Polish Journal of Political Science

Volume 11 Issue 1(2025)

V.11

Polish Journal of Political Science

Volume 11 Issue 1

Editorial Board

Editorial Team

Lead Editors

Associate Editors

Graphic design of the journal

Krzysztof Trusz, *Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw*

Desktop publishing

Karolina Trusz

Language editor/Reviewing

Adam Petrėtis

All articles in the journal are peer-reviewed

The journal is published by the Interdisciplinary Research Center
of the University of Warsaw “Identity – Dialogue – Security”
(Interdyscyplinarne Centrum Badawcze Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego
„Tożsamość – Dialog – Bezpieczeństwo”)

Editorial address
Polish Journal of Political Science

Interdisciplinary Research Center of the University of Warsaw
“Identity – Dialogue – Security”
Prosta 69, 00-838 Warsaw
email: centrum.tozsamosc@uw.edu.pl

Warsaw 2025

eISSN 2391-3991
Original version: e-book
Submit your paper: pjps@uw.edu.pl

Polish Journal of Political Science is included in:
PBN Polska Bibliografia Naukowa
Biblioteka Nauki
ERIHPLUS European Reference Index for the Humanities and Social Sciences
Central and Eastern European Online Library
BAZEKON

Table of Contents

Articles

Book review

Polish Journal
of Political
Science

Janusz Machota[*]

[*] Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński
University in Warsaw,
e-mail: regionalsmatz@gmail.com

Volume 11 Issue 1 (2025)

Albinism as a Challenge for Tanzanian Society and Culture

DOI: 10.58183/pjps.04012025

Abstract

The article explores the lives of individuals with albinism within the highly specific social and cultural context of 21st-century Tanzania. It identifies a number of unprecedented challenges currently faced by the albino community, including health-related issues (particularly skin cancer), limited access to education, economic hardship, stigmatization, and social exclusion. Furthermore, it examines certain traditional beliefs attributing magical powers to people with albinism, which lead to the exploitation of their body parts in shamanistic rituals, as well as for the production of elixirs and talismans – practices that have fueled a wave of attacks, mutilations, and even murders. The article analyzes the actions taken by state authorities and the Catholic Church in the areas of protection, assistance, and the prevention of these dangerous practices. The author presents a concrete response to the situation in the form of the "House of Tanga" project, of which he is the founder. The aim of this study is to present the socio-cultural conditions affecting individuals with albinism in Tanzania and to provide an analytical perspective on the strategies aimed at combating stigmatization, exclusion, and violence against the albino community. The research employs the following methods: participant observation – to gather empirical data; thematic analysis – to structure the discussion and present the core issues; discourse analysis – to examine the language and beliefs that shape societal perceptions of people with albinism; and synthesis – to compare and integrate various countermeasures against the marginalization of this community.

Keywords
albinism, person with albinism, Tanzania, Tanga House, beliefs

Introduction

The aim of this article is to present the specific situation of people with albinism in Tanzania, shaped by socio-cultural conditions, and to provide an analytical perspective on the forms of resistance to stigmatization, exclusion, and violence directed toward this community. Due to their physical distinctiveness, individuals with albinism[1] in Tanzania have historically elicited a range of cultural reactions within local communities, while also attracting the attention of various academic and professional circles. Anthropologists and African studies scholars approach this issue differently than medical researchers, while journalists and filmmakers often pursue their own distinct objectives. The African cultural ambivalence toward the phenomenon of albinism, the variety of beliefs associated with these individuals, their position within African societies, and other related aspects have been addressed in numerous publications over the years. However, a true surge of interest in this subject – particularly in the social condition of the albino community in Tanzania – occurred at the turn of the first and second decades of the 21st century. This surge was prompted by a wave of ritual killings, mutilations, and other forms of violence targeting people with albinism in Tanzania and several neighboring countries. These dramatic and often horrifying events have since become central themes in many contemporary academic works, journalistic articles, and films focusing on albinism in this region of Africa. Most of the existing literature is published in English, with a substantial number of texts available in French, German, and other languages.[2] In Poland, the topic gained notable public attention through Martyna Wojciechowska's film "Ghost People."[3] However, there are relatively few comprehensive academic studies or books in Polish. Instead, the subject is more frequently discussed in press and online articles, which, for the most part, rely on a limited set of recurring sources.

---

[1] The word "albino" carries certain negative connotations, so this article mainly uses the terms "person with albinism" or "albino person."

[2] See: Ch.J. Hohl, *Albinism in the Social Sciences and Humanities: A Bibliography*, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz 2018, DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.29136.97289.

[3] See: "The Ghost People" – Film directed by Martyna Wojciechowska, Marek Klosowicz, Poland, 2014.

This study stems from personal experience and long-term involvement in working with impoverished and marginalized communities in Africa, with a particular focus on the protection and promotion of the rights of people with albinism. I have spent 25 years in East Africa—initially four years as an SMA[4] seminarian studying theology at Tangaza College in Nairobi, Kenya, and since 2004, as a priest and missionary in Tanzania. During this time, I served in a rural parish in the Diocese of Shinyanga (2004–2010), an area predominantly inhabited by the Sukuma ethnic group, among whom dangerous beliefs and practices toward individuals with albinism are widespread. From 2010 to 2019, I held the position of Regional Superior of SMA Tanzania, which included visiting all SMA mission stations across various regions of the country. I was also responsible for co-ordinating SMA collaboration with the local Church – primarily with bishops – in five Tanzanian dioceses where SMA operated at that time. During this period, I regularly participated in the annual meetings of the Council of Major Superiors of Male Religious Congregations in Tanzania (RSAT), which included plenary sessions with members of the Episcopal Conference of Tanzania. Ten years ago, I began to take a keen interest in the situation of people with albinism and became actively involved in advocacy and support efforts on their behalf. Since the beginning of 2020, I have been fully assigned to lead the "Tanga" house, an initiative dedicated to the protection and empowerment of people with albinism and to combating their exclusion, stigmatization, and the violence committed against them. The methods employed in this text include: participant observation, used for data collection; thematic analysis, applied to frame the problem and structure the text; discourse analysis, employed to examine the language and beliefs shaping social perceptions of people with albinism; and synthesis, used to compare and integrate the various strategies for countering the marginalization of individuals with albinism.

I hope that this article will contribute, even in a modest way, to a deeper understanding of this issue and, above all, serve as an effective tool in efforts to build a "better tomorrow" for the albino community in Tanzania, as well as in all other places where individuals with albinism face stigmatization, exclusion, and violence.[5]

---

[4] Full name: The Society of African Missions – a Roman Catholic missionary congregation founded on 8 December 1856 in Lyon, France, to evangelize Africa.

[5] While this article was still being written, Wande Mbiti, a 38-year-old woman with albinism and the mother of one of the children we support, was found dead in her small clay house in a village near Shinyanga. An investigation is still ongoing, as the police suspect foul play. The day after we received the news, we traveled to the scene with her daughter and several other children in our care. Just a little over a week earlier, she had been staying at our Tanga House in Mwanza, from where we had been taking her to the hospital for cancer treatment. She was scheduled to return in mid-March to receive her next dose. See: https://www.facebook.com/share/v/18Q7GC5xRu/, (access 15.03.2025); https://www.facebook.com/share/v/14fUyERrdh/, (access 15.03.2025); https://www.facebook.com/share/r/1646zfPhx8/, (access 15.03.2025).

Health Determinants of People with Albinism in Tanzania

The primary and most serious threat to the health and lives of people with albinism in Tanzania is, without a doubt, skin cancer. In the tropical climate of this country, the absence of melanin – which serves as the body's natural protection against the carcinogenic effects of ultraviolet radiation – makes individuals affected by this condition especially vulnerable to skin cancer. The situation is further exacerbated by the fact that the majority of Tanzania's population continues to rely on subsistence farming,[6] and for many people with albinism, this is often their only means of livelihood, which forces them to spend long hours under the scorching sun. The Tanzanian healthcare system remains severely under-resourced and has a limited reach. Moreover, in the absence of a comprehensive health insurance system, many individuals with albinism are left with no access to adequate medical care, often with fatal consequences. It is telling that the Tanzania Albinism Society (TAS) has its headquarters at the Ocean Road Hospital in Dar es Salaam, home to one of the country's largest oncology departments. Often, as in the case of Robert,[7] individuals with albinism arrive there in very advanced stages of the disease. This is largely due to the fact that their families, loved ones, or local communities lack the financial means to afford treatment, which is typically long-term, demanding, and extremely costly. There are, of course, exceptions – such as in the case of Witness[8] – when family members engage in truly heroic efforts, often beyond their financial and emotional means, to fight for the health and life of a loved one. Nonetheless, it is important to note that in Tanzania, the average life expectancy of individuals with albinism is significantly shorter than that of the general population. While precise and publicly accessible data on life expectancy for people with albinism in the country are lacking, various reports suggest it may be as low as 30 to 40 years, compared to a national average of approximately 65 to 70 years.[9] Vision impairments specific to albinism – such as nystagmus or severe low vision – pose additional challenges. In school settings, affected students require specialized visual aids such as monoculars, magnifying glasses, or prescription eyewear, most of which are only available through limited government or NGO assistance programs. Similarly, access to sunglasses with proper UV filters, which are essential for people with albinism due to their heightened sensitivity to sunlight, remains scarce. In overcrowded government schools – where a single classroom may hold as many as 160 students[10] – children with albinism are often unable to sit close enough to the blackboard to read what is written.[11] These health-related challenges frequently prevent individuals with albinism from entering or remaining in many professions, leading to economic exclusion and long-term marginalization.

---

[6] Data from 2020 indicates that 65% of the population. See: *Employment in the agriculture sector as a share of total employment in Tanzania from 2000 to 2020*, statista, https://www.statista.com/statistics/1232977/employment-in-agriculture-as-a-share-of-total-employment-in-tanzania/#statisticContainer, (access 15.03.2025).

[7] This refers to a 37-year-old man who was brought to the hospital only after part of his head was already affected by cancer. His family and friends felt powerless to help him (source: personal account from Robert).

[8] She was admitted to the hospital at the age of 27, arriving with her mother, who had five children with albinism; three of them had died from skin cancer. The cause of the cancer is excessive sun exposure, which is linked to farm work – often the only means of survival for those without sufficient education or opportunities to find other employment (source: Witness' mother's account).

[9] See: *Helping people with albinism overcome deadly discrimination*, Under the Same Sun, https://www.underthesamesun.com, (access 15.03.2025); A.E. Cruz-Inigo, B. Ladizinski, A. Sethi, *Albinism in Africa: Stigma, Slaughter and Awareness Campaigns*, "Dermato-

Stigmatization, Rejection and Dangerous Beliefs

Albinism is a global phenomenon affecting people all over the world, however, its prevalence varies greatly. The highest percentage of people with oculocutaneous albinism (OCA) are born in Africa.[12] It is estimated that in the United States the ratio is about 1:37,000, in other regions of the world about 1:20,000, while in Tanzania this ratio was estimated at 1:1,429.[13] However, according to the latest census (2022: Population and Housing Census),[14] the population of Tanzania reached 61,741,120 people, and people with albinism 74,273, which would indicate that the ratio is 1:831. In many countries around the world, there are associations of people with albinism[15] that primarily offer them and their families information, support, and advocacy services; importantly, these people do not live on the margins of society and are not stigmatized in any way. In Tanzania, a person with albinism often faces a range of additional problems, difficulties, and even dangers from the first day after birth until death, ranging from health issues, stigma, and cultural and social rejection to physical violence that even threatens his or her life.

In many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, where the native population is typically dark-skinned, the birth of a “white child” to two African parents[16] evokes a range of cultural and social interpretations and reactions. Unable to cope with the unfamiliarity of the phenomenon, communities have sought the means available to them to explain this enigma. As a result, various African peoples have developed their own belief systems to explain the cause of the birth of the “white child” in various ways. Most often, the blame is placed on the parents, especially the mothers.[17] The child’s albinism is believed to be the result of some prohibited act committed by them before or during pregnancy.[18] It can be: “sexual intercourse during menstruation, the invocation of the influence of a self-some white element, the encounter of a person with albinism by a woman during pregnancy, sexual intercourse with a white man (the *Yambassas* people of Cameroon), adultery by one of the spouses (the *Boulous* tribe of southern Cameroon), revenge of an evil spirit on one of the birth parents who has mocked a person with albinism or publicly expressed joy at never having had an albino child (the *Maka* and *Fang* of eastern Cameroon), love ‘mami wata,’[19] or ‘mom waters’ to an earthy woman (Congo and Central African Republic).”[20] In the Tanzanian community, which is about 95% inhabited by peoples of the Bantu family,[21] many of its ethnic groups refer to people with albinism as “zeruzeru,” which in Swahili means “ghost people.” And it is in the people’s relationship with the spirit world, especially its parents, that the causes of the birth of an albino child are most often sought.

---

logic Clinics”, 2011, Vol. 29 (1), pp. 79–87, DOI: 10.1016/j.det.2010.08.015.

[10] Such a situation has taken place at the Buhangija Center (for children with special needs) in the city of Shinyanga (source: interviews with teachers and students at the school).

[11] Based on interviews with around 20 students with albinism, both former and current residents of Tanga House, conducted at schools in Buhangija, Mitindo, and Musoma.

[12] See: A.E. Cruz-Inigo, B. Ladizinski, A. Sethi, *Albinism in Africa…*, op. cit., pp. 79–87; E.S. Hong, H. Zeeb, M.H. Repacholi, *Albinism in Africa as a public health issue*, “BMC Public Health”, 2006, Vol. 6 (212), pp. 1–7, DOI: 10.1186/1471-2458-6-212.

[13] A.E. Cruz-Inigo, B. Ladizinski, A. Sethi, *Albinism in Africa…*, op. cit., p. 79.

[14] Ministry of Finance Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics and Office of the President, Ministry of Finance and Planning Office of the Chief Government Statistician, Zanzibar, *Report on Basic Demographic, Social and Economic Statistics Key Findings* 2024 [Wizara ya Fedha Ofisi ya Taifa ya Takwimu Tanzania na Ofisi ya Rais, Wizara ya Fedha na Mipango Ofisi ya Mtakwimu Mkuu wa Serikali, Zanzibar, *Ripoti ya Takwimu za Msingi za Kidemografia,*

Right after birth, the infant already experiences rejection from his immediate family, sometimes by his own father and occasionally even by his mother.[22] It is also often stigmatized by neighbors and peers who, instead of calling it by name, refer to it as "zeruzeru," "maalbino" ("albino"), or even "mbilimelo" ("white goat" in the Sukuma language). Most ethnic groups in Tanzania have developed their own nomenclature to describe people with albinism, which clearly reflects how they are perceived. This is shown in the table:

Table 1. Nomenclature used to describe people with albinism in different ethnic groups in Tanzania

Ethnic group	Name	Category	Meaning
Tanga (and most strains in Tanzania)	Zeruzeru	Supernatural	ghost people
Kerewe, Kara	embulamwela	Animal	white dog
Haya and related languages	mwera / abela	Supernatural	ghost people
Nyiramba	Tyu	Supernatural	white monster
Nyamwezi and related groups	Isope	Supernatural	white man / white spirit
Jita	Mbulamwela	Animal	white dog
Ikizu	risohe / amasohe / zeruzeru	Supernatural	ghost people / monster / jinn
Hehe	mlangala / vhalangala	Plant	white sticky plant
Hehe, Bena, Sagala	mlangala / vhalangala	Disturbed individual	a very white person – white as an angel
Bena	Valangala	Supernatural	transparency / evil spirit / supernatural creation
no specific ethnic group	sope	Supernatural	cursed white ghost / like a creature

---

Kijamii na Kiuchumi Matokeo Muhimu 2024], pp. 1, 4.

15. In Poland, it is the "Albinism" Association based in Olsztyn; in the United States and Canada, the National Organization for Albinism and Hypopigmentation (NOAH); and in the United Kingdom, The Albinism Fellowship.

16. Unlike children from mixed marriages or children of white spouses who are members of the local community.

17. What's important to note here is that for a child to be born with albinism, both parents must carry the gene responsible for the condition, as it is inherited in an autosomal recessive manner. This means a person must inherit two mutated copies of the gene – one from each parent – in order to exhibit symptoms of the condition. See: K. Grønskov, J. Ek, K. Brondum-Nielsen, *Oculocutaneous albinism*, "Orphanet Journal of Rare Diseases", 2007, Vol. 2 (43), pp. 1–8, DOI: 10.1186/1750-1172-2-43.

18. Cf. R. Aquaron, M. Djatou, L. Kamdem, *Sociocultural aspects of albinism in Sub-Saharan Africa: mutilations and ritual murders committed in East Africa (Burundi and Tanzania)*, "Médicine Tropicale", 2009, Vol. 69, No. 5, pp. 449–453.

19. It represents a whole range of water spirits having the appearance of a mermaid, see: ibidem, p. 451.

20. Ibidem, p. 449.

Sukuma	Mbilimelo	Animal	white goat
Zanaki	Elihehe	Supernatural	white ghosts / like a creature
Jita	Lijungu	Despised person	poverty-stricken European (white living in poverty)

Source: The table was taken from an article on the organization's website Under The Same Sun: *Resources: Names Used for PWA*, https://www.underthesamesun.com/resources/, (access 15.03.2025).

Stigmatization of people with albinism results in some of them being excluded from full participation in society, living on the margins, sometimes with even limited mobility.[23] There are those who believe that albinism is contagious. During one of our meetings on the island of Ukerewe with people with albinism and their parents as part of the "Tanga" project some mothers shared their experiences of discrimination even while in the hospital, where they heard insulting and derogatory comments, and in one case a doctor refused to even give medical advice. People with albinism are also considered to be under a curse,[24] often accused of causing natural disasters such as droughts, floods, and locust attacks.

Moreover, the albino community is severely neglected educationally. Many of these individuals do not even have a primary education and cannot read or write. Some parents keep their "white" children at home; in extreme cases, they hide them in specially prepared pits in the floor for the night, or even in animal pens.[25] The reason for hiding a child is mainly fear for his safety and life, fear of stigmatization at school, and sometimes shame. Education is also associated with costs, and in the case of large families struggling financially, it is sometimes the "white" child who is left at home. Of the thirty or so children who lived in the "Tanga House," four started school only in their teens, as they were not sent to school in their family homes.

Like most people, individuals with albinism have dreams – they long to start a family, have a spouse, and raise children. However, it is evident that the majority of them live alone, are separated, or are divorced. A 2012 sociological study[26] revealed that, among 138 respondents, 72 individuals (48.3%) lived alone, 39 (26.2%) were married, and 18 (12.1%) were either divorced or separated. Among the latter group, nine individuals (50%) cited albinism as the main cause of their marital breakdown.

---

[21] B.E. Sawe, *Ethnic Groups of Tanzania*, WorldAtlas 2019, https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/ethnic-groups-of-tanzania.html, (access 15.03.2025).

[22] At Tanga House, we have two boys who were completely abandoned by their parents as small children at the Buhangija Center. In another case, the mother of one of the girls said in an interview that when she went to show the newborn to the father, he said, "I don't want that white one."

[23] M. Daghar, *Human trafficking / Buried alive: Tanzania's albinos pay the price for superstition*, Enact 2022, https://enactafrica.org/enact-observer/buried-alive-tanzanias-albinos-pay-the-price-for-superstition, (access 16.03.2025).

[24] Ibidem.

[25] I personally met a boy of around 18 years old at the Buhangija Center in March 2015, who had spent his entire childhood in such an enclosure. As a result, he never learned to speak and had difficulties with motor coordination.

[26] S.K. Kiprono, et al., *Quality of Life and People with Albinism in Tanzania: More than Only A Loss of Pigment*, 2012, DOI: 10.4172/scientificreports.283.

These findings are further supported by long-term personal experience working with individuals with albinism and their families. Frequently, people with albinism struggle with low self-esteem, feeling inferior, less attractive, and, above all, different. Moreover, not everyone is willing to form a relationship with a "zeruzeru" – a "ghost person."[27] Another form of marginalization affecting this community is economic exclusion. Lack of education, coupled with health-related limitations that prevent engagement in various occupations, results in a significant portion of the population living in poverty or even extreme destitution, often becoming economically dependent on others. Additionally, cultural and social stigmatization means that even well-educated individuals with albinism struggle to find employment.[28]

Persecution and its Forms

In Tanzania, people with albinism are believed to have magical powers ("ghost people"). Nevertheless, they still live in fear for their lives. This is due to the belief that parts of the body of a person with albinism can be used in shamanistic rituals or to produce elixirs or talismans that can bring good luck in personal life, help find valuable minerals (diamonds or gold are very commonly sought after in poor mines in some regions of Tanzania), ensure a large fish catch, generally make someone rich, and even cure infertility or aid in a political career. Belief in the magical power of amulets or potions is present among illiterate and poor people as well as among the educated and very well-off. It is estimated that a single body part of a person with albinism can cost up to several thousand dollars, and the value of the entire body can be as high as approximately $75,000.[29] Children are valued more highly, and according to Vicky Ntetma,[30] a BBC investigative journalist based in Dar es Salaam, a living person with albinism can be worth as much as $340,000. This, of course, makes the trade in body parts of people with albinism one of the most lucrative and cruel forms of human and body part trafficking. It is a kind of pyramid of evil, starting with the perpetrator, through the shaman and intermediaries, with very rich and influential people at the top. Another incredibly dangerous belief is that sexual intercourse with an albino woman or girl can cure AIDS. This has led to cases of rape of albino girls and women in Tanzania.[31]

Various sources report differing statistics regarding attacks and killings of persons with albinism in Tanzania. In the article *Miners' Magic: Artisanal Mining, the Albino Fetish, and Murder in Tanzania*, it is noted that at the time of writing – spanning nearly two years – fifty murders of individuals with albinism had been reported since the end of 2007.[32] The article also emphasizes the difficulty of establishing an exact number of attacks, in part because not all incidents are reported to the police

---

[27] One of the girls in our care confessed, "I wouldn't mind even being beaten by my husband, as long as someone would marry me."

[28] As part of a project by the international NGO Village of Hope Tanzania in Mwanza, young people with albinism are being educated up to the university level. The organization then runs advocacy campaigns in institutions, government offices, and companies to promote the employment of people with albinism, who often face serious challenges in finding work, cf. *VOH Africa*, http://www.vohafrica.com/, (access 15.03.2025).

[29] M. Daghar, *Human trafficking...*, op. cit.

[30] She had to leave the country after receiving deadly threats following a journalistic investigation into the trafficking of body parts of people with albinism. See: D. Howden, *Three sentenced to hang for murder of an African 'ghost'*, The Independent 2009, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/three-sentenced-to-hang-for-murder-of-an-african-ghost-1792295.html, (access 16.03.2025).

[31] See: A. Ojilere, M.M. Saleh, *Violation of Dignity and Life: Challenges and Prospects for Women and Girls with Albinism in Sub-Saharan Africa*, "Journal of Human Rights and Social Work", 2019, Vol. 4, pp. 147–155, DOI: 10.1007/s41134-018-0085-0; "The Ghost People" – Film..., op. cit.; *TANZANIA: Albino girls*

and because not all reports clearly distinguish between fatal and non-fatal assaults.[33] Other sources cite 75 killings of persons with albinism in Tanzania between 2000 and 2016.[34] According to a report by Amnesty International, released on 14 August 2019, in Johannesburg, South Africa, "About 150 people with albinism have been killed for their body parts since 2014 in countries that include Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique and Congo. With 76 murders, Tanzania reported the highest number of killings."[35] According to official statistics from TAS, a total of 208 cases of violence against persons with albinism have been reported since 2007. These include 79 murders, 99 non-fatal attacks, one case of a missing person, 26 incidents of grave desecration, and three cases in which individuals were granted asylum abroad due to threats to their safety.[36] These latter statistics appear to be the most reliable. However, it is important to consider that in a country where many people still lack birth certificates, where persons with albinism are sometimes hidden from public view, and where local administration in remote and isolated regions remains significantly underdeveloped, the actual number of such cases may be considerably higher.

One of the most well-known cases – both in Tanzania and Poland – is the attack on Kabula Nkarango Masanja. She is the central figure in Martyna Wojciechowska's documentary "Ghost People." On an April night in 2010, when Kabula was not yet ten years old, hired assailants acting on behalf of a witch doctor broke into her small village home, where she lived with her mother and siblings. They dragged her into another room, placed a wooden plank under her right arm, and severed it with a machete. Kabula recalls two blows from the machete; she lost consciousness after the third. Some witch doctors believe that magical rituals are more effective if the victim screams during amputation, which partly explains the brutality with which body parts are removed.[37] Before leaving, the attackers advised her mother to pour kerosene on the wound to stop the child from bleeding to death. They had simply received an order for the arm of an albino child. Kabula's home was in a remote and isolated area, and it was truly a miracle that she could be transported to the nearest hospital in time to save her life. After being discharged from the hospital, she was placed in a special shelter called Buhangija, where she remained until completing primary school. She began her education under the MEMKWA system (Swahili: Mpango wa Elimu Maalum kwa Watoto waliokosa), a special remedial education program designed for children who have exceeded the age limit for beginning formal schooling.[38]

---

at risk of rape because of AIDS cure belief, Reuters 2011, https://reuters.screenocean.com/record/293505, (access 15.03.2025).

[32] See: D.F. Bryceson, J.B. Jønsson, R. Sherrington, *Miners' Magic: Artisanal Mining, the Albino Fetish and Murder in Tanzania*, "The Journal of Modern African Studies", 2010, Vol. 48, Issue 3, p. 354, DOI: 10.1017/S0022278X10000303.

[33] Ibidem.

[34] Cf. P. Rao, *Ending Albino Persecution in Africa: Governments, UN and Human Rights Groups Step Up Advocacy to Enlighten Communities*, United Nations 2017, https://library.au.int/frending-albino-persecution-africa-governments-un-and-human-rights-groups-step-advocacy-enlighten, (access 15.03.2025).

[35] B. Dachs, *African bishop: Church must work to end violence against albinos*, CatholicPhilly.com 2019, https://catholicphilly.com/2019/08/news/world-news/african-bishop-church-must-work-to-end-violence-against-albinos/ (access 16.03.2025).

[36] Source: Salehe Alex Bukanu, national board member of TAS in Dar es Salaam.

Legal Situation and State Protection Measures

In 2007, a sudden surge of violence and brutal attacks against persons with albinism – including murders and severe mutilations – prompted a swift response from the Tanzanian government, the international community, and various non-governmental organizations,[39] and drew significant media attention. In January 2009, then-Prime Minister of Tanzania, Mizengo Pinda, declared that "people caught red-handed murdering albinos should be killed on the spot."[40] President Jakaya Kikwete also strongly condemned these attacks in an official televised address, stating: "I'm shocked and saddened at the sudden upsurge in these macabre killings."[41] He further told Reuters: "It is a false belief that if someone has the body part of a person with albinism, this will bring success in business, fishing and mining activities. This is what has been fuelling this ongoing evil."[42] President Kikwete banned the activities of traditional healers (Swahili: *waganga*) and announced serious legal measures against those responsible for the crimes. He also nominated the first woman with albinism, Al-Shymaa Kway-Geer, to serve as a Member of Parliament in Tanzania. Despite these efforts, the Tanzanian judicial system responded slowly. The first trials of individuals accused of such murders did not begin until mid-2009 and proceeded at a sluggish pace.[43]

Another measure undertaken by the Tanzanian state administration was a public awareness campaign aimed at changing societal perceptions of persons with albinism, and more specifically, at eliminating the false and highly dangerous beliefs that underpinned attacks, mutilations, and murders. The campaign was conducted primarily through state-run media (radio and television), as at that time, social media platforms such as Facebook or Instagram were not yet widely available. Educational sessions and community meetings were also organized, but due to practical, financial, and logistical constraints, these initiatives were short-lived and limited in reach. "We don't have the capability, or means to reach communities at village level. We mainly rely on radio or television, but we can't reach the grassroots because of costs," said Ramadhani Khalfan, chairperson of the Albinism Society on Ukerewe Island, in an interview with the BBC.[44] In Sengerema, a small town approximately 60 kilometers from Mwanza, a monument was erected to commemorate victims with albinism who were murdered, kidnapped, or whose remains were desecrated after being exhumed from graves. The monument depicts a dark-skinned father carrying his albino son on his shoulders, and a mother placing a hat on the child's head.[45] Another form of public awareness involved promoting persons with albinism into prominent positions in politics, culture, and sports. In addition to the previously mentioned Al-Shymaa Kway-Geer – the first person with albinism to serve in the Tanzanian Parliament – Dr. Abdallah Possi was appointed Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Office for Policy,

---

37. *UN rights chief condemns 'abhorrent' attacks on people with albinism in Tanzania*, UN News 2013, https://news.un.org/en/story/2013/03/433382, (access 16.03.2025).

38. Source: Kabula Nkarango Masanja. I met Kabula in March 2015. After she finished primary school and I became her legal guardian, I moved her to Mwanza, where she attended a boarding school (Montessori Secondary School). During holidays and school breaks, she lived with me at the SMA Regional House. After Tanga House was built, she was among the first group to move in and from there attended Lake High School in Mwanza for her A-levels. Today, Kabula is a third-year law student at Tumaini University Makumira near Arusha. She is financially supported by the Unaweza Foundation from Poland.

39. The most thriving in the field of protecting (also helping) people with albinism in Tanzania at the time were two international NGOs: Under The Same Sun (https://www.underthesamesun.com) and Standing Voice (https://www.standingvoice.org).

40. D.F. Bryceson, J.B. Jønsson, R. Sherrington, *Miners' Magic: Artisanal...*, op. cit., p. 374.

41. See: *Tanzania albino killings to end, vows President Kikwete*, BBC News 2015, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-31709165, (access 16.03.2025).

Parliamentary Affairs, Labor, Employment, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities. He served in this capacity from 2015 to 2017, after which he was appointed Tanzanian Ambassador to Germany (with accreditation to Poland as well), becoming the first government official with albinism in Tanzanian history. Awareness efforts were also supported through the popularity of football in Tanzania. The most recognizable figure with albinism in the sports world is Haji Manara, who, although not a football player himself, became the spokesperson for Tanzania's most prominent football club – Simba FC. In 2008, a sports club named Albino United was also established.[46] Public education further included the inclusion of persons with albinism in school textbooks and animated films for children.[47]

The Tanzanian government was logistically and organizationally unprepared for the rapid deterioration in the security situation facing the albino community. The only feasible solution became the mass placement of children and youth in special shelters, which had originally been intended for children with disabilities – primarily those who were blind or deaf. Facilities such as Mitindo near Mwanza and Buhangija in Shinyanga received not only children but also nearly-adult individuals, which quickly led to overcrowding in these institutions. Within their walls, residents found basic shelter and essential provisions such as a place to sleep,[48] food, and clothing. The adjacent government-run primary schools provided them with a limited form of education. To improve the security of the broader albino community, the authorities attempted to increase the number of police posts and raise awareness among local "militia" units known as Sungusungu.[49] President John Pombe Magufuli,[50] known for his hardline political style, strongly emphasized during his 2015 presidential campaign that he would put an end to the killing of persons with albinism. He vowed that state officials would be held accountable in the event of attacks or murders.[51] Despite these efforts and a temporary improvement in conditions, it must be clearly stated that the Tanzanian authorities were ultimately unable to respond adequately to this sudden and unprecedented wave of violence against the albino population. The mass institutionalization of children and youth with albinism in segregated shelters only deepened their sense of stigma and exclusion. The judicial system operated with significant delays, and the police lacked sufficient resources to protect potential victims or effectively prosecute perpetrators. Pervasive corruption among state officials and police,[52] along with the involvement of high-ranking individuals in these crimes, severely undermined the effectiveness of law enforcement. The Sungusungu "militia," generally focused on hyper-local issues, was ill-equipped to confront a highly organized and hierarchical system of violence led by wealthy and influential individuals with the means to buy their way out of "justice."[53] Notably, current President Samia Suluhu Hassan responded forcefully to the brutal murder of a two-year-old child with albinism in May 2024 in the

---

42. Ibidem.

43. D.F. Bryceson, J.B. Jønsson, R. Sherrington, *Miners' Magic: Artisanal...*, op. cit., p. 355.

44. See: *Tanzania's albino community: 'Killed like animals'*, BBC News 2014, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-30394260, (access 16.03.2025).

45. Ibidem.

46. *Meet Tanzanian Football Team Changing the World's Perception of Albinos*, Ghana Star 2017, https://www.ghanastar.com/news/meet-tanzanian-football-team-changing-the-worlds-perception-of-albinos/#google_vignett, (access 16.03.2025); *Albino United kicks against prejudice in Tanzania*, Dawn 2010, https://www.dawn.com/news/586676/albino-united-kicks-against-prejudice-in-tanzan, (access 16.03.2025).

47. "Ubongo kids", animated film, https://www.ubongo.org/shows/ubongo-kids/, (access 15.03.2025); B.J. Hanson, *Takadini*, (school reading) Mathews Bookstore and Stationaries Dar es Salaam 2017.

48. One of our former beneficiaries did not even have a bed and, for a time, slept on the floor.

49. Sungusungu – a name derived from Swahili, referring to painfully biting black ants that usually move in large swarms – is a type of local village militia

Kagera region, ordering the police to take all possible measures to enhance the protection of people with albinism.[54] However, in light of the upcoming national elections later this year, the country's institutions and security services face a significant challenge in ensuring the full protection and physical inviolability of the albino community in Tanzania.

Teachings and Actions of the Local Church

The Catholic Church – both globally in Africa and locally in Tanzania – has condemned the attacks and killings of persons with albinism. In 2019, Bishop Sithembele Sipuka of South Africa, the First Vice President of SECAM (Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar), stated: "The church in Africa must work to end violence against people with albinism through its schools and other education efforts."[55] The Tanzania Episcopal Conference also issued a condemnation, most recently voiced by Bishop Eusebius Alfred Nzigilwa, its Vice President. During the Holy Mass concluding the Fifth Eucharistic Congress on 15 September 2024, at Uhuru Stadium in Dar es Salaam, he stated: "The recent incidents of abductions and killings force us to question the direction our nation is heading. Have the leadership, relevant authorities, and security agencies become so overwhelmed that they are unable to manage this crisis?"[56] However, these words came rather late and represent one of the few critical statements issued by the Tanzanian episcopate toward the country's leadership. It is also a rare attempt by the Church to take a public stance on this matter. Unfortunately, the Catholic Church as an institution has not taken meaningful responsibility in addressing the wave of violence against people with albinism since the phenomenon first emerged, and it continues to do very little in this regard. This reflects a broader pattern of relative passivity by the local Church in matters concerning the protection of human rights and the pursuit of social justice in recent decades. In general, Tanzanian bishops have been reluctant to speak out – especially when it comes to critiquing the government or the president.[57]

In this rapidly transforming Church – from a missionary-led institution to a fully localized one, which for over half a century has been governed by indigenous bishops – issues related to the protection of persons with albinism have failed to make their way onto the agenda of pastoral priorities. The episcopate became deeply engaged in ensuring the material sustainability and structural development of the local Church following a relatively swift transfer of responsibility from missionary leadership. Parishes and "Small Christian Communities," which since the mid-1970s have been envisioned as the primary grassroots form of evangelization in Tanzania – the "domestic church" – are often "bombarded" with heavy financial demands, which limit their ability to fully carry out their

---

or vigilante group with its own specific structure.

50 The fifth President of Tanzania (November 5, 2015 – March 17, 2021), he passed away while serving his second term.

51. M. Daghar, *Human trafficking...*, op. cit.

52. In the town of Shinyanga, the police received bribes of about 30 million Tanzanian shillings (at the time, roughly equivalent to $20,000 USD) from local witch doctors to falsify and close investigations into the murders and mutilations of people with albinism, cf. D.F. Bryceson, J.B. Jønsson, R. Sherrington, *Miners' Magic: Artisanal...*, op. cit., p. 380.

53. Ibidem.

54. One example of such actions was two visits to Tanga House in June 2024 by representatives of the local authorities and the police. Their goal was to assess the security conditions of the place where people with albinism reside.

55. B. Dachs, *African bishop...*, op. cit.

56. *Tanzania Catholic bishops condemn abductions and killings, call for accountability*, The Citizen 2024, https://www.thecitizen.co.tz/tanzania/news/national/tanzania-catholic-bishops-condemn-abductions-and-killings-call-for-accountability-4762968, (access 16.03.2025).

mission and purpose. While dioceses operate Caritas offices and, at least in theory, departments dedicated to social issues – such as those focusing on Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation – there is little public evidence of concrete action taken to protect human rights or to implement the Church's "preferential option for the poor."[58] Dioceses and religious congregations, both male and female, do run various institutions, especially in the fields of education and healthcare. However, in addition to providing quality education and medical services, these institutions are also expected to contribute financially to the support of diocesan and congregational structures. Efforts to protect and promote the rights of the albino community are not financially profitable; on the contrary, they require significant funding. There are only a few notable examples, such as St. Francis School in Moshi,[59] where the local Catholic Church in Tanzania has become concretely involved in supporting the albino community. Missionaries have shown slightly more initiative. One example is the effort of the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers in the parish of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus in Dar es Salaam.[60]Another example is the "ZeruZeru Simama Sasa"[61] project in Lamadi, near Mwanza. This initiative was founded and is supported by Catholic volunteers from the United States and is led by a Tanzanian religious sister. Also worth noting is the involvement of Polish Elizabethan Sisters[62] in Maganzo, near Kahama as well as a few more such example. In some parishes, prayers have been offered for victims of violence and for an end to such practices, and food collections have been organized for the shelters housing children and youth with albinism. However, in the broader picture, combating the stigmatization, marginalization, and violence directed at the albino community has never become a pastoral priority for the Catholic Church in Tanzania.[63]

Missionary Work of "Tanga House"

One of the Gospel-inspired responses to the challenges posed by albinism in Tanzanian culture, society, and – as evidenced – also within the Church, is the Tanga House project, established by the Society of African Missions (SMA). The center was officially opened on 14 March 2020. It emerged primarily from direct, lived encounters with persons with albinism. In the context of insufficient action by state institutions and the largely symbolic and superficial involvement of the local Church, Tanga House represents a grassroots, dual-purpose initiative aimed both at providing immediate assistance and protection to the albino community and at combating all forms of violence against persons with albinism in the long term – ultimately seeking to eliminate these macabre and unacceptable practices altogether. This is an entirely original missionary project, developed independently without precedent, and it aligns with both the SMA's charism of working with "the most abandoned, poor, and marginalized,"[64] and the charism of the Congregation of the Loreto Sisters, who have joined

---

[57] An example of this stance is the current situation in which the Tanzanian government is forcibly evicting the Maasai people from the land they have lived on for generations in the Loliondo area to create a wildlife reserve and a site for exclusive safaris and hunting. So far, neither the Archbishop of Arusha nor the Tanzanian Episcopal Conference has taken a position on the matter. See: Tanzania: *Maasai Forcibly Displaced for Game Reserve*, Human Rights Watch 2023, https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/04/27/tanzania-maasai-forcibly-displaced-game-reserve, (access 16.03.2025); *Tanzania: Authorities brutally violated Maasai amid forced evictions from ancestral lands*, Amnesty International 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/06/tanzanian-authorities-brutally-violated-maasai-amid-forced-evictions/, (access 16.03.2025).

[58] Jan Paweł II, Encyclical *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, no. 42: "It is a kind of option, or a *special form* of priority in the practice of Christian love, certified by the entire Tradition of the Church. It applies to the life of every Christian, which is to imitate the life of Christ, but it also applies to our social *responsibility*", in: *Encykliki Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II*, Wydawnictwo Znak 2009, pp. 494–495.

[59] St. Francis of Assisi Primary School for Able and Disabled, Catholic Diocese of Moshi (Kilimanjaro Region).

[60] G. Brekke, *These Are God's Children: Ministry for People with Albinism*,

in co-creating and managing the initiative.[65] The decision to build Tanga House in Mwanza was not accidental. Mwanza is located in a region[66] inhabited by Tanzania's largest ethnic group, the Sukuma people,[67] among whom harmful practices related to albinism are particularly widespread. The neighboring regions of Shinyanga, Simiyu, and Geita – also Sukuma heartlands – form part of the broader area around Lake Victoria, which has become the epicenter of these horrific acts.[68]

The word *tanga* means "sail" in Swahili, but in this context, it primarily represents a home – designed in the spirit of a large African family – for fourteen[69] girls and boys with albinism. This model stands in stark contrast to the large, institutionalized government shelters, often housing hundreds of children, where many of the young residents of Tanga House had spent their early childhood – some having been placed there as young as four years old, such as Agnes and Jennifer. At Tanga House, these individuals primarily find safety, a familial and home-like atmosphere, access to healthcare, and are embraced within a broadly defined framework of education. The central mission of the home is to prepare its residents for a dignified and independent life in a society, culture, and climate that are not always welcoming to them. The children of Tanga House attend a private school operating under the Montessori model, where they are fully accepted and integrated with the rest of the students. Notably, the school does not use corporal punishment – still a rarity in many Tanzanian educational institutions.

The foundational principle guiding the Tanga House initiative is to assist those most in need – that is, individuals facing the most difficult life circumstances – in the spirit of the Church's "preferential option for the poor." Given the immense need and the project's limited capacity to accommodate only a small number of residents, the process of identifying beneficiaries involves community-based interviews, recommendations from directors and caregivers of institutional shelters, and, not infrequently, reliance on Providence. Choosing to support those most vulnerable, rather than those most gifted, represents a more challenging path toward preparing beneficiaries for independent and self-sufficient adult life. For a person with albinism, completing higher education significantly increases their chances of obtaining dignified employment. However, many children who arrive at Tanga House are unable to complete secondary school.[70] This necessitates additional efforts to equip them with practical skills and vocational training. The project is grounded in the belief that every individual is called to live a life of dignity and is endowed with unique talents. Sewing, cooking, and batik-making workshops, as well as supplementary computer and English classes, are held at Tanga House during school breaks. These activities aim to help each young person with albinism

---

Maryknoll Magazine 2022, https://www.maryknollmagazine.org/2022/12/these-are-gods-children-ministry-for-people-with-albinism/, (access 16.03.2025).

[61] See: *ZeruZeru Simama Sasa!*, https://www.savethealbinochildren.org/, (access 16.03.2025).

[62] The sisters welcome children with albinism into the preschool they run, care for the local albino community, and collaborate with the Tanga House project. They invite us to meetings and lectures, and together we have been helping Sara, a young girl with albinism whose life was in danger.

[63] This assessment is based on my personal experience working in Tanzania from October 2004 to the present day. For the first six years, I worked in the Diocese of Shinyanga, which covers areas that were the epicenter of attacks on people with albinism, including the Buhangija center, where children and youth with albinism were placed at the time. This center is located just a few dozen meters from the parish I visited regularly – yet throughout all those years, I was completely unaware of the center's existence. Not once did I hear any condemnation or even mention of the ongoing attacks on people with albinism from the bishop – neither from the pulpit nor at any pastoral meeting. From 2010 to 2019, I served as the Regional Superior of the SMA in Tanzania and took part in the annual meetings of the Religious Superiors' Association of Tan-

discover a path toward personal growth, acquire a trade, and ultimately achieve employment and independent living.

Tanga House is open to all, regardless of religious affiliation or ethnic background, making it a multireligious and multiethnic space. Religious belief is not a criterion in the admission process, and residents are fully free to practice their own faith, despite the fact that the project is run by Catholic missionaries. Moreover, respect for religious convictions and ethnic diversity – as well as the shared celebration of various religious and national holidays – constitutes a core element of daily life and educational practice at the center. Unlike government-run shelters, which are often isolated from the broader community for security reasons, Tanga House serves as a space for the integration of youth with albinism into local society. Joint educational and sports activities, as well as free tutoring sessions, are regularly organized for residents alongside children and adolescents from neighboring communities. These efforts culminate annually in the celebration of International Albinism Awareness Day on 13 June, an event that brings together approximately 200 participants. A further mission of Tanga House is to protect, support, and empower persons with albinism living outside its walls. Depending on available resources, this support typically includes educational sponsorship, distribution of sunscreen to individuals in rural villages, and emergency medical assistance – primarily cancer treatment – already provided to seven individuals. The next, equally vital component of Tanga House's mission involves working toward societal transformation in Tanzania regarding false beliefs, superstitions, and harmful misconceptions about persons with albinism—the root causes of the violence and marginalization this population faces. This process requires addressing and deconstructing deeply ingrained stereotypes and prejudices in order to eliminate them. It is a form of prevention and systemic response rather than continual crisis management focused only on symptoms and consequences. Only by changing beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes toward persons with albinism can true security, dignity, and rightful inclusion in Tanzanian society be achieved. This is a long-term and painstaking effort that requires grassroots engagement and outreach to as many people as possible, to present professional, demythologized, and fact-based knowledge that dismantles false, harmful, and dangerous notions surrounding albinism. In just five years of operation, Tanga House has facilitated over 230 outreach meetings (mini-workshops) with various groups and communities in schools, parishes, centers, and institutions – primarily in rural regions of the so-called "Lake Zone," where the problem is particularly acute. Collaboration with both governmental and non-governmental organizations plays a crucial role in this area. This is pursued through regular meetings with local government and police representatives, as well as

---

zania (RSAT), where this issue was never brought up as an evangelization challenge for our congregations.

[64] Society of African Missions (SMA), *Constitutions and Laws*, Revised, art. 9, Rome 2022.

[65] Constitution of the Congregation of Our Lady of Loreto, Art. 6, Warsaw 2002 [Konstytucja Zgromadzenia Matki Bożej Loretańskiej, art. 6, Warszawa 2002].

[66] The word Region is used here as a unit of territorial administration.

[67] It is telling that the first Catholic missionaries in this region – the Missionaries of Africa, also known as the White Fathers – established the only existing museum of Sukuma culture in the town of Bujora, located just a few kilometers from Mwanza.

[68] D. Howden, *Three sentenced to…*, op. cit.

[69] The overwhelming needs have reshaped the original plans, and as of today, 20 girls and boys with albinism live here while attending primary and secondary school, along with a few graduates who are waiting to begin further education at boarding schools. However, there are no plans for further expansion of the house in order to preserve the spirit of a family environment.

[70] The British system consists of two levels of secondary education: O-level

through partnerships with the Tanzania Albinism Society (TAS) and organizations such as Standing Voice and Village of Hope Tanzania.

Conlusions

The phenomenon of albinism in Tanzania has long posed a significant challenge both to the communities inhabiting the region and to local cultural frameworks. On the one hand, persons with albinism were born into specific African families and communities; on the other hand, their outward appearance was so distinct and different from that of others that various ethnic groups situated them – within their belief systems – at the threshold between two worlds: the visible and the invisible, the realm of the so-called "ghost people." What life was truly like for persons with albinism in precolonial Tanzania remains a subject requiring further scholarly investigation. However, it appears that the processes of stigmatization and social exclusion were not originally deliberate, but rather the byproduct of complex cultural beliefs. Paradoxically, the real nightmare for persons with albinism in Tanzania emerged only in the early 21st century – precisely during a time of educational expansion, technological advancement, economic growth, and accelerated information exchange. Traditional beliefs regarding albinism were manipulated and weaponized to fuel a highly profitable trade in human body parts. The biblical temptation of pride, power, and wealth led to a horrifying commodification of the human body, where demand and supply came to include dismembered limbs.

An unexpected wave of attacks on people with albinism cast Tanzania in a very negative light on the international stage and took the country's authorities completely by surprise, posing a huge logistical and organizational challenge. It should be remembered that in the first decade of the 21st century, Tanzania (with an area almost three times larger than Poland) was a country that had been building its independent state structures for just over 40 years, with a very weak economy and infrastructure. The measures taken by the Tanzanian government were attempts to respond to a sudden and very demanding problem, but they were not entirely adequate or effective. The question arises as to whether today the Tanzanian authorities, including local authorities and their subordinate services, have learned enough lessons and taken appropriate measures to effectively and efficiently protect people with albinism and ensure their rightful place in the society and culture of the country.

Certainly a big disappointment, however, appears to be the stance of the Catholic Church hierarchy. This is all the more troubling given that the Church should not remain indifferent or limit itself to symbolic gestures in the face of such a dramatic and evident situation of persecution, exclu-

(basic – four grades) and A-level (advanced – grades 5 and 6). There are many reasons for this situation, but the main one is the significant gaps from primary school and the sudden switch from Swahili, which is the language of instruction in public primary schools, to English, which is the medium of instruction in secondary schools.

sion, and human suffering. The Church, after all, carries within itself the seed of a new reality and a better world. As Pope John Paul II taught: "The source of true and eternal newness in every age is the infinite power of God, who declares: 'Behold, I make all things new' (Rev 21:5). [...] This newness, which we await in its fullness at the moment of the Lord's return, is present in the world from the moment of creation, and especially since God became man in Jesus Christ, and with Him and through Him accomplished a new creation" (cf. 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15).[71] The albino community in Tanzania is in need of that Christ-centered newness here and now. In the face of the challenges that albinism poses to both culture and society, Tanga House participates in the work of this "new creation." This article, too, is part of that effort. It is grounded not so much in previously published studies, but rather in over twenty years of direct personal experience, encounter, and work on behalf of the albino community in Tanzania. This text contributes to the deepening of knowledge, ongoing research, and the search for new ways to respond as professionally, scientifically, and effectively as possible to the needs of this marginalized population. These efforts include both immediate responses – protection, support, education, and promotion of persons with albinism – as well as long-term endeavors aimed at transforming Tanzanian society so that every person with albinism in the country may feel safe, accepted, and valued.

Bibliography

"The Ghost People" – Film directed by Martyna Wojciechowska, Marek Klosowicz, Poland, 2014.

"Ubongo kids", animated film, https://www.ubongo.org/shows/ubongo-kids/, (access 15.03.2025).

Albino United kicks against prejudice in Tanzania, Dawn 2010, https://www.dawn.com/news/586676/albino-united-kicks-against-prejudice-in-tanzania, (access 16.03.2025).

Aquaron R., Djatou M., Kamdem L., *Sociocultural aspects of albinism in Sub-Saharan Africa: mutilations and ritual murders committed in East Africa (Burundi and Tanzania)*, "Médicine Tropicale", 2009, Vol. 69, No. 5, pp. 449–453.

Brekke G., *These Are God's Children: Ministry for People with Albinism*, Maryknoll Magazine 2022, https://www.maryknollmagazine.org/2022/12/these-are-gods-children-ministry-for-people-with-albinism/, (access 16.03.2025).

Bryceson D.F., Jønsson J.B., Sherrington R., *Miners' Magic: Artisanal Mining, the Albino Fetish and Murder in Tanzania*, "The Journal of Modern African Studies", 2010, Vol. 48, Issue 3, pp. 353–382, DOI: 10.1017/S0022278X10000303.

---

[71] Jan Paweł II, Encyclical *Centesimus annus*, no. 62, in: *Encykliki Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II*, Wydawnictwo Znak 2009, p. 701.

Constitution of the Congregation of Our Lady of Loreto, Warsaw 2002 [Konstytucja Zgromadzenia Matki Bożej Loretańskiej, Warszawa 2002].

Cruz-Inigo A.E., Ladizinski B., Sethi A., *Albinism in Africa: Stigma, Slaughter and Awareness Campaigns*, "Dermatologic Clinics", 2011, Vol. 29 (1), pp. 79–87, DOI: 10.1016/j.det.2010.08.015.

Dachs B., *African bishop: Church must work to end violence against albinos*, CatholicPhilly.com 2019, https://catholicphilly.com/2019/08/news/world-news/african-bishop-church-must-work-to-end-violence-against-albinos/, (access 16.03.2025).

Daghar M., *Human trafficking / Buried alive: Tanzania's albinos pay the price for superstition*, Enact 2022, https://enactafrica.org/enact-observer/buried-alive-tanzanias-albinos-pay-the-price-for-superstition, (access 16.03.2025).

Employment in the agriculture sector as a share of total employment in Tanzania from 2000 to 2020, statista, https://www.statista.com/statistics/1232977/employment-in-agriculture-as-a-share-of-total-employment-in-tanzania/#statisticContainer, (access 15.03.2025).

Grønskov K., Ek J., Brondum-Nielsen K., *Oculocutaneous albinism*, "Orphanet Journal of Rare Diseases", 2007, Vol. 2 (43), pp. 1–8, DOI: 10.1186/1750-1172-2-43.

Hanson B.J., *Takadini*, Mathews Bookstore and Stationaries Dar es Salaam 2017.

Helping people with albinism overcome deadly discrimination, Under the Same Sun, https://www.underthesamesun.com, (access 15.03.2025).

Hohl Ch.J., *Albinism in the Social Sciences and Humanities: A Bibliography*, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz 2018, DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.29136.97289.

Hong E.S., Zeeb H., Repacholi M.H., *Albinism in Africa as a public health issue*, "BMC Public Health", 2006, Vol. 6 (212), pp. 1–7, DOI: 10.1186/1471-2458-6-212.

Howden D., *Three sentenced to hang for murder of an African 'ghost'*, The Independent 2009, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/three-sentenced-to-hang-for-murder-of-an-african-ghost-1792295.html, (access 16.03.2025).

Jan Paweł II, Encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, 1991. *Encykliki Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II*, Wydawnictwo Znak 2009.

Jan Paweł II, Encyclical *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, 1987. *Encykliki Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II*, Wydawnictwo Znak 2009.

Kiprono S.K., Joseph L.N., Naafs B., Chaula B.M., *Quality of Life and People with Albinism in Tanzania: More than Only A Loss of Pigment*, 2012, DOI: 10.4172/scientificreports.283.

Meet Tanzanian Football Team Changing the World's Perception of Albinos, Ghana Star 2017, https://www.ghanastar.com/news/meet-tanzanian-football-team-changing-the-worlds-perception-of-albinos/#google_vignette, (access 16.03.2025).

Ministry of Finance Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics and Office of the President, Ministry of Finance and Planning Office of the Chief Government Statistician, Zanzibar, *Report on Basic Demographic, Social and Economic Statistics Key Findings* 2024 [Wizara ya Fedha Ofisi ya Taifa ya Takwimu Tanzania na Ofisi ya Rais, Wizara ya Fedha na Mipango Ofisi ya Mtakwimu Mkuu wa Serikali, Zanzibar, *Ripoti ya Takwimu za Msingi za Kidemografia, Kijamii na Kiuchumi Matokeo Muhimu* 2024].

Ojilere A., Saleh M.M., *Violation of Dignity and Life: Challenges and Prospects for Women and Girls with Albinism in Sub-Saharan Africa*, "Journal of Human Rights and Social Work", 2019, Vol. 4, pp. 147–155, DOI: 10.1007/s41134-018-0085-0.

Rao P., *Ending Albino Persecution in Africa: Governments, UN and Human Rights Groups Step Up Advocacy to Enlighten Communities*, United Nations 2017, https://library.au.int/frending-albino-persecution-africa-governments-un-and-human-rights-groups-step-advocacy-enlighten, (access 15.03.2025).

Resources: Names Used for PWA, https://www.underthesamesun.com/resources, (access 15.03.2025).

Sawe B.E., *Ethnic Groups of Tanzania*, WorldAtlas 2019, https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/ethnic-groups-of-tanzania.html, (access 15.03.2025).

Society of African Missions (SMA), *Constitutions and Laws*, Revised, Rome 2022.

Standing Voice, https://www.standingvoice.org, (access 15.03.2025).

Tanzania albino killings to end, vows President Kikwete, BBC News 2015, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-31709165, (access 16.03.2025).

Tanzania Catholic bishops condemn abductions and killings, call for accountability, The Citizen 2024, https://www.thecitizen.co.tz/tanzania/news/national/tanzania-catholic-bishops-condemn-abductions-and-killings-call-for-accountability-4762968, (access 16.03.2025).

TANZANIA: Albino girls at risk of rape because of AIDS cure belief, Reuters 2011, https://reuters.screenocean.com/record/293505, (access 15.03.2025).

Tanzania: Authorities brutally violated Maasai amid forced evictions from ancestral lands, Amnesty International 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/06/tanzanian-authorities-brutally-violated-maasai-amid-forced-evictions/, (access 16.03.2025).

Tanzania: Maasai Forcibly Displaced for Game Reserve, Human Rights Watch 2023, https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/04/27/tanzania-maasai-forcibly-displaced-game-reserve, (access 16.03.2025).

Tanzania's albino community: 'Killed like animals', BBC News 2014, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-30394260, (access 16.03.2025).

UN rights chief condemns 'abhorrent' attacks on people with albinism in Tanzania, UN News 2013, https://news.un.org/en/story/2013/03/433382, (access 16.03.2025).

VOH Africa, http://www.vohafrica.com/, (access 15.03.2025).

ZeruZeru Simama Sasa!, https://www.savethealbinochildren.org/, (access 16.03.2025).