

# THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA IN THE LIGHT OF ONE MISSIOLOGIST'S HISTORICAL REFLECTION

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## INTRODUCTION

In 1921, the Bishop of Cracow, Adam Stefan Sapiecha, then Archbishop-Metropolitan and Cardinal, erected, by his decree, a new Religious Community of Saint Michael the Archangel (*Congregatio Sancti Michaelis Archangeli*), which finally received papal recognition in 1966. According to the dream, and broad understanding of its founder, Blessed Bronisław Bonawentura Markiewicz (1842-1912), the congregation's charism was to take care of children and youth. Within the time, when this community developed, its members had enlarged their apostolate, and had engaged in pastoral activity in the country of its origin, in pastoral care of Polish immigrants abroad, in mission *ad gentes*, and in academic undertakings.

The scholarly activities, exercised by the Congregation, although they still remain *in statu fieri*, had been intensified by the attitude and engagement of one of its members, Zdzisław (Ziggy) Kruczek CSMA, who, for two years, has been the Rector of the Interdiocesan Catholic "Good Shepherd" Seminary at Fatima (Western Highlands Province (WHP)) in Papua New Guinea (PNG). In May 2006, Fr Kruczek finalised his academic studies by obtaining his doctorate at the Catholic University of Lublin, based on his researches and writings, and on his dissertation, written in Polish, entitled *Catholic Mission in the Mt Hagen Archdiocese in Papua New Guinea 1934-1984*, (Mt Hagen, 2005). This achievement had a significant meaning for the Michaelite Community, and for the church in Mt Hagen as well. It had been an official and

spectacular example of a missionary, in an academic quest, which involved pastoral formation and scholarly work. Therefore, a worthwhile task beckons to look at the author's academic achievements, from the "typologico-essential" perspective, and to probe his historical assessment of the church in PNG.

### **PROFILE OF THE AUTHOR AND THE PROCESS OF HIS BECOMING AN HISTORIAN**

The author, born in Poland on January 9, 1945, had showed his interest in history since his youth. Later developments impelled him in such a direction in his work that he began to be more involved in studies on the missionary activity of the Catholic church, and to do researches on the vitality of new religious communities. Already, during his theological studies at the Philosophical-Theological Institute of Latin Rite in Przemyśl, and at the Catholic University of Lublin, he had revealed his curiosity for the past of his congregation, especially regarding the forms of its activity in the fields of religious and cultural aspects. At this time, he finalised his master's thesis on the origin and organisation of the Parish at Miejsce Piastowe (today, the Archdiocese of Przemyśl in southeast Poland), cared for by Michaelites. Subsequently, Kruczek also had a chance to be employed in the pastoral-educational institutions of his congregation, and these activities encouraged him to dig more into its past structures, and the lives of some of its important members. This material, which he busily collected (in 1967-1976), was used by the author in a more-organised mode at a later time – after he left his country, and took a missionary assignment abroad – when he began to portray the striking history of his Michaelite Congregation.

Being engaged in various tasks in PNG since 1977, Kruczek picked out new research possibilities, which corresponded with his interests. As a missionary parish priest at Kuruk, in the diocese of Mt Hagen, he initiated inquiries into the ecclesiastical past of the Melpa, and then other culture areas (around and beyond Mt Hagen). He considered the emergent church, and its cultural forms, in the light of its history, anthropology, sociology, and theology (or religious aspect). He was convinced that doing such research, as part of his missionary task, could

easily stir and influence his parishioners. On the one hand, this helped him to interpret, holistically, the rich *locus historicus* of the Highlands region of Papua New Guinea, and, on the other hand, this mobilised him for further quests, given impetus by his well-grounded theoretical knowledge.

Kruczek's personal experience, and connections within other university centres, additionally reinforced his activities. Kruczek began his studies in Australia (in the Department of Classics and Ancient History, at the University of New England in Armidale, and in the Department of Studies in Religion at the University of Queensland in Brisbane), and continued in Poland (with doctoral studies in Missiology and in Church History at the Academy of Catholic Theology, now the University of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński in Warsaw).

His most meritorious researches were those recent ones, which spring out of his doctorate in Missiology in 1991. Together with educational contacts at the University of Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, the Catholic University of Lublin, etc., all these study opportunities provided remarkably fruitful stimuli for Kruczek in his scholarly activity – expressed through his various publications, seminar presentations in scholarly meetings, and symposia, e.g., in the Good Shepherd Seminary at Fatima, WHP, at Port Moresby (capital of PNG), Lublin and Warsaw. The climax of this activity came in 1995, with his foundation editorship of the annual journal *Mi-cha-el CSMA*, along with his teaching responsibilities in PNG as lecturer at the Fatima Seminary, and at the Divine Word University in Madang, as a principal lecturer in 1997-1999. We should also note his socio-organisational activity as the Bishop's consultant in the Wabag Diocese, 1986-1992, as member of the governing council of the Melanesian Institute in Goroka, Eastern Highlands Province, 2001-2003, as community superior and spiritual formator of young, local aspirants for religious life at the elementary level of the Michaelite Congregation in PNG, 1996-2004, and as present rector (and lecturer) at the aforementioned Good Shepherd Seminary.

## **ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS**

The author's plentiful and topically-varied academic achievements include books (as monograph studies and dissertations), articles, reviews, and (published) interviews. They can be divided into a few thematic subject blocks, even if this attempt overly simplifies matters.

### **THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ENGA PROVINCE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

Kruczek's interest in Enga Province has its roots in having undertaken pastoral tasks there from 1986. While serving there, the Catholic church in Enga was about to celebrate significant anniversaries, and he had the opportunity to write something on these occasions. As a result, two books came out – one in Polish,<sup>1</sup> the second, in Neo-Melanesian (*Tok Pisin*)<sup>2</sup> – along with a few articles.<sup>3</sup> These works, together, are based on the rich resources, and present a full picture of the first 50 years of the Catholic church in this province. It is worthwhile to mention that the author places this local church (her beginnings, structures, personnel, institutions, pastoral activities, social-cultural activities) in a national historical-political-cultural context, firmly authenticating his arguments by documentation, and proving originality and individuality in both his findings and their substantiation.

### **THE VIEW OF THE CHURCH IN THE DIOCESE OF WABAG**

Following the same, aforementioned conventions, Kruczek utilised, and satisfactorily interpreted, other archival sources, so that he was able to document ecclesial forms of the daily life of Wabag Diocese, which was established in 1982, and lies in the central part of the PNG Highlands. He concentrated, first of all, on: general history of this very new diocese,

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<sup>1</sup> *Catholic Church Missionary Activities in the Enga Province of Papua New Guinea (1947-1987)*, Pieniężno, 1991, 164 pp. (in Polish).

<sup>2</sup> *The Golden Jubilee of the Catholic Church in the Enga Province (1947-1987)*, Indore, 1997, xxix+342 pp. (in Tok Pisin).

<sup>3</sup> "The Catholics in Enga are getting ready to celebrate their Golden Jubilee", in *Mi-cha-el CSMA* 3 (1997), pp. 87-90 (in Tok Pisin); "The Catholic Evangelisation in the Enga Province of Papua New Guinea to 1982", in *Mi-cha-el CSMA* 3 (1997), pp. 91-116 (in Polish).

and its organisation;<sup>4</sup> the history of some missionary parish centres in it;<sup>5</sup> and various forms of catechetical education across its terrain.<sup>6</sup> Apropos this first topic, it is worthwhile noting that the anniversary of the first ten years of the diocese occurred in 1992, and this is what motivated the author to describe the first decade of this ecclesial administrative unit. Hence, his books on the Enga church concentrate on the foundation and function of the diocese in its first decade, stressing the common ground between missionaries and indigenes, in their initiatives and pastoral undertakings. Having abundant material at hand, he documents parallel developments in the emergence of both the Wanepap and Kasap parishes. This study reveals the whole entanglement of parish origins at the frontier, and subsequent culturo-historical outcomes.

### **CHRISTIANITY IN THE HIGHLANDS OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA AND IN THE PACIFIC**

In 1994, Kruczek undertook the duty of lecturing on Christianity in Melanesia at two campuses of the Divine Word University (DWU). This very soon forced him to examine the past and present of the activity of the Catholic mission in the Pacific and in Australia. Lack of appropriate works on this topic, which would be useful for his lectures, motivated him to do something more systematic that met students' needs. Following this line, he began to penetrate into the vast historical area that opened new academic perspectives for him, and he came to explore certain aspects, from the history of the mission, in the pre-colonial period, up until the present time. Regarding this research sphere, a number of Kruczek's writings emerged, mainly in English and in Tok Pisin, and often on the foundations of Catholic missions in various

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<sup>4</sup> *A Decade of Struggles: The First Ten Years of Wabag Diocese in Enga Province (1982-1992)*, Madang, 1995, 132 pp. (in English); and the same book in Polish version *Wśród górali w rajskim buszu: Obraz dzieła misyjnego w PNG na przykładzie diecezji Wabag, Marki-Struga, 1997*, 144 pp.

<sup>5</sup> E.g., "The Beginnings of Kasap Parish", in *Katolik Daiosis bilong Wabag: Sios Nius* (Mas 1994), pp. 6-7 (in Tok Pisin); "Wanepap Parish celebrates its 40-year Jubilee", in *Andaka: Niusleta bilong Wabag Daiosis* 10-2 (Jun 1995), pp. 10-11 (in Tok Pisin).

<sup>6</sup> "The beginnings of the first Catechist Training Centre in Enga", in *Verbum SVD* 43-3 (2002), pp. 309-329 (in English).

Melanesian contexts.<sup>7</sup> These works present, in an innovative manner, a panoramic view of pioneer mission activity, and demonstrate an interesting multidimensionality and complementariness of exposition, because of their ecumenical character. This latter aspect is apparent when one looks at the publication – in the form of handouts for the students – under the title *Christianity on Melanesian Soil*.<sup>8</sup> This aid gives an idea about Melanesian Christianity, in broad socio-historical perspective. Special concern was given to those denominations, which first became visible in Melanesia: Methodists, Presbyterians, Catholics, Lutherans, and all the other smaller groups (including Adventists).

### **NATIVE CULTURES AND CUSTOMS**

Today, in missionary endeavour, high profile is given to the so-called “cultural apostolate” or enculturation (the way of preaching the gospel in the context of a particular culture). For Kruczek, this component stimulated him to undertake in-depth research into various expressions and cultural forms of daily life in Papua New Guinea. He made some studies of the forms and customs of traditional marriage, and, whereas marriages were performed, this latter issue entailed a look at the traditional institutions of feast days.<sup>9</sup> It is evident, when reflecting on

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<sup>7</sup> “On the footsteps of the sensitive Flemish”, in *Mi-cha-el CSMA* 1 (1995), pp. 47-55 (in Polish); “Implanting the Gospel in Fiji”, in *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 51-3 (1995), pp. 161-173 (in English); “The First Catholic Missionary Ventures in Papua New Guinea”, in *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 52-2 (1996), pp. 121-125 (in English); “Evangelisation of the Highlands in the Papua Region”, in *Mi-cha-el CSMA* 2 (1996), pp. 59-62 (in Tok Pisin); “The Present Territory of Papua New Guinea with regard to the Administrative Structure of Inaugural Catholic Mission in Oceania”, in *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 53-3 (1997), pp. 227-229 (in English); “The beginnings of Evangelisation in Australia and Oceania”, in *Przegląd Powszechny* 11/927 (1998), pp. 172-178 (in Polish); “Missionary attempts in Melanesia during the pre-colonial era”, in *Mi-cha-el CSMA* 6 (2000), pp. 34-67 (in English); “Christianity in Melanesia in Colonial Times”, in *Mi-cha-el CSMA* 7 (2001), pp. 72-126 (in English); “Missionary Struggles in New Guinea: part 1”, in *Biuletyn Misyjny Archidiecezji Gnieźnieńskiej: BMAG* 3-17 (2002), pp. 15-23; “part 2”, in *BMAG* 4-18 (2002), pp. 20-32; “part 3”, in *BMAG* 1-19 (2003), pp. 17-28 (in Polish); “Christianity in Melanesia in post-colonial time (the present time)”, in *Nurt SVD* 4-99 (2002), pp. 173-201 (in Polish).

<sup>8</sup> Fatima PNG, 2002 (in English).

<sup>9</sup> “Honesty in Agreement with Reality”, in *Wspólnota Michael* 2 (1981), pp. 9-13 (in Polish); “Singing”, in *Wspólnota Michael* 3 (1981), pp. 45-46 (in Polish); “A Few

Kruczek's analyses, that marriage in PNG is not only a matter of two betrothed people, but also a crucial affair for the parents, tribal communities, and other groups. According to most native traditions, the woman was required to live with the man from this time, after all formalities have been completed (Kruczek documented this, especially, in Highland cases). To identify this delicate area for deep discussion, and then place it *vis-à-vis* the teaching of the church,<sup>10</sup> allows for a pastoral platform, on which all marital cases could be considered in a useful, simple manner, while also bringing out both the importance of marriage in society, and the issue of enculturation.

### THE GREAT METHODS IN MISSIONARY ACTIVITY

Together with the above research topic, and appearing *pari passu* with the steady completion of historico-missiological treatments of it, are Kruczek's publications, focused on the cultural adaptations, accommodations, and other more modern methods of performing missionary work.<sup>11</sup> Although the entire matter of substance – as the author says – entails 400 years of struggle, nowadays, it is analysed on the basis of such academic disciplines as: anthropology (more particularly the anthropology of religion), psychology, and, finally, missiology, turning on the question of enculturation. Now, enculturation, compared with “accommodation” (which tends to concern one-sided response mechanisms of colonised peoples), has a wider dimension of reciprocal relations, and, as such, augments, in the church, new values,

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Words on Religious Tradition in PNG”, in *Przegląd Katolicki* 8 (1984), pp. 10-11 (in Polish); “My Christmas in PNG”, in *Wspólnota Michael* 3 (1989), pp. 3-5 (in Polish); “Black Harvest: Joseph from Ganiga Tribe”, in *Przegląd Katolicki* 11-11 (1993), p. 11 (in Polish); “Two Reflections from Papua New Guinea”, in *Wspólnota Michael* 2 (2002), pp. 41-44 (in Polish); “Parishioners in ‘two views’”, in *Animator* 1 (2002), pp. 135-137 (in Polish).

<sup>10</sup> “Enga Marriages in the Past and at Present”, in *Catalyst* 32-2 (2002), pp. 130-164 (in English); “Traditional Convictions and Christianity among the People of Enga”, in *Verbum SVD* 39-1 (1998), pp. 85-91 (in English).

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, “Gregory the Great and the Mission”, in *Mi-cha-el CSMA* 10 (2004), pp. 67-69 (in Polish); *The Return of Jesus (a story of one Corpus Christi procession in Papua New Guinea on the occasion of the Eucharistic Year)*, (in Polish) (forthcoming).

and basics for approaching people interested in the gospel.<sup>12</sup> This tapestry of things, which is found in Kruczek's researches, and is partly based on his personal experiences, and partly on historiographical probing, gets a solid interpretation; and his other works shed light on this whole arena of discussion.<sup>13</sup>

## **THE PAST OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH**

Being acquainted with the position and function of indigenous culture, in the process of evangelisation, and given his duties as a lecturer in Ecclesiastical History, Kruczek was impelled to prepare relevant handouts for students of this subject. These papers had to be written in such a way that suited the addressees' mentality, and their rank of education, so that they would be better able to understand and interpret the ecclesial facts of the past, those that were good and bad as well.<sup>14</sup> This writing consists of three parts: from the beginning of Christianity to the Council of Chalcedon (451); from 451 up to the so-called Great Eastern Schism; and from 1054 up to Luther's revolt. On the basis of this synoptic approach to the general history of the church, he composed some smaller works: on the Orthodox-Catholic church in Russia;<sup>15</sup> on

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. "Inkulturacja", in *Encyklopedia Katolicka*, vol 7, J. Dachniewski, et al, eds, Lublin, 1997, pp. 235-237; *Inkulturacja chrześcijaństwa w świecie*, B. Wujek, E. Śliwka, eds, Pieniężno, 1999.

<sup>13</sup> "Accommodation: Missionary Activities in China", in *Przegląd Katolicki* 10 (1993), p. 7 (in Polish); "Quarrelling on Missionary Enculturation in the XVII and XVIII Centuries", in *Mi-cha-el CSMA* 2 (1996), pp. 13-19 (in Polish); "Reflections on the Missionary Experience of the Michaelites in PNG (a panel speech at the Salesian Family Missionary Seminar, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, September 4-7, 2004)", in *Wspólnota Michael* 1 (2005), pp. 38-46; "Traditional beliefs and customs of the dwellers of Papua New Guinea used in the missionary activities (interview conducted 18-06-2000 with Zdzisław Z. Kruczek CSMA)", in *Mi-cha-el CSMA* 8 (2002), pp. 35-53 (in Polish)/elaborated by Małgorzata Laszecka.

<sup>14</sup> *The History of the Catholic Church from her beginnings up to the Western Reformation*, Fatima PNG, 2001 (in English).

<sup>15</sup> "Eastern Orthodoxy and Catholics in Russia", in *Zwiastowanie* 11-3 (2002), pp. 79-87 (in Polish).



mutual relations between philosophy and history;<sup>16</sup> and on the social activity of the church.<sup>17</sup>

## THE HISTORY OF THE MICHAELITES

Studying at the Theological Institute in Przemyśl, Kruczek had already begun to get interested in the history of his own religious community. Doggedly collecting materials, which he partly used for his master's thesis, and work afterwards. After collating, and bringing intelligibility to them, he now had a source base for a number of articles in English and Tok Pisin. Themes, he pursued, come in the following order: the charism of the Michaelite Congregation,<sup>18</sup> its founder's life and activity,<sup>19</sup> the history of the Michaelites, and their presence in the universal church,<sup>20</sup> and in Australia and Melanesia as well.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> "Philosophical Approach to History", in *Mi-cha-el CSMA* 1 (1995), pp. 65-69 (in English).

<sup>17</sup> "Hospitality and Communication", in *Garamut: DWU Staff Newsletter* (January-February, 1998), pp. 3-4 (in English).

<sup>18</sup> "Beatification of two Michaelite Martyrs", in *Mi-cha-el CSMA* 5 (1999), pp. 11-19 (in Tok Pisin); "The gift or intruders?", in *Wspólnota Michael* 2 (1998), pp. 59-62 (in Polish).

<sup>19</sup> "On the Path to Holiness: The life and work of the Founder of the Michaelites (A talk delivered in the series of Staff Seminars of Good Shepherd Seminary at Fatima, WHP, on April 19, 2005)", in *Mi-cha-el CSMA* 11 (2005), pp. 51-65 (in English).

<sup>20</sup> "A Brief History of the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel on the occasion of its Centenary", in *Mi-cha-el CSMA* 3 (1997), pp. 26-30; and the same, under the title: "Know the other Members of Our Family. The Congregation of St Michael the Archangel", in *Towards 2005* (July-September, 2002), pp. 18-20 (in English); "The Origin of the Parish of Miejsce Piastowe", in *Mi-cha-el CSMA* 4 (1998), pp. 58-72 (in Polish); *A History of the Roman Catholic Parish in Miejsce Piastowe up to 1772*, Madang PNG, 1997, 88 pp. (in Polish); and a number of the other articles published in English in *Mi-cha-el CSMA* between 1 (1995) and 8 (2002).

<sup>21</sup> "A Brief History of Michaelites working for 25 Years in Papua New Guinea", in *Mi-cha-el CSMA* 1 (1995), pp. 15-24 (in Tok Pisin); "Our Planned Future in Papua New Guinea", in *Wspólnota Michael* 2 (1990), pp. 13-18 (in Polish); "Michaelites in Papua New Guinea", in *Wspólnota Michael* 3 (1998), pp. 19-27 (in Polish); "Some Information on the Religious Community House in Mt Hagen", in *Wspólnota Michael* 3 (2001), pp. 10-14 (in Polish); "Missionary Activity of the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel in Papua New Guinea and Australia", in *Akta Kapituły Generalnej Zgromadzenia Św. Michała Archanioła, Górk, 21-29 kwietnia 2004*, Marki, 2004, pp. 175-180 (in Polish).

## **POPULAR PRODUCTIONS**

Popular writing and interviews present quite rich materials in Kruczek's opus. Topics touch all those mentioned previously, but to be digested by the less academic. He is able to write in simple terms about the church and her culturo-historical past. This is not to gainsay that all his publications are solidly based on all sorts of sources, and on an abundant and multilingual reading, that proves the author's professionalism, and his thorough knowledge of essential-methodological apparatuses. One should also add to this, and point out, two characteristics of Kruczek's academic achievements, related to his "popular side". Firstly, when he penetrates the past of the Catholic church in the Pacific, he portrays, not only the beginnings and developments of her structures, but presents her as a paradigm for all kinds of changes, especially in Melanesia. These changes are of cultural, economic, social, and mental, not just patently religious, character. Though, in his works, there is much substantiation of the position that, to understand contemporary cultures of PNG well, it is important to get deeper into their metaphysical and theological spheres. Hence, the academic endeavours of Kruczek usually have an obviously theological bent. Secondly, since the author brings into his historiography many elements from the past of Polish culture, and presents the views of Polish academics, he has become, without question, the propagator of Polish academic views, and propagator of Polish achievements, in the fields of social and cultural science.

## **MONOGRAPH OF CATHOLIC CHURCH ACTIVITY IN MT HAGEN**

In Kruczek's academic achievements, a special position must be given to his recently published, and aforementioned, book, *Catholic Mission in the Mt Hagen Archdiocese in Papua New Guinea 1934-1984*.<sup>22</sup> Its contents have an interdisciplinary character, the topic requiring a range of methods for a vast area of enquiry. In this enquiry, he has to face up to the extensive base, on which the Catholic church matured, while its personnel were engaged in missionary activity in PNG. Seeking to develop a truly encompassing thesis, he had to employ a relevant method, commonly used in contemporary historiography, to defer to the subjects

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<sup>22</sup> Mt Hagen PNG, 2005, 452 pp. (in Polish).

exercised by the great issues of culture – ethnology, anthropology, sociology – and use the proper tools of these disciplines, while producing his portrayals and arguments.

The author, Kruczek, successfully fulfilled the aims he set for himself. In order to interpret and illumine problems, with regard to the subjective and objective activity of the Catholic church in PNG, Kruczek also examined the relevant issues – although aware of the difficulties – in the light of external factors. The historico-political context seriously conditioned the church's engagement in her mission. It has been known, from chronicles, that the Spaniards, for example, wanted to introduce Christianity to the Pacific in the 16th to 18th centuries, but the authentic beginnings of the Catholic church count from the 19th century. From that time to this day, she built up her structural-organisational base and functions in the Pacific. Talking of the main island, in 1885, missionaries reached southeast New Guinea, which was the British Colony that came to be known as Papua. The northeast part of New Guinea, at that time, was under German control, and missionaries began to evangelise there in 1896, with their starting point at Tumuleo Island; their next big move being to establish their headquarters at Alexishafen, near Madang.

Significant stimulators in the process of missionary evangelisation came from events at the beginning of the 20th century: Australia's independence; and the First World War, as it affected New Guinea, with the takeover of the German colony, so-called Wilhelmsland, by Australia. This latter, political shift brought greater stability for the hard-working missionaries in New Guinea, and allowed them to turn towards the vast interior of the New Guinea mainland. Such endeavours – carefully explained by the author – were undertaken to the more remote mountain regions in 1934 by the Catholic missionaries, who, to a large extent, got assistance from the Australian lay prospectors and gold seekers. Thanks to the cooperation of the SVD missionaries from USA, Germany, Holland, and Poland, evangelisation commenced at Wilya village, at the foot of Mt Hagen, in the Central Highlands. This activity consolidated – with a short break during the Second World War, when the missionaries were told to hide themselves in Australia in 1943-1944 – and grew, more

and more fruitfully, up until the present day, taking on a noteworthy local stamp.

There is no doubt, as the author comments, that these developments are partly a result of historical external occurrences (e.g., the independence of PNG, and consecutive steps of territorial reorganisation), on the one hand, and an internal inadequacy to keep up with the pace of things by church personnel (despite the high hopes of visionary hierarchs!), on the other.

Well-conceived, symbiotic pastoral work in evangelisation, by various religious communities (mainly by male and female religious orders), and the process of adventurous incursion into all possible regions ready for Christianisation are two big focal points of the monograph, and its exploration of a whole mental-cultural-anthropological context. Although this last remark applies to the entire book, it is more apparent, in the last two parts, which describe foundational missionary activity, and the initiation of the indigenous local church in Papua New Guinea. The author, who has partaken of a rich life in the area under study, and experienced its daily cultural realities, is able to evaluate diverse behavioural aspects of the inhabitants, and to explain them comprehensively, so as to enlighten the different processes, whereby the lives, meanings, mission, and local peoples are interrelated. The success of Kruczek's portrayal and analyses results from his integrative approach, as he scrutinises facets of reality, spots the appropriate associations of facts, and poses pertinent questions, while looking for impartial answers. On top of this, it is, of course, commendable, and should be highlighted, that the author – working in PNG for almost 30 years – refuses to ignore the issues of his subject, by taking methodological shortcuts. And certainly, given his clerical position, he might have been tempted to take a biased approach, identifying himself with the church of PNG, or with the Melanesian ethos and people.

It might also have been tempting for him to succumb to the attraction of mythologising the extraordinary endeavours and fearless attitudes of the first missionaries – above all of Fr W. A. Ross SVD, who pioneered the Catholic mission of present-day Christianity in the Mt Hagen region, and,

as such, is acknowledged by the indigenes as a half-legendary hero.<sup>23</sup> Kruczek could have been enticed to portray some contemporary stewards of the church of the Hagen Archdiocese in a disproportionate light. For example, the short period the ageing Archbishop-Metropolitan George E. Bernarding SVD had in leading his highland flock; and, from the other side, Kruczek – as a European – might have had a craving to compare the church, and the model of her in service in Papua New Guinea, with the model of the church on the European continent. Yet, despite these possible temptations, he avoided these snares, proving a consistency, a disinterested approach to research, a discipline in analysis, and a breadth of vision over his scanned case studies. Through all this, he demonstrates that he is able to expose positive features of missionary endeavour, to place them in context, maturely, and to be ready to indicate weak points, when they are present – as in examples regarding Archbishop Bernarding (pp. 264-273), and of the local clergy (pp. 319-327). The general approach, leaning, as it does, on deep analysis and sound method, validates the author's diagnostic conclusions (as on p. 369).

Finally, a striking element, in this synoptic study, is its attention to theological or theologically-related matters. The history belongs to a world in which supernatural values are invoked. Without coming to grips with this spiritual ethos, it is virtually impossible to understand, entirely, the forms of activity among members of a community, structured in accordance with metaphysical criteria. Hence, the whole sphere of religious life – of sacramental life, the proclaimed *kerygma*, of professed priorities in the daily action of the missionaries, and the faithfulness, most essential in missionary activity, and its impetuses – has not been passed over in silence, nor has a particular theological bent been injected into the book. It is understandable that, in the case of such research, the historian is, at the same time, a theologian, doing an accurate job. Unless exceptionally, his manner of description could not be duplicated by an

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. M. R. Mennis, *Hagen Saga: The Story of Father William Ross: Pioneer American Missionary to Papua New Guinea*, Boroko PNG, 1982; J. Nilles, *They went out to sow. The beginning of the work of the Catholic Mission in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea 1933-1943*, Roma, 1987; Z. Z. Kruczek, *Missionary Activities in the Central Highlands of the Mt Hagen Archdiocese in Papua New Guinea 1934-1984*, Marki, 2000, pp. 114-116 (in Polish).

ethnologist, or anthropologist, or even the average professional historian, who bases research purely on material sources, and often lacks insider feel for the dynamics of church life and spiritual change. This is what makes Kruczek, a missiologist, and an effective practitioner of a broad discipline.

With regard to documentation, the contents of Kruczek's book, both descriptively and conceptually, are very rich on the "factographic-informative" side, yet the mass of materials is lucidly organised for readers, and in keeping with requirements of historical, social scientific and theological academic disciplines. The author had at his disposition a huge amount of source material and reference works, but he digests everything ably, distilling processes, so that his book bears a structure and style, whereby all its parts are logically and mutually related. Each section is in the form of the previous one, and each comprehensively includes dimensions of the problem under review. As he proceeds, he determines the full range of the church's engagement in PNG, and, at the same time, he discerns the various consequences of this engagement (especially in chapter five).

As to the resources and reference works, one is forced to acknowledge their completeness and extensiveness, with 56 archives – ecclesial (diocesan, religious, and parochial), and civil (from the territory of PNG, Australia, USA, and Europe (e.g., Rome)) – having been used! Many printed resources, however, have been checked (normative papers, memoirs), including reports and interviews. One would be remiss not to mention that the author used all kinds of information coming from local people, who are still alive, and remember the pioneer missionaries. Some of these informants were, and, until this day, are still involved in the church's many activities. Such oral and related local information bears more of a complementary character to "official recording", but is still very useful, with regard to indigenous culture, and other aspects of PNG life. The clear impression is that Kruczek did not leave a stone unturned in tapping every possible source, in the historiography of his subject, as the 32-page listing of published written works clinches. By such thoroughness, he easily sustains, and manages to achieve broad (and, indeed, useful comparative) assessments.

Although Kruczek's major book deserves the highest esteem, it does not mean that it is without a few weaknesses, and debatable points, and I would recommend some slight improvements. The reader will probably sense a deficiency of information about pioneer missionaries (except Fr Ross); about the origins and extent of preparation for missionary work (pp. 55-106); and about procedures concerning sacramental services (except baptism, which is broadly described in relation with catechumenate, pp. 279-290). It is a pity, further, that the author did not put his tables together, in juxtaposition, for an easier comparison of data, and that he did not analyse this data completely enough, as well. Anyhow, these are just fine points for discussion, and they do not weaken the academic and cognitive aspects of his general thesis. I really mean to be positive to the end, hoping that Kruczek will be impelled to do further academic investigations into the many and various characteristics of the church in the region of Pacific.