mented. The participation in the attempt to create a united Ethiopian Evangelical Church and the role of the SIM regarding this seems to have other aspects than those mentioned in the book. Some of the leaders of that body are still alive and they keep insisting that it was the mission that hindered Ethiopian believers from taking part, and in that way foiled a wider evangelical fellowship.

Dr. Fargher’s study would not have served its purpose if it had not raised questions and created discussion. It stands as a most exciting and interesting study and will, because of its thoroughness, remain an outstanding contribution to the study of Ethiopian Evangelical Christianity. To study this book is a must for any person who seeks information about the background and history of an evangelical church which constitutes about half of the ‘New Churches Movement’ in Ethiopia.

Mekane Yesus Seminary
Addis Ababa


There are close connections between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania and the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland. At present around 160 women and men are working in Tanzania for partner agencies of the Association of Protestant Churches and Mission in Germany. There are more than 200 partnerships at parish level. The intensive relationship is also reflected in the literature. In German studies of Christianity in Africa, Tanzania has always received particular attention.

A number of the books on Tanzania have been published by the Verlag der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Mission in Erlangen, which focuses on missions and ecumenism and has a special interest in East Africa. Some of them have been written by former missionaries, as for instance the thesis of Christel Kiel, who was the first ordained woman minister to work in the Maasai-Mission of the North Eastern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. When she arrived there with her husband in 1986, the first meeting with the new congregation was somewhat disappointing, since only her husband was officially welcomed (p. 260). Later, however, Kiel witnessed a significant
increase in conversions of Maasai to Christianity. An important factor for this was, according to Kiel, the healing of the 'peppo-illness,' a spirit possession phenomenon mainly among Maasai women.

Her doctoral thesis, accepted at the Humboldt University of Berlin, is to a large extent a reflection of these experiences and provides a description of the anthropological context as well as an analysis of the history of Christianity among the Maasai groups of the region she worked—the Kisongo and the Parakujo. Sometimes cross-references to other Maasai groups are made, but in general Kiel concentrates on these two.

The book is divided into three major parts. In the first chapters, the circle of life, the structure of society and traditional belief are discussed. The second part gives a detailed history of missions among the Kisongo and Parakuuyo from the first attempts in 1914 to 1992. The aim of the last chapters is to place the findings within the larger framework of the ELCT and of Christianity in Africa.

The second part is the core of the thesis. Kiel reconstructs the first missionary attempts among the Kisongo and Parakuuyo, using as sources the Nachrichten aus der ostafrikanischen Mission (later: Nachrichten aus der Bethel-Mission) and the personal papers of the missionary Siegfried Delius from the archives of the Vereinigte Evangelische Mission in Wuppertal. The station in Tanga became the starting point, since a number of freed slaves were living in that port, among them some Maasai. The first mission in the Maasai territory was started by one of them, Hermann Kanafunzi, in 1914. He worked as a teacher in Mbogoi. The experiment failed, Kanafunzi became convinced that Christianity could not be integrated into Maasai culture (p. 136). In the mid-1930s there was a second initiative when Ismale Guga worked in Mnazi—again with only moderate success. After the second world war a new start was made in Kiberashi. According to Kiel—whose research material for this period is based on information given by Heinrich Waltenberg, the first bishop of the North Eastern diocese, on the direct experience of her colleagues and herself, and on many interviews—, this was the last attempt to evangelize the Maasai through the medium of schools. This method, which had been successful among the Chagga, Pare and Shambaa, did not work among nomadic people, to whom western education was not of immediate need. Nevertheless the early missionaries had an important role in preparing the way. The breakthrough came when the 'peppo-illness' broke out in the late 60s and early 70s and the Lutheran Church offered help. Mainly women lost control of themselves and felt possessed by a spirit, starting to shake and tremble and often also falling down. Unlike in other cases of spirit possession, they