Bauchi town and proximate areas. Embedded in its evangelism approach, the SIM sent native converts to the Bible School in Bayara for training. They employed and deployed them in the mission fields after graduation. The natives were mentored for leadership, which served as a continuity machine to establish and sustain the local Church, the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA).

Keywords: Sudan Interior Mission; Bauchi; Leprosarium; ECWA; Bayara; Evangelism, Missions.

Introduction

Walter Gowans, Rowland Bingham and Thomas Kent founded the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) in 1893 to spread Christianity to northern Nigeria's Muslim-dominated areas. Since founding its first station at Patigi in the middle belt of Nigeria, the SIM utilised diverse approaches in establishing stations, putting into cognisance the pre-existing native socio-political background

of the area and the colonial government of the place (Galadima & Yusufu, 2001, p. 96). The provision of medical facilities became strategic to the evangelical approach of the SIM, and this was very obvious, especially in leprosy control. In northern Nigeria, leprosy became a major social problem, and the colonial government's effort to control it through its agency, the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association (BELRA), rarely demonstrated much success. The SIM's official takeover of leprosy control programmes in northern Nigeria from the colonial government in 1936 not only helped in leprosy control but was strategic to its evangelical mandate in the region (Lere, 2005, p. 92).

Bauchi was one of the relics of Usman Danfodio's Islamic jihad of 1804, and it became one of northern Nigeria's provinces, created in 1904 by the British colonial government. Bauchi town was the centre of the province and emirate, with offices of the colonial administration and the Native Authority (NA). It had a thick wall built after the Islamic jihad of 1804, meant to fortify the town against the incursions of the post-jihad era (Shekarau, 2017). The walled fence subsequently signified a barricade to the intrusion of Christianity into the emirate centre, particularly with the emergence of Christian missions' activities in the area, which intensified in the colonial era. Therefore, it is essential to note that all the people within the wall hedge were Muslims. Since the conquest of Bauchi in 1902 and the introduction of colonial rule, notably the setting up of a provincial government, several socio-economic and political activities opened up additional areas outside the wall, creating more contact with more Muslims and traditionalists. The advent of the Roman Catholic Mission and the Church Missionary Society before the 1930s was the closest of any Christian activity to the Bauchi town walls (*Bauchi Province Annual Report*, 1931, p. 43).

The SIM had made efforts at reaching and setting up stations in the traditionalists areas of Bauchi province, such as Zagun (1915), Kaltungo (1917), Bununu-Dass (1923), Tula-Wange (1924), Katanga-Warji (1926), Rinjin-Gani (1947) and so on (Turaki, 1993, p. 106). However, Bauchi province colonial administrators and the Native Authority (NA) refused to grant the SIM

permission to establish a station within and around the Bauchi town wall, especially when leprosy control in northern Nigeria had a new approach involving SIM (Shekarau, 2023). Bauchi emirate was one of the areas initially earmarked for establishing a leprosarium after setting up Katsina, Kano, and Sokoto Leprosaria in 1937 (Shankar, 2007). Even after the colonial office approved the establishment of the leprosarium, it failed to go through at the provincial level (*Oral Interview with Ado Danrimi*, personal communication, 2015). Bauchi provincial administration and the NA declined to provide land to build the leprosarium as outlined by the colonial government's policy when the Christian missions took over the leprosy control project in northern Nigeria (*Leper Settlements*, 1936). Bauchi authorities maintained that the SIM could not manage the leprosarium, commit and provide competent and experienced leprosy experts, even if they are paid by the government and relief associations, as advocated by Dr. Ernest Muir, the Director of British Empire Leprosy Relief Association (BELRA). They contended that the paucity of funds would force the SIM to relinquish the leprosy project (*Leper Settlements*, 1936).

The provincial administration further argued that the NA could not provide adequate funds to support the leprosarium if it became huge (*Leper Settlements*, 1936, p. 54). It could also not contribute one-third ($1/3^{\text{rd}}$) weekly funding for each leper who was a native of the province receiving treatment in the leprosarium as required by the colonial government leprosy policy (*Leper Settlements*, 1936, p. 91). With doubts about the competency of the SIM to set up and undertake a proficient and functional leprosarium in Bauchi, the Provincial government concluded that the SIM would embark on an endeavour more than they could get grips with (*Mission Matters Relating to Miscellaneous Correspondence*, 1937). These reasons could be considered trivial because the SIM established leprosaria in Katsina, Sokoto and Kano and had no obvious problems as such. The NAs of such provinces cooperated and collaborated with the Christian missions and the colonial administration to set up the leprosaria (Shekarau, 2023).

The determination of Bauchi NA was to protect its Muslim subjects in Bauchi town and environs from contacting and interacting with the SIM. The NA had initially approved the

opening of stations in other areas of Bauchi province predominated by traditionalists; they were yet cautious of compromising Bauchi town, which was entirely Muslim (*Mission Matters Relating to Miscellaneous Correspondence*, 1934). The authorities were not ready to make their subjects vulnerable to the alien or *white man's religion* (Christianity), even when they were stakeholders in the colonial government's fight against leprosy. It was because the leprosarium would attract patients, including Muslims. They needed assurance that the SIM would not carry out forceful proselytisation (*Oral Interview with Ado Danrimi*, personal communication, 2015). In this regard, it is imperative to ask if the provincial government and the NA were interested in the fight against leprosy or contented to see thousands of lepers afflicted and racked with pain in their jurisdiction for frivolous reasons. It could be construed from this stiff resistance that although the Bauchi authorities were interested parties in the leprosy control project, they did not consider that the SIM would stick to its promise against persuasive proselytisation. The NA tended to protect their subjects against the luring strategies of the SIM. For the provincial administration, once the interests of the NA were affected, their colonial pursuit would be at stake. Therefore, since the assurance for non-forceful proselytisation of its subjects was not trusted, it prolonged the establishment of the leprosarium (*Mission Matters Relating to Miscellaneous Correspondence*, 1934).

Meanwhile, the SIM knew what it stood to gain from establishing the leprosarium; it became more determined and tactful through the years of its contact and negotiation with the authorities. Dr. A.D. Helser led the negotiations (*Oral Interview with Adamu Sambo*, personal communication, 2015). In 1951, just a few years before Nigeria's independence, Helser agreed with the authorities that the SIM would exercise caution in its religious effort and provide the necessary human and material resources required for the smooth establishment and running of the leprosarium (*Oral Interview with Hassan Bichi*, personal communication, 2015). Consequently, the NA and the provincial government facilitated land allocation to build the leprosarium far from Bauchi town (*Oral Interview with Ado Danrimi*, personal communication, 2015). The initial area the SIM desired was Bauchi town, but the authorities provided land at

Tashan Mai-Alewa, about twenty (20) kilometres from Bauchi town (*Mission Matters Relating to Miscellaneous Correspondence*, 1934). This was done to send the SIM far away from the emirate centre to avoid the risk of subjecting the people to the missionaries (*Oral Interview with Ado Danrimi*, personal communication, 2015). The SIM felt that the area was far; they, therefore, pleaded and lobbied for the reallocation of the land, and Bayara, about fourteen (14) kilometres from Bauchi town, was earmarked (*Oral Interview with Adamu Sambo*, personal communication, 2015). The leprosarium was established in 1952; hence, the question of the relevance of the establishment of the leprosarium to the SIM, particularly in evangelism in the leprosarium and expansion to Bauchi town. The paper is divided into sections such as the leprosarium and the Church in Bayara, the expansion of SIM/ECWA activities, the establishment of the Church in Bauchi town, and mentorship, evangelism, and indigenisation.

The Leprosarium and the Church in Bayara

The leprosarium in Bayara began with the arrival of Henry Guenter, Dr. and Mrs. Donal C. Edwards, and Miss Mae Gauld in 1952 (*Oral Interview with Dija Ali*, personal communication, 2015). Although Bayara was outside the town of Bauchi, it was the nearest SIM mission station (*Oral Interview with Hassan Bichi*, personal communication, 2015). All the facilities and programmes were meant not only for the small population of Bayara but also to attract or pull the Bauchi town residents and other surrounding communities, villages, and towns who needed such services, thereby exposing them to the SIM evangelism schemes. Again, the leprosarium and the dispensary were provincial facilities where people from diverse religious backgrounds were treated for leprosy and other ailments.

The SIM established a church near the leprosarium and a Bible school to support its evangelism objectives. Dr. D.C. Edwards wrote in his reports that “the medical work is, of course, our major programme, though the gospel is our major emphasis” (*Bauchi Leprosarium Miscellaneous*, 1952). His position indicates how the leprosarium would be utilised for evangelism. Although the SIM initially agreed that it would not engage in forceful

proselytisation, it did not abandon its religious mandate. This could be seen in Guy W. Playfair's statement and pledge below:

A chapel would be built to which all would be welcome but no one compelled to attend, realising that any pressure or force would defeat our best purposes. In other words, the 'golden rule' would apply here. We gladly accord to all that we claim for ourselves. (*Leper Settlements*, 1936)

Playfair's assertions show that setting up a church was a significant part of SIM's endeavours in the area. Therefore, the SIM did not take up the task of setting up the leprosarium without injecting its mandate or mission. It built a church close to the leprosarium in 1952, with the aim of not compelling anyone to join. However, it was a form of consolidation of its cause by providing a place of worship for its converts and officials (*Oral Interview with Adamu Sambo*, personal communication, 2015). The SIM had no funds when they initiated the leprosarium church building. Still, a few Christian lepers voluntarily mobilised themselves and made a temporary plain mud block church with a thatched roof. When funds became available, the SIM built a permanent church. Mela Ardo, SIM's first indigenous evangelist in Bayara, was responsible for facilitating the organisation and running of the church in January, 1953 (*Oral Interview with Dauda Gambo*, personal communication, 2015). On 16th January, the first women's mid-week meeting was held, and the first service in the church took place on 8th March, 1953 (*Bauchi Leprosarium Resumes*, 1952).

The picture below shows Reverend Henry Guenter, Pastor Mela Ardo and Bayara Leprosarium church members.



Source:SIM Archives: SR-5: 192/ Bauchi Leprosarium Reports, 1952-1970

In two years, the number of Christians increased due to the feat of the SIM among the lepers, encouraging converts to participate in church activities. To showcase their biblical knowledge during a thanksgiving service, the Christians in Bayara Church, mostly lepers, gave part of their farm products, such as corn, rice, peanuts and sweet potatoes, to the church as a mark of thanksgiving after the 1954 harvest (*Bauchi Leprosarium Resumes*, 1952). The SIM encouraged evangelism and church attendance in Bayara. It opened an attendance contest between men and women from July to September, 1958, and the women won (*Oral Interview with Adamu Sambo*, personal communication, 2015). The fundamental effect of the attendance programme was that it increased the number of church members from one hundred and sixty-four (164) in July to two hundred and fifteen (215) in September, 1958. The increase created the need for the SIM/ECWA

to expand the capacity of the church building. The SIM's Mr. Hewitson also developed a programme for the boys through which he introduced the Boys Brigade (B.B.) amongst the children in Bayara in August, 1958 (*Bauchi Leprosarium Resumes*, 1952). The church kept growing, and by January, 1960, it organised an annual Bible conference and indigenous evangelists, such as Gayus Dogo and Solomon Gamba, facilitated it. During the conference, about nine (9) people were baptised, increasing the number of church members (*Bauchi Leprosarium Resumes*, 1952). Mela left the church in January, 1962 after nine (9) years of service, and evangelist Gayus Dogo, the principal of Bible Training School (BTS), was selected to head the leprosarium church. Thus, Dogo was licensed as a pastor on May 4th 1962, handling triple responsibilities as the church's pastor, principal, and teacher in Bible Training School Bayara (*Oral Interview with Adamu Sambo*, personal communication, 2015).

By June 1963, the church attendance increased from one hundred and fifty (150) to one hundred and seventy-five (175), with few adult leper-patients in attendance. Children's attendance at all church services was compulsory. One of the schemes adopted by the SIM, which led to the church's numerical growth in Bayara, was devised by Grooters, a nurse in the leprosarium. In August, 1963, Grooters transported ulcer patients from the hospital to the church using the leprosarium bus, which brought a few Muslims (mainly from Bauchi town) and traditionalists into the church service as converts for the first time (*Bauchi Leprosarium Resumes*, 1963). Grooters' act could be viewed as violating the agreement between the SIM and the colonial government on freedom of religion in the leprosarium in item six (6) of the terms of understanding. It also looks like it conceded to the initial fear by the Bauchi Native Authority regarding the proselytisation methods of the SIM in the area. However, the SIM held that Grooters' action only applied to the ulcer patients who were attracted by her kindness in discharging her duties in the hospital and her friendly evangelical approach. The ulcer patients willingly decided to join the bus to the church (*Oral Interview with Adamu Sambo*, personal communication, 2015).

A point worthy of note in the SIM's religious strategies and activities is that at the initial stage, the leprosarium and the dispensary appeared to be the only two significant and indispensable components of its programme in Bayara. The SIM utilised the two infrastructures for evangelism, converting the people and declaring them members and students of the church and the Bible Training School (*Oral Interview with Adamu Sambo*, personal communication, 2015). The SIM carried out its religious pursuit through the leprosarium and the dispensary by "targeting the lepers for evangelism." It engaged in preaching to the lepers and other patients through an organised morning devotion in the Leprosarium Hall as patients waited to consult the doctor. Indigenous evangelists, such as Gayus Dogo and Mamman Jandu, participated in such services.

Similarly, on the fixed medicine collection days (Wednesdays), regular Christian religious services were held, and the evangelists preached to the leprosy patients as they waited to collect drugs (*Oral Interview with Hassan Bichi*, personal communication, 2015). The SIM and their indigenous evangelists frequently visited from ward to ward and from bed to bed in the leprosarium and the dispensary to preach to those absent during the service. Through this scheme, many patients were converted; nevertheless, some left after recovery without converting to Christianity (*Bauchi Leprosarium Resumes*, 1952). The leprosarium and the dispensary were significant providers of the converts sent to the church.

Another evangelical method adopted by the SIM in its religious activities was distributing books and other printed materials, such as vernacular Bibles (Hausa Bibles), pamphlets, tracts, and other printed materials on Christianity to the literate. It also utilised "gramophone ministry" by going around the areas preaching and sometimes using recorded materials. Malam Bala Inuwa, the Leprosarium Store Keeper who served as a village evangelist, was frequently sent by the SIM to preach in the proximate villages (*Bauchi Leprosarium Resumes*, 1952). In neighbouring motorable villages, the SIM used their vehicles to go into such areas for their leprosy works and evangelism, and trekked to reach unmotorable areas (*Bauchi Leprosarium*

Miscellaneous, 1952). The SIM accessed Bauchi town, its primary target, through its scheme in Bayara.

The Expansion of the SIM/ECWA Activities and the Establishment of Church in Bauchi Town, 1958

As noted earlier, the SIM initially desired Bauchi town for the leprosarium but was sent to Bayara; however, they did not give up but remained resolute in spreading its activities, coordinated from Bayara. The conversation on the establishment of the church in Bauchi town cannot be comprehensive without mentioning the role played by the Bauchi SIM bookshop. The bookshop began in 1955 after the Emir of Bauchi, Adamu Jumba (1955-1982), accepted and offered land outside the town's wall at the Maiduguri bypass. It was agreed that the bookshop would assist in providing Christian and school books (*Oral Interview with Dauda Abubakar*, personal communication, 2015). Through the bookshop, the SIM distributed Christian literature, school books, children's books, a few general books and stationery in Bauchi town. To meet the requirements of the expatriate and business community, Olympia typewriters, stationery, Omega watches, Parker pens and cameras were also stocked (Mason, 2009, p. 40). At its outset, Nuhu Bature headed the bookshop and used bicycles to distribute items to the Europeans, missionaries, schools and even indigenous evangelists in Bauchi and other proximate villages (*Oral Interview with Adamu Sambo*, personal communication, 2015).

In addition to the distribution of books and stationary, the SIM bookshop was a strategic facility for evangelism. Through the efforts of evangelists Yusufu and Danladi, who went to nearby markets to preach, church services were initiated in the Bauchi SIM bookshop when the number of converts started to multiply (Mason, 2009, p. 43). The bookshop became the first place where church services were held in Bauchi town led by Pastor Yakubu Abubakar. Before the commencement of services at the bookshop, there was disagreement between the SIM and the Bauchi authorities (Wakili, 1982, p. 67). But, with the SIM's accomplishments in Bayara, its rapport with the NA flourished with time (*Bauchi Leprosarium Reports*, 1952). The relationship

improved after the SIM settled in Bayara, establishing more centres and outstations. In his report, Guenter stated the following.

Our contacts with the Europeans in Bauchi are much better than in former years. We have had numerous invitations to show moody films at the Bauchi Club and also to the R.E.C. The films have been shown and have been well received. There seems to be a change of attitude on their parts towards us and our work. Also, they have requested if we would accept honorary membership in their club which we have done. (*Bauchi Leprosarium Resumes*, 1952)

The relationship with the Bauchi provincial government improved because of the trust they developed in the SIM. Mr. Watt, the Resident of Bauchi, conceived that “the SIM is diligently carrying out leprosy control in Bauchi, and so far, we have not seen any reason to fear their ability. We consider accepting their request to hold more programmes in Bauchi town” (*Provincial Annual Reports*, 1953). This led to the quest to establish a church to extend its activities to Bauchi town. The bookshop was used for church services because there was no space or land available to build the church (*Bauchi Leprosarium Resumes*, 1952).

However, when it was obvious that the bookshop could not contain the growing congregation, Nuhu and Yusufu went to the Emir of Bauchi and requested a piece of land close to it to build a church (Mason, 2009, p. 48). The emir, Adamu Jumba, once again offered a plot of land for this purpose (*Oral Interview with Dauda Abubakar*, personal communication, 2015). Christian leprosy patients in the leprosarium volunteered using local materials to build a 40 x 22 feet church in January, 1958. Church attendance at Sunday services at that time was estimated to be around two hundred (200), and the new church was dedicated on July 6th 1958 (*Bauchi Leprosarium Miscellaneous*, 1952). The number of members increased, and many were baptised (*Bauchi Leprosarium Reports*, 1952). According to Mason (2009, p. 49), “that church is alive and active today. We thank the Lord for getting us into the bookshop and then from the bookshop to the church and then the church reaching out to the different tribal groups.”

Significantly, at this time, the SIM had reasonable access to places in Bauchi town. Hence, they held a conference at the Bauchi football field in Bauchi town in March, 1960, tagged “Youth for Christ Conferences”, and about one thousand five hundred (1,500) youths attended. Gospel movies, such as “Facts of Faith” and “O. L. Town”, were shown at the conference. Over one hundred (100) people attended its programmes at the Bauchi Railway Club and Government Club. The SIM preached both in English and Hausa, as Bunza and Shehu (2018) delineated, and their efforts targeted indigenes and European government officials (*Bauchi Leprosarium Resumes*, 1952).

Mentorship, Evangelism and Indigenisation

In 1952 when the SIM got its grip on Bayara, Nigeria was preparing for independence from British colonialism. The missions all over Nigeria were also devising means of indigenising all their churches. Indigenisation of the church in this context entails the involvement of the natives or locals in running the affairs of evangelism and the church by expatriate missionaries and missions. This took the process of attaining self-rule of the church by the indigenes or natives. Kastfelt states that the reason for and the process of church self-governance in Nigeria can be seen from a political perspective. His study indicates that this impacted an increase in political consciousness on the missionary converts or Christians to play significant roles in politics in the period before, during and after independence (Kastfelt, 1994, p. 52). Contrary to this, records of the activities of the SIM in Bayara and Bauchi town did not indicate such a phenomenon. They concentrated on the propagation of Christianity through social services, and by that, church leaders were mentored.

There was a general clamour for the church's self-governance amongst Nigerians. An agreement between the SIM and its trained indigenous evangelists in Nigeria gave birth to a local church (Olatayo, 1993, p. 21) named the Association of Evangelical Churches of West Africa (ECWA) in 1954 (*The Association of Evangelical Churches of West Africa*, 1952). All SIM's fully owned facilities were transferred to the indigenous church nationwide (Olatayo, 1993, p.

27). This development did not immediately lead to the end of the SIM's work in Nigeria because it collaborated with ECWA in all its subsequent endeavours (*The Association of Evangelical Churches of West Africa*, 1952). The indigenous evangelists were utilised maximally by the SIM in this regard.

Kastfelt further observes that three fields are crucial in developing and indigenising churches by missionaries in Nigeria. The first was the development of self-rule in the churches. The second was a change in the relationship between the missions and the Nigerian Christians, and the third was the making of regional, inter-ethnic church organisations (Kastfelt, 1994, p. 34). His study was conducted on the Danish Sudan United Mission in areas in Adamawa. However, the SIM indigenisation policy was centered on two principles. First is W. Harold Fuller's focus, which emphasises that the indigenous church is responsible for its affairs. The mission also takes care of its undertakings, working in harmony, without one dominating the other. The second is Henry Venn's tripartite principle of mission indigenisation. According to Venn:

The mission aims to call into existence self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating churches. Once this is accomplished, the mission should die out, and the missionaries should go on to other unreached regions, leaving the church to function by itself.(Turaki, 1999, p. 255)

These tripartite principles, that is, the three (3) "selves" methods of "self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating", outlined by Venn, guided the SIM in its indigenisation efforts. Although the mission in Bayara did not "die out" entirely as suggested by Venn's principle, they worked with the indigenous church. Self-governing guided the SIM to raise indigenes who could lead themselves (the church). Self-supporting was for the indigenous church to stand independently without so much support from the SIM. Through the principle of "self-propagating", the native church and evangelists preached to other indigenes (Turaki, 1999, p. 256).

The establishment of the Association of Evangelical Churches of West Africa (ECWA) in 1954 came about two years after the commencement of the Bayara Centre. The fundamental effect of this development was that it resulted in changes in the activities and mode of administration of the churches founded by the SIM in all its centres or stations (Olatayo, 1993, p. 29). This implies that at the initial stage, the administration of all ECWA churches was not left exclusively in the hands of the indigenes but was supervised and mentored by the SIM. The collaboration was to help the SIM and ECWA work towards achieving the goal of evangelism. Many European SIM officials were given few vital responsibilities in ECWA to handle. Thus, ECWA automatically took over the churches in Bayara and Bauchi town, and Guenter, as a SIM official, ensured the growth and progress of the church under the leadership of a native of Bauchi Province (*Oral Interview with Adamu Sambo*, personal communication, 2015).

As delineated in Venn's tripartite principles, the SIM in Bayara first transferred the Bayara church's leadership from Henry Guenter to Mela Ardo. The leadership training of indigenous evangelists was advanced through mentorship. They were utilised to preach in the leprosarium and the neighbouring villages like Buli, Yola, Tashan Mai-Alewa and other surrounding areas. This development explains why Gayus Dogo and Mamman Jandu were required to visit the leprosarium wards preaching to the lepers frequently. Evangelist Abare Duna was also tasked to handle lepers' children evangelism, thereby reducing the number of European SIM officials engaged in preaching in the leprosarium (*Bauchi Leprosarium Reports*, 1952). Yakubu Abubakar became prominent and instrumental in establishing and consolidating the church in Bauchi town. In this regard, the Bible School was to train and produce more indigenous evangelists. It was a strategy to develop the indigenes to take over from the SIM.

The SIM and the church in Bayara and Bauchi organised Annual Bible Conferences. It gave indigenous pastors like Gayus Dogo, M. Tambaya, Solomon Gamba, Philip Gambo, and M. Markus opportunities to make presentations that prepared and equipped them for future church leadership (*Bauchi Leprosarium Resumes*, 1952). Conversely, these same conferences were

meant to develop the indigenous evangelists to take up leadership responsibilities, thereby making the church independent of the SIM, as seen in the case of Bayara. Guenter stated in his report that “Mela Ardo, who has been with us for over three years, has proven an invaluable co-worker in the gospel and was licensed as a pastor. From all appearances, this has made him even a greater blessing and of greater help to the work here. He can now handle several jobs that he could not before” (*Bauchi Leprosarium Reports*, 1952). Furthermore, in 1967, a few years before the exit of the SIM in Bayara, Guenter said that “there is growing evidence that the churches are maturing and seem to realise that one day they will be on their own. Their attitude is commendable to missionaries, and they appreciate any help we offer them.”

Moreover, indigenous evangelists and pastors became increasingly prominent due to their affairs with the Bayara and Bauchi town churches. They became very close to the NA and the government. The Emir of Bauchi gave the title of *Wakilin Wajen Bauchi* to Pastor Yakubu Abubakar (*Oral Interview with Dauda Abubakar*, personal communication, 2015). The responsibility of *Wakilin Wajen Bauchi* was mainly to represent the Christians or those residing outside Bauchi walls in the Emir's palace (*Oral Interview with Ado Danrimi*, personal communication, 2015). Consequently, the indigenous Christians accessed the government and the NA, with little or no assistance from the SIM.

The relationship between the SIM and its indigenous evangelists in Bayara was cordial. The SIM, however, set up strict disciplinary mechanisms for the natives. They sanctioned or sacked indigenous evangelists working under their supervision each time they contravened the teaching of Christianity and official ethics (Dogo, n.d., p. 83). The indigenous evangelists became afraid of them and feared owning landed properties. As a result, Gayus Dogo called the SIM's attention to the fact that there was no way they could achieve the desired outcome of evangelism when the indigenous evangelists were apprehensive of them (Dogo, n.d., p. 83). Gayus also underwent a three-month suspension for wrestling with his friend (Dogo, n.d., p. 23).

The nature of the SIM activities in Bayara reveals that it consciously and gradually started leaving out the control of its facilities when it trained the natives and employed them (*Oral Interview with Adamu Sambo*, personal communication, 2015). This development also coincided with Nigeria's quest for self-rule. Since Nigeria's independence in 1960, the desire of the citizens to nationalise some of the facilities under the control of the European missionaries after independence increased. The SIM had since begun indigenising all its churches and religious facilities when ECWA was introduced (Olatayo, 1993, p. 27). General Yakubu Gowon's Indigenisation Decree of 1972 gave Nigerians the right to participate in the private sector of Nigeria's economy, which foreigners dominated. The Nigerian government took over all schools, hospitals and other facilities from the missions.

Consequently, the leprosarium, the dispensary, and the quarters (*Anguwan Turawa*), including their certificates of occupancy (C. of O.) in Bayara, were all handed over to the Federal Government of Nigeria (*Oral Interview with Hassan Bichi*, personal communication, 2015). The church and the Bible Training School (BTS) in Bayara were the only facilities not given to the Federal Government of Nigeria. These properties and their C. of O.s were earlier given to ECWA by the SIM. This significant development led to the end of SIM's stay in Bayara, and Henry Guenter and his family left for Canada (*Oral Interview with Hassan Bichi*, personal communication, 2015). However, the SIM was able to indigenise the church in Bayara and Bauchi towns to be self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating before they left.

Conclusion

The establishment of the leprosarium in Bayara was initiated in 1937. However, it was delayed due to the provincial and native authorities' distrust of the SIM's capacity to set up a successful leprosarium. Another little reason was the lack of assurance by the SIM to avoid forceful proselytisation in Bauchi. The delay was to the detriment of the surging cases of leprosy infection in the area, which the authorities did not consider. After agreeing with the authorities in 1952, the SIM arrived at Bayara to establish the leprosarium. Bayara village was deliberately

selected to stop the SIM from directly contacting the Muslims in Bauchi town. However, the SIM did not abandon its religious and evangelistic mandate. Therefore, it unleashed it on the patients in the leprosarium. In this regard, the SIM carried out its religious activities in both the leprosarium and the dispensary by preaching to the lepers and other patients in the wards. The membership attendance contests between women and men and the transportation of ulcer patients from the dispensary were schemes adopted for evangelism, which increased church attendance. The SIM also established churches in the leprosarium, Bauchi town, proximate villages, and a Bible school. It also engaged in movie evangelism at cinema centres in Bauchi.

The SIM indigenisation efforts trained indigenous evangelists for leadership of the church. Thus, the natives of Bauchi were utilised as a workforce in evangelism, especially when the SIM church was indigenised as ECWA. It also evangelised through the distribution of literature and gramophone ministry by travelling to villages to preach. Bauchi town, which was its initial target, also witnessed the activities of the SIM through the bookshop. The leprosarium pulled the people, and they were evangelised and sent to the church and the Bible school, where they were trained on the Bible. After graduation, they were also utilised as evangelists to reach other places. In that way, the natives stood on their own after the SIM left in 1972.

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