impact International Journals and Publications

© IIJP 2026 | Volume 2, Issue 4, pp. 591-601 | ISSN: 2636-4484

LEGACIES OF THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY MISSION PARTY (CUMP) AMONG THE MWAGHAVUL PEOPLE OF PANYAM, PLATEAU STATE (1907–1930)

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ARTICLE INFO
Article No.: 0668
Accepted Date: 21/10/2026
Published Date: 01/11/2026
Type: Research

ABSTRACT

The Cambridge University Mission Party (CUMP), an Anglican evangelical student movement from Cambridge University, established a mission station among the Mwaghavul people of Panyam in 1907. This study examines the legacies of CUMP among the Mwaghavul of Panyam from the inception of the mission until 1930, when CUMP formally handed over its stations to the Sudan United Mission (SUM). The problem addressed is the lack of a focused academic appraisal that isolates and analyses the specific contributions of CUMP as distinct from the later SUM administration to the development of the Mwaghavul community. The objective is to document and evaluate CUMP's legacies across religious, educational, medical, agricultural, linguistic, leadership, inter-communal, and cultural spheres. The study employs a historical survey research design, drawing on primary sources, as well as secondary sources, including published and unpublished church histories. Oral interviews were also conducted to capture local memory. The findings show that CUMP pioneered the establishment of Christianity, introduced Western education, initiated medical mission services, introduced modern agricultural practices, developed indigenous leadership, fostered inter-communal relations, translated scripture into the Mwaghavul language, and catalysed significant cultural transformation. The study recommends enhanced archival preservation, integration of mission history into school curricula, sustained medical outreach, promotion of indigenous languages, and continued theological education. In conclusion, CUMP's brief but impactful presence among the Mwaghavul was foundational to the emergence of a literate, Christian, and socially transformed community whose legacy persists in the institutions of the Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN).

Keywords: Cambridge University Mission Party, Mwaghavul, Panyam, missionary legacy, transformation

© IIJP 2026 | Volume 2, Issue 4, pp. 591-601 | ISSN: 2636-4484

Introduction

Some critics argue that religion, particularly Christianity, contributed little or nothing to human and social development in Africa. This critique often portrays missionary activity as purely destructive, an arm of colonial exploitation that erased indigenous cultures and offered nothing of lasting value in return (Turaki, 2010). While there is substantial literature documenting the general contributions of churches to education and healthcare across Nigeria, there are few community-level studies within the Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN) that focus on a single missionary body and its specific developmental legacies for one ethnic group. The Cambridge University Mission Party (CUMP), an Anglican evangelical movement of young Cambridge graduates that established the first Christian mission among the Mwaghavul people of Panyam in 1907, offers a useful case study that has received little scholarly attention. General COCIN histories mention CUMP as a mission that later merged with Sudan United Mission (SUM), but they do not systematically examine what this party of young, zealous, and well-educated missionaries actually achieved among the Mwaghavul before their merger with SUM in 1930 (Goshit, Lere, Longkat, Tang'an, & Gutip, 2013; Gutip, 2017).

The arrival of CUMP at Panyam in 1907, led by figures such as Thomas E. Alvarez and Reverend John W. Lloyd, was a watershed moment for the Mwaghavul, a people who had successfully resisted the incursions of the Fulani jihad but were now confronted with the dual challenge of British colonial rule and a new religion brought by Europeans (Jise, 2022). The missionaries, motivated by the evangelical revival of the nineteenth century and a desire to take the gospel to the unreached interior of Africa, adopted a holistic strategy that combined evangelism with education, medical care, and agricultural improvement (Goshit et al., 2013). This strategy was not merely pragmatic but theological, rooted in the conviction that the gospel addressed the total person and that a church could only be truly indigenous if it possessed a literate leadership and a healthy membership (Rengshwat, 2012). The early converts, including Chief Dakwa of Panyam and figures like Daniel Lot and Yohanna Chanding, became the nucleus of a growing Christian community that would eventually produce prominent clergy, educators, and politicians, including Reverend David Obadiah Vrenkat Lot, one of the first three ordained pastors in COCIN (Gutip, 2017).

Earlier studies on Plateau missions have not given CUMP a separate community-level treatment. Goshit et al. (2013) and Gutip (2017) treat CUMP as part of the wider COCIN story. Jise (2022) provides local detail on Panyam but is an unpublished manuscript. Abdullahi (2019) studies Christianity in the Jos Plateau under colonial rule but not CUMP as a distinct body. Yilben (2025) studies SUM and mentions CUMP only in the merger section. The gap is therefore clear. There is no focused appraisal that asks what CUMP did at Panyam between 1907 and 1930 and what it did not do.

The objectives of this study are to trace the formation of CUMP, to examine its work at Panyam, to identify its religious, educational, medical, linguistic and social legacies, and to separate those legacies from later SUM work. The time scope is 1907 to 1930. The method is a historical survey. The sources are published and unpublished church histories, COCIN and SUM archival logbooks, and fifteen oral interviews with church leaders, retired teachers, health workers and community members. The study is significant because it offers a concrete local case for the wider debate on mission and development. It also gives COCIN and the Mwaghavul community a clearer account of their early mission foundation.

Theoretical framework

This study is anchored on two complementary theoretical perspectives: Functionalism and Social Change Theory. Functionalism, as developed by Émile Durkheim and later refined by Robert Merton (as cited in Haralambos & Holborn, 2008), posits that every social institution exists to fulfil specific functions necessary for the stability and continuity of society. Within this framework, CUMP as a religious institution performed the manifest function of evangelisation and church planting among the Mwaghavul, while simultaneously fulfilling latent functions such as the creation of a new literate elite, the weakening of traditional authority, and wider social integration. However, functionalism tends to ignore conflict. The paper acknowledges this limitation because the Panyam evidence shows clear conflict over polygamy and the traditional religion. Social Change Theory, on the other hand, provides an analytical lens for understanding how external forces such as missionary contact disrupt traditional structures and catalyse the emergence of new social orders (Turaki, 2010). In the Mwaghavul context, the introduction of Christianity and Western education by CUMP fundamentally altered the pre-existing hierarchical and ritual-based authority system, replacing the Priest-Chief with a new elite whose status derived from literacy, church leadership, and participation in the colonial economy (Mangwvat, 2013). Together, these theories provide a robust framework for analysing the CUMP legacy as a multifaceted process that simultaneously stabilised society through new institutions and transformed it by introducing new values, norms, and social roles.

Concept of Mission

The term "mission" originates from the Latin *missio*, meaning "a sending," and in Christian theology, it refers to the divine act of dispatching individuals or groups to proclaim the gospel across cultural, geographical, and political boundaries (Bosch, 1991). In the early church, mission was understood primarily as apostolic witness and the planting of new congregations throughout the Roman Empire. However, the modern missionary movement, which arose from the evangelical revivals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, radically expanded this concept to encompass not only verbal proclamation but also social action, education, and medical work as integral components of authentic Christian witness (Stanley, 2003). This holistic understanding of mission was encapsulated in the famous slogan of the British abolitionist Thomas Fowell Buxton, who declared that "the Bible and the plough must regenerate Africa," a philosophy that influenced the formation of CUMP (Walls, 1996). It was this conviction that led a group of young Cambridge graduates, inspired by the exploits of David Livingstone, to form a missionary party and offer themselves for service in the interior of the Sudan. However, scholars such as Turaki (2010) and Boer (1979) caution that this mission was often entangled with colonial interests, a debate that must be acknowledged when evaluating the work of CUMP.

In the specific context of this study, the researchers adopts a comprehensive definition of mission that encompasses all the activities undertaken by CUMP among the Mwaghavul people of Panyam between 1907 and 1930. As documented by Gutip (2017), the CUMP missionaries understood their task to include not merely the building of a church, but also the establishment of schools, the provision of basic medical care, the teaching of modern agricultural methods, and the translation of scripture into the vernacular. This practical approach was exemplified by figures such as Miss Elsie M. R. Webster, whom the Mwaghavul affectionately nicknamed "*Nakam*" (the lady who teaches), and Miss Margaret Compton-Burnett, known as "Mat Yen" (the woman with medicine), whose educational and medical work were considered integral to the missionary enterprise (Jise, 2022). Thus, in this paper, "mission" refers to this total, institution-building, and community-embedded strategy that sought to bring both spiritual salvation and

material upliftment to the Mwaghavul people, a definition that is essential for understanding the diverse legacies analysed in subsequent sections. This definition also accounts for the agency of local converts, who were not merely passive recipients but active participants in the spread of the gospel and the transformation of their society.

Brief history of the Cambridge University Mission Party (CUMP)

The Cambridge University Mission Party was formed in 1904 by a small band of young, zealous Anglican students at Cambridge University who were deeply influenced by the evangelical revival of the nineteenth century and the inspiring missionary exploits of David Livingstone in Africa (Goshit et al., 2013). The group initially intended to be an independent, interdenominational mission, but practical considerations and the fact that many of its members were sons of prominent figures in the Church of England led to an affiliation with the Church Missionary Society (CMS) in 1906 (Gutip, 2017). Under this arrangement, CUMP personnel were placed on the CMS roll and bound by its regulations, but they retained the freedom to withdraw their resources if necessary. The first party of CUMP missionaries, including Thomas E. Alvarez (who was nicknamed "*Tintim*" by the Mwaghavul due to his stout build), Reverend John W. Lloyd, and Reverend George T. Fox, arrived in Nigeria in 1906 and were assigned by the CMS to the Bauchi highlands, a region that was yet to be evangelised (Rengshwat, 2012). Their original intention was to work among the Berom near Bukuru, but on discovering that SUM was already operating there, they redirected their efforts to Panyam, where they established their first station in November 1907.

The CUMP mission strategy was holistic and methodical. As documented by Goshit et al. (2013), the missionaries commenced their work by learning the Mwaghavul language, building relationships with traditional rulers, establishing a school, and opening a dispensary, all within the first few years of their arrival. The early response was cautiously receptive. Chief Dakwa of Panyam declared, "We are like women, we know nothing, stay with us and teach us" (Panyam Station Logbook, 1907, cited in Jise, 2022, p. 44). The first baptismal class commenced in 1913, and by 1916, the first church building, St. John the Evangelist, was completed and dedicated. The mission station at Panyam became a centre of learning and healing that attracted people from surrounding villages and laid the foundation for the emergence of an indigenous Christian community. The first group of local evangelists, including David Lot, Iliya Tense, and Andarawus Kakiyes, were commissioned in 1916 and sent to outlying areas, marking the beginning of indigenous agency in the spread of the gospel (Gutip, 2017). This timeline shows that the early response was gradual, with the school opening in 1908 and the dispensary in 1914, rather than an immediate mass movement.

Cambridge University Mission Party (CUMP) merger with Sudan United Mission (SUM)

By the late 1920s, the CUMP mission in Panyam and its sister station at Kabwir among the Ngas were facing a severe personnel crisis. The death of several pioneering missionaries from tropical diseases, the premature retirement of others due to ill health, and the inability of the home committee to send reinforcements had left the mission gravely understaffed and struggling to sustain its work (Maxwell, 1954; Jise, 2022). The devastating influenza epidemic of 1918 had already depleted the ranks of both missionaries and indigenous Christians, and the subsequent years saw a gradual contraction of missionary presence at a time when the church was expanding. Simultaneously, SUM, which had been working in the neighbouring districts of Langtang and Foron since 1907, was rapidly expanding its influence and encircling the CUMP stations geographically (Maxwell, 1954). The logic of consolidation, therefore, became compelling for both parties, as SUM possessed the personnel and resources to sustain the work,

while the CMS headquarters, geographically distant and preoccupied with its core work around Zaria, saw little strategic advantage in maintaining isolated stations in the central Plateau (Goshit et al., 2013).

Consequently, in April 1930, after extensive negotiations, the CMS formally handed over the CUMP stations at Panyam, Kabwir, and Mwari to SUM (Gutip, 2017). The transition was not without its difficulties. SUM, which operated on the indigenous church principle of self-support, discontinued the practice of paying evangelists' allowances from mission funds, a policy that caused considerable discontent among CUMP evangelists who had been accustomed to receiving stipends and clothing (Rengshwat, 2012). Furthermore, the SUM's stricter evangelical stance on total abstinence from alcohol, in contrast to the more permissive CMS approach that left the matter to individual conscience, became a source of tension and disciplinary cases in the early years of the merger (Gutip, 2017). Nevertheless, the merger ensured the survival and eventual flourishing of the Mwaghavul church, as SUM invested in advanced theological and teacher training at Gindiri, producing a generation of educated Mwaghavul clergy and laity who would lead the church into the post-missionary era (Jise, 2022). Miss E. M. R. Webster, affectionately called "Nakam," remained at Panyam under SUM, providing crucial continuity and mentoring the young church leaders who had grown up under her tutelage.

Brief history of the Mwaghavul people of Panyam, Plateau State

The Mwaghavul people, who inhabit the present-day Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State, are a Chadic-speaking ethnic group whose origins are traced to the eastern regions of the Jos Plateau, with traditions suggesting a complex process of migration and settlement spanning several centuries (Mangwvat, 2013). Before the arrival of CUMP, the Mwaghavul lived in dispersed hamlets, governed by a decentralised political system in which authority was vested in clan heads and the *Mishkahamyil*, the Priest-Chief who served as the custodian of the land and the intermediary between the community and the spiritual realm (Gutip, 2017). The Mwaghavul successfully resisted the military incursions of the Bauchi Emirate during the nineteenth-century jihad, a fact that contributed to their fierce independence and their suspicion of external political and religious domination (Jise, 2022). Their traditional religion centred on the worship of Naan (the Supreme Being) and the veneration of Kum, a household deity symbolised by an upright stone slab placed at the entrance of each compound, which was considered the guardian of the family.

The arrival of the CUMP missionaries in 1907, therefore, represented an encounter between a proud and independent people and a new faith that demanded a radical break from ancestral customs. The early response was cautiously receptive, as the missionaries offered tangible benefits in the form of education and medicine, which appealed to a community that was marginalised in the colonial system (Goshit et al., 2013). The conversion of Chief Dakwa of Panyam was a significant early victory for the mission, as it lent legitimacy to the new faith and encouraged others to follow (Gutip, 2017). However, the process of Christianisation was not without conflict, as it created deep divisions within families and communities between those who embraced the new faith and those who remained loyal to the traditional religion (Rengshwat, 2012). Over the decades, the Mwaghavul gradually transitioned from a predominantly traditional society to one of the most thoroughly Christianised groups on the Jos Plateau, a transformation that had profound implications for their social structure, cultural identity, and political consciousness (Mangwvat, 2013). Yet, this transition was gradual, and the claim that the Mwaghavul became entirely Christianised by 1930 lacks statistical support.

Cambridge University Mission Party (CUMP) legacies among the Mwaghavul people of Panyam

The CUMP presence among the Mwaghavul, though spanning only twenty-three years, left an enduring and multifaceted legacy that touched many aspects of community life. The following subsections examine distinct areas of impact.

a. Establishment of Christianity

The most fundamental legacy of CUMP among the Mwaghavul was the pioneering establishment of the Christian church in Panyam, which became the mother church from which the gospel spread to surrounding towns and villages. The first baptismal class commenced in 1913, and by December 1916, the church of St. John the Evangelist was completed and dedicated, becoming the visible symbol of the new faith in the community (Gutip, 2017). The early converts, including Chief Dakwa, Yohanna Chanding (who became the first Mwaghavul evangelist), and the household of Daniel Lot, formed the nucleus of a vibrant Christian community that, despite severe persecution from traditionalists and setbacks such as the influenza epidemic of 1918, continued to grow and consolidate its presence (Jise, 2022). This church, which later became the COCIN Regional Church Council Panyam, partly replaced the traditional shrines as the centre of community life, providing not only spiritual guidance but also a new social identity for its members (Goshit et al., 2013). Philemon Gurumse (personal communication, June 23, 2026) explained: "The early church at Panyam was small but committed. They faced rejection from their own people, yet they held on to the faith." Tapshak Dahal (personal communication, June 23, 2026) added: "The first Christians were few, but their witness laid a foundation that we see today in RCC Panyam."

b. Development of education

The introduction of Western education by CUMP was a deliberate strategy to enable converts to read the Bible and to prepare indigenous leadership for the emerging church, but its effects were far more sweeping than the missionaries could have anticipated. The first informal literacy classes, conducted under trees and in thatched huts from 1908, evolved rapidly into a formal primary school that provided instruction in English, Hausa, arithmetic, and religious knowledge (Gutip, 2017). Miss E. M. R. Webster, who arrived in 1919 and dedicated thirty-five years of her life to the educational advancement of the Mwaghavul, was the driving force behind the expansion of education in the district, raising funds in Britain while the local people provided labour and materials for school construction (Jise, 2022). The educated elite that emerged from these schools, including David Obadiah Vrenkat Lot and his brother Joseph Yariyep Lot, became the first generation of Mwaghavul teachers, clergy, and civil servants, fundamentally altering the social structure by creating a new class whose status derived from academic qualifications rather than traditional lineage (Rengshwat, 2012). Tabitha Gofwen (personal communication, April 3, 2026) explained: "COCIN schools were often the only option, the only hope, for many children in the villages to get an education." Dahal Tongpan (personal communication, June 23, 2026) noted: "The mission school at Panyam produced the first teachers and church workers in this area."

c. Medical Mission services

The provision of Western healthcare was an integral component of CUMP's missionary strategy, founded on the conviction that physical healing demonstrated divine compassion and opened doors for spiritual ministry. In 1914, Miss Margaret Compton-Burnett ("Mat Yen"), a retired British Army nurse, arrived at Panyam and immediately commenced a general medical dispensary service that treated common ailments, provided maternity care, and addressed the

health needs of a population that had until then relied on traditional herbal remedies and divination (Goshit et al., 2013). The dispensary quickly became a vital community resource, attracting patients from Panyam and the surrounding villages of Kerang, Niyes, and Ampang, and creating a positive association between Christianity and physical well-being (Gutip, 2017). This pioneering medical work laid the foundation for the later development of the COCIN Comprehensive Primary Health Centre in Panyam, which continues to serve the community. Josephine Goro (personal communication, June 23, 2026) recalled: "The dispensary was the first place where our people saw Western medicine. Mat Yen was loved because she cared for the sick." Philemon Gurumse (personal communication, June 23, 2026) added: "The clinic opened doors for the gospel. People came for healing and stayed for the word."

d. Modernisation of agriculture and skills

While not as extensively documented as education or healthcare, the CUMP mission contributed to the modernisation of agriculture and the acquisition of vocational skills among the Mwaghavul. The missionaries, who were themselves often from rural English backgrounds, introduced new crops and improved varieties of local staples, demonstrated better farming techniques, and encouraged the cultivation of vegetables and fruits that enhanced household nutrition (Jise, 2022). At the mission station, young Mwaghavul men were trained in carpentry, masonry, and basic engineering, skills that were essential for the construction of church buildings and school classrooms and which provided them with marketable trades in the emerging wage economy (Gutip, 2017). This practical dimension of the mission's work fostered a work ethic that combined Christian faith with productive labour and contributed to the gradual economic empowerment of Mwaghavul Christians. Katlong Simon Mangvwat (personal communication, June 23, 2026) explained: "Our fathers learned carpentry and building from the missionaries. Those skills helped them to build better houses and to earn money." Abalis Muwus (personal communication, June 23, 2026) added: "The mission farm taught us to grow new crops and to use better methods."

e. Leadership and local empowerment

A distinct legacy of Cambridge University Mission Party (CUMP) was the deliberate development of indigenous leadership that would eventually assume responsibility for the spiritual and educational oversight of the Mwaghavul community. From the very beginning, the missionaries identified promising converts who displayed exceptional ability and character, and invested heavily in their training. David Obadiah Vrenkat Lot, who began his education at the Panyam primary school and later attended the CMS boarding school at Wusasa, Zaria, emerged as one of the most outstanding products of this strategy, becoming the headmaster of the Panyam school and, in 1937, one of the first three candidates selected for pastoral training at the newly established Gindiri Pastors' College (Rengshwat, 2012). He was ordained in 1938 as the first Mwaghavul pastor and later entered politics, becoming a member of the Northern Region House of Assembly and a regional minister (Goshit et al., 2013). His life exemplified the success of CUMP's leadership development philosophy and inspired generations of Mwaghavul youths to pursue education and public service. Philemon Gurumse (personal communication, June 23, 2026) explained: "The first evangelists were trained by CUMP. They went out to villages and opened the way for the church." Timothy Nwan (personal communication, June 25, 2026) added: "The vision of local leadership began with CUMP, even though the ordination came later under SUM."

f. Inter-communal relations

The Christian identity forged by CUMP among the Mwaghavul served as a unifying force that transcended ethnic boundaries and fostered new alliances on the Jos Plateau. The early Mwaghavul evangelists, including Yohanna Chanding and the team commissioned in 1916, travelled to neighbouring ethnic groups such as the Ron, Kulere, Chip, and Mupun, establishing churches and schools in areas that had previously been inaccessible to missionary work (Gutip, 2017). The CUMP station at Panyam thus became a base for regional evangelisation, and the shared Christian identity created bonds of fellowship that mitigated traditional enmities between communities (Jise, 2022). This pan-ethnic Christian network later contributed to the formation of a broader Middle Belt consciousness that would play a significant role in the politics of decolonisation and the struggle for minority rights in Northern Nigeria (Mangwvat, 2013). Dahal Tongpan (personal communication, June 23, 2026) explained: "The evangelists from Panyam went to other tribes. They carried the gospel beyond Mwaghavul land." Timothy Nwan (personal communication, June 25, 2026) added: "Panyam became a sending church. That vision started with CUMP."

g. Language and translation

One of the most enduring intellectual legacies of CUMP was putting the Mwaghavul language into writing and the translation of scripture into the vernacular, a project that began in the earliest years of the mission and continued under the SUM administration. The first major fruit of this linguistic labour was the translation of the Gospel of Mark into Mwaghavul, which was published by the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1915, enabling Mwaghavul converts to encounter the Christian message in their mother tongue for the first time (Goshit et al., 2013). The mission also produced hymnbooks, catechisms, and prayer books in Mwaghavul, which not only enriched worship but also contributed to the preservation and standardisation of the language at a time when the dominance of Hausa threatened local dialects (Gutip, 2017). This literary legacy remains a source of cultural pride for the Mwaghavul people and has facilitated ongoing Bible translation work by the Mwaghavul Bible Translation Project. Philemon Gurumse (personal communication, June 23, 2026) noted: "The translation of Mark into Mwaghavul was a great gift. It allowed our people to read the Bible in their own language." Timothy Nwan (personal communication, June 25, 2026) added: "Having the scriptures in our tongue helped to preserve our language for future generations."

h. Cultural transformation and social change

The introduction of Christianity by CUMP initiated a profound cultural transformation within Mwaghavul society, challenging and significantly altering long-established customs and social norms. Converts were required to abandon polygamy, refrain from participation in the Dodo masquerade, and cease the veneration of household deities (Kum), obligations that often created sharp divisions within families and communities (Rengshwat, 2012). Daniel Lot, one of the early converts, released his senior wife Piyasivat back to her father's house because the mission required monogamy, an act of sacrifice that became emblematic of the radical demands of the new faith (Gutip, 2017). Christians who refused to participate in traditional agricultural rituals or community festivals were frequently ostracised or fined by traditional authorities, but the mission station at Dawaki (Tashan Panyam) provided a safe haven where a distinct Christian community could flourish (Jise, 2022). Over time, the church introduced alternative rites of passage, including Christian weddings and naming ceremonies, that gradually replaced traditional rituals and established new cultural norms among the Mwaghavul. Tabitha Gofwen (personal communication, April 3, 2026) explained: "The church asked converts to leave many

customs. Some families were divided because of this." Yusuf Duwam (personal communication, June 23, 2026) added: "The old ways were challenged. Some people accepted the new faith, but others resisted."

Overall impacts of Cambridge University Mission Party (CUMP) legacies among the Mwaghavul people of Panyam

The cumulative impact of CUMP's diverse legacies was a comprehensive social and spiritual transformation of the Mwaghavul people, the effects of which are still evident in the community today. Six broad impacts can be identified. First, spiritual transformation and identity formation occurred as the Mwaghavul moved from a traditional religion centred on household deities and ancestor veneration to a vibrant Christian faith that became the cornerstone of personal and communal identity, providing a new moral framework and a sense of belonging to a global religious community (Goshit et al., 2013).

Second, intellectual and professional development was catalysed by mission education, which produced a cadre of teachers, clergy, nurses, and civil servants who became the backbone of the emerging modern society, breaking the cycle of illiteracy and creating unprecedented pathways to social mobility (Gutip, 2017).

Third, improved health and well-being resulted from the mission's medical work, as access to Western healthcare, however basic, reduced the burden of preventable diseases and improved maternal and child health outcomes, fostering a more productive population (Jise, 2022).

Fourth, leadership and political empowerment emerged as the mission's educational institutions and the egalitarian message of Christianity encouraged Mwaghavul leaders to challenge both traditional hierarchies and colonial marginalisation, leading to the active participation of Panyam elites in the politics of decolonisation and the Northern Region legislature (Rengshwat, 2012).

Fifth, linguistic and cultural preservation was an unintended but significant consequence of the mission's translation work, which not only provided the Mwaghavul with the Bible in their own language but also contributed to the documentation and standardisation of Mwaghavul as a literary language, a legacy that continues to enrich Mwaghavul cultural identity (Gutip, 2017).

Sixth, inter-communal peace and regional integration were fostered by the pan-ethnic Christian networks that grew out of the Panyam mission station, linking the Mwaghavul to neighbouring ethnic groups in a shared faith that transcended historical rivalries and laid the foundation for collective political action in the Middle Belt (Mangwvat, 2013).

These impacts were not entirely positive or unambiguous. The disruption of traditional family structures, the demonisation of ancestral customs, and the imposition of Western cultural norms created tensions that persist in Mwaghavul society. Furthermore, the eventual merger with SUM, which imposed a stricter evangelical regime, alienated some early Anglican converts who preferred the more moderate ethos of the CMS.

Nonetheless, the historical record suggests that the net effect of the CUMP legacy was a profound and largely beneficial transformation of Mwaghavul society, equipping the people with the spiritual, intellectual, and institutional resources to navigate the complexities of the twentieth century and to emerge as one of the most educated and politically mobilised communities on the Jos Plateau. This finding aligns with the work of Goshit et al. (2013), who emphasise institutional growth, but it also acknowledges the critiques of Turaki (2010), who highlights the colonial entanglement of missions.

The Panyam case supports both sides in part: CUMP did build schools and churches, but it also worked within a colonial order and demanded cultural breaks. The impacts should not be overstated, as there are no reliable 1930 statistics for church membership, school enrolment, or health outcomes. The evidence relies on church histories, unpublished manuscript, and oral interviews, which are useful but not neutral. The oral interviews add local memory, but memory can be selective. For this reason, the researchers argues that CUMP helped to shape rather than transformed every aspect" of Mwaghavul life. One local case cannot settle the general debate about missions in Africa, but it can show how a small mission party worked in one place and what it left behind before 1930.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are offered to relevant stakeholders.

1. The COCIN History Committee should establish a dedicated archive for Panyam mission records, preserving invaluable historical materials for future scholarship.
2. The Mwaghavul Traditional Council should partner with the Mwaghavul Bible Translation Project to promote literacy in the mother tongue through adult education classes.
3. The Plateau State Ministry of Education should incorporate local mission history into the curriculum of primary and secondary schools.
4. The COCIN Community Development Programme (CCDP) should revitalise the agricultural extension work pioneered by the mission, focusing on sustainable farming practices for rural households.
5. Theological training institutions should include a module on the history of the CUMP-SUM merger, equipping pastors with an understanding of the denominational heritage they serve.

Conclusion

CUMP, though active among the Mwaghavul for only twenty-three years, bequeathed a legacy that fundamentally transformed many areas of community life, from the spiritual to the intellectual and the socio-economic. The CUMP missionaries, through their commitment to the holistic gospel, established the foundational institutions of the church, the school, and the clinic, which became the bedrock upon which the later SUM administration built and upon which the contemporary COCIN continues to stand. While the encounter was not without its tensions, including cultural disruption and a complex entanglement with colonialism, the enduring presence of Christian congregations, schools, and healthcare facilities in Panyam is a living testimony to the positive and lasting impact of these young Cambridge graduates. The Mwaghavul experience thus offers historical evidence against the claim that Christian missions contributed nothing of value to African societies, suggesting instead that faith-driven educational and medical work can be a transformative force for communal development. However, this study has limitations. It relies on a limited number of primary archival sources and one unpublished manuscript, and it depends on oral interviews that are subject to the fallibility of human memory. Future research should focus on the SUM administration from 1930 to 1977 to provide a complete picture of mission work in Panyam, and should also investigate the role of indigenous itinerant evangelists who were central to the spread of the gospel but whose stories remain largely undocumented.

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