

POLICING AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION AND CULTURE
IN THE METHODIST CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE.

BY

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DEDICATION

To my dear parents Nobert and Catherine Chigova whose exemplary life has inspired me to move on.

To my wife Tsitsi, our Children Taonaishe Godwin, Tafara Sean, and Mutsawashe Leanne

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DECLARATION

I, **Greenwell Chigova** (215000256), declare that the research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my own original work. No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been previously submitted in support of an application for a degree or qualification at this or any other University or institute of learning. All citations, references, and borrowed ideas have been dully acknowledged. Where other written sources have been quoted, their words have been rewritten but the general information attributed to them has been referenced. Where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed in italics and inside quotation marks. The thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the thesis and in the references section.

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As the Candidate's Supervisor I hereby approve this dissertation for submission.

Dr F. G. Settler

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the attitude of the Methodist Church of Zimbabwe (MCZ) towards African traditional religion and culture. It is mostly concerned with how the colonial missionary Methodist Church informs the attitude of the postcolonial Church. The church's colonial history is framed as the basis of the negative approach of the postcolonial church toward inculturation, and it is argued to account for the lack of appetite for reformation and change in the ecclesiology and theology of the postcolonial Methodist Church. The study identifies and interrogates the theological and ideological reasons for policing and maintaining regimes of surveillance on African traditional religion and culture by both the colonial and postcolonial Methodist Church in Zimbabwe.

The study draws on Church documents, such as the Deed of Church Order and Standing Orders, minutes of conferences, organisational and farms policy documents, as well as archival material dealing with the historical relationship between the MCZ and African traditional religion and culture. The archival materials used in this research were found in two locations: the Methodist Church Archive (MCA) and the National Archive of Zimbabwe (NAZ), both of which are in Harare. A postcolonial approach to archival research was used to reveal and expose previously overlooked perspectives on the church, and to highlight the voices of subaltern resistance to church suppression of indigenous religions.

The research is guided by two theoretical frameworks, namely, postcolonial theory and Foucauldian analysis of governmentality. The two frameworks were ideal in achieving the objectives of this research. They were used, firstly, to highlight and examine how the colonial Methodist Church impacted or influenced the thinking and attitude of the postcolonial Church regarding the place and relevance of African traditional religion and culture in the Church. Secondly, they were used to investigate and illuminate the tactics, techniques, strategies, and schemes used by the MCZ to govern people's belief systems and to shut out African traditional religion and culture. Thus, this study argues that Church policies and regimes of discipline were primarily oriented toward excluding African traditional religion and culture, and that current efforts at inculturation and indigenising the Church rely on colonial representations of African traditional religion and culture. Further, a Foucauldian analysis of Church rules and policies reveal the extent to which orientation towards African traditional religion and culture remain unreformed.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABM	American Board Missions
BCU	Boys Christian Union
BSAC	British South Africa Company
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CMS	Church Missionary Society
DA	District Administrator
DOC&SO	Deed of Church order and Standing Orders
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
GCU	Girls Christian Union
LMS	London Missionary Society
MCA	Methodist Church Archive
MCCA	Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas
MCU	Men's Christian Union
MCZ	Methodist Church in Zimbabwe
MMS	Methodist Missionary Society
NAZ	National Archive of Zimbabwe
PEMS	Paris Evangelical Missionary Society
RMS	Rhenish Missionary Society
SDA	Seventh Day Adventist
TTL	Tribal Trust Land
WMMS	Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Circuit: The Circuit, in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, refers to two or more local Churches or societies united for mutual encouragement and assistance, under the supervision of a superintendent minister with other ministers.

Class meetings: Class meetings are the basic unit and foundation of the structure of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. Church members are grouped together into classes for Christian fellowship, Bible study, prayer, pastoral care, and support in their discipleship, witness, and service.

Conference: The conference is the governing and ultimate authority of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, which has jurisdiction over all matters of doctrine, discipline, organisation, finance, land, and property. From time to time, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe may make, amend, and revoke such standing orders or other rules or regulations as it considers desirable.

Connexional: Connexion refers to the structure and form of the whole of Methodism within a country under the authority of a conference.

Society: The society, also called the local Church, refers to the body of members of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe connected with and attending one particular place of worship. The society is the most local expression of Methodism, a worshipping community in which members are spiritually nurtured, receive direction and mutual encouragement.

Membership ticket: A membership ticket is a membership card given to Methodist members as proof of membership and is also used to record membership subscriptions, tithes, offerings, and pledges.

Postcolonial Methodist Church: Postcolonial Methodist Church refers to the Church after 1977, when it had attained an autonomous status from the British conference. The Church was now under black leadership and free to determine its own destiny through amending its policies, rules and regulations.

Rhodesian Methodist Church: The Rhodesian Methodist Church refers to the colonial Church from inception in 1891 to 1977, before the Church got independent from the British Conference.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this introductory chapter is to summarize all the key information in this study through announcing my topic, providing the context and rationale of study, stating the problem, aim, scope and significance of the study. The chapter also briefly explains the methodological approach and the theoretical tools used to examine the research problem. Lastly, it outlines the limitations of the study and the structure of the thesis. In summary, the purpose of this chapter is to give an overview of the entire research project. As Creswell (2013:73) argues, the introductory chapter sets the stage for the entire project. The intentions of the study are spelt out in this first chapter through the aims and objectives of the study, and the research questions meant to provide the solution to the identified research problem.

The topic of this study is ‘Policing African traditional religion and culture in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe’. The concern of the topic is to determine how the MCZ relates to African traditional religion¹ and culture, through an analysis of the practices, regimes, and policies used by the Church to regulate aspects of the African worldview, religion and culture. I specifically analysed Church policies, rules, and laws used by the church to achieve its goal and to maintain surveillance on members. The thesis offers a postcolonial and Foucauldian critique of current MCZ’s policies and practices on African traditional religion and culture.

Postcolonial MCZ’s practices and policies related to African traditional religion and culture reveal intolerance and provincialism. The general rules of the Church, the rules and regulations in the mission settlements, the class meeting rules and regulations, and the Church organisations policies

¹I am aware that the phrase ‘African traditional religion’ is debatable and there is no unanimous agreement whether it is religions in the plural or religion in the singular. Scholars are divided between those who think that the belief systems in Africa are closely identical and therefore can be taken as one (Mbiti 1990: 1-3), and those think that with the vastness of Africa and the differences in both traditional beliefs and practices, it is not possible to talk of traditional religions and cultural practices in the singular (Idowu 1973:103-104; Shorter 1975:1’ Maluleke 2001: 37; Magesa 2002: 16). I am also aware that in Zimbabwe there are many ethnic groups with different traditional beliefs and practices. However, I use traditional religion and culture in the singular form because the Missionaries, whose documents I investigate, did not differentiate among African beliefs and practices. There are also common traits that run across the ethnic groups in Zimbabwe. For instance, issues of customary marriage, the place and role of traditional and spirit mediums, beer brewing for traditional rites and ancestor veneration are found among most societies in Zimbabwe.

and rules, mitigate against African traditional religion and culture. Church members are disciplined for engaging in cultural and customary practices such as polygamy, ancestral worship, participation in traditional ceremonies, visiting traditional healers, and brewing and drinking traditional beer.

The MCZ came to Zimbabwe through the endeavours of missionaries (Hewson 1950:51, Zvobgo 1991a:1-2). The Methodist missionaries, like other missionary societies who carried out missionary adventures in other parts of Africa, brought Christianity as it was defined and understood in their own home countries (Waligo 1998:113). The missionaries also applied this understanding and their self-understanding as superior over Africans to define, classify and differentiate between what they considered true belief, and what they considered superstition and ungodly practices (Mucherera 2001:36; Chitando 2005:186; Haar, Moyo, and Nondo 1992:53). When Africans converted to Christianity, they were expected to shun their past, including their traditional practices and culture as a sign of true conversion (Chitando 2005:185). However, many continued to practice and participate in African traditional rituals and culture (Thorpe 1951: 65; Moyo 1987:67; Manyoba 1991:65). Christian missionaries brought with them and reproduced rules and laws that governed the Church system and everyday behaviour of its members as well as among African converts. African converts who continued to perform or participate in indigenous ritual or practices were disciplined through loss of church membership or expulsion from the Church.

The missionary Methodist Church was not comfortable mixing Christian beliefs with African beliefs and culture. As a result, practices such as brewing and consumption of traditional beer, visiting or consulting traditional healers (n'angas), African customary marriages, traditional rituals and ancestral worship were forbidden (Fry 2007:113). The missionary Methodist Church used instruments such as class regulations, Church organisations policies and rules, farm regulation policies for tenants on the farms, and the general rules that governed Church membership, to police and maintain surveillance on members who continued the practices condemned by the Church (Peaden 1970:19; Zvobgo 1991b, 1966; Madhiba 2000:28). This however, did not mean that these practices died down, instead, they went underground, and Africans continued to partake in them surreptitiously. Some African church members were prepared to be disciplined and to leave the Church, especially men who wanted to marry several wives (Zvobgo 1991a:115). Sensing that

many people were leaning back to African spirituality during times of need, the missionary Methodist Church used extra-doctrinal techniques to recruit and retain people into the Church (Njoku 2005:240, Saayman 1991:32, Madhiba 2000:28). These techniques included education, medical missions, Christian villages, and other forms of social responsibility (Zvobgo 1996:319; 1991a:113; 1991b:11, Madhiba 2000:29). The missionary activities discussed above were seen by some as assisting the African society and by others as unsettling of the African social order. Ayandele (1966), for instance, alleges that missionary activity was disruptive to African traditional society through its denouncing of polygamy in favour of monogamy, detribalization of children through the mission schools, destroying the moral principles of the indigenous society through denunciation of traditional religion without any adequate substitute (1966:329). When the MCZ attained an autonomy in October 1977, it was accorded an opportunity to revise and reform its ecclesiology and theology, but to this day the Church has not done much to reform and adjust its policies concerned with African traditional religion and culture. The Church inherited a colonial ecclesiology and theology from the missionary church, which continues to provide social and moral parameters for the postcolonial Methodist Church (Makoti 2015:132). The contemporary Methodist Church's official position is to denounce and punish members who participate in African traditional rituals and culture². This study discusses some reasons why the contemporary Methodist Church in Zimbabwe appears reluctant or unable to reform or change its ecclesiology. Although in its Conferences, the contemporary Methodist Church saw and continues to see the need for reform, it has not done much to revise colonial laws and rules that continue to be applied in mission farms, the failure to recognition of customary marriage and the general denial of African religion as legitimate.³ Due to the rigidity of some of the rules, some members are opting out of the Church to join most recently established Churches which are deemed flexible and accommodative of traditional practices and African culture (Minutes of Conference 2005, p. 37).

²The MCZ has been punishing and continues to punish and discipline those who are involved in polygamy and cultural practices, examples are letters written to tenants on Methodist Farm settlements and disciplinary cases in circuits, see appendix 3 (Presiding Bishop's message addressing Farm tenants on prohibited activities) and Appendix 4 (letter of reprimand for failure to adhere to rules and regulation).

³The Methodist conferences have deliberated on issues of policy with pressure coming from the youth and men in the Church who were complaining that the current rules on marriage were leading to loss of membership. Conferences deliberate on the issues and made recommendations for Change of note is conference 2014 which resolved to redefine marriage and bless all men with monogamous marriages and do further research on polygamy. however, no significant changes in Church policy on traditional rites and culture have taken place.

The contemporary Methodist Church is not comfortable with such concepts as inculturation, it does not even accept the inclusion of positive aspects of the African worldview and culture.

To ascertain the MCZ's position on African traditional religion and culture, the present study engaged archival material to access primary data from minutes of the Rhodesia Synod (1901-1977), minutes of the MCZ Conference (1981-2016), colonial missionary and postcolonial Church organisations' constitutions and policies, and the colonial missionary and postcolonial farms documents. A postcolonial approach to archival research was utilized in this study to extricate relevant data from the material. The postcolonial approach to archival research is the critical use of colonial archival with the view to critically re-read records which offer space to the master's voice and not the oppressed and voiceless (Bastian 2006). The aim is to decolonise and pluralise the Archive (McKemmish and Gilliland 2013: 79-112). The Foucauldian concept of governmentality was used to illuminate the MCZ's system of government, specifically, how its discourse is used as a mechanism of discipline and surveillance, and to highlight all the techniques and strategies used by the Church to govern its members. This will be explained further in the chapter on Methodology.

The study will not only offer insight about the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe but to other missionary Churches as well. It will help them consider the need to reform their ecclesiology and theology and to adapt and accommodate African traditional religion and culture. The study encourages dialogue between the Christian faith and indigenous religion and continuous research on African traditional religion and on any new social issues so that institutions such as the Church may remain relevant to members and to the ever-changing society. The study dispels the colonial conviction that all aspects of African traditional religion and culture are evil and superstitious. Churches and faith-based organisations will benefit from this study because it will assist them to deconstruct their organisational policies, rules and laws, and thereby make guided reforms of their relationship to indigenous or customary laws, rituals, practices and healing systems.

1.2 Background of the study

This thesis explored the attitude of the MCZ toward African traditional religion and culture. The study is concerned with the influence and impact of the attitude of the missionary colonial Church toward African indigenous religion and culture on the postcolonial MCZ. The activities of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS) from the Church's inception in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) from 1891 to 1977 were interrogated. The study also looked at the second phase of the Church's history from 1977 to date when the Church became autonomous under the leadership of the Africans themselves. The study thus interrogates MCZ's documents to ascertain the extent of the Church's entanglement with, and against African traditional religion and culture. These documents include archival material on the MCZ and the African worldview, the Church's organisational policy documents, and the minutes of conference.

The study looks at the activities of the MCZ in Zimbabwe, a country formerly called Southern Rhodesia⁴. Methodism came to Zimbabwe through South Africa and under the direct control of the British Methodist conference (Gondongwe 2011, Mawire 2015). This arrival of Methodism in Zimbabwe was not an isolated event, it was part of the expansion of Methodism to other parts of the world and part of the general missionary enterprise to Africa since the Methodist missionaries came at the same time as the missionaries of other missionary societies (de Gruchy 1991: 1; Hallencreutz 1998:7; Zvobgo 1991a: 1-2). When the WMMS arrived in Zimbabwe, the territory was under the control of Britain, which exercised its influence through the British South Africa Company (BSAC)⁵. The WMMS and other missionary societies were allocated land by the BSAC on which they established themselves through the establishment of schools, hospitals and Christian villages (Hallencreutz 1998:29; Zvobgo 1991b:66). The establishment of schools, clinics, and Christian villages was considered a very effective evangelistic strategy by all missionary societies that operated in Africa (Zvobgo 1991a:86, Cox 1991).

The attitude of the WMMS toward African traditional religion and culture, like that of other missionary societies, was negative due to pre-conceived judgements on Africa and feelings of superiority by the European missionaries (Gray 1990:144, Wijsen 2016:195-196). The conviction

⁴During the colonial era, the Country now known as Zimbabwe was known as Southern Rhodesia taking this name from Cecil John Rhodes who was the leader of the pioneer column

⁵The British South Africa Company (BSAC) was a mercantile company incorporated on 29 October 1889 by a Royal Charter at the instigation of Cecil John Rhodes with the objective of Acquiring and exercising commercial and administrative rights in South- Central Africa (<https://www.britanica.com/topic/British-South-Africa-Company>)

that Africa was a dark continent and that African traditional religion was idolatry, superstition, magic, polytheism, ancestor worship, and a product of a lack of enlightenment was shared by both the missionaries and the colonialists (Zvobgo 1991a:6; Udeani 2007:82). Due to the above persuasion, the missionaries did not bother to understand the African worldview, instead, they took it as their mandate to bring light to the darkness that covered the African minds and hearts. There was general conviction among the missionaries that tenets of African traditional religion were not compatible with Christian beliefs and practices (Ibbotson 1933, *The Kingdom Overseas*, July 1933, pp. 150- 151). Breaking down African beliefs and customs became the objective of the missionaries and they did this without sifting for the best and life-giving practices from African traditional religion and culture (Kaplan 1995:9, Peel: 2000 88, Aguwa 2007:130). The Methodist missionaries were opposed to any manifestation of African indigenous religion and culture to the extent that they applied sanction on those who practiced or participated in traditional rituals and customs (Fry 2007:113).

Despite the efforts by the missionaries to subdue the power and effect of traditional religion and culture among Africans, these continued to have a grip and power over the hearts and minds of Africans. Effective evangelisation among Africans, who held deeply their traditional beliefs, was very difficult. Ranger (2005:18) compares the efforts to writing on the sand.

The Methodist missionaries did not only believe that it was not necessary and possible for African traditional beliefs and the Christian faith to co-exist, they also believed the continued adherence to these aboriginal beliefs by Africans was an impediment to the propagation of the gospel. This led to the missionaries developing strategies meant to harness and regulate African traditional religion and culture (Madhiba 2000:28, Zvobgo 1991a:74). The strategies were like political means of forcing or coercing Africans to convert, because there were material incentives to be gained or lost if one converted or did not convert respectively (Robinson 1915:32, Weller & Linden 1984:89). The main aim of these extra-doctrinal techniques was to calm African traditional practices and customs. The strategies developed by the Methodist missionaries included the introduction of rules and regulations governing Church membership, the introduction of Christian villages, schools and health systems (Madhiba 2000:29, Zvobgo 1991a:110). The rules and regulations governing Church membership forbade, among other thing, beer drinking and beer parties, visiting or inviting traditional healers (*n'angas*), traditional rituals and all customary forms of marriage (Minutes of

the Rhodesia Synod 1902, Madhiba 2000:38, Zvobgo 1991a:113). Christian villages, which according to Chitando (2008:53), were like sacred spaces, were meant to shield converts from pagan influence and to be an example to the world (Peaden 1970:19; Zvobgo 1991a:127). Christian villages mitigated against African traditional religion and culture in that converts were required to abandon their traditional ways of life and sever relationships with unconverted relatives. There were specific rules and regulations that banned polygamy, ancestor worship, beer brewing and drinking and all traditional ceremonies (Peaden 1970:21; Mudavanhu, 2010:128). Education was also used as a tool to undermine African traditional religion, in that schools were platforms for proselytization meant to destroy traditional religion, culture and identity (Moyo 1987:62).

Medical missions were also used as a strategy to fight African traditional religion and culture, the motive behind the introduction of western medicine was to change the African's understanding of medicine, which would make him opt out of his worldview (Peaden 1970:16, Minutes of the Rhodesia Synod 1909). According to Manyoba (1991:68), the introduction of western medicine was meant to bring competition between western medical practitioners and African practitioners (*N'angas*) who commanded respect in the African society. The strategies discussed above are a clear testimony that the Missionary Church was against African traditional religion and culture, although some scholars argue that not all missionaries employed these extra-doctrinal techniques as a bait to lure Africans to converts, but that some employed them to fulfil the Church's missionary mandate of social responsibility and to uplift people's living conditions as demanded by the gospel (Robert 2009:52). The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe became an autonomous Church in October 1977, which accorded her the opportunity to make own decisions independent of the British Conference (Madhiba 2000, Makoti 2012). This independence gave the Church an opportunity to Africanise by reforming her liturgy, theology and ecclesiology. However, the Church did not do much in changing the status quo (Makoti 2012).

The post-autonomy Church inherited many things from the missionary Church including structures, policies, rules and regulations (Madhiba 2000:78; Makoti 2012:132-133). The contemporary Methodist Church still maintains the missionary theology and ecclesiology, and these continue to provide parameters for the postcolonial Church despite calls for reform and the Africanisation of the Church in the Church's conferences. The class, which is an important unit in the Methodist Church, still uses rules and regulations that mitigate against African traditional

religion and culture. The same applies to organisational rules and policies as well as the farms policy document. The same rules that governed these Church institutions during the colonial era are still applied with very slight changes and amendments (See figures 4.3 & 4.4, & Appendixes 6 & 7). Most have only changed wording but not content. The organisational rules and regulations, the class regulations, the general Church rules, and the rules governing farms still forbid African customary marriages, such as polygamy, beer brewing and drinking, participation in traditional rituals, visiting or inviting traditional healers (*n'angas*), and burying relatives on undesignated burial sites, in case of mission settlements. The above shows that the attitude of the missionary Church towards African traditional religion and culture has been carried over to the postcolonial Church and the MCZ looks comfortable to continue in that direction.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Research is always an attempt to find solution to an identified problem (Evans, Gruba and Zobel 2014:61). This section of the study seeks to make a statement of the problem, that is, to highlight the reasons for engaging in this research and what the research sought to address. Jacobs (2011) argues that problem statements serve an especially critical foundational role because they communicate formally the reasons for engaging in any research (2011: 132-146). I intend to do three things in this section, firstly, to describe and explain how the ideal situation should be regarding the contemporary MCZ's relationship with African traditional religion and culture. Secondly, I will describe the reality of the situation and the conditions that are hindering the MCZ from attaining what I perceive as the ideal situation and explain how the current situation falls short of what I consider the ideal situation. Thirdly, I will propose ways that are meant to improve the current situation so that it moves closer to the ideal situation regarding the relationship between the MCZ and African traditional religion and culture.

The MCZ has historically struggled with several issues stemming from the effects of her colonial past. The key issue that this study interrogates, is its relationship with African traditional religion and culture. The MCZ has not achieved much in Africanizing the Church, through revision and reform of missionary ecclesiology and theology which continue to guide and provide parameters for the Church's relationship with African traditional religion and culture. For many years, the MCZ is directed by an ecclesiological system that discouraged the Africanization of the church and the contemporary MCZ appears to be comfortable with such an arrangement. Ordinary

members have, however, resisted the continued imposition of the colonial missionary theology and ecclesiology especially on its engagement with African traditional religion and culture. One method of resistance by the ordinary African members of the MCZ was by urging the Church in conferences to reconsider the place of African traditional religion and culture and its attitude toward African customary marriages, ancestor worship and rituals, and visiting or inviting traditional healers for divination (Minutes of conference 2005 & 2014). The contemporary MCZ denounces and punishes those who partake in the abovementioned acts through policies, rules, and laws. The Church discourse (policies, rules, and laws) which were crafted by the colonial missionaries and have unfortunately been maintained to this day, do not necessarily reflect the voice of the Methodist African members. African members were not represented in the crafting of the MCZ discourse but in most cases, they were misrepresented by the European missionaries who thought and spoke for them.

The restrictions imposed by the MCZ discourse as a way of policing and maintaining surveillance on African traditional religion and culture have a negative impact on the Church Kingdom Overseas Magazine, July – August 1962). Church membership has dwindled with disciplined and disgruntled members leaving the Church. People have become pretenders because they are torn between the African worldview, which they perceive to provide answers to their life problems and at the same time they want to remain members of the MCZ which does not tolerate traditional belief and culture. The rules and regulations of the Church concerning customary marriages have had an impact on men and young people most of whom cannot afford the affluent white wedding or so called Christian wedding (Minutes of Conference 2013, p.45). The restrictions on African traditional religion and culture in the MCZ have also been met with resistance from the ordinary members of the Church, examples can be seen in the refusal by tenants in the mission farms to bury their deceased relatives on designated cemeteries, and the continued practice of traditional rituals and ceremonies both in the mission settlements and elsewhere in the Church (Minutes of Conference 2014). The resistance by ordinary members paints a picture of an African Church that conflicts with itself and so there is need to work towards harmony within this conflicting institution.

The study therefore seeks to generate knowledge on what the policies and practices of the MCZ which originated in the Church's colonial past disclose about the postcolonial Church's desire to

incorporate African traditional religion and culture into its ecclesiology, ideology and theology. The goal is to explore how and why the MCZ has resisted, and is still resisting, the integration of indigenous practices into its ecclesiological structure. The study looks at the MCZ's activities that illustrate its effort to shut out aspects of African traditional religion and culture. Such activities include the introduction of rules specifically for the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) in addition to the general rules of society used by Methodists the world over, the introduction of missionary education, medical missions and mission settlements or Christian villages. Further, as a way of ascertaining why the MCZ resisted and continues to resist the introduction of African traditional religion and culture in its ecclesiology, the study attempts to unearth the theological and ideological reasons for policing and maintaining surveillance on the ways its members relate to aspects of African traditional religion and culture.

The purpose of this study is to understand, interrogate and critique how the postcolonial Church relates with African traditional religion and culture. The study proposes ways to improve the current situation and move closer to the ideal situation where the relationship between the Church and the African worldview is not tense and suspicious. Firstly, the study proposes that since the ecclesiology of the MCZ is no longer relevant to the needs of the postcolonial African Church, there is need to reform it. This is based on the observation that the rigid rules that the postcolonial Church is applying on her members are not enhancing the Church but scaring members away. Secondly, the study proposes that the Church engages in a deconstruction of its theology and ecclesiology. Deconstruction of theology and ecclesiology should precede the process of reformation because deconstruction, which is an interpretive way of reading and examining texts, reveals hidden intentions of those who produced the document. Meaningful reformation in any institution should be informed by the process of deconstruction, whereby beliefs are not changed but are forced to reform and are reconfigured (Caputo 2007:27). Thirdly, the study proposes that the Church deliberately engages in the process of inculturation where there is genuine dialogue between the Christian faith and aspects of African traditional religion. The process of inculturation encourages the sifting and selecting of positive and life-giving aspects of any religious tradition and is against prejudice and dismissive attitudes (Osei – Bonsu 2005:21). This means that the process of inculturation enables religious traditions to co-exist and accommodate each other. Fourth, I recommend that the Church engages in research on issues pertaining to African Spirituality. By engaging in research, the Church will come to a better understanding of aspects of

African traditional religion and culture, and this will assist with the process of inculturation because it is through research that an institution discovers that not all aspects of a religious tradition are good and not all aspects are bad. Fifth, I recommend that there should be a timeous response to contemporary social issues by the Church. Responding to contemporary issues and problems helps the Church or any institution to remain relevant and address the needs of the people. Society is very dynamic, it keeps changing, with new challenges coming up every day, and this requires institutions to equal the challenges. I believe that if the above recommendations are implemented, a better MCZ could be created with a less estranged relationship between the Church and African traditional religion and culture.

1.4 Research questions and objectives

The overarching objective of this study was to explore the place of African traditional religion and culture in the MCZ through an examination of the attitude exhibited by the Church toward these. To achieve its main objective, the thesis answered the following questions:

The key research question is:

What does a postcolonial critique of the MCZ's policies, rules, and laws reveal about the Church's relationship with African traditional religion and culture?

In order to answer the central research question, I devised the following sub-questions:

- What is the current approach to African traditional religion and culture in the MCZ?’
- How do the MCZ's ideological and theological discourses inform its policing of members' engagement with African traditional religion and culture in contemporary Zimbabwe?
- What does the MCZ position on African traditional religion and culture reveal about the status of indigenous beliefs and practices, in this self-declared postcolonial Church?

In answering the above questions, the study, firstly, analyses the situation in the contemporary MCZ regarding the place of African traditional religion and culture. Secondly, the study identifies the ideological and theological factors that inform policies related to African traditional religion and culture in contemporary MCZ. Lastly, it makes an analysis of what the MCZ policy and practices related to African traditional religion and culture reveal about the desire to incorporate

indigenous belief and practices into the postcolonial Church. The thesis seeks to show how far the Church has gone or is prepared to go in the inculturation of the gospel of Christ.

1.5 Methodology

For this study, I have consulted written sources, including Church discourse and archival sources. I have consulted church documents and policies from 1891 to 1977 and 1978 to 2016, because the documents in the first period (the missionary period) form the background of the contemporary MCZ documents and practices. The Church discourse, as used in this study, comprises the Standing Orders and Deed of Church Order (2011) (the constitution of the MCZ), minutes of conference (1981-2016), and organisational policy documents. Organizational policy documents include the Farms committee policy document (2011), the Ruwadzano\Manyano constitution (2013) and policy document, the MCU constitution (2013), and the MCZ class book (2014). The Deed of Church Order and Standing Orders (DCO & SO) is the constitution of the MCZ on all matters regarding doctrine, discipline, power and government. The organisational policy documents regulate the day to day, week to week behaviour of individual members, and they further interpret the constitution of the Church. Minutes of conference are detailed accounts of events, debates, amendments, and resolutions passed by conference. They are records of deliberations that take place when the Church sits to affirm policy, make new manifestations and agreements, interpret and adjust Church policy. The minutes of conference that this study interrogated were those that record the deliberations on the origins of the rules and regulations that govern Methodists and mitigate against African traditional religion and culture, and the debates on the relationship between the Church and the African worldview.

Since the attitude of the MCZ and the rules and regulations regarding African traditional religion and culture were handed down from the Church's colonial past, the study used historical data on the development of the attitude of the MCZ and the crafting and reasons for the rules and regulations regulating aspects of traditional religion and culture. Two archives were visited for archival material on the relationship between the MCZ and African traditional religion and culture, these are: the Methodist Church Archive (MCA) in Harare, and the National Archive of Zimbabwe (NAZ) also in Harare. Details on the procedure of getting access to these institutions are discussed in full in Chapter 4. The study did not only depend on Church documents and archival material, it also utilised books, theses, and articles on the Church's relationship with African traditional

religion and culture. I used the postcolonial archival approach as a way of reading archival documents. The Postcolonial archival approach is an attempt to decolonize and pluralise the archive (McKemmish and Gilliland 2013: 79- 112). Decolonizing and pluralizing the archive is done by approaching archival material with the conviction that colonial records offer the voice of the master more space and none to the voice of the oppressed (Bastian 2006). Postcolonial archival approach reveals that archival materials are not objective representations of the past, but a selection of objects and information preserved for a variety of reasons and do not give direct and unaided access to the past (Manoff 2004: 9- 25).

Having taken notes from both Church discourse and archival material, I carried out a critical discourse analysis (CDA). The aim of CDA is the analysis of exclusion, where some discourse excludes sections of people from speaking or being consulted, as long as it is in the interest of the originators of such discourse, to justify their dominance and supremacy (Leeuwen 2008:28). CDA was useful in this study since I dealt with both colonial and postcolonial discourse of the MCZ in which Africans were excluded and not consulted when the Church came up with the right belief and crafted the rules that governed the same belief. CDA as an analytical reading of texts helped me to identify instances where, in the MCZ, power was abused, where dominance and inequality were enacted, reproduced and resisted by the ordinary people, which, according to van Dijk (2001:352) is the main objective of CDA. CDA assists researchers to explore the opaque relations of causality and determination between discursive practices, events and texts (Fairclough 1995:132).

1.6 Theoretical tools

This study is guided by two theoretical frameworks, namely, postcolonial theory and the Foucauldian concept of governmentality. The two frameworks were deemed suitable by the researcher because this study is concerned with how the MCZ relates with African traditional religion and culture, how Church policies, rules, and regulations shape individual members' behaviour, how these rules and regulations are a product of the Church's colonial past, and how the members have resisted these over the years. This section shall briefly explore these two frameworks, defining and explaining how each of them was applied in this study and showing its

relevance. A comprehensive and detailed discussion of these theoretical frameworks is given in Chapter 3 which is dedicated to defining and explaining the conceptual tools of this study.

Postcolonial theory provides a framework that destabilises dominant discourse about the coloniser and the formerly colonised (Kwek 2003:128). It interprets events or texts to empower the previously colonised and marginalised (Venn 2006:129; Quayson 2000:2; Lye 1998:16). The theory was used in this study to examine the impact of the colonial missionary Methodist Church on the contemporary MCZ, especially on the production of its policies and standing orders. Postcolonial theory was engaged to challenge the existing Church discourse and to formulate new discourse for the MCZ, especially non-western discourse as a means of challenging western missionary domination (Quayson 2000:2). Postcolonialism seeks to deconstruct the effects of colonialism in many aspects of life such as material, political, pedagogical, and textual domination (Kwek 2003:128). This study is more concerned with the deconstruction of the MCZ discourse that focuses on religious and cultural domination. Postcolonial theory is useful for this research because it makes visible the complex forces that were at work in the production of MCZ discourse. It also enables African Methodists, who were formerly colonised, to produce alternative emancipatory discourse for the indigenous Church.

The Foucauldian analysis of governmentality was also used as a framework for this research, especially drawing on the notions of discipline, surveillance and power. In his analysis of governmentality, Foucault argues that there are various kinds of power that can be seen in social institutions (Carrette 2000:138). This study will focus on one type of power, which is pastoral power, and here, pastoral power is viewed as both political power and a power of care (Golder 2007:165). The Foucauldian analysis of governmentality is used here to illuminate the schemes, techniques, policies, and controls used by the MCZ to govern its members' relationship with African traditional religion and culture. Church discourse in the MCZ is used to carry out surveillance on the Church members and has power to discipline and exclude non-orthodox members and to control their behaviour and conduct. When discourse is used in this manner, it becomes a political tool of control and a way to achieve goals by inducing fear in members through threats of punishment and loss, and members are forced to memorise the rules and regulations out of fear. When discourse is used to exclude errant members, it becomes systematic violence (Žižek 2009:1; Mayes 2010: 111-126). As a political tool, discourse is used to maintain order in an

institution, to carry out surveillance on members, to define correct belief for members, and remove those who threaten the unity of the institution. Members in this case should have their names written in registers, class books as a way of following them up and ensuring that they are always in check.

Apart from the political use discussed above, discourse is used as a power of care, whereby the goal is the salvation of members. The goal of discourse when it is applied as a power of care, is supposedly for the benefit of the members, and not just for the institution or the leadership. For instance, having members' names in registers and having rules and regulations is not merely for purposes of surveillance and control but to ensure that no member is lost and at risk of losing salvation. The schemes, techniques, policies, rules and regulations used by the Church, including exclusion of members considered threats to the belief system of the organisation, are viewed as having the goal to save both the individual member and the entire institution. When viewed as a power of care, discourse is not something to be feared by members but to be embraced willingly because it benefits them. When they memorise the rules and regulations, they do not do it out of fear but as a way of clinging to something that is meant to give them life and protection.

1.7 Significance and contribution of the study

The study of the relationship between the Christian Church and African traditional religion and culture has been carried out by other scholars. However, this study makes a unique contribution by looking at Church discourse as a way of regulating and policing aspects of the indigenous. The study also contributes to the understanding that Church discourse should not be taken for granted and as guiltless, but as a political tool that is meant to pacify, control and dominate Church members. The research and discussion carried out in this study reveals that rigidly regulating and policing of aspects of African traditional religion and culture have an adverse impact on both the numerical and spiritual growth of the Church. The MCZ has lost members to new Churches that are not very particular about members being Christian and holding on to traditional beliefs and customs. The research helps to dispel the notion that all aspects of African traditional religion and culture are evil and ungodly.

The study encourages debate between the Christian faith and African traditional religion and culture. The debate should be genuine and should mostly listen to the input of the ordinary African members of the Church and not a monologue in which those in authority decide on what is

acceptable as true belief and dismiss what they consider as unorthodox belief and practice. If the debate is properly carried out, it will provoke the desire to do research on African traditional religion and culture so that the Church understands the African worldview. Research helps the Church to win the war over dismissive attitude toward all aspects of African traditional religion and culture which are prevalent in the MCZ even after the Church became an autonomous Church under black leadership. Genuine dialogue between African traditional religion and culture, and research on African spirituality helps the Church realise the need to revise and reform its ecclesiology and theology. The Church does not only discover the need for reform in its discourse but will also discover that inculturation is possible and necessary. The possibility of inculturation comes when the Church sifts through African traditional religion and culture and discovers that there are life giving aspects that could be used to make Christianity more meaningful in Africa. The study encourages a relook at both Christianity and African traditional religion so that there is selection of the best aspects from the two religious traditions which can be blended together for the benefit of both the Church and the members.

The study has a direct influence and inspiration on the MCZ policy, that is, its Standing Orders, rules and regulations, in the sense that it encourages policy revision and expansion. MCZ policy that is not often reviewed, and this has become an impediment to change because it does not allow new insight or accommodate of anything that is deemed unorthodox. In this thesis I argue that the deconstruction of the MCZ ecclesiology will lead to the desired reformation in the Church's policies toward African traditional religion and culture. Firstly, it helps to decolonize the Church and the minds of the people, so that they know and accept that there are positive facets in African traditional religion and culture. Secondly, it helps the Church to respond to and respect the needs of the people. MCZ members have for a long time encouraged the Church to consider positive elements of African traditional religion and include them in the Church system, but the Church did not implement that, despite coming up with resolutions around the subject in its conferences. Thirdly, reformation helps the Church to move with time and in the process, mitigate against loss of members and risk being an irrelevant institution.

The findings of the study are useful not only to the MCZ but to other missionary Churches that are facing a historical struggle with the place and significance of African traditional religion and culture. Missionaries from across the denominational divide had the same conception regarding

the place of African traditional religion and culture, and this was made part of the doctrines of these Churches. Thus, the problem is not only bedevilling the MCZ but all former missionary Churches. The results of this study are also transferable to other fields apart from the Church. For instance, policy extension and revision, and deconstruction of institutional discourse can be applied to other social institutions such as political parties, governmental and non-governmental organisations. All institutions risk being redundant and irrelevant if they do not revise their policies from time to time.

1.8 Findings and recommendations

The study came up with findings from the analysis of the data which was collected from the various sources mentioned in the methodology of the research. This section only gives highlights of the findings, details are given in Chapter 6. The MCZ's ecclesiology is informed by the missionaries' self-understanding and conception of mission. The missionaries were influenced by their understanding of the universality and missionary nature of Christianity, and the superiority of their race. They were convinced that their goal was to uproot other religious traditions. Their approach to African traditional religion and culture was non-inclusive but to classify and condemn as evil and ungodly. The intolerance and misconceptions about African traditional religion and culture and the negative and derogatory categorisation were handed down from the missionary Church to the contemporary postcolonial MCZ. The MCZ inherited the colonial ecclesiology without reforms in several areas, the postcolonial Church did not develop its own liturgy, amend and expand its constitution. Organisational policies, such as the Ruwadzano\Manyano and MCU, the farms committee, and rules and laws governing the membership of the Church, are, in most cases replicas of the missionary colonial ones. Makoti (2012:133) argues that the continued preservation of the missionary ecclesiology is to maintain the characteristics of the founding Church to keep the unique identity of Methodism undiluted.

The patronising attitude of Christianity adopted by the MCZ from the missionary colonial Church makes dialogue and co-existence between the Christian faith and African traditional religion and culture impossible. The postcolonial MCZ has not shown much desire for inculturation, not much attempts have been made research African traditional religion to sift and select positive elements that could be used to enhance the Christian faith. The classifications and derogatory terms used during the missionary era, and the dismissive attitude continue to be used by the postcolonial

Church. The study also revealed that during the missionary era, the power and resurgence of African traditional religion and culture among African converts became an impediment to the smooth evangelisation expected by missionaries. African converts continued to lean back to the African worldview for solutions during times of need and this confirmed the indispensability of African traditional religion and culture. This was despite the dismissive attitude and attacks that African spirituality and culture continued to receive. The missionaries were forced to adopt other means of keeping the new converts in Church without being influenced by African beliefs. These were extra-doctrinal techniques or political methods of conversion. Incentives were used to induce conversions of Africans. The incentives included the use of medical missions, western education, Christian villages and the rules and regulations governing Church membership. Njoku (2005:240) argues that the Church resorted to extra-doctrinal techniques after preaching using threats of heaven and hell could not remove the influence of African traditional religion and culture. Africans converted for fear of losing the material incentives and facing punishment such as exclusion from the Church through loss of membership.

The material incentives did not yield serious conversions among the Africans. Conversions did not come from the heart but out of the need to get the material incentives and fear of victimisation and discipline. Those with children in school did not want their children to be expelled from school because they had participated in traditional rituals, those living in Christian villages did not want to be expelled from the settlements and then lose the safety, food security and other benefits that were a privilege of being a tenant on the Church farms. The study reveals that the rigid application of the rules and regulations that were handed down from the missionary Church has negative effects on the Church both spiritually and numerically. The Church is losing men and young people who are affected by the Church's demand for the so called white wedding which most members cannot afford because of the expenses involved. Most of these young people and men end up joining other Churches that are accommodative to customary ways of marriage. Many who could not stand the humiliation of being named and shamed in Church meetings for participating in traditional rituals have also left the Church, and some tenants have been expelled from the mission farms for inviting other Christian denominations, especially those of apostolic orientation, and for participating in customary rituals. The continuous calls from the members of the Church and by the MCZ conference for reforms in many areas of the Church's belief system, especially on matters

related to marriage, healing, and African traditional religion, is an indication that the ecclesiology and theology of the MCZ is no longer relevant.

Having analysed the data and arrived at the above conclusions, the study makes recommendations which could assist the MCZ or any other institution faced with the same predicament. The study suggests the need for deconstruction and reformation of the ecclesiology of the MCZ. Deconstruction is an interpretive style which shows that there are no fixed meanings, challenges orthodoxy, and forces reforms. The MCZ must apply the interpretive style to her texts, which includes, literature, Church and organisational constitutions, rules and laws; and to her practices. Deconstruction should inform reform, because, according to Ghosal (2011), poorly done reform may make things worse than they were, and if properly done, opens new possibilities and effective governance. There is need for the MCZ to consider having genuine dialogue between Christianity and African traditional religion and culture. The power and resurgence of African traditional religion in the postcolonial MCZ necessitates this dialogue. Dialogue helps the Church to identify the positive elements in African traditional religion and culture which can be blended with the positive elements from the Christian faith (Keteyi 1998:36). In carrying out the dialogue, the Church must engage the grassroots approach as opposed to the top-down approach which was used by the Christian missionaries leading to the problems faced by the Church today. Vanden Berg (2005:47) argues that the top-down approach ignores the concerns of the people while in the grassroots approach the concerns of the people are considered and members use their everyday and cultural experiences to forge integration. Genuine dialogue helps to Africanise the Church.

The MCZ must also conduct research pertaining to African spirituality. Research will help the Church which has a history of struggle with issues of African spirituality including customary marriage, ancestor worship, and traditional rites. Dismissive attitudes and preconceived conclusions about African traditional religion and culture will be dispelled by research and the Church will come up with new definitions of issues. The Church should respond timeously to contemporary social issues as this helps to avert problems such as loss of members and becoming an irrelevant institution. The Church took too long to respond to the thorny issue of the relationship between African traditional religion and culture. Society is changing, and the Church should have answers to contemporary issues such as homosexuality, gender identity, marriage, divorce,

domestic and political violence, abortion, migration, healing and deliverance. The Church must liberate itself from its colonising past by moving away from colonising theology and ecclesiology.

1.9 Limitations of the study

The research attempts to give a balanced assessment of the attitude of the MCZ on African traditional religion and culture. The study relied on the evidence from the MCZ discourse which includes the constitution of the Church (DOC&SO), minutes of conference, organisational policy documents, and archival material related to the relationship between the MCZ and African traditional religion and culture. The use of the abovementioned sources was to avoid giving a generalised and emotional assessment of the subject. The following problems were encountered during the process of doing this research and may have had an impact on the study:

First, because I am a minister who was brought up in the MCZ which does not approve of indigenous beliefs and customs, the preconceived convictions continued to exert pressure on my neutrality and tended to want to derail the outcome of the study. I was faced with the problem of an insider studying his own religious tradition. Reat (1983:464) describes an insider as someone who has been born and raised in a religious tradition and has been shaped by it through life-long development, is part of the religious tradition. Lyle (2004:4) contends that outsiders contribute to a more objective perception of a given religion because they are not bound by the limits of the insiders, they start the interpretive process without “baggage filled” foreknowledge. The “baggage filled” foreknowledge that I had about African traditional religion and culture from my being a member of the MCZ came along the way during the interpretive process.

Secondly, there were gaps that threatened the quality of research due to missing documents especially from the MCA. Some minutes of the Rhodesia synod and the MCZ conference were missing due to lack of trained staff to run the archive or render assistance during times of need. There is no catalogue for easy and fast location of documents, shelving was disorderly and haphazard, some of the material was handwritten and old making them quite illegible. There is no proper backup of documents in the MCA. The gaps created by the MCA were, however, filled up by the National Archive of Zimbabwe (NAZ), which is a public state-controlled archive and allows access to any researcher provided they produce their identification documents and pay \$1 for every entry into the archive.

The travelling cost from the University of Kwazulu Natal in South Africa to the archives in Zimbabwe was very demanding on my part since travelling out of South Africa for fieldwork was not covered by my scholarship. Apart from charging \$1 for every visit, the NAZ was very far from my location in Zimbabwe, so the travelling cost was too much for me. The archive also does not allow photographing of documents but allows photocopying of a maximum of 5 pages per day at a very high cost. Additionally, only four copies at a time can be used by a person, which have to be returned to get other documents. This made a comparative analysis difficult to carryout.

1.10 Structure of the dissertation

This thesis will have the following structure;

Chapter 1: Introduction

This Chapter is the introduction of the entire project. It covers the background of study, statement of the problem, research questions and objectives, methodology of the research, theoretical frameworks, significance and contribution of study, personal findings and recommendations, limitations of the study as well as the structure of the dissertation.

Chapter 2: Literature review

Chapter 2 makes a thematic review of literature related to the study. The three themes under which the literature will be reviewed are, the history of Methodism, the Church and inculturation, and the Church and governance.

Chapter 3: Theoretical framework and Methodology of the research

This Chapter explains and discusses the theoretical frameworks that guide this research, which were used to investigate the attitude of the MCZ on the place of African traditional religion and culture in the Church. The study engaged postcolonial theory and the Foucauldian analysis of governmentality. The chapter further discusses the methodology of the research. It looks at the sources of data, the instruments for data collection and the method of data analysis. The chapter discusses postcolonial archival approach as an attitude towards Archival sources, and Critical Discourse Analysis as a method of data analysis.

Chapter 4: Analysis of how the MCZ regards African traditional religion and Culture

This Chapter is concerned with how the MCZ regards African traditional religion and culture, the goal is to examine if the MCZ has any appreciation of African traditional religion and culture. This is done through investigating and interrogating historical and contemporary documents that are concerned with the way the MCZ regards elements of African traditional religion and culture. These documents reveal that the attitude was handed down by the missionary Church and the postcolonial Church has maintained the status quo and continues to regulate and police elements of African traditional religion and culture.

Chapter 5: Ideological and theological factors that shape the concepts of policing and surveillance of African traditional religion and culture in the MCZ.

Chapter 5 investigates the theological and ideological factors that are behind the MCZ's drive to police and maintain regimes of surveillance on aspects of African traditional religion and culture so that they do not infiltrate the Church's belief system. The chapter is concerned about knowing the reasons why the MCZ continues to have a negative attitude toward traditional belief and culture and why they must employ tactics and techniques to keep them in check and out of the Church.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and recommendations

This chapter gives the findings of the research after analysis of evidence from the data. This is the concluding chapter of the thesis where I also make recommendations on how the MCZ should relate with African traditional religion and culture.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter makes a comprehensive thematic study and interpretation of selected literature that relates to the topic under study (Aveyard, 2007:1; Ridley, 2012:3). The themes under which the literature relating to this study will be reviewed are: history of Methodism in Zimbabwe, the Church and inculturation in Zimbabwe, and Methodist Church governance. The review will consider how the missionary history, missionary attitude toward the African worldview, and the encounter between the Christian faith and the African traditional religions relate to the formulation of policies that govern and regulate the contemporary Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. Much focus will be on the history of Methodism in Zimbabwe, particularly, how its administration and government is informed by its missionary and colonial past. The research will use this literature review to demonstrate how this research is connected to other related areas and to show how this research fits into the broader context (Oliver, 2012:1).

2.2 Mission and Missionary activities of Christianity in Southern Africa

Robert (2009:41) states that during the early 20th century, newly protestant nations looked beyond Europe to establish trade relations and colonies, and Udeani (2007:73) claims that it was also the same time that the Church moved to non-European parts of the world, including Africa. As time went by there developed a dubious relationship between the Church and the colonialists in which the two worked closely together to achieve their goals. They needed each other. Scholars who studied this period can be classified into those who had a nationalistic and critical approach and those who were political and social analysts. Njoku and Korieh (2007:1), for instance, maintain that it was scholars with a nationalistic and critical approach who characterised Christian missions as agents of colonial governments. Ayandele, (1966:29-30) also gave a political and socialist analysis by arguing that the missionaries were pathfinders of British influence, and that their propaganda not only prepared the way of government and exploiters but also ensured the smooth and peaceful occupation of African territories. In support of the above, Freund (1984:32) concludes that there was a thin line between the political conquest of Africa and the Christianisation of Africa. Saayman (1991:32), arguing in the same vein points out that by the second half of the 19th Century

the missionaries had discovered that real Christianization would not take place if the hold of the traditional African system was not broken, and that the only power that could break the system (and bring about deculturation) was colonial authority. The missionaries are viewed here as actively supporting the political and cultural conquest of the African peoples, and in some case helping the process along. The point that the scholars above missed is that there were instances when the relationship between colonial governments and the Christian missionaries was not cordial.

Apart from the not always affectionate relationship between the missionaries and the colonialists, Taiwo (2010:6) notes that their approaches were different. For him, missionaries were revolutionaries while colonial administrators were conservatives and opponents of progress and liberalism. There seems to be, in Taiwo's view, a distinction between missionaries as advocates of mission for autonomy and colonial administrators as promoters of the mission for servitude, because he thinks these revolutionary and progressive missionaries, as opposed to colonial administrators, aimed to equip Africans so that they could run the Church by themselves and take what they had learnt in Church to other areas of life. The weakness of Taiwo's view is that he takes all missionaries to be the same. Yet per other scholars, among the missionaries there were both conservatives and progressives (Mucherera, 2001:40; Gray, 1990:144). Mucherera views what Taiwo would consider to be positive and progressive as negative and furthering the servitude of the Africans, especially missionary education which he thinks contributed to bringing down the Africans to a level where they could be used by colonizers as tools and still be reminded that they were inferior to the Europeans. Wedepohl (2012) also identifies two types of missionaries when he argues that:

Some of the missionaries did have faults such as trying to civilize the people first before evangelizing them, and had racist and paternalistic attitudes, however many missionaries had a genuine concern to bring the Gospel to the people of Africa and Africa can be externally grateful for coming to Africa at a great cost (2012:31).

The assertion that Wedepohl is making is that among the missionaries were some whose aim was to preach the gospel to Africans and not to exploit them and look down upon their belief system. Such missionaries, in Wedepohl's view, were involved in holistic missions (medical work, education, trade etc). In contrast to Wedepohl, Aguwa (2007) does not think that the coming of the missionaries was meant to benefit the indigenous people. He argues that the humanitarian

approach to mission work in Africa provided the Europeans with important but subtle avenues for interaction with ordinary people. He thinks missionaries destroyed the indigenous way of life. Sanneh (1989:25) also argues positively on the work of missionaries in Africa looking at the fact that missionaries translated the Bible into African languages and he thought this reflected basically positive attitude towards African Culture.

Mission and missionary activities in southern Africa were carried out by several missionary societies and denominations. Writing about the activities of the London missionary society (LMS), de Gruchy (1999:1) acknowledges that they were not alone, though they were at the forefront, in pioneering missionary outreach throughout much of the Cape Colony and beyond its borders. Whiteside (1906:414) argues that during this period, especially the first half of the 19th century, missionaries from across the denominational divide ruled everything, from sending out missionaries, appointing them to stations, deciding what new ground should be occupied, and furnished their wagons. Whiteside (1960) further argues that this paternalistic system was deemed necessary by the missionaries because the natives then were considered heathens, barbarous, and for a long period unsusceptible of religious impression. However, King (1959) and de Gruchy, (1999) single out the LMS as an example of missionary society that was not so paternalistic, their constitution spelt out that the society was not to send Presbyterianism, independency, episcopacy, or any form of Church Order to distant lands, but only the gospel of Christ. This shows that missionary societies differed in their approaches to mission, and while they had many things in common, each had characteristics unique to itself (King, 1959:11; de Gruchy, 1999:1).

It may be argued that the British South Africa Company (BSAC) helped to bring some form of uniformity among the missionary societies that operated in Southern Africa because it gave them tracts of land and expected them all to build mission stations, schools, medical centres, and Christian villages (Peadar, 1970:5; Zvobgo, 1991:5; Hallencreutz, 1998:29). The missionaries that operated in the Southern Africa region, include the London Missionary Society (LMS), the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS), the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), the Roman Catholic Church, the Anglican Church, and the Salvation Army among others (King, 1959:20). South Africa seemed to have been the port of call for almost all the missionary societies that came to Southern Africa from Europe and then missionaries would be sent across the borders into neighbouring states. The claim can be supported by the fact that the Wesleyan Methodist

Church came to Zimbabwe through South Africa. The Dutch Reformed Church also started work among the Shona in Zimbabwe from South Africa. The Anglicans also came to Rhodesia not directly from England but from South Africa. The same applies to the Catholics, the LMS and the Salvationists (Peaden, 1970; King, 1959).

The literature reviewed in this section touched on the ambivalent relationship between the BSAC and the different missionary societies that operated in Southern Africa, most of whom were of a Pentecostal orientation. Missionary societies that carried out work in Southern Africa were of various denominations, including, the LMS, the WMMS, the Anglicans, the Dutch Reformed Church, the Salvationists and the Catholics. The literature brings out two types of missionaries, the revolutionaries and advocates of human advancement, and the advocates of white superiority and African enslavement. Another point of note is that, at first, missionary activities were inseparable from colonialism, and both advocated for conquest and subjugation of Africa, its culture and customs. The mission for conquest and subjugation, however, evolved and took a developmental and humanitarian approach due to necessity and pressure that obtained on the ground.

2.3 Methodism in Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia)

The coming of Christianity and the pioneer column to Southern Rhodesia happened at the same time (Peaden, 1970:1, Hallencreutz, 1998:25), with two Catholic Chaplains accompanying the first Column (Hallencreutz, 1998). The Wesleyan Methodists also came to Zimbabwe during this time but were not part of the first Pioneer Column. Therefore, the expansion of Methodism to Zimbabwe must be seen within the context of Christian missionary enterprise in Zimbabwe (Zvobgo (1991a:2). The following or accompaniment of European settlers by missionaries can be interpreted in two ways. firstly, the missionaries saw an opportunity as the settlers opened the way for them through crushing African regimes that were a hindrance to the preaching of the gospel (Hallencreutz, 1998:7, Zvobgo; 1991a:5). Secondly, the missionaries were used as tools to pacify the Africans through preaching the gospel and to give the European settlers a chance to loot much from the Africans (King, 1959:11). The coming of Methodism to Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) has been linked to South Africa by many scholars (Weller and Linden (1984; Hallencreutz 1998; Zvobgo 1991a; Gondongwe 2011; Mawire 2015). Although most scholars link Methodism in Zimbabwe with the South African and British Methodism (Mawire 2015; Gondongwe 2011;

Zvobgo,1991a, 1991b), the important point that they do not make quite explicit is that the Transvaal district of the Methodist Church was directly under the British conference and not under the jurisdiction of the South African conference when it became an autonomous conference in 1882 (Whiteside 1906:5). The Methodist missions in Transvaal and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) were under the control of the British Wesleyan Missionary Society which ruled everything, including granting permission to occupy new lands, and sending out missionaries to these new stations (Whiteside: 1906:414).

Makoti (2012) argues that Methodism came into Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) from South Africa, and that it was by means of a call of Mr Cecil John Rhodes to Rev Isaac Shimmin that the Methodist Church started missionary work in the new country. The above assertion by Makoti suggests that Rhodes, as a colonial Administrator was involved in the sending out of missionaries and the decision on the lands to be occupied. However, it shows that this was the responsibility of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society based in London (Methodist Book of Order, 2014:22). Madhiba (2000:24) and Makoti (2012) argue that the call of Rhodes brought Methodism to Zimbabwe but Zvobgo (1991), de Gruchy (1999), King (1959) and Peaden (1970), argue that Methodists were among and part of the other missionary societies and were backed by their home missions. So, it was not necessarily the call of Rhodes that brought the Methodists in Rhodesia. Madhiba (2000) and Makoti (2012), see the call by Cecil John Rhodes, the granting of land by the BSAC, and the offer of a hundred pounds per year to support Methodist Mission in Rhodesia, as an act of goodwill toward the Methodist Church. But Peaden (1970:1), and Zvobgo (1991) show that these acts of the BSAC were not unique to the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe but were privileges that all Missionary societies enjoyed. The Methodist Church actually came to Rhodesia when other missionary Societies had already got their share.

The possibility and impact of Cecil John Rhodes' call cannot be completely dismissed because there is evidence of some applications for the grant and communication in that respect and some follow ups on the grant by the Methodist missionaries (Zvobgo,1991:19). Even if this was government land policy (Peaden, 1970:5), to give the missionaries large tracts of land, it had a bearing on the relationship between the BSAC as the now custodians of the land and individual missionary societies and the missionaries in general who operated in Rhodesia (the country had been claimed as a British territory under the BSAC). The first Methodist Missionary societies

were founded by Revd Owen Watkins and they arrived at Fort Salisbury on the 29th of September 1891. The Methodists, like other missionary societies, made full use of the land apportioned to them by the BSAC to build schools, hospitals, and Christian villages. The missionaries across the denominational divide regarded the ministry of the Church as threefold: preaching, teaching, and healing. The three methods were used by all missionary societies simultaneously. The Christian villages on mission farms were meant to be model communities to serve as islands of light in a sea of heathen and superstitious darkness (Peaden, 1970:19; Madhiba, 2000:28; Zvobgo,1991a). Zvobgo (1991a) and Madhiba (2000) present their history as Methodist historians and therefore present the Methodist Church as the pioneer in coming up with the strategy of Christian villages, but for Peaden it was a practice adopted by all missionary societies operating in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). Missionaries viewed these villages as enabling them to have control over the people than in stations outside the villages. According to Peaden (1970:20), the missions formulated rules, not only concerning the general organisation of the villages but also requiring certain behaviour patterns to be observed by the tenants as a condition for tenancy, and the rules varied according to what the individual mission considered to be necessary. The rules and regulations on mission stations were therefore not an invention of the Methodist Church but even Catholics, Anglicans, Salvationists, and many other Churches had their own rules and regulations. Madhiba (2000:28) sees the mission settlement as a tool used by missionaries against African traditional religions and culture because of the strict rules which mitigated against traditional customs and culture. These rules and regulations that were applied by the missionary societies included the banning of widow inheritance and child betrothal, all forms of ancestor worship, banning of polygamy and total abstinence from beer drinking (Peaden.1970:20-21; Zvobgo. 1991a:66; Madhiba. 2000:28).

Mission stations became both attractive and very strict settlements, they could lure people through the incentives they offered and dismissed some through the strictness of rules. People flocked to mission settlements not because they wanted to be uprooted from their culture but because they had discovered the importance of schools and preferred to live closer to schools for the sake of their children (Zvobgo, 1991:67). What is evidently clear is the appeal of material incentives to the African people such that it was possible that they joined mission stations without true conversion. The material incentives offered by the mission settlement included education, which brought with it decent employment and many opportunities, agriculture, which guaranteed food

security, the construction of toilets which assured hygiene, and security for those who lived on the farm (Zvobgo, 1991b:67).

Since mission stations were associated with schools and Africans themselves were discovering the importance of education, the missionaries also put their energies in the construction of mission schools. It is important to note that the schools were not only meant to benefit Africans but the missionaries in their endeavours too. The missionaries saw in education a powerful force by which to weaken the influence of indigenous religion, superstition, and witchcraft in the African society and expedite the acceptance of Christianity (Moyo, 1987:62; Zvobgo, 1991b:86; Keteyi, 1998:25). The result, however, was that education could not weaken the influence and grip of African traditional religion because people had not converted in the true sense of the word and therefore, were not totally weaned from their old beliefs and customs. Peaden (1970) and Zvobgo (1991a) argue that initially, the schools' main objective was religious, meant to strengthen the faith of the converts by enabling them to read the Bible and the Church's instructions about faith, but gradually, due to pressures from various sources, the curricula widened. One of the sources of pressure was the Department of Education following the decision of the legislative council in 1899 to give grants to certain schools (the department demanded certain standards and certain subjects to be taught as a condition for receiving grants (Peaden, 1970:8). It could be argued that because of the demands of the Department of Education the missionaries were forced to change from offering education for religious purposes to an emphasis on academic and industrial training. There was now competition with schools of other missionary societies and so, for them to remain relevant and attractive to young people, they had no choice but to embrace the new curricula.

The emphasis and target of missionary education was the younger generation rather than the older generation (Aguwa, 2007:135; Mucherera, 2001:37; Keteyi:1998:25). The use of education on the young as a vehicle of evangelism and an attempt to uproot African traditional religion made many African scholars to have a negative attitude toward missionary education. Yet for the missionaries, it was fertile ground for evangelism. Even the Wesleyan Methodist mission report of 1930 also shows how schools were used to undermine the African worldview. It reads: "Education is a most important factor in undermining their (African) old beliefs in witchcraft and is the only practical method of opening up these people and the opportunities which we believe should be given to every man to live a fuller life that God purposes for him. Again, our schools give us our opportunity

because of the religious instruction we are able to give through them- to old as well as young” (Zvobgo, 1991b:86-87). The schools therefore became the main vehicles for evangelization, because pupils, and often their parents identified with the Church that controlled the school (Weller and Linden, 1984:89).

The mission farms were not only used as Christian settlements and to build schools, the missionaries also built hospitals meant to help people during illness. Like education, health services were viewed as part of the enlightening programme, the African health care methods and African practitioners were viewed as primitive and unhygienic (Zvobgo, 1991; Madhiba, 2000). The missionaries had assumed that giving health care services to Africans was going to deal a blow to African traditional religion and the *N’angas* (indigenous ritual and healing specialists). The missionaries were opposed to African traditional healers (*N’angas*) and these were not allowed on the mission farms because they were viewed as the source of conflict. Although hospitals were built to benefit Africans through the reduction of infant mortality and increase in life expectancy (Madhiba, 2000), it appears that for the missionaries, the medical missions would counter the role and activities of the African traditional healers and have a cultural effect (Peaden, 1970:16). Seeing the importance of medical missions, the Methodists were prompted to build their first hospital in Zimbabwe at Kwenda in 1913 and the government offered 200 pounds towards the cost of building the hospital (Zvobgo, 1991a:79). Again, we see the involvement of government with missionaries. It seems, however, that the government was not buying any favours from the missionaries but was interested in development.

The missionaries banned participation of converts in traditional religious and social activities, and the converts were expected to abstain from evil which included, visiting or inviting traditional healers, witchcraft, engaging in traditional rituals, and brewing and drinking beer (Hallencreutz, 1998:46; Fry, 2007:113). The commitment of the Methodist Church to teetotalism had effects on the rituals that depended on beer (*Mapira*) which could not always be held (Fry, 2007:114). This is evidence of the temperance of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe towards traditional beer and traditional rituals. Beer in the African society has a prominent place because it is used to celebrate at weddings, funerals, cleansing during illness, communal activities, and during times of calamity or to appease ancestral spirits (Zvobgo, 1991b:71).

When the Methodist missionaries utilized the use of Christian villages, schools, and medical services as vehicles of evangelisation, first, they celebrated because they thought they had won the battle against African traditional religion and customs. Regardless of such celebrations by the missionaries, the beliefs in African traditional religion and its grip on African Christians did not wane. Despite the negative attitude and heavy suppression that African traditional religion and customs suffered, they continued to be practiced by most people in (Rhodesia) Zimbabwe (Thorpe, 1951:65; Moyo, 1987:62; Manyoba, 1991:65). The Methodist missionaries are viewed as having contributed both positively and negatively to Africans and their worldview in Zimbabwe. Education, hygiene, and agriculture uplifted the lives of Africans, yet on the other hand, the same positive aspects were used to destroy the African religion and culture.

The literature in this section helps to illustrate that the Methodist missionaries were part of the missionary innovativeness of several, mostly protestant, missionary societies. It also brings out the link between Methodism in Zimbabwe and British Methodism through its link with the Transvaal district of South Africa, which was directly under the British conference. The ambivalent relationship between the Methodist Missionary society and Mr Cecil John Rhodes is also reviewed in the literature. The literature also shows that the Methodists replicated forms of mission from other missionary societies since they came into Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) when other missionaries were already operating. The missionary approach of the Methodists in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) also evolved from mission for servitude to mission for human development and autonomy. The change of approach was due to competition with other missionary societies and government legislation.

2.4 Methodism after Independence

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) was granted an autonomous status from the British Methodist conference on the 16th of October 1977 (Zvobgo, 1991; Madhiba, 2000:58; Gondongwe, 2011:54; Makoti, 2012:132; Mawire, 2015:48). Twelve years before autonomy, in 1965 the British conference had handed over power to the first black president of the Methodist Church, Rev Andrew Ndhlela, who was also elected the president of the Rhodesia conference by the foundation conference held in Salisbury in 1977 (Madhiba, 2000:60). Mawire (2015) argues that, it took 74 years for the British conference to surrender to a black Zimbabwean and it took 86 years for the Zimbabwean Church to be autonomous (2015:48). The amount of time taken before allowing black leadership and granting an autonomous status to the indigenous Church may have been due to lack

of trust on the capability of the African to direct the activities and the life of the Church. The lack of trust is apparent in the reactions of the missionaries who showed resentment to both the election of the black president and the granting of autonomy to the Rhodesia conference (Gondongwe, 2011:54). Madhiba (2000:59) takes the argument further to say that it was not only the expatriates who had reservations towards the local Methodists' capabilities to bear the responsibility of Methodist work in Rhodesia but also the locals had the same misgivings. The reason for such suspicion especially among the locals may have been because of the inferiority complex that had been propagated by the missionaries and had affected the locals' self-confidence. The missionaries had the resentment to black leadership because they had a superiority complex and thought anything done without their involvement was bound to fail. The other reason given by Madhiba (2000:59), which Gondongwe (2011) does not allude to, is that both the locals and the missionaries had fears that the Local Methodist Church could not sustain itself financially without the aid from the British conference. The reason here is that the missionary Church did not prepare the local for self-sustenance but taught them to be dependent. They were not empowered. The task then before the autonomous Church was to teach Christian giving as a priority in order to see the Church under local leadership move forward and not collapse along the way.

The granting of autonomy to local Methodists was because of several factors. Madhiba argues that the autonomy of the Methodist Church cannot be divorced from the political independence of the state (Madhiba, 2000:60). Madhiba's argument is that due to the political situation obtaining in the country which had become unbearable, the missionary church was forced to hand over power to the locals. This evidenced by the fact that autonomy was granted during the political climax of African politics in the country and after only three years of autonomy Zimbabwe gained her political independence (Makoti, 2012:132). It was not only in Zimbabwe that the Methodist Church's autonomy and the state's political independence occurred close to each other. Sierra Leone, for example, received political independence in 1961 and the autonomy of the Methodists in the country followed in 1967, the Methodist Church in Ghana got its autonomy in 1961 after the state had received political independence in 1957, and Nigeria got political independence in 1960 and the Methodist church in Nigeria got its autonomy from Britain two years later in 1962. One is forced to conclude that maybe if the colonial government had remained in power, the missionaries would not have given up power, but when they saw the colonial government under pressure, they also decided to give up. Apart from political pressure, it was also felt that the local

Methodists had come of age and so were responsible for the life and mission of the Church in the country (Madhiba, 2000:59).

The granting of autonomy to the local Methodists was like a transition from mission to Church (Zvobgo, 1991b). However, this does not imply that the local Methodists no longer had the zeal to evangelize, but that they now had the responsibility to run the Church by themselves. Having just attained autonomy, and with the effects of war still felt among the people, the Zimbabwean Methodist Church in 1979 saw the need for some spiritual, theological and physical rehabilitation, and conference asked for an experienced person from the British Church to come and help in that regard (Chirisa 1991:192; Madhiba, 2000:60). The British Church sent Dr Lovell to come and assist the Zimbabwean Church, only after two years of granting autonomy. Such a move confirms that the African Church was not yet prepared to stand on its own and did not trust its own ministers. Dr Lovell and his team came up with tasks that the postcolonial Church was supposed to carry out. The responsibilities that faced the post-autonomy Methodist Church, according to the Lovell report, comprised the need to experience liberation from colonial thinking, to deal with dependency on the British conference on matters of faith and practice, to make own independent decision without referring to the British Conference, producing own literature and liturgy, training own ministers, the resurgence and importance of African traditional religion and culture, and moving away the European traditional worship to ways that appeal to the African Methodists (Chirisa, 1991:181). Makoti (2012) still feels that the Church has not done much in achieving its numerous tasks as outlined soon after the attainment of Autonomy. He argues that the Church at autonomy inherited most of the ways of doing things and maintained the status quo. The postcolonial Methodist Church maintained Clinics, schools, farms, held the same meetings the missionaries held, denounced anything that the missionaries denounced as superstitious, and did not deal with issues pertaining to African spirituality (Makoti 2012:132-133).

The postcolonial Methodist Church was faced with the challenge of the resurgence of African traditional religion and culture. There was, therefore, a necessity to study and understand the Zimbabwean culture without running the risk of overemphasizing it so that people do not end up confused (Chirisa, 1991:175). The resurgence of African traditional religion and culture was a result of members who had not truly converted but had pretended in order to avoid the discipline and punishment from the missionary Church government. This was a sign that the African

traditional religion and culture were powerful and appealing to the African Methodist. The ties between the African Methodists and their worldview were not easy to break. The Church also faced a serious financial challenge because the African Methodist members were not taught to give so that they may support the Church by themselves.

The dialogue between the Christian faith and African traditional religion has been ongoing in the post-autonomy Methodist Church with no position reached by the Church, and as early as 1981, the relationship between African traditional religion and culture were topical in the Methodist conference (Madhiba, 2000:63; Chirisa, 1991:193). In terms of worship in the postcolonial Church, Makoti (2012) maintains that the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe continued the western way which does not appeal to the people, and for him, it seems that all mainstream Churches are trying to maintain the characteristics of their founding Churches (2012:133). Madhiba, (2000) concurs with Makoti (2012) that although there were deliberate efforts undertaken to localise the Church's forms of worship, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe still has more foreign concepts and components than local ones (Madhiba, 2000:78). The orders of service for holy communion, baptism, marriage, confirmation, and burial are mere translations of British ones, and in some cases, translations still have Latin words which do not have meaning to the ordinary members. The maintaining of characteristics of the founding Churches by most mainstream Churches mentioned by Makoti (2012), is mostly due to the desire to continue an identity that gives a denomination some form of uniqueness. A closer look at the pattern of worship in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe today reveals a different scenario from the one defined by Makoti, we see the incorporation of traditional musical instruments in worships services such as traditional drums, the horn and the singing and dancing resembling the traditional African society. However, the rules that govern the Church, the Christian villages in the farms, and the Church organisations have not changed, which makes Makoti's (2012) argument pertinent. The maintenance of such rules and regulation without changing them may be due to a unique identity and ethos that differentiates Methodists from other denominations. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe still has a stance on marriage that objected to the African traditional approach to marriage, where polygamy and other forms of traditional marriage are not recognised by the Church, and only the missionary view of marriage is accepted in the Methodist Church (Mudavanhu, 2010:131).

2.5 Inculturation and the Church in Southern Africa

When surveying the activities of the missionaries in Africa, one cannot but notice one missing, but essential element. There was no effort towards establishing dialogue between Euro-Christianity and the African society, their culture and religion (Udeani, 2007:115). What occurred, according to Udeani, was a monologue led by different agents of Euro-Christianity to the utter neglect of healthy contact between the two sides. This became a confrontation resulting in the devaluation, and almost annihilation of non-European culture. Udeani (2007:116), maintains that one criticism of such confrontation is because the purported evangelization of Africa was just a forceful and violently coerced transplantation of institutions, symbols, concepts and moral values of European culture. It can be maintained, therefore, according to Udeani, that there was no real encounter between the message of Christ and the indigenous African reality and culture.

Lungira (2009:127), like Udeani analyses the attitude of the missionaries to the African worldview especially the lack of dialogue. He argues; “Christianity was essentially hostile to traditional African religion, destroying statues and shrines and overturning ancient customs as devil worship or being of no significance any longer”. Lungira (2009), however makes a review of his stance on the attitude of Christianity towards African traditional religions. He argues:

In recent decades attitudes, have changed, led by theological changes within the Catholic Church after Vatican II, which encouraged Catholics to see God within all religions, and by changes within Protestantism brought about by the rise of anti-imperialism movement associated with the World Council of Churches (2009:127).

Udeani (2007:116) calls this period of change of attitude by Christianity towards African traditional religion the period of reaction by Africans towards missionaries. During this period, it was not only in the socio-political situation of Africa that the winds of change were blowing, other developments contributed in no small measure to supporting the quest of the Africans, especially Christians, for the indigenization of the message of Christ in Africa (Udeani 2007:121). African theologians and religious studies scholars began to argue that Africa had a form of Christianity that was not distinctly African but rather Eurocentric, and there was a general discomfiture with this form of Christianity (Vanden Berg 2005:46). This movement towards a better understanding of the message of Christ in the African culture led to scholars developing some models of the effort to achieve that concern (Udeani, 2007:116). Various concepts such as indigenization, adaptation,

contextualization, incarnation, and inculturation were developed during this period. All the above models were efforts to indigenize or Africanize the Christian faith.

Vanden Berg (2005:46) argues that scholars such as Baeta, Bediako and John Mbiti underscored the universality of Christianity and that Christianity finds a position of resonance within many cultural contexts because it is eminently translatable. Vanden Berg makes another very important argument, when he notes that with all the models of Africanizing Christianity, there is need to address how Africanization will be carried out. He contests that there are two ways of Africanizing the Church, the top-down and the grounded Africanization of Christianity. No matter what model one is using, inculturation, adaptation, contextualization or incarnation, one should adopt one of the approaches. Vanden Berg describes the top-down approach as follows;

It is the assumption that the incorporation of the African forms of Christianity should come from top down. African Scholars, theologians, and other members of the Church hierarchy, as well as European and North American missionaries, are expected to lead the masses through the Africanization of Christianity. The assumption seems to be that Africanization is a dogmatic endeavour. The endeavour often seems detached from the grounded reality of the people in the Church, it creates a uniquely African Church on a metaphysical level, and such efforts may have little value for those at the grassroots level (Vanden Berg 2005:46).

A weakness of the top-down approach to Africanization of Christianity is that it does not understand the experiences of the people at the grassroots and it is bound to fail because it does not address their concerns. This is the approach that was used by the missionaries during the colonial era (Vanden Berg 2005:6). They did not bother to listen to the spiritual concerns of African Christians. Vanden Berg describes the grassroots approach or grounded integration as:

The ordinary Church members' effort to integrate the two separate yet intertwined circumstances of being African and being Christian. Such efforts are not dependent on Church officials but rather are predicted on day to day living grounded with specific cultural context (Vanden Berg 2005:47).

The grassroots approach is the most effective because it involves ordinary members who form the majority in the Church, since it considers their daily living and experiences and it is not forced on to them, it is bound to be more successful than the top-down approach. This study will discuss the inculturation model as a way of Africanizing Christianity.

According to Antonio (2006:1) inculturation as a discourse tends to be oppositional and is concerned with the impact of colonialism on cultures, traditions and worldviews of formerly

colonized territories and with the reactions and responses of colonized subjects to their historical plight. Like Antonio, Magesa (2004:5) and Mwandayi (2011:78) also argue that from a Christian theological perspective, inculturation is the process whereby the faith already embodied in one culture encounters another culture, and in this encounter the faith becomes part and parcel of this new culture. In the same vein Keteyi (1998:36) and Acheampong (1998:29) argue that inculturation is an approach to evangelism that seeks to find a home for the Christian faith in diverse cultures and an accommodation of cultures in the Christian faith. Culture, for Keteyi (1998:36), is no longer seen as hostile to the gospel but as the context in which the gospel offers its challenges. It is an intricate relationship where neither Christianity nor culture should give up its goodness. Keteyi further argues that what is significant in the process of inculturation is the recognition that no one culture can contain the entire message of God's reign. Like Keteyi (1998), Osei- Bonsu (2005:21) argues that during inculturation there must be a mutual and critical dialogue and integration, and there should be no room for cultural and spiritual domination. In the exercise of inculturation, a distinction needs to be made between what is essential to Christianity and what is peripheral, and therefore, to be dispensed with.

Justin Ukpong (1999), like the above scholars, also argues that inculturation takes as its starting point the strong interaction of the Christian faith with all aspects of African culture. Ukpong further argues that due to lack of attention to specifically African religio-cultural issues such as belief in ancestors, the spirits, spirit possession, witchcraft, etc. by missionaries and western theology, inculturation seeks now to redress the situation by adopting a holistic approach to culture whereby all aspects of culture are seen as interconnected and having implications on one another. Kä Mana (2004:90) contends that inculturation refers to a vast field, where missionary theologies are challenged by the firm desire to develop an African Christianity, designed, conceived and experienced by Africans themselves through their creative intellect and concrete hopes. The argument Kä Mana is putting forth is that inculturation is like a time of recovery by Africans from the negative attacks on their belief systems. Hilman (1993:8), like Kä Mana, argues that the colonial processes undermined the values and worldviews of entire cultural worlds, the victims were stripped naked and taught in schools and Churches to be ashamed of themselves, and were coerced morally as well as physically into clothing themselves with the ways of an invading culture. Waligo (1998:113) has the same view as Hilman that missionaries carried with them the Christian doctrine and culture as developed in their respective countries, they came to preach and

not to listen or learn. Therefore, inculturation for Waligo becomes a quest for African identity, it is a discursive postcolonial African response to the intercultural problem created by the expansion of Christianity to Africa.

In all the above usages, the concept of inculturation stands for the penetration and taking root of the Christian message and the springing up of a Christian life in a way that accepts the uniqueness of each culture (Udeani, 2007:130). The literature on inculturation is useful to this study, specifically on how the colonial Church laws, rules, and policies were developed and are still used to regulate and exclude indigenous culture and customs in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe.

2.6 Church Governance

This section reviews literature on Church governance, particularly the Methodist Church governance. Siwa (2014) argues that “The laws and discipline is an ecclesiastical and organizational tool that is meant to assist in the effective and orderly governance of the Church. It is a blend of history, doctrine, policy, ordinances and guidelines that have been agreed upon by past conferences” (*The Methodist Order Book: The laws and discipline of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa* 2014:4). The argument that Siwa is putting forth is that, governance is indispensable in the life of the Church, as in any organization, for it to carry out programs effectively achieve the desired coordination which is necessary for any progressive organisation. The literature will be reviewed under two themes, the governance of the Methodist Church in general, and the governance of the Methodist Church in postcolonial contexts.

2.6.1 Methodist Church Governance

Governance in the Methodist Church can be traced back to the year 1743 when John and Charles Wesley sat down to draft a document called “The nature, design, and the general rules of the united society” (*Laws and Regulations of the Methodist Church of New Zealand*, 2007). These general rules were used in the early years of the spread of Methodism as the governing constitution for those who desired to be members of the Methodist Society (Madhiba 2000:29). However, with the passage of time, these rules have been modified, revised and improved depending on the different experiences in the mission field. However, some major features remain in many Methodist constitutions across the world.

Most constitutions of the Methodist Church across the world have a structure that is quite analogous, though there are minor differences in names and titles in the structures. The constitution

of the Methodist Church in Fiji gives five levels in the Church Structure: the class, the local Church, the Circuit, the Divisions, and the annual Conference (*The constitution of the Methodist Church in Fiji, Chapter 5*). The Methodist Church Nigeria also has five levels in its administrative structure, which are the preaching station or the local Church, the circuit, the dioceses, the Archdioceses, and the Conference (*Constitution of the Methodist Church Nigeria, 2006:11-12*). The structure of government for the Wesleyan Methodist Church of New Zealand gives five levels: the local Church, the district level, the national level, the regional level, and the international level (*Wesleyan Methodist Church of New Zealand National constitution, 2014:29*). The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe's administrative structure also has five levels in its government structure: the society or local Church, the Circuit, the District, and the connexion (Mawire, 2015:48; Madhiba, 2000:75). Though the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas (MCCA) accepts the five level on the structures of other Methodist conferences, they emphasize the importance and place of the class, which is the basic pastoral unit of the Methodist Church, as the first level in the structure (*hollandmethodistchurch.org*).

The divisions in the administrative structures worldwide are practically the same and only differ in the names given by each conference. The level referred in most conferences as the district has other names in other conferences. For instance, in the Fiji constitution it is called a division, in Nigeria they are referred to as the dioceses. The titles of officers also differ from one conference to the other. For instance, the head of the Church in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe and the Methodist Church of Southern Africa is the Presiding Bishop. Titles such as presbyter, president, Archbishop are used for officers in other conferences. The preamble to the *Laws and rules of the Methodist Church of New Zealand, 2007*, states from the beginning Methodism has been under the authority of the conference. The conference, in all Methodist conferences, is the governing body of the Methodist Church, and its decisions are final and binding upon both the ordained and lay members of the Church (*The Constitutional practice and discipline of the Methodist Church, 2013:219, Laws and Regulations of the Methodist Church of New Zealand, 2007:5, Methodist Church Nigeria constitution and Standing Orders with deed of foundation and deed of Church Order, 2006:11-12, Constitution of the Methodist Church Fiji, Chapter 5, Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, Deed of Church Order and Standing Orders, 2011:, The Methodist Book of Order, 2014*). When the conference meets annually, in all nations, it has two sessions, the ministerial or Presbyteral session and the Lay session. The ministerial session discusses business that primarily

concern the ministers, but the representative session is like the final authority on all matters because its resolutions are binding. Though the conference, in most Methodist contexts, has jurisdiction over all Church matters of doctrine, discipline, organisation, finance, land, and property, there are other Church courts that are responsible to the Conference. The district synods are the governing bodies in the districts, the Circuits quarterly meetings are the governing body in each Circuit, and the local leaders' meetings are the governing body at the local Church, and all exercise their authority and govern on behalf of the conference.

There are also important committees in the running of the Methodist Church the world over. These include the Standing committee and the Bishop's council which in some cases is called the President's committee of advice (*constitution of the Methodist Church Fiji*:11, *Laws and Rules of the Methodist Church of New Zealand*:72). The standing committee is elected by conference annually to act on its behalf in any matters that may arise between the annual conferences, and to make sure that the resolutions of conference are carried out and that all outstanding issues on the conference agenda are dealt with. The Bishop's council or the President's committee of advice is meant to give advice to the head of the Church on any matter on which it is consulted by the head of the Church (*Methodist Church in Zimbabwe Standing Orders and Deed of Church Order* (2011), *Laws and Rules of the Methodist Church of New Zealand*, p.72)

2.6.2 Government of the postcolonial Methodist Church in Zimbabwe

During the early years of establishment, Methodism in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) was under the control of the Transvaal district, which was itself directly under the administration of the British conference (Mawire, 2015:48). Methodism in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) got district status in 1894 under the chairmanship of Isaac Shimmin who led until 1898. After him came Alfred Sharp from 1898 to 1903, John White from 1903 to 1927, Frank Noble from 1927 to 1939, Herbert Carter from 1939 to 1954, and Jessie Lawrence from 1955 to 1965 (Hewson, 1950:53-54; Kadenge, 1991:111-113; Mawire, 2015:48). During his tenure as the chairman of the Methodist Church Rhodesia district, Jessie Lawrence began planning for the decentralisation of the administration of the Methodist Church in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) in 1963 by creating four area councils, namely Bulawayo, Marandellas, Salisbury, and Selukwe (Mawire, 2015; Kadenge, 1991:113). It is important to note that historians think that Lawrence was only responding to the need for decentralization due to the massiveness of the district and the need for smooth governance, and

not due to political pressure triggered by the national liberation war in the country. The decentralization of the district could be interpreted as giving in to both the political pressure and to the pressure of work in the district.

In 1965 Rev Andrew Ndhlela took over the chairmanship of the Methodist Church Rhodesia district from Jesse Lawrence and took over the administrative structure of the area councils that was initiated by his predecessor (Gondongwe, 2011:54; Mawire, 2015:48). When the Methodist Church Rhodesia district got its autonomy on the 16th of October 1977 and became a conference, the four area councils were transformed into districts. The foundation conference elected Rev Andrew Ndhlela as its first black African president. The election of Ndhlela can be viewed in several ways, as a way of giving in to political pressure that was mounting from black nationalists who were advocating for black rule, the genuine idea that the Africans were ripe to take over the leadership of the Church, or he was only to be a place holder without real authority as a way of dealing with tension. Before the granting of autonomy, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) had three levels which made up its structure, and these were, the Society Circuit and, the District (Madhiba, 2000:74). A fourth level was added to the three at autonomy, and this was the conference of the Methodist Church Rhodesia (Madhiba, 2000:74). The government of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe today is pyramidal in nature, at the summit is the conference, and this type of government is not peculiar to Zimbabwean Methodism but is distinctive of Methodism the world over. Below the national level or connexional level there are districts which help to devolve the administration of the church and to enable members to have a sense of solidarity with the wider Church (*Constitution of the Church of Fiji, Chapter 5*). The Districts are made up of circuits grouped together by conference and are under the direction of a District Bishop. Beneath the Districts, there are Circuits, and these consist of Churches grouped together, generally because of close proximity to each other. These are under the care of the Superintendent who is responsible to the conference for the administration of his/her Circuit (Mawire,2015:40). The Superintendent is responsible for ensuring that the Standing Orders of the conference and other procedures are observed and relates closely with the District Bishop who has responsibility of oversight of Circuits within his district (Mawire, 2015). Further down there are local Churches which are each run by a church council which is responsible for ordering the life of the Church and the maintenance of property in conformity with the requirements of conference. Mawire (2015) argues that at this stage, the local Churches do not have much autonomy.

The conference in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is the overall legislative and governing body, with regards to matters of doctrine, discipline, and organization. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe conference meets annually and is Chaired by the Presiding Bishop who is the head of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. Mawire (2015) argues that when conference sits, it has two sessions, the ministerial and representative session. The ministerial session deals with matters of ministers and discipline, while the representative session deals with doctrinal ones. The oversight that Mawire makes is that there have been some changes over the years and the sessions of conference are no longer two but three. There is now the lay session which sits concurrently with the ministerial session with an agenda similar to the ministerial one except that it does not discuss matters concerning ministers. The two sessions then meet in the representative session of conference which makes binding resolutions (*Methodist Church in Zimbabwe Deed of Church Order and Standing Orders*, 2011). The lay session of conference is presided over by the connexional lay President who, per recent developments in the Church, is second in command to the Presiding Bishop. The move to have the lay session of conference and the elevation of a lay person is meant to not only empower lay people but to show that the Church is for both the clergy and the laity and all are free to contribute constructively to the church.

There are very important committees in the government of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe that need special mention. These are the Standing committee and the Bishop's council. The work of the standing committee is between conferences, it exercises powers that are normally vested in the conference (*Methodist Church in Zimbabwe Deed of Church Order and Standing Orders*, 2011). The committee deal with issues that should have been dealt with by the conference but because there will be some time before conference sits, the standing committee takes the responsibility. The Bishop's council is also an important committee in the administration of the Church, this committee acts like the policy reviewer of the Church and the advisory body to the head of the Church. However, the committee does not have any statutory executive powers (Mawire, 2015:41). Apart from the two committees, the Presiding Bishop himself has the authority to exercise those powers that are normally vested in the conference in some instances (Mawire, *ibid*).

The form of Church government outlined above, where the conference, and not an individual, is different to the time of John Wesley when he had much authority centred on himself. The

Methodist Church system of Church government has led many, especially its adherents and members, to claim that they are the most democratic Churches. Mawire (2015) argues against the claim that the Methodist Church is a democratic Church, he asserts that “Although members are democratically elected, there seems to be no democracy for the rank and file of the membership have little or no part in the government of the Church” (2015:41). The argument Mawire is making is that the ordinary members of the Church hardly have their voices heard in the structure that has its own complications and would require and involve the elite and the powerful to participate at the expense of the underprivileged. The fact that only some chosen few participate in the decision-making bodies of the Church, which include the Conference and the Synod, means that the feelings and views of the ordinary members are hardly taken up. However, there is the argument that their voices are heard because the debates follow the structure of the Church which starts at the grassroots level, the society, right up to the supreme body of the Church, the Conference. Each level in the structure, the society, circuit, district, and connexion, is a platform for members’ participation in policy making and evaluation of Church activities (Madhiba, 2000:75). Such a structure enables members to feel that they belong to the Church and that they own the Church (Madhiba 2000). The only problem is that when issues are taken up to be discussed in platforms that make binding decisions, the ordinary members are excluded from making follow ups in the meetings but are expected to accept the decisions that come down.

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe had to add another level to its structure out of necessity. The level that was added from the ones inherited from the colonial Church is the section and it fits between the local Church and the society and the Circuit (Madhiba 2000: 75). The level became relevant and necessary because some Circuits, especially rural ones, were too vast and difficult to administer. The section helped group together societies that were close to each other within the Circuit. Yet, Madhiba (2000) still feels that there is need to consider other ways of delimiting circuits because some are still very too big for effective administration.

2.7 Chapter Summary

The Chapter offers a thematic review and interpretation of literature related to my area of study. The three themes under which literature was reviewed are, the History of Christian missions in Africa, particularly Methodist Missions; Church and inculturation in Southern Africa, and Church governance. The first section deals with the history of Christian mission in Africa in general and

in Southern Africa, the second section looked at literature relating to the encounter between the Christian faith and African traditional religions and culture, the third deals with Church governance, particularly, Methodist Church governance.

The history of mission in Africa reveals that there were several missionary societies or Christian denominations that came to Africa, including Southern Africa, to propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the Methodist Missionary Society was one of them. The missionary societies had an ambivalent relationship with the colonial government to the extent that the good intentions of the Missionary societies were contaminated and stained by this relationship. Missionaries, across the denominational divide, had different views of mission and different attitudes towards the locals and the African worldview. Among the missionaries were those advocating for mission for servitude and those who promoted mission for the autonomy and advancement of Africans. The activities of the missionaries in Southern Rhodesia could not be divorced from the events in the entire continent of Africa and in the Southern Africa region. Mission activities in Zimbabwe were carried out by several denominations of a protestant orientation: the LMS, the Dutch Reformed Church, the Anglicans, the Wesleyan Methodist Society and the Salvationists. The Roman Catholics were also part of the missionary activities in Zimbabwe. The Methodist missionary society was a latecomer in the mission field, coming after the Catholics, the LMS, the Anglicans, and the Dutch Reformed Church. Being a foot-dragger, the Methodist Missionary Society had to adopt most of the missionary strategies that the other societies were already engaging, such as using education, health systems, and Christian villages as vehicles for mission.

The strategies for mission mentioned above were both positive and negative. They were positive in that they brought enlightenment and progress in the lives of the native who embraced the new systems. Negatively, the strategies were meant to eradicate African traditional religions and culture, by weaning the Africans from their belief system, customs and culture. The missionary strategies as tools of eradicating African religion and culture failed because African customs, religion and culture were deeply rooted in the people and conversion of Africans in most cases was not honest but only for incentives. During the encounter, the missionaries did not appreciate the value of African traditional religion and culture but exhibited negative attitudes by demonising everything African as evil and superstitious. It was, however, not all missionaries who had a

negative attitude towards African traditional religion, customs and culture, because some showed much appreciation of the African worldview and the capability of Africans.

The Methodist Church in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) at autonomy, handed over to Africans the authority to lead the Church and decide its own future. The handing over of power was necessitated by two factors, namely, the political pressure from nationalistic resistance and fight for black rule in the country, and the realization that the black Methodists in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) were ready for self-government. The autonomous church was faced with several tasks that it had to work on, such as to teach and do research on African traditional religion and culture because of their resurgence, to come up with own liturgies and literature, to train indigenous clergy, and work to attain independence on matters of faith and practice. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) inherited the pyramidal system of government, which is the system of government used by Methodists globally, with few and minor variations. The variations include the number and names of levels on the administrative structure, differences in the titles for officers, and the names of the Church courts. Despite the minor variations, Methodist governance is identical all over the world, since all Methodist Conferences agree that the Conference is the supreme body of the organisation.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORY AND METHOD: INTERROGATING THE ARCHIVE

3.1. Introduction

This study adopted and was guided by two theoretical frameworks, which are deemed useful and relevant. These include postcolonial theory and the Foucauldian concept of governmentality. Postcolonial theory, in this study, offers a critical lens and at the same time is used as an analytical tool with which to interrogate the relationship between Methodist Christianity and the African worldview and culture, and to examine the impact of colonial conception of Christianity as religion, and the various ways this imperial science of religion continues to find expression in ecclesial governance in the contemporary Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. Since one of the attempts of postcolonial theory is to formulate non-Western modes of discourse as viable means of challenging the West (Quayson, 2000:2), it was used to challenge the existing ideas about what constitutes religion in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe.

Postcolonial theory was engaged to illuminate the effects of colonial discourse, which is ambivalent in that it simultaneously recognizes and disavows differences of culture, race, history, and so on with the result that it produces the once colonised as a social reality and at the same time as the 'Other' (Bhabha, 1994:70-71). While postcolonialism seeks to deconstruct the effects of colonialism in many aspects of life such as in material, political, pedagogical, discursive, and

textual dominations (Kwek, 2003:128), this study is more concerned with the analysis and deconstruction of Methodist Church discourse about what counts as religion. Postcolonial theory in this study concerns itself (1) with the link between the Methodist Church's colonial ideas about religion, and its residues the present MCZ, and (2) with reimagining the status and authority of African traditional religion in the postcolonial context.

Postcolonial theory in this study does not only interrogate the relationship between the Methodist Church's colonial past and its present state, it also concerns itself with how the members of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe have forged and maintained relationships between Christianity and indigenous culture, and how they have resisted cultural domination of colonial Methodism. The aim of postcolonial theory is to make visible the intricate forces that were at work (Venn: 2006:29) in the production of the Methodist ecclesiology and to help the formerly colonized members to come up with new and emancipatory discourse for the indigenous Church.

The Foucauldian concept of governmentality has essential elements, such as discipline and power, that are useful in carrying out this study. Governmentality in this study is used to illuminate the procedures, analyses, reflections, calculations and tactics (Foucault, 1995:176) that the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe employs to govern and administer its members. The rules and laws that the Methodist Church uses were critically examined in this study.

Although Foucault identifies various kinds of power in his analysis of governmentality, this study will focus on pastoral power, both as a political type of power and as a power of care. Pastoral power as pastoral care is non-violent and its goal is the salvation of the flock and the pastor or shepherd is prepared to sacrifice self for the flock (Golder, 2007:165; Ojakangas, 2010). Pastoral power as a political type of power is when it involves systematic violence (Zizek, 2009:1; Mayes, 2010:111- 126). This is when pastoral care is expressed through violence of exclusion in order to maintain order in the community or institution. Church discourse is used to exclude the non-orthodox members of the Church and to control their conduct, behaviour, aptitudes, and capacities. Governmentality, in this study, is used to show that Church discourse defines what should be included, and what is prohibited, and that Church discourse is a political force, with the power to silence and demand utterance (Carrette, 2000:42).

The use of discourse by the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is evidence of the Church's way of carrying out surveillance on its members using rules and laws. The power of discourse to discipline

and exclude makes it feared and, at the same time, memorized by all members, which makes its application easy and effective. The Foucauldian concept of governmentality and postcolonial theory are relevant to this study since the research deals with the rules and laws that govern the Church, especially against African traditional religion and culture. These laws and rules were produced by the colonial Church and therefore a product of the colonial past, which have been resisted and challenged over the years.

The chapter also outlines and discusses the methodology that guides the research. This includes the research design, the research methods and procedures for implementing the research design, instruments for data collection, process and method of data analysis, ethical considerations and the limitations of the study. The research uses the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe's documents which include the Standing Orders and deed of Church Order, organisational policy document and minutes of conference to see how the colonial Church rules and regulations were used as tools to regulate and play down the African religious beliefs and customs.

To get an in-depth understanding of the origins, theological and ideological justification, and the impact the colonial rules, Archival research was conducted. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe Archive and the National Archive of Zimbabwe were visited by the researcher several times to gather relevant data for this research. The postcolonial approach to Archival research was engaged as an attitude and way of reading the Archival records. This basically means that the researcher specifically looked for the misrepresentations of the locals in the archival material. Church documents were used in this research as the instruments for data collection. Critical Discourse Analysis was engaged as a method of data analysis to develop theories and hypotheses from the gathered data.

The chapter also discusses all the ethical considerations that were made during the research. The limitations of the research process are also outlined and discussed, and these include the problems and shortcomings that the researcher encountered, which also had a bearing on the research and its findings.

3.2 Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonialism marks out the supposed historical period as well as a distinct form of theorization and analysis (Rattansi, 1997; Kwek, 2003:127; Childs and Patrick, 2008:1). McLeod (2000), distinguishes between postcolonialism as a chronological marker and as a way of theorizing by using a hyphen. Post-colonialism, for him, denotes a period after the empire, whereas 'postcolonialism' refers to disparate forms of representations, reading practices and values that can circulate across the barrier between colonial rule and national independence (McLeod, 2000:5). This study moves away from the chronological implications of postcolonialism towards the emphasis on a 'coming into being' of resistance, tensions and struggles against the many guises and effects of colonialism (Kwek, 2003:128). Key scholars, some of whom are considered progenitors of Postcolonial theory, include, Edward Said, Ashis Nandy, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Spivak (Prasad, 1997:8). Although postcolonial theory emerged as a mode of enquiry into the cultural, political, and literary impact of colonialism, it is the impact of colonialism on culture that this study is much focused on. According to Fanon:

The decolonization cannot be considered fully effected until and unless the domain of culture is also included in the liberation struggle (Gilbert, 1997:164).

Postcolonial theory is an important device for analysing the cultural dynamics of control, resistance, and representation in the process of colonialism and its purported aftermath (Kwek, 2003:127). Colonialism which was experienced by a significant section of the currently impoverished regions of the world over the past 500 years, not only facilitated the process of wealth appropriation by the colonial powers, but also served to impose a certain homogenizing discourse that denied legitimacy to a variety of perspectives and episteme (Mir, Mir and Upadhyaya 2003:48). The above therefore suggests that postcolonial theory emerged as a mode of enquiry into the cultural, political, economic, and literary impact of imperial expansion by European states across much of the globe (Carey and Festa, 2009:3). According to Gandhi (1998)" as a practice, postcolonial theory commits itself to a complex project of historical and psychological recovery, it seeks to assist the subjects of colonialism to live with gaps and fissures of their condition, then learn to proceed with self-understanding".

Postcolonialism involves a studied engagement with the experience of colonialism and its past and present effects on ex-colonial societies (Quayson, 2000:2). The colonial experiences are often very vast, and they range from slavery, migration, suppression and resistance, difference, race, gender,

and the responses to discourses of imperial Europe, such as history, philosophy, anthropology and linguistics (Quayson 2000). Postcolonialism also involves attempts to formulate non-Western modes of discourse as a viable means of challenging the West (Quayson 2000). This was one of the aims of this study which sought to challenge the missionary and colonial discourse of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe and suggest a reformulation and realignment of this discourse according to the needs of the contemporary Church. Therefore, postcolonialism provides this study with a framework that destabilizes dominant discourse about the persistence of missionary Christianity in MCZ and offers a critique of the inherent assumptions and discursive legacies relation to the position of indigenous religion.

Postcolonial theory starts with the recognition that the neo-colonial world order of our time is extremely unfair and unjust, and that justice and human freedom are indivisible and that achieving true freedom and justice requires genuine global decolonization at political, economic and cultural levels (Prasad, 2003:7). Many scholars agree that the principal aim of postcolonial theory and criticism is to “provincialize Europe”, or assign Europe its proper place in the globe (Prasad and Prasad 2003; Chakrabarty. 2000; Prasad, 1997). In support of the above, Prasad and Prasad (2003:284) argue that,

The postcolonial agenda is crucially enmeshed with the goal of assigning Europe its appropriate place in the global order of cultures and civilizations, or in other words, with the goal of provincializing Europe.

However, Prasad and Prasad (2003) further argue that provincializing Europe should not be read as a desire on the part of postcolonial theory to exclude or marginalize the West, rather, the postcolonial agenda is informed by a concern to prepare the stage for a genuine democratic colloquium between the antagonistic inheritors of the colonial aftermath (2003:292). Provincializing Europe through the postcolonial critique, according to Prasad, does not seek to invest an automatic emancipatory possibility to all the local narratives. Attempts to provincialize Europe or assign Europe its proper place in the world order of cultures and civilizations results from an extremely self-referential view of the West, which is then presented to the world as a universal viewpoint, to the extent that it obscures the intimate, and often violent dialogue that is taking place between the Western and non-Western worlds on a variety of contested terrains (Mir, and Upadhyaya, 2003:54).

Postcolonial theory is about the decolonization of representation; the decolonization of the West's theory about the non-West, and challenging white mythologies (Bush, 2006:54). This decolonization also involves attempts to formulate non-Western discourse as a way of standing up to and challenging the West and its forms of discourse (Quayson, 2000:2). Apart from provincializing Europe, postcolonial theory also seeks to understand colonialism, postcolonialism and other related phenomena by means of investigating the role therein not only of Western political and economic practices, but also Western culture, knowledge, and epistemology (Prasad and Prasad 2003:284). The aim of postcolonial theory, therefore, would be to develop a fine-grained understanding of the multiplicity of instruments and causes that combined to perpetuate the current international regime of exploitation and deprivation, and their wide-ranging effects on peoples, cultures, economies, epistemologies, and so on (Prasad and Prasad: 2003:284).

In its analyses of colonialism and neo-colonialism, postcolonial theory also seeks to challenge peoples from former colonies to become active agents responding to, revisiting the historical conditions of unprecedented violence and cruelty (Prasad and Prasad 2003). Postcolonial theory, as already alluded to, seeks to reformulate Western and non-Western discourse (Quayson, 2000). First the theory examines the ways in which the literature of the colonial powers is used to justify colonialism through the perpetuation of images of the colonized as inferior (Lye, 1998:6). In this respect, postcolonial theory focuses on the way in which literature by the colonizing culture distorts the experiences and realities and inscribes the inferiority of the colonized people on literature by colonized peoples which attempts articulate their identity and reclaim their past in the face of that past's inevitable otherness (Lye 1998:6).

Postcolonial theory aims at relating modern day events, phenomena, and knowledge systems based on their implicit, explicit or even potential relationships (Kwek, 2003:128). As already highlighted, postcolonial theory seeks to resist and deconstruct the effects of colonialism in the material, historical, political, pedagogical, discursive, and textual dominations – including the discourses related to indigenous beliefs and practices. However, Pennycook (1998:16) argues that it is cultural colonization and its effects that need to be at the centre of postcolonial theory and criticism. Postcolonialism challenges the discursive authority of the centre (West) by exposing its violent effects and listening to the voices that provide alternative perspectives (Kohn and McBride, 2011:120). Postcolonial theory seeks to contextualize the modernist and colonial experience as

one part of the histories of colonized societies (Mir and Upadhyaya, 2003:54). This means that postcolonial theory encourages the once colonized to use their history, the history of subjugation and exploitation as subjects, as stepping blocks to build the future, this painful history should not be discarded. According to Mir, Mir, and Upadhyaya (2003:54);

Despite the loss and subordination of knowledge systems that resulted from the contact with Euro modernity, there still exists, in however fragmented form, enduring carryovers of various knowledge systems, belief systems, systems of spirituality, and connectedness with nature that need to be articulated and examined.

Postcolonialism, therefore, aims at recovering fragments from the colonial scene, fragments of the various aspects of life, and putting these together as a way redefining the self.

3.2.2. Postcolonial Theory as a mode of literary criticism

Apart from the many aims of postcolonial theory outlined above, postcolonial theory in this study will be utilized as a mode of literary criticism. Postcolonial theory will be used as a critical approach dealing with literature produced by the colonial Methodist Church as well as by the contemporary Methodist Church. According to Lye (1998), postcolonial theory as a literary theory does not only deal with literature produced in countries that were once colonies of other countries, but it also deals with literature written by citizens of colonizing countries that take colonies or their people as its subject matter (1998:16). The focus is to examine ways in which the MCZ literature (historical and current) is used to justify ideas of indigenous religion as inferior.

The insistence of postcolonial theory as a literary theory according to Gilbert (1997), is upon the importance of studying literature together with history, politics, sociology and other art forms rather than in isolation from the multiple material and intellectual contexts which determine its production and reception (1997:8). The motivation for such an insistence is that the European model of colonialism is overlaid with a discourse that locates the colonized as the 'other' and inferior being, to be brought under the tutelage of the Colonisers (Venn, 2006:11). This type of colonial discourse combines physical, epistemic violence, the denial of the authority and validity of the knowledge of the colonized, ontological violence, the refusal to recognize colonized subjects as fellow human beings, and the symbolic and psychic violence, the silencing of the voice of the colonized, and denial of their ability to tell their own story (Venn, 2006). The analysis of discourse as an instrument of power is what inspires postcolonial theory (Kohn and McBride, 2011:6).

Postcolonial theory studies literature, especially colonial discourse, to show that in a way, it is a discourse of control which has been justified in institutions such as the church to expel recalcitrant members (Taylor, 1967). The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is viewed in this study as using its Standing Orders (the church's constitution and laws) and supporting ecclesial policies as a means of eliminating those members who are not prepared to adhere to the rules and laws of the Church – notwithstanding the fact that these laws are products of colonial Christianity. Postcolonial theory studies colonial discourse not only as presenting the colonised as subjects, but also as a social reality and as active agents as far as their destiny is concerned. According to Bhabha (1994),

The effect of colonial discourse is the ambivalent production of 'that otherness' which is at once an object of desire and derision, and moreover colonial discourse is ambivalent also because it simultaneously recognizes as well as disavows differences of race, culture, history and so on, with the result that this discourse produces the colonized as a social reality which is at once an 'other' and yet entirely knowable and visible (1994:70-71).

It is therefore the task of postcolonial theory, when analysing colonial discourse, to bring out the ambivalent nature of this discourse, and to bring out the positives out of as well. To come up with a kind of contemporary discourse that is well balanced and addresses contemporary concerns. Postcolonial theory should challenge and destabilize the dominant discourse about both the colonizer and the colonized and come up with discourse that does not discard the history of the colonizer and the colonized, yet it gives a voice to the once colonized.

For Venn, the tools of postcolonial theory have made visible the complex forces at work and, importantly, pointed to the agency of the subaltern or the subjugated in determining the outcome of new strategies of governmentality (2006:29). Carey and Festa (2009:3) argue in the same vein that postcolonial theory helped to make visible indigenous indigenous practices of resistance and has opened new avenues to critique of colonialism. Using postcolonial theory, it becomes clear to both the colonizer and the colonised societies that there is no universal culture, knowledge system, or belief system, and that the universalizing of such was a fallacy. Kohn and McBride (2011) also support the argument that the influence of postcolonial theory is to challenge the authority of the West, which is believed to have been the centre of knowledge production, by exposing its violent effects on cultures, worldviews, knowledge systems and belief systems (Kohn and McBride, 2011:120).

3.3. The Foucauldian concept of Governmentality

As I have already alluded, the Foucauldian concept of governmentality was employed in this study to illuminate the techniques, policies, controls, and schemes by the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe to govern its members' relationship with African traditional religions, culture and rituals. The concept was used to critically examine the rules and laws that govern the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, its organisations and its farms.

Institutions, organizations, societies, and different bodies require some form of direction, administration, management, control, and supervision. According to Foucault (1991), government is quite necessary in any institution. Rodgers (2009) concurs with Foucault when he declares that

Human society can neither be well ordered nor prosperous unless it has some people vested with legitimate authority to preserve its institutions and to devote themselves as far as is necessary to work and care for the good of all. God made human beings social by nature, and no society can hold together unless someone directs all to strive earnestly for the common good. Every civilized society must have a ruling authority, which has its source in nature, and consequently God for its author (2009:93).

Government, for Foucault, speaks of the ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power, which has as its target the population, and as its principal form of knowledge, political economy, and as its essential technical means, apparatus of security (Foucault, 1995:176). Olssen (2008:35), explains the Foucauldian concept of governmentality as the structure of power by which conduct is organised and by which governance is aligned with self-organising capacities of individual subjects. It deals with certain modes of governing individuals. Foucault's governmentality, therefore, refers to the approaches, styles, ways and means of exerting control over individuals in several aspects of their life. The techniques and procedures used by institution to control and sway individual members and populations vary from one institution to the other, and these include the use of discipline, surveillance, discourse, and violence.

Mills (2004:47), Carrette (2000), and Brockling et al (2011:1) are in accord with the above that Foucault's governmentality stands for a range of forms of action and fields of practice aimed, in complex ways, at steering individuals and collectives, and on how the shaping of individuals activities can be achieved. According to O'Farrell (2007:5,138), Foucault's governmentality was

originally used to describe a way of administering populations in modern European history within the context of the rise of the idea of the state, but later the definition was expanded to encompass the techniques and procedures designed to govern the conduct of individuals and populations at every level, not only at the administrative or political levels. Since governmentality can be applied at every level of society, the same can be used to examine the techniques and procedures used by the Methodist Church, as a level of society, to govern its members. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe's laws and rules, examined in this study, are used to 'steer individuals and collectives' and to shape their activities. These laws and rules are mastered and recited by each individual member and the church at large and help to bring uniformity and conformity. In these rules and laws, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe has encoded its expectations, and they help the Church to get the desired coordination and control.

According to Douglas (1986:48),

The more fully institutions encode expectation, the more they put uncertainty under control, with the effect that behaviour tends to conform to the institutional matrix: If this degree of coordination is achieved, disorder and confusion disappear. Institutions put rules or principles into codes to gain coordination and control.

Though governmentality brings about coordination and control in an institution, there is also a tendency to make the members passive and submissive because the institution does everything on their behalf, including thinking for them. Douglas (1986) points this problem out;

Besides encoding information, social institutions make routine decisions, solve routine problems, and do a lot of regular thinking on behalf of individuals (1986:48).

When an institution deals with its members this way, it becomes a convention. It becomes normative and all parties have a common interest and there is a rule to insure coordination, or that no one has a conflicting interest, and that no one will deviate. Further, if members are placed under such powerful coercion, there is really no choice but to obey. Social sanctions will be applied to penalise uncooperative behaviour (Douglas, 1986:32, 46). Nicoll and Fejes (2008:14) argue that the focus of governmentality is studying the specific historical practices, the discourses produced by and producing these practices, and how the different subject positions are constituted through them. Governmentality in this study will be used to examine the historical practice of colonialism and mission, the missionary teaching and beliefs which were later encoded, and the subject position accorded African Methodist Christians.

Governmentality, according to Lemke (2002:49-64), is first and foremost concerned with guidance. However, this does not exclude the consensual forms of recourse to violence. It signifies that coercion or consensus are reformulated as means of government among others. What Lemke implies is that in governmentality, the institution becomes the place for both guidance and punishment. In institutional discourses, including the discourses of religious organisations, there are expectations to be followed as well as consequences for failure to follow, and all these must be known by every member of the institution. The institutional discourses and codes of behaviour seem very friendly but at the same time they are punitive if not properly followed.

The other crucial point that Foucault raises in his analyses of governmentality is what he terms “conduct of conduct” and it starts from governing oneself to governing others (Lemke, 2002:46-64). However, a closer and critical analysis reveals that sometimes government is about governing others and not much about governing the self. It is about putting restrictions and limitations on others and not oneself. The historical study of the origins of the discourse of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe reveals that Methodist missionaries constructed policies, rules, and laws for black Methodist Christians and the same laws excluded the white section of the membership in their application. The white sections were considered more civilized than their black counterparts. This confirms that sometimes governmentality is more concerned with governing the ‘other’ than governing the ‘self’. The restraints are applied to one section, especially one that has no influence and power.

3.3.2. Pastoral power as both pastoral care and political power

According to Carrette (2000:138), the Foucauldian theory of governmentality holds together the ethical, spiritual, and political inside a single framework. What the above implies is that governmentality comprises both political and pastoral power. Political power here is concerned with disciplinary power invested in the nation states that has as its object the disciplining of individuals within a territory and regulating populations as resources to be used and optimised (Nicoll and Fejes 2008:11). Pastoral power is also considered a Christian religious concept that focuses on the comprehensive guidance of individuals (Lemke, 2016:13). This study will engage pastoral power more than political power and will endeavour to show that pastoral power is not only a type of power that is affective and caring but that it is also political in its application.

The identifying features of the Foucauldian analysis of pastoral power are, firstly, a power exercised on people; secondly, it is a power exercised for the care and benefit of the people, and thirdly, the pastor\shepherd is concerned for one and for many, and is prepared to sacrifice for them (Mayes, 2010:111-126). Pastoral power, according to Foucault (1988: 67), seeks to constantly ensure, sustain and improve the lives of each and every person. Golder (2007) like Mayes, also outlines the elements that characterise the Foucauldian Christian pastorate as follows:

Firstly, it is characterised by the principle of analytical responsibility according to which the Pastor must account for every act of his sheep, for everything that may have happened between them, and every good and evil that they may have done at any time. Secondly, there is a principle of exhaustive and instantaneous transfer according to which the merits and demerits of each individual sheep are imputed to the Pastor. Thirdly, there is the principle of sacrificial reversal under which the pastor must be prepared to sacrifice himself to save his sheep. The fourth principle is the alternative correspondence according to which the merits of the sheep, and the prospective salvation are increased in inverse proportion to the failings of their Pastor, and the Pastor rises in the eyes of the Lord (and will assure his salvation) if he has struggled with the recalcitrant flock (2007:165).

In view of the above understanding of the Foucauldian analysis of pastoral power summarised by Mayes (2010) and Golder (2007), and by many scholars who have studied the work of Foucault on governmentality, such as Ojakangas (2010), it gives the impression that pastoral power is the power of care, a power that concerns itself with the salvation of the flock, and promotion of life through the shepherd's self-sacrifice. Pastoral power as a power of care and affection is concerned more with organizing people in the same way a shepherd cares for the flock from birth to death (Lemke, 2016:14; O'Farrell 2007:8).

Pastoral care as a power of care according to Lemke (2016:14) and O'Farrell (2005:46) is taking care of every aspect of people's lives from birth to death to guide them to salvation. The instruction and guidance of individuals in pastoral power takes place with a view to other worldly salvation (Lemke 2016). The relationship between the shepherd\Pastor, the leaders and those they lead, in the Foucauldian analysis of pastoral power is viewed as cordial, affectionate and without any hitches, because the aim is to care and save.

Systematic violence, for Zizek, of which exclusion is part, is demonstrated through invisible and subtle forms of coercion that sustains relations of domination and exploitation, including the threat

of violence. The violence of exclusion as an expression of pastoral care for the flock establishes and maintains the order of the community (2009:8).

What is evident is that pastoral power is non-coercive and works through infiltrating regulation into the very interior experience of the subjects, and in this form of power, the subjects educate, or fashion themselves, a process where subjective experiences are simultaneously shaped and yet paradoxically remain uniquely one's own (Carrette, 2000:26). Religion in pastoral power for Carrette (2000:136), is constituted as a political force which brings people under a certain system of control, and the subjects are constructed through a series of power relations which shape life, the body and the self. The religious beliefs, ceremonies and rituals enact these relations of power and maintain a system of control through the mechanism of pastoral authority (Carrette 2000). Religious powers govern the individual self through the operation of the said and unsaid, manipulate control by silencing, (Carrette, 2000:19) and this helped Foucault to develop ideas of political spirituality

Pastoral power is therefore both political and a form of pastoral power in the sense that as a power of pastoral care, it is construed as being affective, interactive and relational in the way it deals with members, and it is political in the way it uses rules and laws to control, exclude and punish errant members. The use of pastoral power as political power in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is seen in the use of rules and laws that are laid down to be followed by members, and used to control, shape their activities and behaviour, and the spelling out of the acceptable, beliefs, doctrine and behaviour. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is very dogmatic and systematic in its administration and the rules and laws are very radical, drastic and severe to members who do not observe them. That the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is affective, interactive and relational towards its members is realised through the care of individual members, from birth to death, through keeping registers, conducting services for all Christian rites from birth to death, and the visiting of individual members in their respective homes.

3.3.3. Institutional discourse as discipline and restraint

Different institutions have discourses which stand for various functions and these institutional discourses include policies, rules and laws. These rules and laws become contexts which shape members' behaviour through mastering and internalizing them. According to Edward (2008),

Discourses are powerful, and some are more powerful than others, even institutions such as the Church through their practices traditionally authorized certain discourses to be more powerful than others (2008:21).

The above statement by Edwards supports the fact that institutions have many discourses with distinct functions and denotations, and with varying degrees of importance. The Foucauldian understanding of discourse, according to Edwards (2008::22), is that it is a restructuring of meaning-making whose major characteristic is its disciplinary, hence regulatory, behaviour; and that the production of this discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed according to certain rules and structures.

Foucault discusses the Christian confession as an example of Christian or religious discourse meant to bring the complex relationship that exists between the individual, discourse, truth and coercion. The Christian confession demonstrates how religious discourse simultaneously, forms a subject, how it controls, gives identity, and disciplines the individual (Carrette 2000: 40). The church rules, and standing orders are mechanisms of power whose main aim is that of control and giving individuals identity and disciplining each member of the institution. Discourse and power in institutions are intertwined in the act of governing individuals, and the study of the two discloses the processes of subjugation in religious practice. According to Mills (2003:33), power is often used by the powerful or by those in positions of authority to realize their will over the powerless and the ability to force them to do things they do not wish to do. As a mechanism of power, religious discourse is used to make members of religious institutions conform to the 'right' religious beliefs of an institution without questioning, to think and behave in ways that they would not if they are away from the institution, and to have a uniform identity that is sometimes hard to sustain. Religious discourse becomes a disciplinary apparatus which had its origins in the monasteries and helps an institution to attain ordered existence without much striving.

The discourse of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe helps the church to deal with unorthodox belief and to deal with members who do not want to conform to its teachings. Apart from giving members uniform belief, the Methodist discourse regulates their daily activities and behaviour, and the discourse also gives certain individuals within the Church the power to control and sometimes to subjugate others, and through the same power, some members are given access to committees and boards that give them power to speak on behalf of others. Those people who

become this powerful have the privilege to revise and amend the Church discourse from time to time and to determine which Church discourse is sacrosanct.

3.3.4. Institutional discourse as violence of exclusion

The use of religious discourse, as discussed above, is positive in that it controls individuals and institutions, brings about uniformity and coordination in an institution, and is disciplinary and regulatory (Edwards, 2008:22). However, in its discharge of discipline and restraint, it is violent and therefore negative. The violence of pastoral power is enacted in institutional discourse, as already highlighted. Religious discourse is a political force which is two dimensional because it spells out the said and the unsaid in an institution (Carrette, 2000:42). This section seeks to show how institutional discourse, particularly religious discourse, is used as a tool to exclude those members considered to have deviant views and who fail to uphold the teaching and belief systems of the church. Further, the section intends to show that this exclusion is violence towards the members, although it is subtle and not easy to perceive.

Religious discourse is used in most cases to qualify or exclude one from being a member of the institution, because it defines membership, and spells out the qualities of a good member while at the same time laying down what is not expected of members. According to Mayes (2010), the Christian Church's discourse and instructions stem from Pauline actions and instructions as recorded in his teaching to the New Testament Church. In his writings Paul instructs the Pastors to remove one member who would have become a threat to the entire institution or community, and this becomes the key role of the Pastor to lookout for such threats and if found be excluded from the community. During the Hebrew or Old Testament times, the violence of David to the wolf that threatened his flock, or his violence towards Goliath who threatened the Israelites, was material and could not be hid, unlike the violence of exclusion through discourse. The violence of exclusion using discourse does not cause physical harm like the violence of David to the wolf and toward Goliath (Zizek, 2009:1). The violence of exclusion using religious discourse is more of systematic violence as opposed to subjective violence that causes physical harm. The systematic violence of religious discourse is invisible and order-sustaining in an institution or community (Mayes, 2010:111- 126; Zizek, 2009:8).

Using discourse, members accused of any faults in the Methodist church are excluded, rebuked, condemned, given names, and shamed. This is sometimes done in public with the name of the

person and offence announced before the congregation, and it hurts the person very much. The exclusions vary depending on the degree of the offence committed. Some are excluded from participating in certain aspects of Church life for their entire life, and others are excluded for a few months, up to a full year. The decision to exclude someone for a certain period is reached at the Church's administrative meetings at various levels of the Church depending on his\her standing in the Church. Members of the church in most cases voluntarily or are required to master and internalize the institutional discourse, including the policies, rules, and laws (Mills, 2003:45). However, in most cases, the mastering and internalizing of discourse is done as a way of making sure that one does not make a mistake that may result in exclusion or any form of humiliation.

Church discourse excludes certain people from speaking and participating in Church rituals and ceremonies (Edwards, 2008:22). While someone may want to participate in Church rituals or debates, there are laid down rules and procedures that block people from participating. This may be due to their standing in the Church or any form of discipline imposed on them. Church discourse accords people different standings and statuses that qualify them to participate in rituals, to speak or be part of conferences or platforms that discuss issues. This exclusion is a form of systematic violence towards members that are prohibited from participating as they should in Church life.

3.3.5. Institutional discourse and surveillance

Social institutions develop and maintain systems of surveillance that help them order and control individual members and groups, and these social institutions include the Church. In support of the notion that regimes of surveillance developed by institutions bring about order and control, Simon (2013) asserts that,

The social and material practice of surveillance has an implication of social order and social control (2013:1-20).

The systems of surveillance established by Social institutions bring with them the presence of a strong culture and shared internalized values that provide the desired control and coordination (Stanley, 2010:1-20). The implementation of surveillance, control and order in any institution finds little resistance because each individual person becomes a proponent and an apologist of the surveillance systems (Tran, 2011:29). In the same fashion, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe uses policies, rules and regulations which are supposed to be mastered and internalized by each individual member and by the Church at large.

Since attaining autonomy from the British conference in October 1977, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe's system of government and administration has remained hierarchical with the annual conference at the apex and the local society at the bottom (Mawire, 2015:40; Hallencreutz, 1998:29). This hierarchical administration enables the national Church to become one, with one understanding and a uniform belief system. The use of rules and laws within this hierarchical government system becomes the Church's means of surveillance, observation and coercion. Although members are far away in communities that are dotted throughout the nation, they are still visible to the Church and still feel the effects of the centralised power. The above approach can be best summed up in Foucault's words when he asserts that,

The exercise of discipline presupposes a mechanism that coerces by means of observation; an apparatus in which the techniques that make it possible to see, induce effects of power, and in which conversely, the means of coercion make those on whom they are applied clearly visible (Foucault, 1995:170).

The function of the Foucauldian surveillance is that of a network of relations from top to bottom, and to a certain extent, from bottom to the top, and this network literally holds the whole together (Foucault 1995:176). The type of relationship or network explained above also exists across the hierarchical setup of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe's administration, and helps to keep the Church as a unified body. Hierarchized surveillance enables the disciplinary power to be both indiscreet and discreet in the sense that, firstly, it is everywhere and always alert, leaving no zone of shade and constantly supervising the very individuals who are entrusted with the task of supervising. Secondly, it functions permanently and largely in silence (Foucault 1995: 177). The use of the MCZ's standing orders, rules and laws across all administrative levels makes the rules available everywhere and applied to every person including those who are at one point entrusted with the power and responsibility to supervise and discipline others.

The use of surveillance on individuals and collectives in the Church penetrates all aspects of their lives from birth to death, leaving them with no space for privacy. According to Trans (2011:82), Foucault held that surveillance was like an intrusion in people's private life and space, he commented thus,

What worried Foucault was contemporary society's unwillingness to reserve sacred space – for Foucault, modern day surveillance forced incursions into every zone of

existence, the intrusion of the gaze on everybody under the ruse of benevolence and knowledge.

The Church's pastoral gaze on individuals in the Church appears to be innocent and concerned with help and benevolence, yet it intrudes and makes people their own slaves. The Church members are free to move away from what is considered orthodox by the Church, but they resist or go underground to do the unorthodox as a way of protest.

3.4.1 Research design

Research design focuses on how to achieve one's research goals (Bechhofer and Paterson, 2000: ix), or simply to the many ways in which research can be conducted to answer the questions being asked (Rugg and Petre, 2007:62; Marczyk, DeMatteo, and Festinger, 2005:22). Further, a research design is the overall strategy that one chooses to integrate different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, ensuring that it will address the research problem. It constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data (De Vaus, 2001: 8). The research design provides the glue that holds the entire research project together (Trochim, 2002).

The research design for this study is to interrogate the documents of the Methodist church in Zimbabwe that deal mostly with church governance, that is documents that deal with policies, rules, and regulations of the Methodist Church. The documents include the constitution of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, which shall be referred to in this work as the Standing Orders and Deed of Church Order, the policy documents of the men and women's organisations, the Farms policy document, and the minutes of conference. The choice of these documents was based on the fact that they contain the rules and regulations that govern the people called Methodists in Zimbabwe, and in many ways, mitigate against the African worldview and customs. Attention was given to the debates that have taken place in the Church around the area of the relationship between the Church and African traditional religions and customs. Therefore, in this regard, the minutes of conference become a very important source of data. Since the rules and regulations that govern the current Methodist Church in Zimbabwe were handed down from the colonial church, it is the prerogative of this research to search for the historical data on the development of such rules and regulation and the reasons for their invention. Besides the Church documents, I also read works written by other researchers on the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, and these include published books, theses and articles on the church's relationship with the African worldview.

To access the historical data, two Archives were visited and searched for relevant data, and these are, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe Archive and the National Archive of Zimbabwe. The selection of these two institutions is because the missionaries used both as repositories during the colonial era. My research area and question contributed in the choice of these two institutions and the type of material that I investigated. As Glen and Enoch (2010:13), put it that,

Rarely do researchers identify an Archive and hope to find a research project in it. Instead, they begin with a broad research question and then read widely and deeply until they begin to identify an outline of significance or basis of investigation for the project at hand. Once the researchers have a handle on the topic, they consider the kind of Archival documents that would support, extend further, and energize the project.

The term Archive is not without ambiguity. As Derrida (1995) puts it, “Nothing is less clear today than the word Archive” (1995:90). For some, the Archive is a place where documents and other materials of public or historical interest are preserved. Others think of it as a repository and collection of artefacts. Some distinguish between Archives as repositories of documents, manuscripts and images; libraries as repositories of published books, journals and other media; and museums as repositories of yet other kinds of cultural objects (Manoff, 2004). The term, however, is frequently used to refer to the contents of museums, libraries, and archives, thus, refer to the entire extent of historical records.

While the contemporary Church continues to deposit documents in the Church Archive, they no longer deposit any with the national Archive as the early missionaries did. The national Archive of Zimbabwe was very helpful in this research because it served as a backup source for the relevant documents as some documents that could not be found at the Church Archive were well preserved at the national institution.

3.4.2. Postcolonial approach to Archival research

In this study I applied a postcolonial approach to Archival research insofar as it is the analysis, critical attitude and use of the library to expose the colonial master narrative, and also attempt to reflect the voices of the oppressed and the voiceless (Bastian, 2006). The aim of the postcolonial Archival approach is the decolonisation and pluralizing of the Archive (McKemmish and Gilliland, 2013: 79-112). The use of the postcolonial approach to Archival research comes from the understanding that the historical record, whether it consists of books in the libraries or records in the Archives, is not an objective representation of the past, but a selection of objects and

information that have been preserved for a variety of reasons, and therefore cannot provide direct and unaided access to the past (Manoff, 2004:9-25).

The colonial Archive is viewed here as shaped by the aims of those who created it and the interpretation of the Archive now depends on the perspective of the interpreter (Manoff, 2004). I view the documents on the history of the Methodist Church kept in the two Archives as shaped by the ideologies, views and feelings of the missionaries and, therefore, take it as my duty as the interpreter to read these records in a way that gives the silenced a voice to speak. Despite the weaknesses, the Archival material still helps us to connect with the past. As Manoff (2004) rightly puts it,

Despite their limitations, we cling to Archival material in the hope of somehow connecting to a past we can never fully know.

Colonial records are central to this process, often as obstacles to be overcome, predicaments to be resolved and mazes to be negotiated, rather than as sources of enlightenment and memory, and they help to reflect, to mirror, to define and to uncover the communities that create them (Bastian, 2006).

3.4.3 Research methods

The study employs a qualitative methodology to understand aspects of social life, belief systems, perspectives and experiences of Methodists in Zimbabwe (Strauss and Cobin, 1990:19). Qualitative methods seek to understand the perspectives of the participants, to explore the meaning they give to phenomena, and to observe in depth the process under study (Strauss and Cobin 1990). Documents of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, which include the Church's constitution, organizational policy books, minutes of conference, and journals and articles on the Church's view of African religious beliefs and customs, were interrogated to understand the history of the Methodist missionary society, the attitude of the colonial missionaries, and the context of the birth of rules and regulations governing the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe.

Archival research was conducted in two Archives, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe Archive and the National Archive of Zimbabwe since these two institutions house document on my area of study. The postcolonial approach to Archival research was used as an approach to Archival material, and the Critical Discourse Analysis was used as a method for data analysis.

3.4.4. Research procedures

To access the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe Archive, I made an application in writing on the 9th of February 2016 and on the 15th of February 2016 the Church responded and granted me permission to use the Archive with the condition that I submit a copy of my finding at the end of the research. The conditions for the use of the Archive were very relaxed and I went in at will when those responsible for the doors of the Archive were present to open the doors for me. The reason for relaxing the conditions was because I am a minister of the Church and the workers responsible for the Archive seem too junior to me, and my letter of permission was signed by the Presiding Bishop. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe archive is situated at 7 Central Avenue in Harare and is under the Research and publication department of the Church which is a semi-autonomous arm of the Church dealing with literature, printing and the preservation of Church records. Although it seemed like an advantage to walk in and out of the Archive without close monitoring, I discovered that due, to this lack of monitoring, many documents and manuscripts are not in place and some are missing. There are no rules that govern the use of the library by the Church, there is no employee responsible for running the Archive and the documents are in disorder with many of them not marked. There is no catalogue to use when searching for materials such that one has to go through each document in the dust as the Archive is also not kept clean. The documents and manuscripts do not follow any sequence or order, they are just thrown all over the room. Most documents, especially the early minutes of the Rhodesia conference, were written in pen and some of the handwritings are not clear and legible. Thus, it was difficult for me to see and therefore difficult to get meaning out of some of these writings.

Reading through some works on the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, I was referred to the National Archive of Zimbabwe. This is the national Archive situated on the outskirts of Harare. The colonial Church, from the years of the church's inception to the 1970s, made sure that they deposited copies of minutes, journals, magazines, articles and reports on various aspects of the Church. The national Archive is better kept than the Church Archive. It is kept clean and everything is well catalogued and classified. I never made an application to use the National Archive of Zimbabwe. When I went there I discovered that there were many other students and researchers using the Archive from many other educational institutions. The way the Archive operates is that one is required to pay \$1 per day and produce an identification document. After identifying an item on the catalogue, you

fill in an item request form indicating the author, title, and call number of the item, then give to the attendants and they will bring the article immediately.

Users of the archive can only request 4 items at a time and no material from the archive can be taken out or photographed. However, a maximum of 5 pages per day can be made. The photocopying is very expensive, and I think it is a way of discouraging people from photocopying material. The use of pens is not allowed in the archive, people go in with pencil only. The pen use rules are very strict because of the fear that documents will be destroyed and most of them are hard to replace or reproduce. In terms of the material for this research, the National Archive of Zimbabwe proved to be more helpful than the Church archive. Some of the material I failed to find in the Church Archive I could find in the National archive in good condition because they were well cared for.

3.4.5. Research instruments

In both archives, I took notes from the manuscripts that were relevant to my research. The documents were my sources of information, especially on the history of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, the development of rules, and the ideological and theological justification for developing such rules to govern the Indigenous Church especially because the British Methodist Church's rules were applied globally. The notes included direct quotes from the missionaries, the record of events from the Methodist missionary society's annual reports on the developments that took place, and the resolutions that were reached regarding the Church's relationship with African traditional religion and customs.

3.4.6 The process and method of data analysis

The study engaged the critical discourse analysis as a method to analyse all the data collected from Archival research and from other reading materials. This method of data analysis was used to develop theories and hypotheses from the data that I collected from the Archives using the postcolonial approach to Archival research.

3.4.6.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis is a type of discourse analytical that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context (van Dijk, 2001:352; Widdowson, 2004:89). The approach is not

much concerned with the properties of discourse but with social issues that affect people. As Teun van Dijk (2009:111) rightly puts it,

Critical Discourse Analysis is problem oriented, it does not primarily focus on discourse and its properties, but on social issues and problems, such as racism and sexism or other forms of domination and power abuse, and then examines whether and how text and talk are involved in its production.

By using Critical Discourse Analysis to analyse data concerning the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe's view of indigenous religion and customs, I aim to utilize the approach in transforming and unsettling the status quo. The tendency and major aim of Critical Discourse Analysis is the transforming and unsettling of the existing order and transforming its elements into an arrangement that are less harmful to some, and perhaps more beneficial to all members of society (Kress, 1996:15). Critical Discourse Analysis will be used in this research to illuminate the relationship between the colonial order in the Methodist Church and the production of rules that still govern the Methodist Church today. The approach will help to describe and explain how power abuse is enacted in Methodist discourse and how the same discourse legitimized such power imbalances in the Church.

The questions that Critical Discourse Analysis seeks to answer, according to van Dijk (1996), are about who may speak or write to whom, about what, when and in what context, or who may participate in such communicative events in various recipient roles, for instance as addressees, audience, bystanders, and overhearers (1986:86). The questions that I sought to answer in this research include, who should have put together the rules governing the Church in Zimbabwe? Who should have examined the context before introducing the rules and regulations? Who should have determined the relevance of these regulations? Who should have participated or who should have been consulted to come up with the rules to govern the black church in Zimbabwe?

The other aspect of Critical Discourse Analysis is exclusion, whereby some discourses exclude sections of people from speaking or from being consulted, as long as it is in the interest of the originators of such discourse to attempt to justify their dominance and supremacy (Leeuwen, 2008:28). It is my argument that black Methodists in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) were excluded when the rules were crafted by the colonial missionaries who viewed themselves as superior to the black and so attempted to replace the African worldview with the European one. The European worldview was imposed on Africans without them knowing or without being listened to. Critical

Discourse Analysis views power in society as imposed on individual subjects, views human subjectivity as constructed or inscribed by discourse, views the social order as historically situated and therefore, relative, socially constructed and changeable, and views social power as constituted and sustained less by the will of individuals than by the pervasiveness of certain constructions, or discourses (Locke, 2004:1).

The order that obtains in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is because of its colonial history whereby the colonial missionaries imposed their belief system and worldview on the African Methodists in Zimbabwe. Using discourse, the missionaries made sure that this order stayed permanently by asking Africans to recite and know the rules by heart. The reading and interpretation of such texts as the Methodist documents, the constitution and policies is revelatory of ways in which discourses consolidate power and colonize human subjects. Trying to take the African Christians out of their worldview, making them hate their religious beliefs and customs was tantamount to human colonization.

One of the progenitors of Critical Discourse Analysis, Norman Fairclough (1995), summed up the approach as aiming;

to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and, (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations, and processes; to investigate how such practices, events, and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power (1995:132).

The most crucial point that Fairclough is making is that discourses are mostly shaped by the ideologies of the most dominant groups or individuals in society or in institutions. The missionaries in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) were a dominant group although they were a minority. Thus, the Church discourse, including the rules and regulations were guided and shaped by their ideologies. The western or European worldview had so much impact on the discourse of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. The discourse that the missionaries crafted gave them an edge over their black counterparts since it gave them access to control the institution. Blacks members, especially polygamists, could not lead in the church, so it gave the whites the right to lead and decide for their black brothers and sisters. Teun van Dijk (1996) elucidates this relationship between discourse and power when he argues that

One major element in the discursive reproduction of power and dominance is the very access to discourse and communicative events. In this respect discourse is similar to other valued social resources that form the basis of power and to which there is unequally distributed access (1996:85).

Critical Discourse Analysis, therefore, seeks to alter this inequitable distribution of and access to economic, cultural, and political goods in contemporary society. The intention here is to bring a system of excessive inequalities of power into crisis by uncovering its workings and its effects through the analysis of potent cultural object – texts – and thereby help in achieving a more equitable social order (Kress, 1996:15). The approach stresses not only the decoding of propositional meaning of the text but also its ideological assumption (Huckin, 2012).

3.4.7 Ethical considerations

The fact that I was interrogating documents, some of which were published by the church, and the official documents of the Church such as the constitution of the Church and of the organisations, means that the study has validity and it leaves no room for manipulation and swaying of meaning. I used mostly historical data which is not easy to manipulate, and sources were quoted accordingly. The room for bias is very limited although in applying the postcolonial approach to Archival research, in trying to decolonize and pluralize the Archive, there is possibility of my views overturning history in my direction. However, the tools that I am using will help guard against such pitfalls. To ensure that the research is rigorous enough, Critical Discourse Analysis was utilized to ensure that the themes and codes identified adequately represent the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe's policy documents. I made it a point that the conclusion drawn was a product of data collected from the policy documents and the other Church related documents, including journals, articles, and magazines.

I sought permission to use the Archive and the permission was granted in writing. Further, the authorities knew about my research topic and they only asked for a copy of my findings and recommendations soon after the completion of the research. I will therefore, jointly with my supervisor, draft a short report of no more than 10 pages summarising the research effort, method and findings without breaking anonymity and confidentiality. These shall be delivered to the Methodist Church no more than a month after the final examination of the thesis. The data collected, the data analysis phases of this research and all documentation were solely handled by myself (and my supervisor where necessary) to ensure confidentiality. The research data shall be

stored with my supervisor in his office at the University of Kwazulu Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus.

3.4.8 Limitations of the study

My position as a practicing member and minister of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, and the fact that I was brought up in this Church which does not approve of indigenous religious beliefs and customs, threatened the neutrality of the study. This is because my socialization and involvement in the church continued to exert pressure on me. However, the research instruments I engaged directed the research such that my convictions could not interfere with the findings. I remained vigilant about my position as a member and minister in the Church and did not influence the direction of the study.

The Methodist Church Archive had numerous gaps that threatened the quality of the research. However, the gaps were bridged by the National Archive of Zimbabwe. The Church archive has no trained staff, which means there was no one to give help in times of need. The only person present was a caretaker to unlock the door, not a trained Archivist. This means that the Archive does not have a catalogue or index so that locating documents is made easy and fast. The shelving of material is haphazard and quite disorderly. There are no marked locations for manuscripts except very few boxes and a filing cabinet with minutes of synod and reports. Most materials in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe archive are very old and dusty, and there seems to be no effort to preserve these documents. Several manuscripts could not be located in the archive especially some minutes and reports. These may have been taken out and not returned since no one checks the going out and returning of material. There is a book which one fills by him\herself after taking out a book and after returning it. There are no rules governing the use of the Archive that are in place.

There is no proper backup of manuscripts and documents such that those that go missing or are destroyed will be hard to find in the future. Most of the manuscripts in the Church Archive, especially those of the late 1890s and early 1900s, were hand written in pen, and most of the hand writing is not easy to read, and this makes it difficult to construct meaning. The documents sent by the Methodist missionaries to the National Archive were typed and quite legible. The impediment of visiting the National Archive was the cost involved. I had to drive to the place since it is on the outskirts of Harare and had to pay \$1 every day to gain access and to be able to do my

research. Although the National Archive is well looked after, catalogued, and manned by well trained staff who assist researchers satisfactorily, the rules do not allow taking pictures of documents or anything. Photocopying is permissible, but researchers are only allowed to photocopy a maximum of 5 pages per day and the costs of photocopying are very high as a way of discouraging people from photocopying material. The limit of 4 items at a time limited my ability to compare materials and affected continuity because I had to return articles to get different ones. The visit to the two Archives revealed that the history of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is biased, it uplifts the missionaries and looks down upon the African Methodist Christians and their worldview.

3.4.9 Chapter summary

The chapter focused on the two theoretical frameworks that guide this study, postcolonial theory and the Foucauldian concept of governmentality. Firstly, a distinction is made between postcolonialism as a chronological marker, and as a reading practice and way of theorisation. There is evidence of a swing from the chronological implications of postcolonialism toward a focus on the tensions and struggles against the effects of colonialism on colonised societies and their cultures. The major focus is on the impact of colonialism on the African culture and identity. The aims of postcolonial theory are outlined, which include making people understand that no culture should be universalised or be dominant, to ensure understanding and not antagonism between the inheritors of the postcolonial aftermath, and to decolonise western theory. The impact of postcolonial theory is that it addresses issues that were never touched especially on the links of imperialism and national cultures in the once colonized states, and it also draws links between the imperial past and the present. The weakness of postcolonial theory is also highlighted which includes failure in most cases to acknowledge the positive contribution of the colonial history and the fact that both the colonizer and the colonized are part of that history. There is also a tendency to marginalize and there is fear of opening the old colonial wounds caused by the history of exploitation and subjugation.

The chapter also discussed the methodology guiding this research, the various component that constitute the methodology were outlined and discussed. The research design touched on the whole plan that was put in place to answer the research questions, from the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. The research methods included visiting the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe

Archive together with the National Archive of Zimbabwe to access documents that were relevant to my research. These documents were very important sources of information or research tools, because I took notes from them that I used to support my arguments for this thesis. Having identified and extracted the data through note taking, Critical Discourse Analysis was engaged as a process of data analysis. The approach was used to develop theories and hypotheses from the data that I collected from the various sources in the library and the archives.

The chapter also examines ethical considerations that I made during the process of study. Firstly, I sought permission and it was granted to me in writing, to use the Archives. During the study, I ensured my position in the Church, my religious convictions and worldview did not influence my findings. I managed to deal with the sway of these with the help of the tools that I employed in my research. The tools included my research design and research methods that I have already mentioned. The conclusions that I arrived at during the research were not influenced by my feelings, thoughts or ideology but came from the analysis of the data that I gathered.

The limitations of this study were also discussed in this chapter, and these include the problems and impediments I encountered during the research process. Primarily, I had to wrestle with my personal convictions and my upbringing so that they did not influence and prevent the research from being meticulous. However, my research tools came to my aid. There were gaps in the Methodist Church Archive because of some missing documents, but these were bridged by the National Archive of Zimbabwe which had document which I could not find in the Church archive. Most of the manuscripts that were old, torn, and illegible are not backed up in the Methodist Church Archive. Lastly, that the Church Archive does not have proficient personnel, made things a bit difficult since there was no one to assist me, and the disorder took me a lot of time since I had to go through piles of manuscripts in search of those that were relevant to my study. The cost of travelling especially to the National Archive of Zimbabwe which is located far from my place of residence affected me since I could not visit the place from time to time owing to the scarcity of resources.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE METHODIST CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE AND AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION AND CULTURE.

4.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to examine the contemporary Methodist Church in Zimbabwe's appreciation of African traditional religion and culture. The attitude of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe towards African traditional religion and culture is discussed in two parts in this chapter. The first part will briefly discuss the Methodist missionary attitude from the inception of Methodism in Zimbabwe to the period when the Church attained autonomy from the British conference in 1977.⁶ The second part discusses the attitude of the postcolonial MCZ toward African traditional religion and ritual from 1977 to 2016. The attitude of the Methodist Church during this period will be constructed from an examination of the rules and regulations governing the church at the time – with specific reference to Christian villages, the education system, and the health systems. These three social institutions were used by missionaries to deal with the African religion, culture and customs, which they considered to be effective vehicles of evangelisation (Madhiba 2000: 28, Zvobgo 1991a: 77, Peaden 1970:19). The rules and regulations governing the Methodist Church were crafted as a way of undermining and suppressing the African traditional religion, customs, and culture (Madhiba 2000).

Christian villages on mission farms were created also as a way of dealing with the African belief system. These were considered as exemplary communities to the rest of the society, which were considered to still be in the darkness of heathenism (Zvobgo 1991b:66; Peaden 1970: 19; Loubiere 1921:370). The converts that settled on the Christian villages had to abide by the rules that governed settlement in these villages. The rules were mitigating against African beliefs and practices such as polygamy, brewing or drinking traditional beer, visiting traditional healers, and ancestral worship (Madhiba 2000:28; Samudzimu 1991:79). The missionaries did not just impose punitive rules but there were incentives for those who were in Christian villages, such as western education and western medical systems.

⁶Methodism came to Zimbabwe in 1891 and operated as part of the Transvaal district of South Africa which was directly under the British Conference, later it became a district under the direct control of the British Conference. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe became an autonomous Conference in October 1977 which meant it had freedom to develop and reform its theology and ecclesiology according to its needs without seeking approval from the British Conference.

The initial aim of education, for the missionaries, was evangelisation. It, however, evolved to address humanitarian needs. Before the progression, missionary education was meant to wean Africans from their worldview and belief system. The target of education was young Africans, and this led to the introduction of the boarding school where boys and girls lived at the school isolated from the influence of the society, as with Christian villages. Colonial education was viewed as helping to develop the minds of young people, making them disavow their African background and embrace Christianity, which also came with modernity and development. Schools were used as platforms for both indoctrination of the young and to give them a better life (Chitando 2005:84; Weller and Linden, 1984:89). The goal of missionary education was therefore to wane African religion, culture, and customs. For instance, educating the girl child meant that the girls were given liberation of the mind, so they would refuse to marry elderly polygamists (Peaden 1970).

Besides education, the missionaries also introduced the medical missions as a way of dealing with the African worldview, especially African ways of healing, African medicine and the practitioners. When the missionaries introduced medical work, they did not only look at giving help to the people, but they also anticipated that western medical systems would have an impact on African Culture (Aguwa 2007:6, Manyoba 1991:68). The chief adversaries were the African traditional healers (*N'angas*) and their wares. The attack on the African traditional practitioners followed their overwhelming esteem as experts in the medical field by the African society.

The second part discusses the attitude of the post-autonomous Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, from 1977 to date. The attitude of the Methodist Church during this period will be explicated from constitution of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, the Deed of Church Order and Standing Orders, the class book regulations, organisational policy documents, rules, and regulations, and the farms policy documents, rules and regulations⁷. On attaining autonomy, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe retained most of the things they inherited from the colonial Methodist Church, which were carried over into the new dispensation (Makoti 2012). The class is the foundation and the smallest unit in the administrative structure of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. Each member

⁷The Deed of Church Order and Standing Orders (DCO&SO) is the constitution of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe with authority on all doctrinal matters, discipline, power, and governance. Organizational policy documents (Ruwadzano\Manyano, MCU, and Farms committee) regulate the everyday behavior of the Church members and further interpret the Constitution. Minutes of conference are Church records giving detailed accounts of events, debates, amendments and resolutions arrived at when the conference sits to affirm policy, consider new manifestations, and agreements.

of the Methodist Church is expected to belong to a weekly class which is under a local society. Members of each class meet for Bible study, prayer, and self-examination. The feature of the class in the Methodist Church is a universal phenomenon, as it is found in all Methodist traditions. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe uses the class book which has some rules that are supposed to be mastered and followed by members. The rules regulate the behaviour of members and dictate how they are to live and relate to the outside world, especially the African worldview and belief systems.

Apart from belonging to classes, members also belong to organisations within the church. For instance, men belong to the Men's Christian Union (MCU), and women belong to the *Ruwadzano\Manyano*, boys belong to the Boys Christian Union (BCU), and girls belong to the Girls Christian Union (GCU). This study is interested in the adult organisations so the policy documents, rules and laws of MCU and *Ruwadzano\Manyano* have been interrogated. Conference resolutions are later put into the Church canon and organisational policies as binding and authoritative. The Conferences of the Methodist Church have deliberated on issues regarding customary marriage, polygamy, and participation in ancestral worship and ruled against such. Ayandele (1966) who studied the impact of mission on the Nigerian society admits that polygamy is one of the African institutions on which Christian missions have up to date refused to compromise (1966:334). This is true of the situation in Zimbabwe, particularly in the MCZ, where the Church is convinced that the Christian society must be built on the family life and that the idea of the Christian family life can be realised in monogamy.

Among the institutional practices that the postcolonial Methodist Church has retained from its colonial past are the mission farms and the Christian villages. The rules and regulations governing the tenants on the Methodist farms have been maintained as they were handed down from the missionary past. The chapter looks at the contemporary policy document used to regulate tenants on all Methodist Farms. The regulations on polygamy, advocacy for teetotalism, banning of ancestral worship, traditional dances, visiting or inviting traditional healers (*N'angas*), all these are still in force in the new farms policy document of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. The new farms policy document of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is a replica of the missionary rules and regulations that governed these Christian villages during the colonial era. The attitude of

the Methodist Church towards African traditional religion and culture can be said to be influenced by the Church's colonial past.

4.3 Brief history of Missionary Methodism in Southern Africa

The WMMS's missionary endeavours saw Methodism spread to countries such as the Gambia (1821), the Gold coast (Ghana) (1834), and South Africa (1814). The first missionary to arrive in South Africa was Reverend John McKenny who established a station at Namaqualand in 1814 (The Methodist Book of Order, p.22) and in 1820 work began among the slave people in the Cape colony. In Bechuanaland and Natal, work began in 1822 and 1841 respectively. The South African conference was established in 1882 and assumed care of mission in South Africa, except for Transvaal, Swaziland, and Rhodesia (The Methodist Book of Order, p.22). It is important to note that there were four distinct stages in the development of Methodist overseas missions. First was the period of voluntary evangelisation within England, second was the sending forth from England of preachers to the North American colonies, third was the sending of men as missionaries to the non-Christian coloured races, and lastly the appointment of committees to control and organise the overseas work (Our Overseas Mission, 1932. PP. 3-10).

It is important to note that two streams of Methodism came to Africa and particularly to Zimbabwe through different missionary societies. As Manyonganise notes, Methodism came to Zimbabwe in two forms, the Wesleyan Methodists from Europe in 1891 and the United Methodist Church from North America in 1897. Zvobgo (1991a) gives the order of the coming of missionaries to Zimbabwe which shows that these streams of Methodism arrived at different periods. He observes that

First was the LMS (1875), second were the Catholics (1879), thirdly were the Anglicans (1888), fourth were the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), fifth the WMMS (British Methodism) (29 September 1891), sixth were the Salvationists (18 November 1891). Later, four American missionary entered Zimbabwe, first was the American board of commissioners for foreign missions (1893), the second were the Seventh Day Adventists (1894), thirdly was the American Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC) (American Methodism) (1898), and lastly in late 1898 came the Brethren in Christ Church. (1991a: 4-5).

The expansion of Methodism in the Transvaal district in South Africa which was under the direct control of the British Conference brought it to Zimbabwe (Gondongwe. 2011:43, Mawire. 2015:44). Zvobgo (1991a) argues that

The expansion of Methodism to Zimbabwe was not an isolated event; it was part of the expansion of Methodism, before and after Wesley's death, to various parts of the World – to North America, Europe, Asia and Africa (1991a:1).

The above means that the coming of Methodism to Zimbabwe was part of the worldwide missionary endeavour to spread this brand of Christianity across the globe. The expansion should be viewed as a continuous effort by Methodism to spread its wings to all parts of the earth. Zvobgo goes further to say,

The expansion of Methodism to Zimbabwe must be seen within the context of Christian missionary enterprise in Zimbabwe (1991a:2).

When the Methodist missionaries arrived in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), together with other missionaries who came before and after them, the country had been claimed as British territory under the control of the BSAC (Peaden. 1970:5). The BSAC began allocating land as European farm sites and initially offered generous land grants to missionaries who wished to begin work in the country (Hallencreutz. 1998), and even advertised the country to foreign settlers who wished to settle in Rhodesia (see figure 5.1 below). Accepting the land from the BSAC, the missionary societies participated in the displacement of Africans from their Ancestral lands and so, they got entwined and implicated in the land question which is topical in most African nations today. Chitando (2008) shows that by accepting land from the colonial agents, the missionaries got involved in the callous process of land grabbing and had their hands tainted in the process. He argues that,

For many Africans, the Churches in southern Africa had become an intricate cog in the colonial machinery. This was confirmed by the participation of the Churches in the displacement of the Africans from their ancestral lands. Missionary bodies were happy to receive large tracts of land from the colonising powers, frustrating African communities in the process. Churches were heavily implicated in the land question in the region. Colonial conquest entailed the removal of Blacks from fertile territories and consigning them to rocky spaces. Colonialists and missionaries accessed prime land, banishing blacks to overcrowded reserves. The partitioning of Africa had now moved to another level where 'sacred spaces' had been created in form of Christian villages (2008:53).

Though land grants were offered to all missionary societies, it shows that the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society got more than other missionary societies due to the intimate relationship that existed between the society and Cecil John Rhodes. Hewson (1950) shows how close this relationship was through Watkins's private journal to his wife:

Having a cup of tea at 6 O'clock this morning, and then Shimmin and I started for the camp. When we got there, I saw the door of Mr Rhodes's hut open, so I walked straight to it. He had just got out of bed. He smiled and said; just wait a few minutes and I will see you. After a little talk, in which I told him that I was going to make a good report of the country, and that all officers had been very kind, and that Dr Harris, the secretary of the company had given me for the missionary society as much as he could but that I wanted more land. He said, "Well, let us have Harris in and see what we can do". So out he went in his bare feet, roused Dr Harris out of bed, and Dr Jameson the administrator – and brought them along, just as they were in their pyjamas their hair all tumbled, and their eyes half opened. Mr Rhodes said, 'Mr Watkins is not satisfied with one farm for the Wesleyan missionary society, he wants five or six farms. What do you say to that. Dr Harris said 'No it can't be. I have given one farm to the Church of England, one to the Roman Catholics, and one to the Wesleyans. If I give Mr. Watkins more, then the others will come and want more.

Mr. Rhodes said, 'Well we don't want the country filled with mission stations, what do you say to that Mr. Watkins?' I replied that I had only to do with our own society which was a very great one and most important in England. Dr Harris still fought against it, and I answered him point to point. Then Mr. Rhodes said, "Well Harris, you must remember the Wesleyans will do good for the country - all their people will be of the right sort they will not bring in loafers who can do nothing but drink whisky at 4 pounds per bottle'. Then he turned to me, he said, 'What do you say to this? Suppose we give you three farms to start with – then when you get them going, if you want more and the mission is a success, why, apply for more, and I promise your application shall receive every favourable consideration" (1950:51).

The words of the above journal do not only show a close relationship between Cecil John Rhodes and the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, it also came from a good reputation of the people called Methodists back in England. The colonial administrators gave all the missionary societies a farm each, but the Wesleyans were given more. This could have been because of their shared origin with the colonial administrators. Apart from the promise of land, Rhodes had pledged to give the Methodist Missionary society 100 pounds for five years towards the expansion of mission within the area over which the Company exercised jurisdiction, and he fulfilled the promises (Whiteside. 1906:461; Zvobgo. 1991a:17, Hallencreutz. 1998:46).

The relationship between the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and the BSAC was not only based on the money and land they received, it was also grounded on the political gains that the missionaries used to their advantage. One such political advantage was the overthrow of the stubborn Ndebele state which for years had stalled mission work and even forced the Catholics to withdraw in 1889 owing to the unsettled state of affairs (Hallencreutz. 1998:7). The missionaries, including Shimmin welcomed the fall of the Ndebele state because the overthrow gave them the opportunity to propagate the gospel. Such was the opportunity they had been waiting for (Zvobgo, 1991a:5; 1996:11). The Methodist Missionary society together with other missionary societies enjoyed the protection of the Colonial administration, such that they even supported the colonial government to overthrow such stubborn states as the Ndebele no matter how bloody and inhumane the wars. The words of Fr Prestige a Catholic priest who made a remark after the bloody war which killed many natives is testimony that missionaries were in support and did not condemn the war. He remarked:

If ever there was a just war, the Matabele war is just. I am indented that such a tyrannical and hateful rule has been smashed. The Chartered Company's force deserves praise. They have done their work well (McLaughlin, (19996:10).

The colonial government was necessary as a harbinger of mission work. Hastings (1979) concludes that in British Africa mainline Churches tended to stand in a position of considerable colonial privilege, sharing in the subsiding of their educational and medical work. The missionaries had to follow behind after the colonialist had removed all impediment to the spread of the Christian message. However, this confused the people since the missionaries supported the brutal invasion of their land, culture and religion and were even given the land that had been forcefully taken from Africans⁸.

⁸ By 1898 after the war, the BSAC had complete control of land of Rhodesia. The new order of things was laid down in the Southern Rhodesia order in council of 1898. The order allowed the company to assign Africans to native reserves which were termed Tribal Trust Lands (TTL). Africans lost their right to land and African chiefs lost their traditional roles and customary functions. See D. Chanaiwa, The Shona and the British South Africa Company, in the Africa Quarterly Vol. Xiv Numbers 3 &4, 1974, pp.35- 63. (National Archive of Zimbabwe), Also The special reference as to the ownership of the alienated land in Southern Rhodesia: Report of the lords of the judicial committee of the privy council delivered on 29th July 1918, in The African World, 24th annual edition, 1926, pp. 1-20 (National Archive of Zimbabwe).

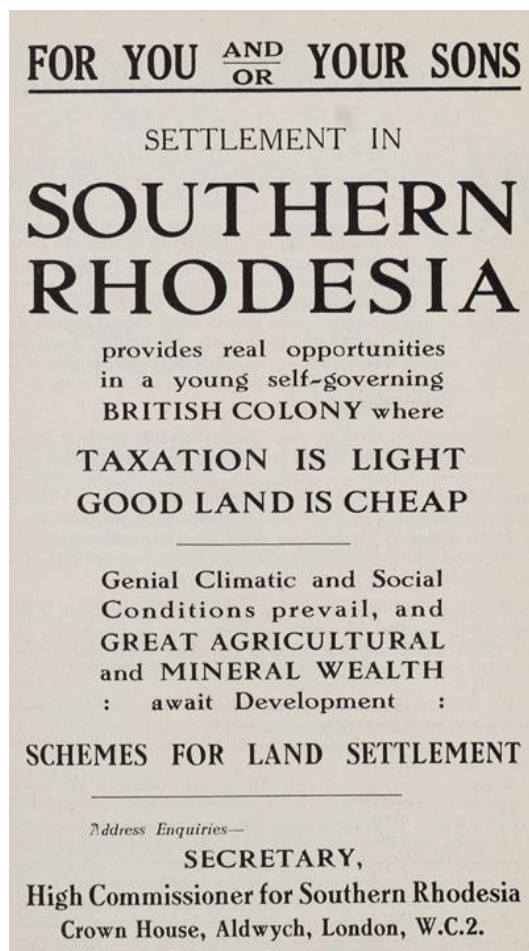


Figure 4.1: Advert from Southern Rhodesia government.

Source: The African World, 24th Annual edition, 1926, p.130 (National Archive of Zimbabwe).

When the Methodist missionaries had acquired the land from the BSAC, and had settled, they embarked on the scheme of establishing mission stations from late 1891 to 1914 (Hallencreutz 1998:29; Zvobgo 1991a:66). Isaac Shimmin, who was the chairman of the Methodist Missionary Society, confirms this fact that the Methodists received land from the BSAC in his writing after visiting Zvimba in 1892. He writes, ‘My main objective was to mark out a missionary farm granted us by the Chartered company and hope to get back before the annual rains set in’ (The Rhodesia quarterly review of the Methodist Church. 1959). Besides the mission stations, the Methodist missionaries were also involved in education and health services, constructing schools and hospitals during the period. Christian villages were established in all the farms that were under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Church. The Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries started medical work

in February 1913 by constructing a hospital at Kwenda mission and schools were opened on all mission farms (Zvobgo 1986, 1996:208) The threefold ministry i.e. the mission stations or Christian villages, education and health services were critical to the expansion of Methodism in Zimbabwe and these were used as military strategies for the advancement of mission (Peaden 1970:19; Zvobgo 1991a:77; Madhiba 2000:28). The three methods of evangelization were used simultaneously by the Methodist Church because they discovered that these were effective ways of evangelisation.

4.5 The Colonial Methodist Church's attitude towards indigenous religion

The Wesleyan Methodist missionaries' attitude towards African traditional religion and culture was not only exclusive to them but cuts across denominational divide due to the conviction of the superiority of Christianity and European culture (Chitando, 2002:5). African traditional religion was considered idolatry, superstition, magic, mischief, polytheism, ancestor worship, and a product of backwardness and blooming imagination (Udeani 2007:82). Due to this attitude, the Methodists converted very few Shona and Ndebele to Christianity because they did not appreciate, and greatly underestimated, the importance of traditional religion among them (Our Missions Overseas, 1932, pp. 108- 112). The Methodist missionaries thought the tenets of the Christian gospel were not compatible with African traditional belief and culture. Percy Ibbotson (1933), a Methodist missionary, brings out this view that the Methodist missionaries thought that indigenous religion and the Christian teaching could not accommodate each other, he writes;

Methodist missions were commenced in Mashonaland over forty years ago, and except for setbacks caused by rebellion of 1896 the work has gone apace. In these forty years, what changes have been wrought and what victories have been won! What numbers have been passed from the darkness of witchcraft and evil custom to the light and joy of the Christian way. In the midst of town and mine life, Africans are away from tribal custom and restraint, and old belief and customs are rapidly broken down. The war with superstition, witchcraft, heathen custom, drink, and social evil still goes on (The kingdom overseas, July 1933, pp. 150- 151).

The missionary world, for Ibbotson, represents light and joy while the African worldview, which is characterised by witchcraft and evil custom, represents darkness. He derives joy when the African beliefs and customs were broken down by the teachings of Christianity. Conversion for missionaries like Ibbotson meant taking people out of the darkness of the African worldview and bringing them to the light of Christianity. All African customs were considered evil by the missionaries of this period

The Methodists, during the missionary era, according to Fry (2007) were always strongly opposed to any manifestation of African traditional religion, and they even went as far as applying sanctions to their female members if they or their children were involved in the African customary rites (2007:113). However, Chitando (2005) argues that even during those first days of the encounter between Christianity and African religion and culture, there were missionaries who refused to condemn African traditional religion totally but identified positive elements within it and sought to use these as stepping stones for building Christian communities (2005:185).

The negative attitude and belief that the African worldview was an impediment to the propagation of the gospel of Christ led the Methodist missionaries to develop strategies that would help to harness and regulate African traditional religion and culture to prevent them from negatively impacting on their endeavours to bring light to the people who were in darkness (Madhiba, 2000). The strategies, which will be discussed in detail below, show the attitude of the first Methodist missionaries and how they related with African traditional religion and culture.

4.5.1 Rules on general Church membership

When Methodism was introduced in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) in 1891, it was governed and regulated by the general rules of society (Minutes of Rhodesia synod 1901 and 1903, Madhiba 2000:29) that were put in place in Bristol in 1743 (Norwood 1958:22). According to Thompson (2013:7), the general rules of society provided a framework for organisational and personal discipline for early Methodists in that way had both a disciplinary and regulatory function. The Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society was of the view that the general rules and regulations of the society, by nature, were adaptable to any environment. This can be summed up in the Diamond jubilee report of 1951:

Methodism throughout the world follows with local variations the pattern of that in England, and this is especially true of the Churches still under the British Conference. The system of Church order and governance has proved itself adaptable to every country and people, and within it the indigenous Church can work and grow. That is a very remarkable tribute to those who were responsible for the constitution. But it is at the same time sufficiently flexible to be adapted in detail to varying conditions (Methodist Church, Southern Rhodesia Diamond Jubilee, 1891-1951).

The general rules of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society were printed in the class book and were required to be learnt by all evangelists who were to be examined in these subjects at conventions, and those who failed received reduced salary (Chemhanza supplementary rules of

Synod, 2011). The rules were later translated into vernacular for effective and straightforward application among African members following the resolution of the Rhodesia district of 1901 (Minutes of Rhodesia Synod, 1901). The formulated rules and regulations were initially in oral form (Madhiba 2000:29) and were only written down in 1902 (Methodist Church Rhodesia District, Rules and Regulations for African work, 1902,) (Zvobgo 1991a:110; 1991b:11; 1996:319).

The series of rules and regulations governing African customs and membership of the Methodist Church in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) passed by the Rhodesia District Synod of 1902, included the banning of heathen beer parties and the outlawing of any marriage according to (heathen) African customs (Madhiba 2000:30; Zvobgo 1991a:113). Under the new rules, people who drank, brewed, or participated in traditional parties lost their membership. Besides, the Church's advocacy for teetotalism, members were instructed not to participate in traditional religious and social activities. The evil which the local Methodists were to avoid included visiting or inviting traditional healers (*N'angas*), engaging in traditional rituals, witchcraft, and brewing and drinking beer (Minutes of Rhodesia Synod, 1902,) (Madhiba 2000:30; Zvobgo 1991a:113). Further, the Synod stated that no person could be a member of the Methodist Church who did not accept the Christian view of marriage as monogamous - unlike polygamous local unions. The rules and regulations stated that,

All male polygamists or second or subsequent wife of a polygamist may on conversion be received into on trial status but not full member unless the polygamous marriage ceases. If a member had a daughter who married through elopement (*kutizira*), both the daughter and the mother were remove from membership (Minutes of Rhodesia Synod, 1902

The Methodist missionaries strongly condemned all the traditional ways of marriage and continuing with these types of marriage meant removal from Church membership. The aim of the Methodist missionaries, like the missionaries of other missionary societies, was to create a new and ideal society marked by discontinuity with the traditional Zimbabwean one.

Despite the introduction of the rules and regulations on African religious beliefs and customs, the practices and beliefs did not just die down. The annual reports of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society for 1931-1933 states that

It would be a mistake to suppose that in Rhodesia, as in other fields, the present difficulties are entirely of a financial character. There are the old recurring difficulties that are always with us - the ever- present danger of reversion to heathen

habits and customs, which threaten to destroy the spiritual life of individuals and communities if they are not wrestled with and overcome by the power of God. Possibly the economic depression has reacted upon these old tendencies (WMMS, Annual reports 1931- 1933)

Revd John White, a veteran missionary of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society is quoted in the same report commenting and lamenting the resurgence and power of African customs that threatened the effective propagation and taking root of the Christian gospel. He argues,

Organized Christianity is everywhere being subjected to a very severe test. In my forty years' experience as a missionary, I have never found things quite so difficult as they seem now. Of late there has been a marked increase in beer drinking. Last year's crops were pretty good, and since there is little sale of grain, many people have turned into beer for which they try to obtain cash. The matter of runaway marriages too, is on the increase. It has been my painful duty this year to cross off the class book a number of young people who have ignored Christian marriage and have run away together. It is an old heathen custom revived (WMMS, Annual reports 1931 -1933).

The Methodist Missionary Society, which had taken over from the Wesleyan Methodist Society, in its first annual report (1932), also states that some Methodist missionaries were facing difficulties of a marked revival of old pagan superstitions and practices, and the problems of these superstitious practices were goading people to desperation and they were now seeking help from the old witchdoctors (N'angas) (The first Annual report of the MMS, June 1933, pp. 108- 112). The report also carries Revd. D. W. Evans' remark who wrote about the resurgence of African customs in Chibero Circuit. He writes,

At Nerera we have witnessed scenes of deepest heathenism which seem to combine rain – making, spirit worship, and totemistic rites. These rites have been conducted by an old woman who is the priestess of Nyandoro, a very old Mashona Chief. Thousands of people have gathered in fear at the command of *ambuya*. Oxen have been slaughtered, the warm blood caught in the dish and given to the priestess to drink before the people. The raw meat has been torn with teeth and hands by the terror- stricken worshippers, while there echoed in the beautiful hills of Nerera the cry 'Now we are lions'. Such rites as these have so wrought fear in the hearts of the people, that in many places only a handful of Christians have been left (The first Annual report of the WMMS, June 1933, pp. 108 112)

The missionaries thought that it was fear and the command of the traditional practitioners that made the people to leave the Church and rekindle the practices in traditional rites and customs. They thought Africans did not participate in these rites willingly. The Methodist missionaries missed two very important facts: the power of African traditional religion and the moderate effect

of the rules and regulations that had been imposed on African Christians. The report of the MMS in 1962 shows how the rules imposed on African Christians had impacted negatively on the membership of the Church: It states;

In new areas, the family is still the most effective unit for the beginning of evangelistic work. But this, too, has problems in a polygamous society. From the Gokwe circuit comes the report that, our present rules make it almost impossible to secure the menfolk. All the new areas are occupied by a polygamous society. In effect, we have to say to the men that it is no good for them to accept the call to repentance because of their marital status (Report of overseas work, 1962, kingdom overseas Magazine of the MMS).

Instead of enhancing the Church, the new rules and regulations had scared many new converts away and the most affected were men. The rules were in effect crafted as a tool to uproot the African traditional religion and culture out of the hearts and minds of the African Christians. The African belief systems and culture, which were viewed negatively by the missionaries had a special place in the African society. There was need for the missionaries to take ample time to understand such dynamics and the importance that Africans put on different phenomena for instance on polygamy. Udeani (2007:90) argues that the hasty one-sided attitude of the missionaries made them come up with the strict uncompromising stand on the issue of polygamy, they did not consider the difference between the society they were coming from and the African society. Peaden (1970:10) claims that missionaries condemned polygamy due to the erroneous idea that African men were incorrigibly lazy and that they contracted polygamous marriages mainly to have more women to work for them and prevent the necessity of working themselves.

The stance of the Wesleyan Methodist Church on polygamy was even more problematic than those who practiced it, because it brought suffering to the women and children if their husbands and fathers converted to Christianity. Zvobgo (1996) highlights this cruelty when he notes that;

In the Wesleyan Methodist Church, a polygamist might be accepted as a member on trial and if he fulfilled his Christian obligation in respect of a monogamous marriage with the first wife and in making satisfactory provision for the other wives and their children, he might be baptized and received as a full member. The second and subsequent wife of a polygamist who understood her husband's Christian obligation to put her away and gave her consent thereto, might be received as a member on- trial but might not be received as a full member as the polygamous marriage continued (1996:326).

Thorpe (1951) records the testimony of Revd. Harry Buckley on the conversion of Chief Chiremba, which exhibits the ungodliness and cruelty of cutting ties between a man and his family at conversion. Revd Buckley explains the painful conversion of Chiremba as follows;

Chiremba was to accept the word himself and to come slowly out of darkness into light. His was not an easy conversion. It meant putting away his wives after making provisions for them; it meant renouncing his craft as a witchdoctor, thus losing prestige and material gain; it meant giving up his reputation and putting away many physical satisfactions so dear to the African; it meant walking humbly before his people as a new convert; but he did it. The time came when he was baptised Isaac and received into the Church – One of the victories of the gospel (1951:58).

Revd. Buckley's description of Chief Chiremba's conversion shows that the missionaries saw the annihilation of African cultures as a victory of the gospel. The missionaries did not care to make sure their rules and the gospel of Christ were not in conflict, as long as they made sure that African traditional religion and customs were put under lock and key through strict and unbending rules. The missionaries overlooked the pain of the wives and the children who were sent away and separated from their husbands and fathers, which the gospel of Jesus Christ that they purported to represent and preach was against.

4.5.2 Christian villages

When the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe was apportioned land by the BSAC, which was the custodians of the land in Rhodesia,⁹it embarked on a mission station scheme and many missions were established between 1891 and 1914 (Zvobgo 1991b:66). The establishment of mission stations or Christian villages on Church farms was not a preserve of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe but the other missionary societies too were involved in this exercise. Africans who stayed on these mission stations lost their right to land and were at the mercy of the missionaries. In Zimbabwe, such mission stations included Chishawasha for the Catholics and Epworth for the Methodists, and were like protected villages (Chitando, 2002:6) and sacred spaces (Chitando 2008:53). The reason for creating the Christian villages, for Chitando (2002:6) and Zvobgo (1996:127), was to shield and screen African converts or neophytes from pagan influences. Fr J.

⁹Between 1890 and September 1923 the territory known as Zimbabwe was administered by the BSAC in terms of the royal Charter granted to Cecil John Rhodes by Queen Victoria. The Charter empowered the BSAC to, inter alia, make treaties, promulgate laws, preserve peace, maintain a police force, acquire new concessions and generally provide, at the company's expense, the infrastructure of the new colony (Zimbabwe: British South Africa Company (1890-1923), www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/zw-bsac.html)

Loubiere, a Catholic priest in 1921 summarises the reason for coming up with Christian villages or mission stations in the following words:

The pagan atmosphere is so thoroughly corrupt that laymen themselves come to the conclusion that we must take our Christians out of it ---- The devil is so well at home in the native milieu, he has such a hold on the native mind, that nothing short of heroism will enable young converts to persevere if he is in daily contact with pagan acquaintances---- It is only by creating new surroundings for the converts, by introducing them to a healthy and Christian atmosphere, that we may hope to establish a true Christian community built upon the cornerstone of Christian life, i.e. Christian family (Loubiere 1921:370).

What becomes evidently clear is that the missionary societies, which included the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society had a hidden agenda when they created mission stations or Christian villages. It was a way of taking the African converts out of the African worldview and a way of divorcing them from the environment that had moulded them over the years. Mission stations were used as tools against African traditional religion and Culture (Madhiba 2000:28). The Christian villages were considered model communities which would be islands of light in the sea of heathen and superstitious darkness, and they provided an opportunity for more control to be exercised over the people than was possible when establishing stations outside the villages (Peaden 1970:19). Zvobgo (1991b:66) also concurs with Peaden that the mission stations were to serve as settlements of Christian example to the rest of the pagan world. The missionaries also understood the Church to be a new family and so the old family ties that were based on kinships, clans, or ethnicity were broken and the basic family unit became the husband, wife and their children (Mudavanhu 2010:128). The confirmation that one was a true Christian was to adopt a new way of life, to abandon the traditional way of life, detach oneself from unconverted relatives and friends and team up with fellow converts under the guidance of the missionary (2010:127). With such an approach, the Church introduced the concept of individualism and individual decision-making as opposed to the extended family and the traditional concept of consulting elders before major decisions could be taken.

It is, however, important to note that the introduction of Christian villages was not only meant to curb the participation of African Christians in traditional customs and culture but were meant for the transformation of the lives of the African converts. Revd. Alfred Sharp confirmed this in 1900 when he outlined the purpose of introducing the Christian village. He sums it up as follows;

Our object is to establish a mission village on each of the farms we occupy, where the English missionary resides, and to work the surrounding villages from these centres. To these centres we seek to gather the best of our people, the majority of them being our own converts. These villages will be essentially Christian villages, where we make our own civic laws and social rules. They will thus present a striking object lesson to the surrounding heathen. Epworth is a signal success on these lines. Since Brigg took up his residence there nine months ago, a transformation has been affected. In place of a few dilapidated Mashona huts, we now have a well laid out village, with wide streets, sanitary lanes, and neat gardens. Our rule is that every inhabitant must build a square house, or at least a house near square as possible to a native, and, already the village presents a very pleasing view, a model of a missionary settlement (Zvobgo 1991a:74).

At the introduction of the mission settlements, everyone could live on the mission station, but as time went on, only those prepared to observe the Church's teaching were accepted in the Christian villages. The rules and regulations on the mission stations not only concerned the general organisation of the village but also required certain behaviour patterns to be observed by the tenants as part of their condition of tenancy (Peaden 1970:20). Polygamy and all forms of ancestor worship were forbidden to all tenants, including the ceremonies for asking for rain and all the *mashave* ceremonies (Peaden 1970:21). The brewing of traditional beer for cleansing someone of a severe illness was outlawed on the Mission farms, and missionaries were opposed to witchdoctors (N'angas), and these were not allowed on the mission farms (Zvobgo 1991b:67). This negatively impacted on the social organization of the indigenous people and recent converts. The missionaries regarded beer drinking as one of the evils that retarded the growth of the Church. The report of Tegnani circuit in 1907 is testimony to this. It states that,

A great hindrance to our work on the outstations is the use or misuse of native beer. Among old people it is regarded as food, and in many cases the task therefore of its suppression is not an easy one, but in the interest of the moral welfare of the natives its prohibition is their only safeguard (Methodist Church Rhodesia Synod minutes 1908).

The supplementary rules of the Methodist Church Southern Rhodesia district synod of 1911 clearly stated that,

No person residing in the Christian village shall have more than one wife; and that;

No strong beer shall be made by the Christian nor are heathen dances permitted in the Christian village (Chemhanza Circuit Supplementary resolutions of Synod 1911).

The synod of the Methodist district of Southern Rhodesia had to grapple with the issues concerning African traditional religion and culture on the farms and several restrictive resolutions were reached by the Synod. As a way of discouraging Church members from engaging in customary ways of marriage and brewing of traditional beer, the Rhodesia district Synods of 1916, 1922, and 1953 (Methodist Church Rhodesia Synod minutes, 1916, 1922 and 1953)¹⁰ ruled that those who married by customary ways could not be Church leaders and that women who brewed traditional beer could not be bloused as full members of the Ruwadzano\Manyano movement. Circuits had over the years urged synod to reverse its stance especially on marriage after seeing the effects it had on Church growth, but the Synod stated that it only considered Christian marriage (Zvobgo 1991b:71).

The missionaries refused to compromise on beer drinking and polygamy, and members who failed to abide by the rules were disciplined, and this was intended to be a lesson for those members who took Church rules and regulations lightly. In 1922, a number of tenants left Tegwani farm in order to escape the rules and regulations of the Church (1991a:115), left Tegwani mission farm because of the rigidity of missionary rules on polygamy (Manyoba 1991:66).

While the punitive rules and regulations forced some tenants out of the mission farms, many more flocked to get a place and settle in the Christian villages. Vambe (1976:35) argues that tenants in mission villages were conscious of the advantages of the life in the mission and they made the most of it. Zvobgo (1991b) sums up the reasons for the people flocking to the mission stations despite the prohibitive rules and regulations. He argues that

Mission stations were normally associated with schools, and Africans were discovering the importance of schools, particularly in the new socio- economic situations created by colonial enterprise, they preferred to live near schools for the sake of their children. Many people flocked to mission farms not because they liked to be uprooted from their culture, but because the new life on the mission farms was materially advantageous. There was agricultural instruction, decent employment because of education, food security because of sound agricultural methods, hygiene because of the construction of toilets, and security for those who lived on the farms (1991b:66-67).

The material incentives were attractive to Africans which led them to join the Church with little or no proper conversion. The problem that the missionaries had to grapple with over the years was of

¹⁰The synod minutes of 1916, 1922, and 1953 are found in a voluminous notebook in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe Archive at 7 central Avenue, Harare, the note book is handwritten and does not have page numbers.

people reverting to their traditional customs and culture. This was because of using incentives that were in the mission stations to lure people to join the new faith. The resurgence of old beliefs was a sign that the new faith had not taken root in the hearts of the African converts but that it was the African traditional beliefs and customs that were deeply rooted in their heart and minds.

4.5.3 Schools

Education was another vehicle that the missionaries used in their evangelisation endeavours and to undermine the African worldview and belief systems (Cox, 1991). When the Methodist Church constructed schools on its farms, the motivation was to promote the assimilation of religion. It was to strengthen the faith of the converts, by enabling them to read the Bible and Church instruction about their faith (Samudzimu 1991:79; Zvobgo 1991b:85, 1996:149; Peaden 1970:8). The Methodist Missionary report of 1930 shows that at its inception, the objective of missionary education was religious:

The schools may be a problem, but they certainly give us one of the finest opportunities. It is almost impossible to present the Christian message to raw Africans apart from some measure of education. Moreover, education is a most crucial factor in undermining their old belief in witchcraft; and it is the only practical method of opening up to these people the opportunities which we believe should be given to every man to live the fuller life that God purposes for him. Again, our schools give us our opportunity because of religious instruction we are able to give through them- to old as well as young (Zvobgo 1991:86).

Similarly, the report of the summary of missionary work in Mashonaland section of Southern Rhodesia in 1902 shows that education and medical missions were used as vehicles for both evangelization and to fight the African beliefs and customs. A part of the report reads:

We are preaching the gospel to all who will hear it, we are educating thousands of children, we are guiding and directing the people in all their difficulties, and we are healing the sick. In all these directions, our efforts are highly appreciated and are meeting with good success. We thank God for the heathen who have left their idols, for believers who despite all the fascinations of their old life, have been enabled to remain staunch and true to Jesus Christ; for a new generation, which is growing up in fear of the Lord (The Methodist Church Rhodesia District, 1902, Summary of work Mashonaland section).

In educating Africans, the missionaries were targeting the old beliefs of the Africans so that they denounce their old ways and embrace the new beliefs and ways of thinking. The thousands that were educated had to leave their old life and beliefs, and for the missionaries, this was victory. Another religious reason for introducing missionary education among Africans was the discovery

by the missionaries that the evangelisation of Africa was best performed by Africans, so they set up schools and recruited the young unmarried people to train them as evangelists and teachers so that they could preach to and teach their fellow Africans (Mudavanhu 2010:128). Education as a means of religious instruction to education for industrial and social transformation was necessitated by several factors. Peaden (1970) outlines the factors that led to the widening of the scope of missionary education. He writes;

Pressures from various sources caused the widening of the curricula, one of these came from the Department of education following the decision of the legislative council in 1899 to give grants to certain schools, schools that met certain standards and taught specific subjects. Secondly pressure came from the Africans themselves as the demand for book- learning, especially English grew (1970:8).

Samudzimu (1991:81) cites competition among various denominations for membership as well as areas of influence as another reason for the change of approach in education. He argues that, the Methodist Church was not the only denomination with an interest of propagating its influence in the country, others too, like the Catholics, the LMS, the Lutherans, the SDAs, the Salvation Army and the Anglicans were doing similar work. It had become evident during this time that those Churches that catered for material needs attracted more converts. Western education had become like a double- edged sword during this time because while its value as tool for enhancing religious understanding was not lost. It now tended to attract the interest of the Church's flock at the expense of religion, but mysteriously religion changed pupils who went to school particularly for education and they ended up being converts during their stay at the school.

Madhiba (2000:12) thinks that by introducing western education to the African converts, the missionaries sought to create a society which was a replica of the western one, and that western education did harm to the African society. In trying to create a new society, according to Madhiba, western education was used to condemn and destroy the African society, and it created tension in the society because it was presented as undermining traditional values and female roles. Chitando (2005) further points out that the institution of the boarding school which was introduced by missionaries went a long way in alienating young Africans from indigenous traditions and made them more receptive to Christian teachings. The schools rapidly became the main vehicles for evangelisation, because pupils, and often their parents, identified with the Church that controlled the school (Weller and Linden 1984:89). The emphasis on the young in the Methodist Church is evidently clear in the letter written by Isaac Shimmin to Hartley on the 18th of May 1899 where he

explained that: “It is with the Children that our main, and indeed our sole hope of building up a Christian community in this country rests and from the beginning it is our aim to endeavour to provide them with Christian education” (WWMS, Correspondence, Rhodesia, 1899- 1904). Similarly, Revd. J. Butler said that schools offered a wonderful opportunity to instil the teachings of Jesus and the Christian truth into the hearts and minds of African boys and girls, the rising generation (Zvobgo.1991a).

The deliberate targeting of the young as a way of dealing with cultural beliefs and customs appears to have worked for the Methodist missionaries. The Mqini native report alludes to this success:

The teacher has profound influence with the young people. Many of them have separated themselves from heathen customs, but little opposition has been offered them by their parents (Methodist Church Rhodesia District, general summary Mashonaland section, 1902).

The directing of effort toward the young African boys and girl was not smooth sailing. It was met with resistance by their parents. The parents as well as their children were initially reluctant to go to school, it was only when the parents had come to terms with colonial rule and seen the advantages of missionary education that children began to fill the schools (Zvobgo 1996:215). The first Annual report of the Methodist Missionary Society of 1932 shows that the missionaries had to take advantage of the hunger and thirst of education:

This very necessary work makes large demand on the time and energy of ministers and evangelist- teachers alike. Education is looked upon by the Africans as the only supreme thing to be desired. This is only natural. Having the evidence of European civilization before their eyes and knowing that the better paid posts involve some knowledge of English they are anxious for their children to be educated. In Rhodesia, particularly all education is in the hands of the missions. We have 14 000 children in our Methodist schools alone. Whilst this work constitutes a tremendous burden, it is also a mighty opportunity. These institutions, in addition to general education, are especially designed to train workers for the mission – ministers, evangelists, teachers and their wives (First Annual Report of the MMS, June 1933, pp. 108 – 112).

When the missionaries were quite sure that African parents were now aware of the essence of education for the future of their children, they used the presence of the children in school to influence their parents’ commitment to African traditional religion. Fry (2007:113) argues that in the days when the Methodist missionaries were in control of schools completely, before most of

their schools were taken over by African councils in the 1960, they would go as far as expelling the children of any adult who had been involved in African traditional ritual.

The above scenario was meant to use schools to fight African traditional beliefs not only among the Children but also among the parents who wanted their children to learn and be guaranteed of a brighter future. There were many nominal conversions to Christianity that took place in schools and in the villages, but these same converts continued to practice their own traditional beliefs secretly. Peaden (1970) gives a summary of how the missionaries thought targeting the young would help fight African culture and customs when he writes;

It was considered that education would help in three ways to weaken custom, first by taking and educating boys while still young it would be possible to instil in them a higher conception of morality which was not possible in those who were older and set in their ways- to consolidate the higher ideas, they should be kept as far as possible from heathen influence. Secondly, by educating girls it would give them increased independence of mind and strengthen them to refuse to be married by older polygamists. Thirdly, by increasing the horizons of the boys it would encourage them to seek fulfilment in other ways – other than in their cultural activities (1970:10).

Missionary education, as Mangan (2012:6) puts it, was meant to create racial images, to inculcate in the Children of the British empire appropriate attitudes of dominance and difference, to shape the ruled into patterns of proper subservience and legitimate inferiority, and to develop in rulers the convictions about the certain benevolence and legitimate superiority of their rule.

4.5.4 Hospitals and clinics

The Church missions were the first agency to bring western medical facilities to the African people (Peaden 1970:14), and the medical missions were part of the missionary enterprise (Bongmba, 2016:503; Hardiman, 2006:14). All Missionary Societies believed that the ministry of the Church was threefold: preaching, teaching, and healing, and most of them used the three methods simultaneously. Medical work was begun by the Wesleyan Methodists in February 1913 with the government offering them 200 pounds towards the cost of constructing a hospital at Kwenda mission (Zvobgo 1991a:77; 1996:208). The Christian missionaries, including the Wesleyan Methodists started medical missions in Zimbabwe, as elsewhere in the world, for two reasons. First, because the ministry of healing was an integral part of the ministry of Jesus, and secondly, they viewed medical missions as an invaluable evangelistic strategy (Zvobgo 1986, 1996:202).

Although mission schools were an important machinery for the recruitment of Church members and to deal with African religion and culture, the medical missions also had the same responsibility. Peaden (1970), who wrote about missionary attitudes to Shona culture, notes that medical missions were not only for giving service to the community but were a way of fighting African culture. He says:

Missionaries entered upon medical work not merely as a service to the community, but also in anticipation that it would have a cultural effect. They were aware that the Shona had their own healers (*N'angas*), who were regarded by the people not only as experts in their own field, but as a friend and advisor of the community – so the traditional healer (*N'anga*) was considered an enemy of the Christian faith (1970:16).

The attitude of the Methodist Church in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and its use of the medical missions to undermine African religion and culture can be summed up in the writing of Revd. Oswald Brigg, one of its missionaries in 1909 wrote;

Until we can change the native's idea of medicine, we can never make him a real Christian. Half heathenism is summed up in that one word 'medicine'. So, every case we cure, and every pain stayed without magic, means not only relief to the sufferer, but it is the most powerful sermon against witchcraft and superstition (Minutes of Rhodesia District Synod, 1919).

Missionary medicine was meant to counter African medicine and the role of the traditional healer (*N'anga*). The missionaries objected to the idea of *n'angas* because they saw them as a source of conflict. For example, a *n'anga* would try to find out the person responsible for an illness or a death, and this would create enmity between the offender and the offended (Manyoba 1991:68). According to Gunda (2004:232) traditional medical practitioners were the drivers of the traditional health delivery system responsible for treating both natural and supernatural sickness and keeping the spirit world and the world of the living in constant communication. Though the actual healing of people took place, the main motive no longer to help but to use healing as a way of attacking African methods of healing that's why Brigg calls it 'a powerful sermon meant against witchcraft and superstition'. Aguwa (2007) emphasized that the introduction of western medical systems by the missionaries resulted in the destruction and rejection of indigenous health care (2007:6). Like education, health services were viewed as part of the enlightenment programme and those who continued with the African ways of healing were considered to be backward (Madhiba 2000:22).

African converts acknowledged that the missionary medicine could heal a sick person, however, the belief in some superpower, which the missionaries termed as superstitions continued to linger in their minds (Manyoba 1991:67). The result was that after taking a sick person to the hospital some traditional rituals would be performed such as brewing traditional beer for cleansing the ill person of illness. In the event of death, the relatives would consult a n'anga even after a post-mortem to ascertain the cause of death. African Christians followed and practiced missionary medicine when things were not so serious, but when it came to times of crisis they fell back to their old ways. For instance, when a child fell ill they took him/her to hospital but when he got very ill they consulted a n'anga. This shows that no matter how much the missionaries tried to denigrate the African health systems, they continued to have grip on the African hearts and minds.

4.6 Postcolonial MCZ attitude towards African Traditional Religion

The election of a black leader for the Rhodesia district of the Methodist Church in 1965, and the attainment of autonomy by the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe from the British conference in 1977, meant a lot of things for Methodism in Zimbabwe. It meant that the local Methodists had come of age to lead the Church on their own and to develop their own liturgies and make their own theological reflections. It also accorded them an opportunity to revisit and revise the existing liturgies, theologies, rules, and regulations. Throughout the years since autonomy the Methodist Church has grappled with the same issues that were topical during the period before autonomy. Issues such as marriage, ancestor worship, visiting or asking for the services of n'angas, and participating in traditional rites and brewing traditional beer for these rites.

There has been slight change or none in many areas and it looks like the post- autonomous Church just adopted everything from the colonial church and it is the Black man today who is regulating the African beliefs and customs making sure they do not corrupt Christianity. Madhiba (2000:60) argues that autonomy implied maximum participation in Church leadership and that the Church was free to make own decisions and to resolve crises on her own without referring to the British conference. Madhiba goes on to say that even though the Church had the liberty to change things, there were no deliberate efforts undertaken by the Church to localize Methodist forms of worship' therefore Methodist worship has more foreign concepts than local ones (2000:78). Makoti (2012) corresponds with Madhiba when he argues that

When the Methodist Church became autonomous, not much changed, except that the Church tried to become more indigenous in terms of its worship which became more relevant in their traditional background – also its leadership became indigenous as well. Before this the Methodist Church in Rhodesia had virtually no indigenous ministry; almost everything being westernised. When the Methodist Church became independent it inherited most of the western ways of doing things, maintaining the status quo. The Church maintained its clinics, schools and farms and held the same meetings they used to have. Anything the missionaries denounced as superstitious, the Methodist Church still held to. Although the Church was trying to remain indigenous in terms of worship, it did not deal with the issues pertaining to African spirituality that surrounded its members; issues such as witchcraft, healing, possession, visions, dreams and exorcism (2012:132-133).

The assertion that Makoti is making is that the post-autonomy Church has inherited many things from the missionary Church, including practices that suppressed the African expression and identity. Like most mainstream Churches, the Methodist Church is trying very much to maintain the characteristics of the founding missionaries. The aim of this section is to show the extent the Methodist Church has unconstrained herself and moved towards emancipation and cultivate an indigenous self-understanding. The focus will be more on the attitude of the self-governing Zimbabwean Methodists' relationship with African traditional religion and culture, to see if the Church has broken away from the missionary temperament toward the African worldview, cultural practices and customs. The continued defiance of African traditional values and customs or their appreciation can best be seen in the laws and regulations that still govern members, the debates that have taken place over the years concerning African religion and culture, and the amendments that have been made to the colonial missionary rules and regulations.

4.6.1 Rules and regulations that govern Church membership

The rules and regulations that govern the general membership inherited from the Methodist Church's missionary past continue to be applied on members in the post-autonomous Church. The rules and regulations are not only applied to the ordinary members of the Church but to those in leadership as well. They are not only applied to the laity but to the clergy as well. The Mbare Circuit quarterly meeting held on the 5th of May 2017 disciplined a young male local preacher for anticipating marriage (*kutangira muchato*) and he lost his full membership of the Church and all privileges that come with it (Minutes of Mbare Circuit quarterly meeting, 2017) Student ministers in training who impregnated girls while in college have been expelled and reduced to on-trial status (Minutes of Conference, 2002, 2009 & Minutes of Connexional pastoral committee, 2009). The

phrase 'to anticipate marriage' (*kutangira muchato*), is an assumption that there is a marriage that one has gone ahead of when he impregnates or get impregnated. The marriage that is said to have been anticipated is the Christian marriage which should end up with a white wedding. Disciplining individuals for anticipating marriage is a way of confirming the superiority of the Christian or western marriage over all the other types of marriages including all the customary marriages.

The Methodist Church has over the years disciplined both lay members and the clergy for traditional beer drinking. In 1994, a senior minister in the Church was withdrawn from the ministry after he had problems with drinking (Minutes of connexional pastoral committee, 1994). The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe conference in 2009 also withdrew from the ministry one of its ordained ministers after considering the allegations that were levelled against him and these included that, not performing his ministerial duties, he was taking alcohol and attending Church functions drunk, and he was having extra-marital affairs with Church women (Minutes of MCZ Conference, 2009. P. 18). The Chideme Circuit quarterly meeting also disciplined a fully accredited local preacher who had come out openly to say he was taking over from his brother as the clan's spirit medium (*svikiro*). He was disciplined to on-trial status but did not care because he then left the Church to concentrate on his new role (Minutes of Chideme Circuit Quarterly meeting, July 2005). Disciplinary cases that have to do with participation in ancestor worship and participation in traditional rituals are not very common in circuits since these activities are carried out surreptitiously in individual homesteads covered by dark nights. The above shows that the Methodist Church advocates strongly for teetotalism and monogamy and does not condone any other types of marriage union among its members. The attitude toward beer drinking, traditional rituals and toward polygamy was inherited by the contemporary Church from the missionary Church and this attitude continues to draw parameters of conduct among the Methodist membership.

The Class Meeting Regulations

The class meetings were the instruments that John Wesley used for deepening the faith, hope and love of believers (Clapper 1989: 166). Wesley did not believe or recommend lonely mountaintop contemplation, for he knew too well the human heart's propensity for deceit. Thus, new members were formed into classes, societies and bands where the Christians could examine each other and openly and honestly share with each other the course of their spiritual struggles (Clapper 1989).

The class functioned as the membership unit, in which the members held themselves and one another to the demanding disciplines of the way of holiness (Richey 2013:52). The growing numbers in the Methodist societies can be said to have contributed to the genesis of class meeting. According to Norwood (1958),

Membership had grown so large that Wesley could not keep up with the need. The society in London had about 1 100 members by 1742- by chance, as he describes it, the solution appeared in Bristol. In discussing the means of paying debt on the property in 1742 one member suggested each member gave a penny a week and that in order to facilitate collection groups of twelve be organised, each with a leader. The leader was to visit the members for weekly contributions (1958:70).

During these financial visitations, it was discovered that some members were not following the rules closely, and so John Wesley asked each class leader to add to his duties an inquiry into the life and faith of members in his class. The institution of the class in the Methodist tradition developed into something universal and wherever the Methodist Church went, the classes were introduced, and as time went by, classes became an ingrained institution, fixed in the preservation of heritage (Norwood 1958:79). The classes became part of the administrative structure of the Methodist Church under the charge of a local preacher who told every member in the class what he thought was wrong with them and he did that plainly.

The universality of the class meeting, in the sense that they were introduced wherever the Methodist Church was introduced, saw them introduced in Zimbabwe when the Church arrived in the 1890s. The Constitutional practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church in Southern Rhodesia (1963), being the constitution of the Methodist Church then, states that

In the Methodist Church, the class meeting is one of the chief means of grace which all members should attend. Members and catechumens who are constantly absent without sufficient cause cut themselves off from fellowship, and their names should be removed from the list of members. In the class meetings, the spiritual character of the meeting should be kept constantly before members. The class meeting is for Christian fellowship and for instruction in Christian truth and should not be regarded as a preaching service (The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church in the Southern Rhodesia District, p.8.).

There are three important points to be noted from the above extract. First attendance to the class was compulsory for all members. Secondly all those who failed to attend for no substantial reason, were disciplined by removal from the class register and from membership. Thirdly, the classes were meant to teach Christian truth apart from Christian fellowship. Apart from having their names

written in class registers, each member was expected to have a membership card on which all monetary contributions were recorded (see fig. 5.2 below). Giving members cards and writing their names in class registers was not only for administrative and governance purposes but also as a means of maintaining surveillance on members. The truth taught in these classes was subjective, it was based on the beliefs and understanding of the missionaries based on their religious and cultural worldview. The discipline involved was meant in a way to coerce African members to accept the Christian teaching as taught in the class without dissent, because of fear of punishment. Since the classes were compulsory to all members, full members and catechumens, the Methodist missionaries made sure that their teaching were received and followed by all.

Having spelt out the importance of the Class in the Methodist Church, the constitution went on to outline some rules and regulation that were to be taught to the members and the expectations to those who wished to be members of the Methodist Church. The expectations and rules are as follows;

Adult membership shall be divided into three classes (a) Catechumens, (b) Members on trial, (c) Full members. The Catechumen and on- trial periods are for fellowship, instruction and probation. The length of the probation shall be decided by the minister in conjunction with the leaders' meeting, account being taken of the fitness of each candidate. The normal period shall be two years, not less than one year in the Catechumenate followed by one year on trial. It is desired that illiterate candidates should be taught to read. A male polygamist, or any wife of a polygamist other than the first taken, may not be baptised or be received as a member as long as the polygamous marriage continues. These and others who cannot for various reasons (including discipline) be received into full membership of the Church but who desire fellowship shall be encouraged to attend some form of Class Meeting or Fellowship Class (The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church in the Southern Rhodesia District, p.8.).

Among the expectation on the Members of the Church was that each man be married to one wife and this was taught to all members in the Class meeting. This means the Class meetings were used to teach against African religion and culture and were meant to be effective since the classes were compulsory. When the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe became autonomous in October 1977, the Class fellowship continued as an indispensable heritage of the Methodist tradition.



Figure 4.2: Copy of a Methodist membership ticket or card with the inscription of the great commission.

Source: <http://www.chefred.org.uk/gp/FullAlbert/images/042.jpg>

The current Methodist Church class book, 40 years after attaining an autonomous status, still has rules and regulations that still mitigate against African religion and culture. At the annual conference in 2004, the Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe emphasized on the importance of maintaining the classes as the basic unit for Christian fellowship when he argued that

Methodists all over the world seem to have either lost or abandoned what was known as 'the mark of Methodism' during the time of John Wesley and beyond. John Wesley was a man of the crowds. Any conference which has returned to these basics, is experiencing rebirth, revival, increase in numbers and financial boom. The caring Church would cause people to experience God's love and his grace. Class meetings and group Bible studies are a way we can create a caring Church which would result in spiritual growth of our membership (Minutes of the MCZ Conference, 2004, p. 65).

The emphasis on the maintenance of classes by the Presiding Bishop confirms a continuation of the rules and regulations that mitigate against African traditional religion and culture that were part of the colonial Church system. The duties of the class leader are delineated in the class book. The class leader has the duty to make sure those under his care do not participate in ungodly practices such as, drinking, buying, or selling any intoxicating substances, playing games of chance such as lotto, engaging or encouraging others to participate in witchcraft, singing heathen songs or participation in heathen dances (The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, Class Book, p. 4- 5). The

teaching of the missionaries during the period before autonomy seems to have taken root in the Africans such that now after four decades of black leadership of the Church, they emphasize the suppression of any traits of African religion and culture. The attitude of the Methodist Church toward African religion and culture has not changed if one closely interrogates the restrictions that are imposed on the class leaders in the contemporary Methodist Church in Zimbabwe.

The missionary class fellowship prohibited beer drinking, heathen dances, and the Church in which black Methodist Christians have authority to review and change rules and regulations still maintains these. The issue of polygamy is not included in the prohibitions in the class book but it is in the organizational policy documents. The reason why the Church removed the prohibitions for polygamists from the class book could be that since class lessons are taken by all including the youths, issues of marriage become relevant to the adult organizations.

4.6.2 The farm settlements\ Villages

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe inherited the farms together with the Christian villages in them and continued to hold the administrative meetings that were held during the missionary era (Makoti, 2012:132-133). The Church also continued to enforce the rules that were crafted during the missionary era and the tenants were expected to comply with these rules and regulations. The church, however, faced problems of indiscipline, non-compliance among the tenants and also lack of cooperation and various threats from external stakeholders (MCZ Farms Policy document, p.1). The Church had for a long time failed to provide answers to the above challenges. Thus, the Church through the connexional Farms Committee came up with the idea of having a Farms Policy aimed at guiding the Church in its quest to run its farms affairs in a rational and professional manner. The Farm Policy seeks to create an enabling environment for stakeholders in Mission Farms to act decisively, resolutely and objectively on matters of discipline, governance and compliance with regards to Mission Farm life (MCZ Farms Policy Document, p. 1).

The objectives of the Farms Policy document include, ensuring the Mission Farms are occupied by the Methodist Christians whose manner of living will be exemplary in holding Methodist Church ethos and identity (MCZ Farms Policy Document). This objective is a carry-forward from missionary era whereby the occupants of the Christian homes were expected to be a shining example to the dark heathen surrounding. The Farm Policy document also seeks to organize Methodist Christians on the Mission farms into a powerful agency for evangelisation and

development (MCZ Farms Policy Document), this objective is not new because during the missionary era, the mission Farm were used as agency for evangelisation and development, which is what lured many to settle in the Farms. In order for the Church Farms to continue being a vehicle of evangelisation and an example to the outside world, the Farms policy document gives a set of rules that are to be enforced on every Methodist Farm settlement. Part of the rules, in the documents states that,

All illegal tenants must be evicted from the Methodist mission Farms. No new tenants will be accepted on MCZ farms. No beer parties shall be allowed on the mission Farms. No beer brewing, or sales shall be allowed on MCZ mission farms. All people settling on mission farms shall be subject to control and direction of the MCZ (MCZ Farms Policy Document, p. 1).

The rules in the new policy document are a duplication of those that were used to govern settlement on mission Farms before autonomy. Beer parties, brewing and selling of beer, were outlawed during the missionary era and are still outlawed by the new farms policy document.

The tenants on the Methodist Church Farm settlements sign a lease agreement after every two years so that order is maintained. It also keeps a good and up to date records of legitimate tenants. The lease agreement form is compatible with all the items that are in the Farms Policy document (MCZ Farms Policy Document, p.3). The lease agreement form has several undertakings that the tenant has to agree to and sign. Part of the expectations that the tenant has to agree to include;

The lessee shall not make or bring to the mission land any beer or other intoxicating stuff or engage in traditional ancestral worship. The lessee shall not be permitted to enter into polygamous marriage or to cohabit with any person without marriage (only chapter 5:11 is accepted). Any child dependent of the lessee who gets into marriage or cohabits with any person shall cease to stay on the farm. The Lessee shall not undertake any non- essential work on Sundays and must endeavour to attend MCZ services every Sunday. The lessee who practices, attends or bring in the mission farm other denominations will be expelled from the farm. The lessee shall not be permitted to cultivate tobacco or barley crops on the mission farm under whatever circumstances (MCZ, Farms Agreement of lease).

The lease agreement prohibits several practices that are related to African traditional religion and customs. These include polygamous marriages and cohabitation, beer brewing, drinking, and selling, taking of traditional snuff, ancestral worship, working on Sundays, and cultivation of tobacco and barley (Farms Committee Agreement of lease). The advocacy of Christian marriage (Chapter 5:11) on the farm settlements still has the motive of fighting all forms of African

customary marriages, including runaway marriages (*kutizira*), and cohabitation. There is no shift from the original stance of the first Methodist missionaries because the position has been maintained for over a century now. The rules on brewing and drinking of beer has also been upheld, the reason being that African traditional beer is associated with most traditional rites, such as *kurova guva* ceremony and other cleansing ceremonies. The contemporary farm policy document goes further to prohibit the growing of tobacco and barley on the mission farm. The prohibition on the cultivation of tobacco was meant to discourage smoking and taking of traditional snuff which is highly associated with ancestral worship in Zimbabwe. Bishop (1985: 9-13) argues that tobacco, especially in form of snuff, is of special importance in dealing with ancestral spirits, the ancestors are generally appealed to or appeased at ritual feasts and tobacco is a prerequisite (1985:9). Snuff according to Bishop, is responsible for aiding communication with the ancestors, diviners use it to clear their heads in order to allow the ancestors to enter and guide them in their divining (1885:10). Barley is also prohibited because barley is a preferred grain for brewing beer after converting it into malt. The prohibition of non-essential work and declaring Sunday as a day of rest on the mission farms had a huge cultural effect in Africa. In most African societies, the spirit mediums have set aside a day on which people are supposed to rest and not do any work and its observance was to be overseen by traditional leaders. Those who continue to work on such a day (*Chisi*) are fined by traditional leadership or calamity befalls him. The introduction of Sunday as a day of rest is meant to discourage Christians staying on the farm from observing the traditional day of rest (MCZ, Farms Committee, Agreement of lease).

The enforcement of rules and regulations has continued in Methodist farm settlements. However, the application and enforcement were not smooth sailing, they were met with resistance and insurrection from the tenants. In 2010, the visit to Pakame mission farm revealed the resurgence of African traditional religion and culture and the resistance of the tenants to the rules and regulations. The report of the visit stated that

Church rules and regulations are no longer being followed at all, in any case traditional rituals are now common among tenants. The Churches (mostly Pentecostal and Apostolic) have gained free access to the mission Farm at the invitation of some rogue tenants (Report on the visit of Pakame and Thekwane Farms, 2011).

The above problems of continued adherence to African traditional practices and inviting apostolic sects to the farm was not only unique to Pakame mission Farm but it was common in all farms. The above was discussed at a farms committee meeting. The meeting noted that;

Apart from owing these large sums of money, tenants are engaging in all sorts of activities in defiance of Church rules and regulations, as enshrined in the lease agreement forms they have signed. Among others, the most serious offences include: Brewing, selling, and consumption of alcohol within the mission farm with some performing traditional rituals and beer parties. Some are inviting, accepting, and attending other denominations at the Methodist Farms, while others are refusing to bury their deceased relatives at designated cemetery sites. These matters are not peculiar to Chivero, Pakame, and Marshal Hartley farms, but other farms too (Minutes of the MCZ Farms Committee, May 2011).

At Marshal Hartley farm the above problems were compounded by the interference of the local Chief, Chief Chivero, since each of the Church Farms falls under the jurisdiction of a traditional Chief. According to the report on the situation at Marshal Hartley farm, the Chief visited and addressed tenants without the blessing of the Church and encouraged people to practice traditional rituals and threatened all those who did not participate in traditional ceremonies. Part of the report read,

Up and above the challenges that are directly caused by some rogue tenants, there are also external forces that are compounding the problems at Marshal Hartley farm. An example is Chief Chivero who recently visited and addressed the tenants on Monday 20 June 2011 without the blessings of the Church. He went on to denigrate the Church and denouncing the activities of the men of the cloth (ministers) who were present and calling them names and also using derogatory language in front of the tenants. The traditional leader actually fuelled the already burning seeds of disrespect of the Church by the rogue tenants and went on to encourage them to perform traditional rituals such as beer parties and ancestral worshipping among other activities that are not in sync with ethics, values, and norms of the Church. He even threatened to punish those who fail to perform the ritual ceremonies as prescribed by him and also threatened the Church ministers with unspecified action if they prevent such rituals to be carried out on the mission farm (Report on the situation at Marshal Hartley Farm, 2011).

The blow by the Chief forced the Methodist Church to seek the protection of the District Administrator of Chegutu rural district council. The Church narrated the disastrous visits of the Chief to the farm to District lands committee which was perplexed by the actions of the Chief (Report on the situation at Marshal Hartley Farm, 2011). The lands committee agreed to send a

delegation, including Chief Chivero, the D. A, the ministry of lands, ZRP, AREX, War Veterans and representatives of Zanu PF to go and address tenants at Marshal Hartley farm on the 30th of June 2011 to water down the effects of the Chief's visit and address of the 20th of June 2011. The outcome of this stakeholders' meeting was:

Freedom of worship- it was clearly spelt out that there is freedom of worship in Zimbabwe and that individuals were free to join any religion of their choice, including engaging in traditional practices as enshrined in the constitution of Zimbabwe. With regard to religious life at Marshal Hartley Farm, the DA supported by Chief Chivero, stressed that only Methodist members are known to be staying on the farm, according to signed lease agreements, hence, those who want to keep on staying on the mission farms should be practicing Methodist members. This means that no traditional practices should be performed on the mission farm, e.g. brewing of beer and beer parties and ancestral appeasement. Anyone with desire to perform traditional rituals should apply for land and move out of Church land. It was also resolved that all tenants should bury their deceased relatives at designated cemeteries\burial places (Minutes of the stakeholders, 2011).

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, according to the above, won the battle to continue policing and maintaining surveillance on African traditional rituals and culture on her farms. The DA further stressed that the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe's expectations, rules and regulations should be fulfilled and adhered to as long as tenants still want to stay on the Church farm, and that the door is open for those who no longer enjoy mission life to apply and join others in the resettlement areas where freedom is more diverse (Minutes of the stakeholders, 2011). The Chief also mentioned that if anyone continues to breach the rules and regulations, the Church may be forced to invoke the necessary instruments of law available to expel them out of the mission farm (Minutes of the stakeholders, 2011). The outcome of the meeting empowered the Methodist Church to apply its repressive laws towards African traditional practice and culture.

As a response to the continued indulgence in African traditional practices and culture, the Presiding Bishop wrote a letter addressing all tenants on mission farms. Part of the message read:

Let me take this opportunity to share with you that the connexional office has realized that some of you are engaging in activities that are not compatible with rules and regulations of the Church as stated in the agreements. It is common knowledge amongst you that the following activities\behaviour is strictly prohibited on Methodist Mission Farms:

Brewing and drinking beer\alcohol and engaging in traditional beer parties or ancestral worship.

Burying the deceased on undesignated places or homesteads. Burial places are well designated in all mission Farms (Presiding Bishop's message to all tenants, 2011).

The actions of the Chief Chivero on the 20th of June 2011 could have been triggered by the contents of the Presiding Bishop's letter of the 14th of June 2011, with some tenants having alerted him of the communication from the head of the Church. The emphasis by the Church that tenants bury deceased relatives on designated burial places, as exhibited by the Presiding Bishop's correspondence, is a way of maintaining surveillance on the tenants since it becomes difficult to conduct rituals for the dead at a public cemetery monitored by the Church. On the other hand, the continued insistence by the tenants to bury their deceased on undesignated places or homesteads is not only a form of resistance to Church rules and policies, but a sign of the power and grip of African traditional religion and culture which requires rituals to be performed on the departed relatives and that they be buried among other deceased relatives. The Presiding Bishop also wrote letters to individual tenants these included those who could not abide by the rules and regulations of the Church (Presiding Bishop's correspondence, October 2015), those who were inviting and attending apostolic events at their allocated plots (Presiding Bishop's correspondence, 21 June 2012), and those who could not manage the conduct of their children who failed to observe the rules and regulations (Presiding Bishop's Correspondence, 31 December 2015). The writing of such letters by the Presiding Bishop are proof that the rules and regulations of the Church are still in force and the those who continue to defy the rules face expulsion and exclusion from their allocated mission plots.

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe farms still hold on to the missionary attitude toward the African traditional religion, culture and customs. They preserve and uphold the negative perception that the missionaries had on the African belief system and culture. The superiority of the worldview of the missionaries over that of the Africans is still maintained through the new policy document, which has taken the place of the first Methodist missionaries in policing and regulating African religion and culture. The system that was used over one hundred and twenty years ago is still used today to draw parameters against African culture and religion.

4.6.3 The Ruwadzano\Manyano

The Ruwadzano\Manyano is the name given to the women' organisation in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. The organisation has been an effective evangelistic agency for the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, since it was introduced as early as 1920 (Zvobgo 1991a:96; 1991b:44, 1996:346). The origins of the organisation can be traced back to South Africa, in the Transvaal district, when Mrs Amos Burnet started a movement called 'the African Women's prayer Union' (Zvobgo 1991b:44). Gaitskell (2009:1), however, thinks the origins of the movement are traced back to Mrs Stephen Gqosho, and Mrs Burnet was only a late comer in the movement. Gaitskell's testimony is as follows;

After attending a women's convention at Edendale in Natal in 1907, Mrs Gqosho, wife of a Cape born African minister in Potchefstroom, started the Wesleyan Methodist Prayer Union, in South western Transvaal in 1907. She brought a small group of women together to pray for their families and for the common unity and for their sins, as well as for the safety of their husbands and sons working in the mines and for uprooting witchcraft and superstition. Mrs Gqosho spread the movement by holding revival services throughout the district, followed by a convention in 1908. The Transvaal story of the movement is complicated by the fact that Mrs Gqosho somehow fell out with her peers after 1909 conference – three African Ministers' wives complained to the Synod secretary and as a result she had her movement taken away from her. This fuelled her husband's departure from the Wesleyans for the primitive Methodist in 1911. Mrs Burnet, the wife of the District Chairperson of the Transvaal District, was only requested in 1910 by the Wesleyan district Synod to lead the movement.

The taking away of leadership from a black leader and replacing her with a White one could have been due to lack of trust in the capability of the black leader. Mrs Esther Burnet proceeded to sharpen the movement after taking over the reins of leadership, the focus was on the domestic virtues of the devout wife and mother. These were stressed in the new constitution, and they stressed the need to keep house and family clean, to clothe children and instruct them in the Christian faith (Gaitskell, 2009:1). The movement became very successful in South Africa such that it expanded into Zimbabwe in 1920 where it became known as *Ruwadzano* in Mashonaland and *Manyano* in Matabeleland (Zvobgo 1991a:96). When the movement got to Zimbabwe, the virtues of Mrs Burnet were maintained, the sweeping and cleaning of homes every day and keeping Children clean and clothed. A few expectations and restrictions were added to these virtues; women were not allowed to drink beer, smoke, or take snuff, not to follow heathen customs and

to prevent their observance in their homes, including consulting witchdoctors (The discipline and Constitutional practice of the Methodist Church Southern Rhodesia, 1963).

The virtues discussed above were used and are still used by the Ruwadzano\Manyano to inculcate responsibility in Christian women as far as the home and the family is concerned. The Ruwadzano\Manyano constitution advocates for an ideal woman whose responsibility is to take care of the cleanliness of the house and of the Children. Gaitskell (1990:255) calls this training of women in domestic work, in which they are mothers of children and makers of Christian homes, devout domesticity. If closely analysed, the Ruwadzano\Manyano movement advocates for independence, for women who can fend for themselves and their families and not be dependent on their husbands' provisions and salaries. The Ruwadzano\Manyano constitution also makes emphasis of the uniform for the Methodist Christian women. The Ruwadzano\Manyano uniform is more than a dress, it is a distinctive Christian dress, it marks Christian commitment and is a symbol of corporate identification and status (Haddad, 2016:166). The ritual service conducted when new members are bloused is testimony that the uniform is sacred among Methodist women, it is believed to have powers because it is consecrated by the prayers and rituals performed before it is won by a member. The belief in the sacredness of the uniform makes it a special dress not won every day but on specific days and occasions believed to be sacred such as Easter, holy communion, Ruwadzano\Manyano convention, memorial and burial services, and weddings (MCZ, Ruwadzano\Manyano Card, rule 6). The only problem that arises with women putting on uniforms in Church, as highlighted by Haddad (2016), is that most women join the Ruwadzano\Manyano organisation and also the Church to don the uniform and Church membership and commitment to God means nothing to them and they continue their life of sin.

The Methodist Church after autonomy has maintained the virtues that stretch back to the Transvaal District, and the rules and regulations introduced during the era when missionaries were in charge. Concerning marriage, the rules state that

Members with customary marriages may be bloused members of the organisation but cannot be elected into positions of leadership, they should be encouraged to have Christian marriages if their husbands have no wives (MCZ, Ruwadzano\Manyano Administration Policy and Constitution, 2011).

The brewing and drinking of beer is under the cases for discipline, which means members of the organisation are not allowed to have anything to do with beer (MCZ, Ruwadzano\Manyano

Administration Policy and Constitution). The Ruwadzano\Manyano card which is included as part of the uniform of the organisation has the rules and the expectations of the organisation that must be mastered by the members. The rules in the card, also contained in the constitution, emphasize that for any woman to be a full member of the organization she must have a Christian marriage (referring to civil marriage, Chapter 5:11), that women members are not to take snuff, visit n'angas, participate in traditional rituals, and quarrelling (MCZ, Ruwadzano\Manyano Card, Rules).

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe continues to guard against the infiltration of the African belief into the Christian for fear that this will corrupt the Christian faith, and Ruwadzano as an organization is doing that task on behalf of the Church. The Ruwadzano\ Manyano rules and regulations are simply a continuation of the missionary rules and regulations. In them one can see the continuation of the missionary attitude towards the African traditional religion and culture. The attitude is now continued by the black African Christians even if the white missionaries have long left. The African worldview has no place according to the rules of Ruwadzano\Manyano because they are so rigid and leave no space for any dialogue between the Christian faith and the African worldview.

4.8.3 The Men's Christian Union

The Men's Christian Union (MCU) is the men's organisation in the Methodist Church that is associated with Ruwadzano in that it is used by the Church as a growth group and as a way of regulating the infiltration of African traditional religion and culture. The aims and objectives of the MCU are to encourage the study of the Bible and the reading of other useful books, to help and encourage young men to seek the higher life for which they were created; to strive for pure life on the part of all members; to seek continually love and peace and to put away hatred and strife, to spread the good news of salvation and to encourage young men to become preachers in the future (MCZ, MCU Constitution, 2014). It is, however, important to note that these aims, and objectives are a replica of those that were contained in the organisation's initial constitution drafted in the 1960s (The Constitutional Practice and discipline of the Methodist Church in Southern Rhodesia). Having been founded in 1928, the organisation produced its first constitution later in the 1960s, the constitution has been revised four times to date. First in the 1980s, then 2004, 2010, and lastly in 2013 (MCZ, MCU Constitution, 2014, p.3). Despite the several revisions made to the constitution, quite a lot of rules and regulations remain unchanged (See figures 5. 3 and 5.4 below).

Regarding marriage, the original constitution of 1963 spelt out that;

No person may be a member of the Methodist Church who does not accept the Christian view of marriage. All Methodist people when marrying must take the Christian vows of marriage, except in the case of a first wife of non- Christian, who may be received on probation and for instruction and be baptised and be received into Full Membership even though her husband refuses, or is not eligible, to be married by Christian rites. No Christian marriage shall be performed between Christian and non- Christian partners until its meaning and implications have been explained to and accepted by both parties. Only in very exceptional circumstances may a Christian man be married to a non- Christian woman (The Constitutional Practice of the Methodist Church in Southern Rhodesia, 1963).

The constitution did not recognise polygamous marriages or any other types of African customary marriages. The only marriage that was acceptable to the Church was a monogamous one contracted in the Church with Christian vows. The current constitution of the MCU states frankly that

Any man who wishes to be a full member of the MCU must be a married man of one wife. A polygamist i.e. a man having two or more wives (may attend MCU meetings) but shall not be badged (MCZ, MCU Constitution, 2014, p.6).

The contemporary constitution still advocates for monogamy and discourages polygamy or any form of marriage that is deemed unchristian by the Church. Polygamists or even monogamists who have not married according to the Christian tradition still have no place in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. This strictness and demand for the Christian marriage was not without effect to the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, especially on its numerical growth. The restrictions affected the number of men coming to Church. The Church was however, forced to continually sit to reconsider its position on the concept of Christian marriage. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe conference of 2014 is an illustration of the Church's commitment to reform its position on the understanding of marriage.

The two constitutions of the MCU, the colonial missionary one and the current, both advocate for an ideal Christian man who should study the Bible, strive for purity, shun polygamy, abstain from drinking liquor, and all worldly lust. The current constitution goes further to demand that a member of the MCU must lead his family in an exemplary manner, and this includes providing for the family needs, he must be of service to his family, Church and community (MCZ, MCU Constitution, 2014, p.7). The MCU uniform, like the Ruwadzano\Manyano one, is not an ordinary dress but is symbolic and sacred. The constitution goes further to stipulate the times and occasions when the MCU uniform is to be donned, these include, during the holy communion service, annual

conventions, Christian funeral services, Easter, Christmas, and revivals (MCZ, MCU Constitution, pp. 11-12).

The mission committee had in 2013 recommended to conference that the Lay and ministerial sessions of conference, the youth conference and District Synods should discuss the issue of marriage (MCZ, Minutes of conference, 2013, p.93). The committee had realised the massive loss of young people to other Churches. The points of discussion included the questions, where does marriage begin? What makes a marriage Christian or non-Christian? The mission committee recommended to Conference 2014 that the Church blesses all *monogamous* customary marriages in order to remove the stigma that a white wedding is the only true marriage, and that there be further scrutiny on the Church's view of marriage, and voted and accepted this legislation (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2013, p. 93). Although the decision of the 2014 conference gave some respite to those men who did not have Christian marriages but had monogamous customary marriages, polygamy still has no place in the Methodist Church.

The issue of beer drinking was not allowed in the first constitution and still in the current constitution it is still unthinkable to do. The constitution of 1963 was explicit that beer drinking was not permissible, it stated that;

No member is allowed to take intoxicating drink (The Constitutional Practice of the Methodist Church in Southern Rhodesia, 1963, p.29.

The new constitution still maintains the same stance of teetotalism. It states that;

A member of the MCU shall not drink any intoxicating substance, alcohol\beer or smoke cigarettes\snuff, he shall not be expected to horse bet, play lotto, bet cards or play betting games of any kind (MCZ, MCU Constitution, 2013, p. 6).

Although the MCU Constitution is silent on the issues surrounding the participation in traditional rites (Mapira) and inviting or visiting traditional healers for divination and healing, which the Ruwadzano\Manyano constitution is explicit about, it still does not condone African traditional religion and culture. In Africa practices such as playing lotto, horse betting, or any form of gambling are associated with the African worldview because those who participate consult the traditional healers who help them guess the correct numbers or horses. The banning of participation in gambling is in a way meant to deal a blow on the African traditional religion and culture.

SECTION 10

ORGANISATIONS

70. Men's Christian Union

A. CONSTITUTION

1. Officers:—

- District President: Chairman of the District.
- District Secretary: Elected by Synod.
- District Treasurer: Elected by Synod.
- Circuit President: Superintendent of the Circuit.
- Circuit Chairman: An African Minister.
- Circuit Secretary: Elected by the Quarterly Meeting.
- Circuit Treasurer: Superintendent of the Circuit.
- Station Chairman: The Evangelist. If there is no Evangelist at the place, the members of the M.C.U. shall nominate one of their number to the Quarterly Meeting for appointment.

2. District Committee

For the membership of the District Committee see the current Handbook.

3. Local Committees

The M.C.U. in each Circuit or Station shall elect a Committee of its members. The Committee shall elect its Chairman, who shall preside at the meetings of the Committees. At least one month before Synod the Circuit Secretary shall send to the District Secretary a report of the M.C.U. work in the Circuit.

4. Contributions

Each member and member-on-trial shall contribute 1s. per year, 3d. of which shall be sent to the District Treasurer. In addition each member shall purchase his own membership card.

B. AIMS AND OBJECTS

1. To encourage the study of the Bible and the reading of other helpful books. (2 Peter, 1.2)
2. To help and encourage young men to seek the higher kind of life so that they may fulfil the purpose for which they were created. (Matt. 6.33)
3. To strive for purity of life on the part of all members

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11. Each member ought to ask himself these questions:

- (a) As I am a member of Christ's Church, am I pure in heart and body? (Heb. 6.1)
- (b) Am I trying to possess inward holiness? (1 Peter, 1.16)
- (c) Have I the witness of the Holy Spirit within me?
- (d) Does the work bear witness of me that I am not of the world but have separated myself from it? (2 Cor. 7.1; John 7.14)

12. No Circuit M.C.U. Committee, or member of that Committee, shall invite members from another Circuit to attend any M.C.U. Convention without the approval of the Superintendents of the Circuits concerned.
13. Where there are isolated members in several Churches in one area, these shall be entered on the membership return as being members of one Branch, the Branch to be called by the name of the strongest Church in that area.

71. Ruwadzano-Manyano

A. CONSTITUTION

1. District Officers

- District President and Treasurer: The Chairman's wife, unless she declines, in which case the President is elected annually by the District Committee, subject to confirmation by Synod.
- District Vice-President: Elected annually by the District Committee.
- District Secretary: Elected annually by the District Committee.

2. District Committee

- (a) For the membership of the District Committee see the current Handbook.
- (b) Representatives to the District Synod and to the Area Councils shall be elected as determined from time to time by the Synod.

3. Circuit Officers

- Circuit President: The Superintendent Minister's wife, unless she declines, in which case the Circuit President is elected annually by the Circuit Committee, subject to confirmation by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting.
- Circuit Vice-Presidents: Wives of Circuit Ministers.

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of the Church. To seek continually love and peace and to put away hatred and strife. (Thess. 5.15.)

4. To spread abroad the good news of salvation, and so to teach the younger men that they may become preachers, and fitted for great tasks in the time to come.

C. RULES

1. All men who are members or members-on-trial of the Methodist Church may join, but only full members may be badged. All young men who desire to do so, whether members of the Church or not, may freely attend the open meetings.
2. No member is allowed to take intoxicating drink.
3. Those joining shall remain on trial for six months, during which time the meaning of the M.C.U. shall be explained to them.
4. The Sash of the M.C.U. shall be a red band six inches wide on which is worked the letters, "M.C.U."
5. Meetings shall be held on Saturday each week at a time appointed for each place.
6. It is not allowed that any member of the M.C.U. neglects to pay the appointed M.C.U. contribution and his Church contribution. Anyone in arrears will be reckoned to be unworthy of the M.C.U. and must return his membership ticket and badge to the Chairman of the Branch.
7. The Badging Service shall be conducted by the Superintendent assisted by the Chairman of the Branch.
8. Vain arguments and discussions are not allowed among the members, but encouragement should be given to the holding of meetings for the discussion of worthy subjects or other helpful purposes. Quarrelling and strife must be put away and not be found among us. (Gal. 5.20; 1 Cor. 13.6)
9. An unmarried member ought to exercise great care in choosing his wife. The consent of the parents of the girl should be obtained. The custom of visiting the girl's hut is not permissible. Members must keep themselves pure. In marriage ceremonies it is not fitting to make great display at great expense. It is wrong to get into debt for such expenses. (1 Cor. 6, 18-20.)
10. Members are strongly urged to pray for other members especially in the Sunday morning prayer meetings. (1 Tim. 5.17; 1 Tim. 2, 1-8; James 5.16.)

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Figure 5.3: Constitution and rules of the MCU during the missionary era.

Source: The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church in Southern Rhodesia, 1963

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MCU

Goals and Aspirations

1. To strengthen men's resolve to read the Bible and other relevant spiritual books (2 Peter 1: 20-21, 2 Timothy 3: 16-17, Hebrew 4: 12, Romans 15: 4). *be spiritual, prayerful, Bible reader*
2. To enable men to seek resolutely righteousness in order to do that which they were created for (Matthew 6: 33, John 3: 3)
3. To strive for holiness in the lives of all members in the body of Christ. To seek love and peace. To remove all hatred and discrimination of all types, grudges, disagreements and misunderstandings. (Matthew 5: 8, 2 Timothy 2: 22, 1 Thessalonians 5: 13, Matthew 5: 48, Romans 12: 19-21). *lead a holy life without anger in the church*
4. To preach the good news, the Gospel of Salvation and to build the body of Christ (Evangelism). (Romans 10:14-15, 1 Corinthians 1: 22-25).
5. Dedication to the service of the organization in order to bring others to Christ. (Matthew 5: 16, 25: 35-40, Galatians 6: 9-10).
6. Every member of the MCU should ask himself the following questions:
 - (a) As part of the body of Christ and member of the Methodist Church and MCU, am I clean in body and spirit? (Mark 7: 12-22, *strive for purity* 1 Corinthians 6: 19-20, 2 Corinthians 7: 1, Hebrews 12: 21).
 - (b) As a member, does the Spirit of God and my soul testify that I am a child of God, that I am no longer for myself, and that I am no longer of this world, I have decided and dedicated my life to serve the Lord? (Mark 7: 20-21, Romans 8: 16).
 - (c) Does the world testify that I am no longer part of it? *Yes! For we are not of this world*
 - (d) Do I desire purity in body and spirit? (Leviticus 11: 45, 20: 3, 1 Peter 1: 16). *purity of body and spirit*

4 RULES / LAWS

1. Membership of the MCU is open to any man who chooses to be a member.
2. Only full members of the church can put on the MCU uniform.
3. A man who decides to join the MCU must serve as an on-trial (OT) member for at least six months before being badged as a full member of the MCU.
4. *X* Any man who wishes to be a full member of the MCU must be a married man of one wife. A polygamist i.e. a man having two or more wives (may attend MCU Meetings) but shall not be badged. *X* *polygamous unions discouraged - one wife*
5. Every man shall give contributions as set by the society.
6. Every man shall be in possession of a Bible, Hymn Book and MCU Constitution. *possession of hymns & Bible*
7. MCU meetings shall be conducted on a day set by each society e.g. Friday. Any member who fails to attend for three consecutive months without a concrete reason ceases to be a full member of the organization.
8. *R* A member of the MCU shall not drink any intoxicating substance, alcohol/beer or smoke cigarettes/snuff, he shall not be expected to horsebet, play lotto, bet cards or play any betting games of any kind. *no drinking / snuff / smoking*
9. Any member who does not abide by or breaks any provisions of the MCU Constitution shall not put on the MCU uniform and shall not be assigned any MCU duties pending conclusion of disciplinary processes.
10. *X* Every MCU member is expected to lead one's family in an exemplary manner. *Be an example to families*

11. Every man must be of service to the church, family and society. *Be a useful father to the family, society.*
12. Every member of the MCU shall do the following in Church:
 - (a) Pray and pray for others *Prayer*
 - (b) Partake in the Holy Communion Service unless one is unable to do so due to some pressing problems or commitments. *fellowship*
 - (c) Fellowship with others in prayer and other actions. *Bible Study*
 - (d) Study the Bible and attend Bible School lessons.
 - (e) Give church offerings with a willing heart, a willing spirit and desiring to do so, with commitment.
13. Every member of the MCU is obliged to do the following in one's community/society:
 - (a) Be a testimony of one's faith in word and deed.
 - (b) Preach the Gospel of Christ.
 - (c) Acknowledge that Jesus Christ is his personal and every person's Saviour.
 - (d) Perform good works to all people.
 - (e) Use one's possessions as a Christian.
 - (f) Support the Church in its mission to evangelise in this world.
5. LEADERS AND COMMITTEES

The Presiding Bishop who is the head of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe shall be the Connexional MCU President.

1. Connexional MCU Chairman must be a Minister elected by Connexional MCU Committee to lead the following lay members.
2. Connexional MCU Vice Chairman
3. Connexional MCU Secretary
4. Connexional MCU Vice Secretary
5. Connexional MCU Treasurer
6. Connexional MCU Coordinator
7. Connexional MCU Vice Coordinator

Figure 4. 4: Contemporary Aims, objectives, rules and laws of the MCU.

Source: MCU Constitution, 2013, pages 5- 7.

4.7 Conclusion

The chapter looked at the missionary activities in the continent of Africa in general and the reasons for such an endeavour. The reasons for these missionary activities varied, from the genuine response to the great commission of Jesus Christ to being advocates of the smooth colonisation of the African continent. Some scholars accuse most missionaries of aiding the colonialists to make the occupation of the African continent smooth through their influence. The chapter shows that the missionaries that came to Africa could be divided into two clusters, those who saw nothing good coming out of Africa, especially her religious beliefs and culture, and those who were of the view that not everything African was heathen and superstitious. There were those who were advocates of human empowerment in Africa who took a humanitarian approach to uplift the lives of African Christians, there was also those who, like the colonial administrators, were conservative and did not care about uplifting Africans but to exploit and subjugate them.

The first missionaries to Africa, including the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and other missionary societies that came to Zimbabwe had a superiority complex and thought it was not possible to mix African belief systems with the Christian faith. They never bothered to rummage for the positive elements in African religion and culture that could be used to edify the Christian faith. The understanding that these missionaries had of Christianity as a universal religion, made them think that their task was to suppress and supplant other religious traditions.

The first missionaries' relationship with the colonialists, for instance, the relationship between the Methodist Missionary Society and the BSAC, compromised their mission and genuineness because the people they sought to convert got confused and could not separate between the two. The Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, like other missionary societies, came up with strategies to subdue the hold of African traditional religion and culture on the African converts. The strategies included the introduction of Christian villages on the Church farms, western education, the rules and regulation governing Church membership, and health systems. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe after autonomy in 1977, took over from the missionary Church but maintained the status quo, it embraced what the missionaries held to and continued to demonise what the missionaries attacked. The attitude of the post autonomy Methodist Church is seen in the

continual regulation of African traditional religion through the Class meeting regulations, the teachings of the Church organisations, and the Farms committee policy document.

CHAPTER FIVE: IDEOLOGICAL AND THEOLOGICAL ANXIETIES ABOUT THE INDIGENOUS IN THE MCZ

5.1 Introduction

The preceding Chapter dealt with the activities of Christian missionaries in Africa and their relationship with the colonial authorities. The focus of the Chapter was particularly on the activities of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in Zimbabwe and its relationship with the BSAC which had colonial authority over the territory. The Christian activities of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Zimbabwe included the introduction of rules and regulations governing Church membership, the education system, the medical systems, and Christian villages, are a demonstration of the missionary attitude toward African traditional religion and culture. The Methodist Church over the years has not been comfortable with the concept of inculturation since it did not believe that there were any valuable aspects within African traditional religion and culture. Thus, most of the practices of the colonial past were carried over into the post-autonomous Church. This is an indication that the attitude of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe has not changed up to this day. The autonomous Church inherited the attitude of her colonial past.

This Chapter builds on the preceding Chapter and seeks to bring out the theological and ideological reasons that were behind the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and are still behind the contemporary Methodist Church's policing and carrying out surveillance strategies toward African traditional religion and culture. The contemporary Methodist Church in Zimbabwe assumes a similar position towards African traditional religion and culture as their predecessors.

The Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries, besides seeking to create the kingdom of God on earth and having a high regard for themselves and their religion and culture, also suppressed African traditional religion and culture for them to achieve the effective and orderly governance of the African converts. Order and compliance could only be achieved when the converts are governed in such a way that shows them what to believe and what to throw away. The Methodist missionaries prescribed for the Africans what they had to believe and hold on to, and what they had to shun and ignore including African traditional religion and culture. Prescribing a belief system for the

converts and delisting African traditional religion and culture from their belief system, gave the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe effective and orderly governance. Methodism as a worldwide belief system, has its own unique characteristics shared by all people called Methodists. The missionaries did not, and the Church today does not allow their members to mix the Christian faith as taught to them with African traditional religion and culture for the simple reason that they want to maintain the unique Methodist identity.

Below I discuss the range of theological and ideological reasons that can be seen to have informed, and still informs Methodist attitudes towards African traditional religion and culture in Zimbabwe.

5.2 Theological motives for policing African traditional religion and culture

This section looks at the theological motives that impelled the colonial Methodist Church and continue to drive and push the contemporary Methodist Church in Zimbabwe to regulate and police the inclusion of aspects of African traditional religion and culture into the Christian faith. The theological factors that are discussed here include the interpretation and response to the Christian injunction, the desire to create the kingdom of God on earth and exercising divine mandate or juridical authority by the Church. These are discussed in detail below.

5.2.1 Colonial and postcolonial MCZ's understandings of Christian mission.

Okure (2000:5), Taiwo (2010:50) and Udeani (2007:67) argue that the reason for the missionary enterprise in Africa was the command of Jesus Christ, 'to go and make disciples of all nations' (Matthew 28:18-20). At the beginning of the missionary endeavours in Africa, many missionaries were seized by this injunction to spread the gospel and harvest native souls, and the result of this endeavour included dissemination of Christian civilization to the native lands (Taiwo 2010:50). The missionaries considered Africa as their mission field with the African converts or African population in general as the harvest. The Africans were supposed to be harvested from the grip of their traditional religious beliefs and customs, which were considered by the missionaries as the corrupted environment out of which people had to be taken. The present-day Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, like missionary Church, is also held by the same understanding and interpretation of the command of Jesus. The Church is convinced that the sole purpose of its existence is to go out and evangelise and this mandate is given them by Christ himself (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2013, p.120). In his address to the representative session of conference, the presiding Bishop of

the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe clearly stated that the Church's mission flows from Jesus' injunction when asserts that

As encapsulated in our mission statement, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is committed to the fulfilment of the great commission (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2007, p. 42).

The same can be said about the address to ministerial session of conference in 2014. The Presiding Bishop was clear that Methodist mission is based on Jesus' injunction when he argued that

Ministers must endeavour to remember their call and the mandate we received from Jesus himself. Our mission is to make disciples for Jesus Christ. As we serve in our circuits we must also take time to reflect on our achievements. Take corrective action where we were wrong. Encourage the whole Church to be mission driven (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2014, p.99).

The injunction of Jesus is not as narrow as the missionaries and the modern-day Church use it, for them conversion was meant for other nations to abandon their indigenous customs and religious beliefs and this did not apply to the Westerners. Okure (2000) makes an analysis of Jesus' command and brings out its broadness and all-embracing nature, she argues,

The non-discriminatory or all-embracing nature of Jesus' mission is the designation 'earth'. Earth here is the totality of our planet. It is not merely Africa, the third world, the world of the poor, the voiceless, the oppressed and the marginalized, refugees and the displaced persons – it is not equated with the world of the Black, Feminists, Womanist African or third world theologians, or that of ordinary readers off the gospel. The statement envisages the whole earth, developing and developed nations, its includes the world of the IMF, G7- the earth torn by crime, war, landmines, littered with starving women and children and men who eke out a living from garbage heaps even in industrially wealth cities, and includes the world of the Church and the academy (2000:5).

Though the situation prevailing in Europe was different from the African one, both needed to be saved by the same gospel truth. Udayakumar (1998) also argues in the same vein as Okure about the broadness and inclusive nature of Jesus' mission as spelt out in the injunction. He asserts that

Another important feature of Jesus ministry is inclusiveness. Because Jesus' mission was God's mission, Jesus embraces all people- the rich and the poor, the oppressor and the oppressed, the devout and the sinner. Jesus' mission is to all Israel, not just to the remnant. His was a consistent challenge to attitudes, practices, and structures that tended arbitrary to restrict and exclude potential members of the Israelite community. Jesus reached out to all people- the poor, the blind and hungry; those with leprosy, those who weep and mourn; sinners, tax collectors, captives and prostitutes, the demon possessed and persecuted, the little ones, the last and the least

(1999:9).

The great commission was easily seen as the duty imposed on all European Christians to bring the Christian culture and civilization that they had been brought up in to the poor primitive pagans still in darkness of ignorance and immorality (Okure 2000:44). The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe inherited from the missionaries the understanding of Jesus injunction that was not inclusive, but one that undermined other religious traditions and cultural practices in its approach. In his address to the ministerial session of conference in 2012, the Presiding Bishop emphasized that the Church should be outgoing to seek the lost, seek the unbelievers and bring them to Christ (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2012, p.88). The interpretation of the Presiding Bishop's message is that people who are not Christians are unbelievers which includes those of other faiths.

5.2.3 Postcolonial MCZ's understanding of *Missio-Dei*

Missio Dei is a Latin term meaning that the Church has no mission separate from God's mission, and this means that the Church is the outcome of God's mission, and the sending of missionaries is God's own concern (Schirrmacher, 1999:22; Udayakumar, 1998:9). The injunction of Jesus discussed above shows that the Church follows the Biblical model and becomes both missionary and universal, reaching out to all the four corners of the earth. However, the mission of God is not to convert someone from his religious conviction and worldview to your own culture and worldview, but to God's will and purposes. The Methodist Church understands that its mission and reason for existence is to make disciples for Christ (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2010, p. 97), therefore there is the understanding that the mission is of God through Jesus Christ (Bediako 2000).

In mission as *Missio Dei*, mission is understood as God turning to the world. It is seen as the movement from God to the world, and the Church is only an instrument for that mission (Bosch 2011:322). Bosch (2011) goes further to show that the mission is of God not of the Church or those who minister in the Church as missionaries. He argues,

Mission is not primarily an activity of the Church, but an attribute of God. It is not the Church that has the mission of salvation to fulfil in the world, it is the mission of the son and the Holy Spirit through the father. Missionary activity is nothing else, and nothing less, than the manifestation of God's plan, its epiphany and realisation in the world of history. The Church stands in the service of God's turning to the world- for care, consummation and redemption. Mission takes place in ordinary human history, not exclusively in and through the Church (2011:334).

The above quotation shows that in *Missio Dei*, the instrument or one who is responding to a message to go and serve, should not be the focal point and should not dictate his or her own parameters for his converts to observe. The western missionaries who included in their fold the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries moved the focal point from God, the owner of the mission, to themselves and their culture.

The reason for the western missionaries hijacking God's mission and making it their own and coming up with their own prescriptions for the African converts to follow was because of their understanding of mission. Mission was understood in a variety of ways during the missionary era. Bosch (2011) outlines and explains how mission was understood during this time. He says:

During the preceding centuries mission was understood in a variety of ways- Sometimes it was interpreted in soteriological terms: as saving individuals eternal damnation. Or in cultural terms: as introducing people from the East and the South to the blessing and the privileges of the Christian West. In ecclesiastical categories, mission was understood as the expansion of the Church, either the Church universal or denominational (2011:333).

The postcolonial Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is also convinced that the mission to go out and preach Christ to the world is not their own, but it belongs to God through Jesus Christ. Addressing the ministerial session in 2014, the Presiding Bishop reminded ministers that the mission of the Church is to make disciples for Christ (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2014, p. 97). If the Church reaches out to non-Christians to convert them, they are therefore, not doing it for themselves, but they are doing that on behalf of the sender or owner of the mission who is God. The Church is sent to save people from the evil world and bring them into the safety of the Church. The Presiding Bishop described the Church as “the sanctuary for all from evil” (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2014, p. 99).

5.2.4 Ecclesial and juridical authority of the MCZ

The contemporary Methodist Church in Zimbabwe believes it has juridical authority, which is the divine mandate and authority to bring the gospel and organize the local people (Udeani 2007:74). In the same vein, Logan (2003) and Rehaag (2009) view the Church as the sanctuary and as an institution having extra-juridical authority. The juridical ecclesiocentric understanding of the mission of the Church, adopted by both the missionary Church and the contemporary Methodist Church in Zimbabwe can be said to have been passed down from John Wesley himself, the founder of Methodism.

According to Wesley, the binding and loosing refer to excommunication pronounced in the spirit and power of Christ (Todd 1958:174). The Christian Church, therefore, according to Wesley inherited this juridical power and it must bind individual members who do what is outside of the gospel's teaching and loosen those that have done what is required by the gospel or have served their punishment. Scriptural holiness became and remained a guiding element among the earliest societies in England (Udis-Kessler. 2008:15). Wesley's procedure was plain and direct, he himself continued to examine all members as long as he could and excluded all those found wanting (Norwood. 1958:98). Wesley's understanding of the Church as a juridical body is evident in his definition of power, when he says

What is power? It is admitting into, and excluding from, the societies under my care; of choosing and removing stewards; of receiving or not receiving helpers, of appointing them when, where, and how to help me, and of desiring any of them to confer with me when I see good. And it was merely in obedience to the providence of God, and for the good of the people, that I accepted this power, which I never sought, so it is on the same consideration, not for profit, honour, or pleasure that I use it today (Norwood. 1958:16).

The juridical ecclesiocentric understanding of the mission of the Church, as understood by Wesley, was adopted by the Wesleyan Methodist missionaries and in turn by the contemporary Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. The juridical ecclesiocentric approach to mission led to the classification and condemnation of African traditional religion. The derogatory terms used to describe African religious practice and culture was a way of classifying African traditional religion as a lesser religion and to condemn it (Chidester 1996:85 - 89). The contemporary Methodist Church does not only classify African traditional religions as the "other", it does the same to African independent Churches. On the 21st of June 2012, the Church wrote to two of its tenants giving them notice to vacate Kwenda mission because they were attending and inviting apostolic denominations them to conduct services at their plots (See Appendix 4). The exclusion, withdrawal, and accepting back of all those who observed African traditional religion and culture is testimony of the inheritance of the juridical ecclesio-centric approach to mission. The Church during the missionary era has seen the expulsion of tenants in the mission farms for practicing polygamy, ancestor worship, and participating in beer parties. The contemporary Methodist Church continues excluding tenants who fail to abide by the rules and regulations of the Church. Church members continue to be disciplined and lose full membership of the Church for taking part in traditional religion and rituals, polygamy, and beer drinking. A full accredited preacher was

disciplined by the Church in Chideme Circuit in 2005 after he took after from his late brother as a family spirit medium and he ended up leaving the Church (MCZ, Minutes of Chideme Circuit, 2005). It is not only ordinary Church members that have been condemned and excluded by the Church, even ministers, both ordained and students in training, have fallen victim to the Juridical ecclesiocentric understanding of mission by the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. In 2009 a minister in full connexion was withdrawn from the ministry for beer drinking (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2010, p. 19). Students in college have been withdrawn for anticipating marriage, while ordained ministers have been withdrawn for taking alcohol and polygamy.

5.2.5 Contemporary Methodist Church's understanding of salvation

Bosch (2011:336) argues that, salvation is indeed a fundamental concern for every religious tradition, however, for the Christians, there is belief that God has decisively wrought salvation for all in and through Jesus Christ. The Christian conviction that salvation is only found in their religious tradition motivated the Christians to mediate salvation for all through the Christian faith. Jude Aguwa (2007:130) argues that the western missionaries, convinced that salvation for humankind was only found in Christianity, believed God was using them to extend civilization and salvation to the barbarous savages that inhabited the remote parts of the earth. However, Aguwa argues that the belief that the missionaries were extending salvation and civilization to the uncivilized peoples of other land is not clearly expressed anywhere but it is visible in their attitude towards African traditional religions and medical practices (Aguwa 2007:130). The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, like all other Christian denominations, have adopted the missionary conviction that salvation of mankind is only found in the Christian Church. The words of the Presiding Bishop sum up that conviction when he says:

The Church is to save the world from sin. The purpose for the Church's existence is to make disciples for Christ. The Church of God embodies Jesus Christ in and for the world. The Church celebrates the sacraments, offers prayers and intercession for and with its people, worship in truth and in spirit, teaches and cares for creation. The Church reaches out to sinners, welcomes sinners, transforms the world and humanity, reforms creation and informs followers of Christ (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2014, p. 97).

The Presiding Bishop was explicit that the salvation of the world comes from the Christian Church, and this notion is inherited from the missionary understanding.

Adamo (2004) shows his concern on the missionaries hijacking God's plan for the salvation of humanity. He says;

The salvation of humankind is not the work of the Church, but the work of Christ wrought in the hearts of the people through the conviction of the Holy Spirit (2004:1-15).

The above quotation shows that salvation is of God, not the missionaries or the missionary societies they were affiliated to. The saving acts of God are present wherever there is humanity, so these were present in Africa even before the missionaries came, salvation is God's plan to take care of his people. Brand (2002:59) contends that the western missionaries and missionary societies failed to stretch the concept of salvation in all contexts, so that it could go beyond the confines of conventional Christian usage in order to encompass elements from widely divergent religious frames of reference. Brand (2002) argues against the monopolization of the concept of salvation by Christianity and contends that the concept is not unique to and was not originated by Christianity, but Christianity inherited it from Judaism (2002:60). Brand (2002:59), like Bosch (2011:336) asserts that; Salvation is often taken as a key to the very heart of all religions.

Newbigin (1995), similarly, questions the notion that salvation is only found in the Christian religion alone and he sees it as manipulation by Christian missionaries, he argues;

Can it really be believed that God, who is creator of heaven and earth, by whom and for whom all things exist, has concentrated his purpose of salvation on these minuscule communities in the little world of the Eastern Mediterranean leaving the millions in China, India and Africa, who at the same moment are living, praying, suffering and dying outside the realm of salvation until they are discovered many centuries too late, by the explorers and missionaries of these chosen people? (1995:59).

The argument that Newbigin is making is that salvation of humanity, including Africans, Chinese, and Indians, has always been there, it was not brought by the missionaries. The argument leads us to a very important point with regards to the salvation of mankind: if their salvation was before the missionary era, it was therefore found in their religious traditions.

The missionaries and the contemporary Methodist Church's conviction that salvation is only found in the Christian religion and not in all other traditions across the world, justifies their activities that were aimed at suppressing these belief systems. To make the salvation of non-Christians guaranteed, Christian missionaries made it a matter of do or die when it came to the attack and

exclusion of African traditional religion and culture (Udeani 2007:75). Harris (1999) also shows that Western missionaries were convinced that only the gospel truth could save the Africans from the clutches of their traditional beliefs and customs. He declares that,

In the eyes of the missionaries, heathenism possessed an essential unity. All heathens were similarly possessed by mental stagnation and moral degradation- to different degrees, perhaps- but always owing to their ignorance of gospel truth. That was one indispensable justification for missions in the first place (Harris 1999:10).

Besides preaching and teaching against the African spirituality, Christian missionaries restricted and monitored the observance of African traditional religion and culture and advocated for western cultural values and norms as a way of assuring the salvation of their converts. The restriction and surveillance on the observance and participation in African traditional religion and customs resulted in the disciplining and exclusion of members from the Church. As Lemke (2016) argues, the goal of forcing of people to observe and obey certain moral and legal norms, while demonizing and punishing them for taking part in others, is nothing other than setting someone on the road to salvation (2016:14).

The exclusion of members from the Church for participating in African rituals and customs is very painful and brutal exercise especially to the persons involved. Golder (2007:165) and Ojakangas (2010) argue that pastoral power, exercised by the Church, is both a political type of power and a power of care, as power of care it is non-violent, and its goal is the salvation of the members with the pastor\minister sacrificing himself. Here the Church tries to teach and encourage the members to abandon their traditional beliefs and customs so that they are saved. The political aspect of pastoral power is seen where there is systematic violence, and this type of violence is expressed through exclusion, especially for those who take part in the traditional rituals (Zizek, 2009:1, Mayes 2010:111-126). The MCZ, like its missionary forebearers, uses pastoral power both as a power of care and as a political type of power, but both were viewed as aimed at saving and guarding the salvation of its African members.

5.3 Ideological factors for policing African traditional religion and culture

This second section of this chapter explores the ideological reasons why both the precolonial and postcolonial Methodist to police and maintain surveillance on aspects of African traditional religion and culture. The ideological reasons for regulating African traditional religion and culture in the Methodist Church discussed in this section include, the missionaries' self-understanding,

the conclusions drawn from the intolerance and misconceptions about the African worldview and culture, the application of extra-doctrinal techniques for conversion, effective and orderly governance of the Church, and the need to maintain the uniqueness of Methodism. These are discussed in detail below.

5.3.1 Methodist self- understanding in the postcolonial era

The Christian missionaries' self-understanding, like their understanding of salvation, had a bearing on their attitude, which led to the regulating and policing of African traditional religion and culture. The missionaries came from the colonizing powers to areas that were less advanced economically and technically than their home countries, and the missionaries had an obligation to compare, and thus thought they were superior than the natives (Newbigin 1995:73). Before they came to Africa, the missionaries built an attitude following the stories they heard about Africa and Africans. Some missionaries were convinced of the superiority of their race as social Darwinist concepts penetrated western culture in the 19th century (Dunch 2002:301-325). Aguwa (2007) argues that the prevailing racism of the time influenced most missionaries and they then possessed an unflinching conviction about Christianity as the universal truth which would leave no room for any compromises (2007:30). This made the western missionaries to think that they were superior and nearer to God than the Africans.

Nthamburi (1989) supports the notion that the stories told in Europe about Africa, gave the missionaries a superiority complex and they in turn thought lowly about Africa. He argues;

The missionaries were drawn by the stories of the unfortunate conditions of the people who had been denied the chance to hear the saving gospel of Christ. The descriptions of Africa circulating in the West convinced them of the urgency of preaching the gospel to Africans. African barbarism, superstition, treachery, cunning, laziness, paganism, and general moral depravity, had been depicted in a very dramatic and vivid manner. Few nineteenth century missionaries doubted that these evils would soon succumb to the purging nature of the gospel. What was needed in such a situation was the spread of Christianity coupled with western civilization. The pamphlets and news reports from foreign fields generally painted a picture of African barbarism, thus motivating potential supporters of protestant missions to rescue for the kingdom souls destined for hell (1989:113).

The attitude of superiority made the missionaries look down upon everything African to the extent of dressing them with western culture before preaching the gospel to them. Coupling the gospel

with European culture was out of a conviction that it was not only superior to African culture, but it was also untainted and redeeming.

Adamo (2011) maintains that Christianity from its earliest history maintained the negative attitude toward African traditional religion, and to date Christianity is still governed by such perceptions which are because of the inherited prejudices developed by past colonial theology and the feeling of superiority over and against African traditional religion and culture. Christianity was equated with civilization, so African Christians needed to be civilized from their barbaric ways and were forced to do away with their traditional religion. Missionaries in the imperialist era came to their fields convinced of the intellectual, moral, and spiritual superiority of what they thought of, not as their culture but as civilization (Dunch 2002:301-325).

Ideology in the above instances, is used as a form of worldview which inspires a programme of action (Adamo:2004:1-15). Convinced of the superiority of their culture, the Western Christian missionaries strove to impose such ideas on the universe. Galani-Moutafi (2000) describes how this attitude of personal and cultural superiority developed among the western missionaries and travellers in the following words:

Passing through various locations and crossing personal and cultural boundaries, explorers, missionaries, colonial officers, military personnel, migrants, emigrants, exiles, domestic servants, anthropologists, and tourists have their own histories. The status of the traveller has been assigned predominantly to the economic well off, European male who has embarked on voyages motivated by heroics, educational, scientific, and recreational purposes (2000:203-224).

The European travellers and missionaries who came to Africa were already well to do citizens in their home countries. Thus, coming to Africa they brought that attitude and used the economic situation in their countries and their cultural values to measure Africans and their worldview. Non-Christians of other nations were seen by the missionaries not only as idolaters deceived about God, but also as possessed by the devil. Therefore, evangelization appeared as a crusade against the devil, the inspirer of heathen religious institutions (Udeani 2007:84).

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe inherited and accepted the superiority of western culture and theology, because western culture was equated with civilization. The acceptance that western dress, culture, language, and theology were superior to the African ones, made the African to hate his own and seek to embrace and maintain the western prejudices developed by past colonial

theology (Adamo 2011). The continued maintenance of colonial systems in the Methodist Church today long after attaining an autonomous status is due to the fact that the package of western dress, language and culture were viewed as equalling civilization, so the African Christians see dropping these for their own as shunning civilization and adopting barbarism and primitiveness.

5.3.2 Intolerance and misconceptions about African traditional religion and Culture

As already alluded, the stories told in Europe about Africa, the notion of racial and cultural superiority, and the notion of salvation, led to the western missionaries having a negative attitude toward African traditional religion and culture. The stories about Africa and cultural superiority did not only lead to intolerance of African traditional religion and culture but also some misconceptions about them. The missionaries did not take time to study and understand the African worldview, to see if some of the aspects were positive and life-giving. They used the preconceived understanding to make judgements and ended up dismissing African cultural and religious aspects in their entirety.

Colonial literature of the time painted the picture of misconceptions by the missionaries, one such piece of literature is by Glover (1960). He wrote,

The heathen are spiritually lost, wicked, wilful sinners, without Christ, having no hope and without God in the world. Their moral conditions are reeking with filthy and degrading habits --- They are marked by abject poverty, wretched homes and unremitting (1960:4).

The judgement in the quotation reveals that the missionaries used what they previously knew about Africa to categorize the religious beliefs as irredeemable and useless. They already saw no need to make comparisons, studies, and analyses so that they get to know the African spirituality better. Lungira (2009) sums up how the misconceptions about African traditional religion and culture led to their intolerance, leading to the many attempts to destroy them. He contends that

During colonial times, African religion was thought of as a 'less than' religion on par with paganism, fetishism, primitive religion, and animism – the African belief systems and modes of thought became subjects of ridicule. This was due to two misconceptions: On one hand, there was the unfortunate but quite general European prejudice that Africans were a primitive people without religion; on the other hand, it had become generally accepted in Europe that all magic and all evil were devilish. Christianity was essentially hostile to African Traditional religion, destroying

statues and shrines and overturning ancient customs as devil worship or as being of no significance any longer (2009:128).

The misconceptions about African spirituality led to missionaries applying several strategies to try and quarantine and confine African traditional religion and culture as a way of containing it. The missionaries' misconception about the superiority of their culture and the inferiority of the African culture led to cultural imperialism which was based on the conviction that there was connection between western culture and western Christianity, and Christian culture was viewed as the destination of cultural development (Udeani 2007:90). The situation that obtained after such cultural imperialism was a kind of relationship between the missionary and the convert which was a model of relation between a superordinate and a subordinate in a hierarchical context (Taiwo 2010:54).

The missionaries have been condemned as cultural imperialists who were either incapable of or unwilling to fairly evaluate and respect the culture of the peoples with whom they came in contact. They were unable to separate the Christian religion from such trappings as monogamy, western dress, and etiquette, and so they sought to impose an all-inclusive package upon the African population (Kaplan 1995:9). The negative attitude and characterization denied validity to African indigenous religion, and this led to western missionaries justifying its replacement with their own religion (Peel 2000:88). The continued favour and use of derogatory terms by the missionaries was meant to support theories of Western superiority (P' Bitek 1970:44).

Adamo (2004:1-15) contends that the assumption of the missionaries was based on ignorance, prejudice and preconceived notions and as a result they were hostile to native culture and intolerant to African traditional religion. For the missionaries nothing valuable could come from African religions and culture, so African indigenous heritage and medical practices were abandoned for Africans to become Christians.

The misconceptions and intolerance of African traditional religion and culture led most western missionaries to take it upon themselves to work in a culture- founding way, and for them there was no question about the validity and correctness of the substitution of indigenous norms and values by western Christian culture (Udeani 2007:90). The missionaries fought the African spirituality and culture without first making effort to understand them due to what was engrained in them prior

to coming into the mission field. They believed their duty was to destroy and uproot the African belief system since it did not correspond with the universal faith, Christianity.

The misconceptions and intolerance of African traditional religion and culture by the Methodist missionaries was handed over and inherited by the post-autonomous Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is failing, after decades of an autonomous status, to fairly evaluate African traditional religion and culture so that it incorporates in its ecclesiology those aspects that are compatible with the Christian faith. The continued use of derogatory terms, the exclusion of those who participate in African traditional religion and culture, and the failure to separate Christian trapping of monogamy, western dress and etiquette by the contemporary Church are examples of continued intolerance and misconception of African traditional religion and culture by the post-autonomous Methodist Church. The failure to address the effects of missionaries' misconceptions of African traditional religion and culture could therefore, be because of serious indoctrination by the missionaries on their black converts.

The letters written to the tenants on Methodist farms who fail to uphold the rules and regulations of the Church by participating in African traditional rituals, brewing or drinking beer, and seeking the services of traditional healers¹¹ are a testimony of the continued upholding of misconceptions and intolerance of African traditional religion and culture. Apart from the mission settlements, disciplinary cases taking place in circuits and in the church at large where individuals are disciplined and excluded for anticipating marriage, participating in traditional practices, and beer drinking, (Minutes of Chideme Circuit, July 2005, Minutes of Mbare Circuit, May 2017 & MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2005, p. 8, 2009, p18 & 19) are also evidence that the Methodist Church has inherited the missionaries' intolerance and misconception of African religious tradition and culture.

5.3.3 Extra- doctrinal techniques for conversion

The endeavour of the missionaries to convert the Africans and totally wean them from their belief system and cultural practices often proved very difficult owing to continued resurgence of these beliefs and practices among the African converts or even worse failure to convert at all. The failure

¹¹Tenants on Methodist Farms have been addressed by the Presiding Bishop through a letter on the 14th of June 2014 concerning Ancestor worship, beer parties and beer drinking. Some have even received notices to vacate their plots for failing to abide by the rules and regulations of the Church while others have been threatened with eviction if they did not comply, (see appendixes for letters).

to convert Africans using such methods as preaching the gospel, made the Missionaries to resort to extra-doctrinal techniques to add to their number of converts. Njoku (2005) highlights this fact when he argues that:

From painful and frustrating experience, veteran missionaries realized that conversion by direct appeal to doctrinal logic and even threats of heaven and hell, just did not produce the kind of result they hoped for. On the account of the failure of these earlier attempts at critical dialogue with the local people, the turn to other tools and techniques for enhanced conversion was invoked quite early in the missionary enterprise (2005:240).

Robinson (1915) refers to the extra-doctrinal techniques for conversion as ‘political methods of evangelization’, and here he considers all offers of material inducement and threats of punishment or loss for purposes of facilitating conversions to Christian faith (1915:19).

The missionaries employed numerous extra-doctrinal techniques or political methods of evangelization to force conversion from the African flock. One such extra-doctrinal or political strategy for converting people was the use of colonial authority. Saayman (1991) argues that

By the second half of the 19th century missionaries had discovered that real Christianisation would not take place if the hold of the traditional African system was not broken, and the only power to break the system was colonial authority (1991:32).

Colonial authority helped the Church during the missionary era by breaking the local people politically which made evangelisation easy for the missionaries. This, according to Saayman, made missionaries to actively support the political and cultural conquest of the African people, and in some cases, they actually helped the process along (1991:32). This is like what transpired in Zimbabwe when first the efforts of the LMS and the Jesuits were frustrated by the powerful Ndebele state (Zvobgo 1991a:5), and when the state was finally overthrown, missionaries, including the Methodist Isaac Shimmin, welcomed it since it gave them the opportunity to convert the Ndebele people (Zvobgo 1996:11).

Western style education was one of the most powerful extra-doctrinal strategies adopted by virtually every Christian mission (Njoku 2005:241). A further method by which missionaries have sought to appeal to non-Christian races is represented by the establishment of medical missions (Robinson 1915:28). Zvobgo (1986) shows that medical missions were established by missionaries to serve both as an evangelistic agency and as an important part of Christian witness. Apart from

the dependence on colonial authority, the use of western style education, and the use of medical missions as extra-doctrinal or political methods of evangelisation, the missionaries also used two extra methods, the mission settlements and the rules and regulations governing the membership of the Church. Mission stations were used as a tool against African traditional religion and culture (Madhiba 2000:28) and were used to curb participation in African traditional religion and culture (Zvobgo 1991a:74). The rules and regulations applied to the general membership of the Church, just as the rules applied in the Christian villages, were used as a political tool to force conversion because people feared losing tenancy, membership and being excluded from the Church.

Robinson (1915:22) argues that using the extra-doctrinal strategies, converts are induced to make a profession on their Christian faith in the hope that they might secure for themselves material advantages. African converts to the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe flocked into the Farm settlement because of the material advantages found there, agricultural instruction, decent employment because of education, and food security, because of agricultural methods, hygiene because of construction of toilets, and general security on the farm (Zvobgo 1991b:66). African Methodist parents also settled on the mission farms for the sake of their children since these mission stations were associated with schools and they had discovered the advantages of missionary education for themselves and their children (Weller and Linden. 1984:89; Zvobgo. 1991b:67). Further, Robinson argues that missionary work prospers most and that the best types of Christian characters tend to be produced when the converts to the Christian faith must face at least a mild form of persecution (Robinson 2015:22).

The extra-doctrinal techniques for conversion, continue to be employed by the post-autonomous Methodist Church in Zimbabwe in the form of rules and regulations in the farm settlements, in the church organisations, and in the Church in general. Members in the Farms, organisations, and in the Church, are threatened with discipline or exclusion if they participate in African rituals and customs. Changes in government policy in education and rural resettlement have, however, affected the imposition and application of these extra-doctrinal techniques in the contemporary Church. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe was involved in rural education until the African councils took over rural primary schools in the 1960s (Samudzimu. 1991:104). The taking over of these schools by councils affected the Church in its evangelisation since parents and children were no longer obliged to be members of the Church before enrolling with the school. Farm settlements

were also affected by government resettlement policy where people moved from the restrictions of the mission environments to the freedom of the reserves. The first report of the Methodist missionary society brings out this concern over the effect of the government on the use of mission settlements as a political method of evangelisation. It states that

In their days, these farms have served a very useful purpose; but their days seem to be passing, and now it is more usual for the Africans to settle on the land given to them by the government in the reserves. We have had many healthy causes on the farms in the past days, but now numbers are dwindling owing to the policy of government in inducing the Africans to settle on the reserves were they permanent tenure (Our Missions Overseas, First Annual Report of the MMS, June 1933).

The present legislation by government in the schools has influenced the Church, such that continued use of these institutions to politicise conversion by excluding parents or students from the Church or school is now unacceptable, although the teaching of the Church continues uninterrupted. In the Farms, the rules and regulations are still in force and tenants are still threatened and sometimes expelled from the mission settlement for participating in African traditional religion and cultural practices. In the Circuits and societies, members continue to be disciplined or expelled for practicing polygamy or any other ways of marriage that are not Christian, brewing and drinking beer, participation in ancestor worship and traditional rituals, and seeking the services of traditional healers (*N'angas*).¹²

It should be noted, however, that when the missionaries used, and the contemporary Methodist Church uses, the extra-doctrinal techniques or political methods of evangelisation to convert people, their aim is not necessarily to induce conversion. The Methodist Church, just as some missionaries, use these methods as part of their mission to meet the human needs of their converts and nothing more. According to Robert (2009), the use of extra doctrinal strategies was not meant to force Africans to convert. She argues,

The missionaries were driven by religious motivations that included ideas of human equality under God. Thus, they offered - literacy, education, medical care, social services, support for individualism, the gospel message, and these were tools that ultimately equipped indigenous peoples to challenge European empires on their own terms (2009:52).

¹²Evidence to the fact that the rules and regulations are still in force are the cases of discipline taking place in Circuits, and the evictions and threats of eviction by the Church to the tenants who continue to practice those acts that are deemed not compatible with the Church 's beliefs and teachings.

While it was not all missionaries, Roberts believes that the help offered to Africans through western education, medicine and all social services was meant to uplift the African converts, to bring them at the same level with their European counterparts because of the belief in human equality. Newbigin (1995), like Roberts, argues that there were missionaries who genuinely wanted to preach nothing but the gospel of Christ but could not ignore the plight of the indigenous people. He asserts that

One can tell the story of missionaries who have set out with the firm determination to do nothing except preach the gospel, to be pure evangelists uninvolved in all the business of social service. But the logic of the gospel has always been too strong for them, and they could not ignore hungry and sick people (1995:72).

The extra- doctrinal techniques, for Newbigin, were not engaged as a way of luring people into the Christian faith, but in response to the demands of the gospel which advocates for the feeding of the hungry and healing of the sick (Matthew 10:8, 25:35-40). The same can be said of the contemporary Methodist Church in Zimbabwe when she continues to use the seemingly political methods. They are not simply meant to induce conversions but come out of a genuine desire to fulfil the demands of the gospel and make better the lives all people in the Church and in the communities.

The postcolonial MCZ still uses its Farm settlements as political methods of conversion. According to the objectives stated in the Farms committee policy documents, the Church must ensure that all tenants are members of the Church who have a duty to uphold the ethos and identity of the Church. The tenants are to be powerful agency of evangelism and development, and to are to be assisted to transform from being subsistence farmers to being small scale commercial farmers (MCZ, Farms Policy Document). This means that the programs that are offered on the farms continue to lure people to want to reside in the farms as tenants. At the same time, the Church is using them as tools of evangelisation. In schools too, the MCZ still uses the institutions to make conversions. Part iv of the Church's Education Policy states that all students who choose to enrol at the MCZ schools are expected to participate in Church related activities, should have material aid to worship, and their parents or guardians should be aware of these requirements before they sign for a place (MCZ, Education Policy, 2013, p. 10 -11). The forced participation of students in MCZ activities despite their different Churches means some will be forced to convert and end up as Methodists leaving their previous Churches. Apart from coercing the pupils into converting, the

policy further states that at enrolment, 65% of the pupils should be Methodist, and Parents are also forced in a way to identify with the Church that owns the school. The Methodist conference continues to urge schools to work towards Methodist ethos and to make sure the 65% enrolment of Methodist students is achieved (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2011, p. 36).

5.3.4 Governance of member of MCZ

Effective and orderly governance is another reason the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe maintained and continues to maintain its ecclesiological boundaries to make sure aspects of African traditional religion and culture do not filter through and corrupt the Church. Apart from the maintenance of ecclesiological boundaries due to feeling of superiority, intolerance and misconceptions about African traditional religion and culture, and other theological reasons, the Wesleyan Methodist Church believed in order and doing things methodically. Gondongwe (2011) shows that the Methodist Church was influenced by this need for order and methodical attribute, which led to crafting of rules and regulations that also mitigated against African traditional religion and culture. he argues;

One of the key attributes of British Methodism was its Methodical way of doing things. When the Church extended its frontiers to Africa, it immediately began to promulgate rules and regulations to regulate its operations (2011:55).

That order is essential for effective governance in an institution is also suggested by Bishop Z. Siwa of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa when he asserts that laws and discipline are an ecclesiastical and organisational tool that is meant to assist in effective and orderly governance of the Church (The Methodist Order Book, 2014). Like Siwa, Robbins (2014:44), supports the indispensability of government and order. He says,

Government is sometimes viewed negatively, seen as something that inhibits one's freedom. However, government is a necessary element of human society which serves to establish and maintain order. In the absence of authority and organisation, the human nature lends toward mischief and Chaos (2014:44).

The need for order in Methodist ecclesiology can be traced back to the time of John Wesley who emphasized the need for order if the Church is to attain its goal of bringing people to salvation. He argued;

What is the end of ecclesiastical order? Is it not to bring souls from the power of Satan? And to build them up in his fear and love? Order, then, is so valuable as it

answers these ends; and if it answers them not it is nothing worth (Koskela 2013:156).

At one point, Wesley wrote to Thomas Rankin, his agent in America, telling him to enforce the rules of the society because of their benefits. He wrote;

Among our societies we must enforce our rules with all mildness and steadiness. At first this must appear strange to those who are as bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke. But after a time, all that desire to be real Christians see the advantage of it (Norwood 1958:24)

Those described by Wesley as ‘bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke’ are the people who do not want to be under any rules and therefore do not want order. Wesley further went on to say, to the troublesome society at Norwich, ‘Those who resolved to keep these rules may continue with us, and those only’ (ibid).

Mills (2004:47) and Carrette (2000:26) argue in the same way that governance has one aim, of steering individuals and collectives and to shape their conduct. Stanley (2010) also thinks institutions such as the Church establish systems of surveillance which bring with them the presence of a strong culture and shared internalised values that provide the desired control and coordination (2010:1-20). The Wesleyan Methodist missionaries and the contemporary Methodist Church in Zimbabwe introduced laws against the African worldview as a way of achieving coordination and control of the membership as well as uniformity in worship and belief system. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe considers following rules and regulations by its members in its societies, circuits, and in the mission settlements as according it high esteem as an orderly Church, and failure to uphold the rules would lead to disorder. In one of the letters to a tenant who had failed to reign in his son the Presiding Bishop expressed concern that the boy’s actions were putting the name of the Church in disrepute and that there was need for the parent to make sure he reined the son’s conduct or face expulsion from the farm (Presiding Bishop’s letter, 20 October 2015).

The need for order in the Methodist Church can be inferred from the Church’s position that all deceased people in the mission farms should be buried at the designated cemetery sites and not at the homestead (Minutes of the stakeholders meeting, 2011 & Farms lease Agreement Form). The above has been a bone of contention between the Church and its tenants who continue to defy the Church’s directive and bury their departed relatives at their yards. It should be noted, however,

that the Church's insistence on central grave sites on the mission farms is not only about order but also a way of maintaining surveillance on tenants so that they don't perform customary rites for their departed relatives. Mwandayi (2011:199) argues that when a person dies there are, pre-burial, burial, and post-burial rituals that are performed, which of course differ from place to place. Some of these rites demand that people be present at the grave, for instance the *kurova guva* ceremony among the Shona where the relatives pour beer on the grave. The Church continues to fight with tenants that invite or attend other church denominations or sects, and letters have been written to that effect to concerned members (Presiding Bishop's letters, 21 June 2012). The Methodist Church wants order in its farms and the best way to attain this order is by defining what people must participate in, believe in, and what to exclude. Rodgers (2009) sums this up when he says,

Human society is neither well-ordered nor prosperous unless it has some people invested with legitimate authority to preserve its institutions and to devote themselves as far as is necessary to work and care for the good of all (2009:93).

The Methodist Church takes it as its mandate to make sure that there is order in all her institutions and worship services, she feels she has the legitimate authority to maintain this kind of order. If people could be allowed to practice and participate in African traditional religion and cultural practice, there is bound to be chaos and so there is legitimate need for regulating against participation in Ancestral worship, traditional rites, and contracting polygamous marriages.

5.3.5 Retaining the uniqueness of Methodism??

Resistance to the inclusion of aspects of African traditional religion and culture in the ecclesiology of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe revolves not only around the superiority of the Christian faith and the missionary origins of the ideas, but also on the desire to maintain uncorrupted Methodism as a unique brand. The missionaries and the contemporary Church view Methodism as having unique symbols, marks, and features that distinguish it from other religious traditions and even other Christian denominations. Due to this, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, like its missionary predecessors, does not want these symbols, marks, and features soiled by contact with features from other religious traditions including African traditional religion. This is usually done at the expense of the positive features that are found in these religious traditions.

The uniqueness of Methodism as an ecclesiastical brand can be construed in the Presiding Bishop's address to the ministerial session of conference in 2014. He told the clergy that; 'Our mission is to make disciples for Christ. As we make disciples let's always remember we are Methodists with a

tradition to Cherish and preserve' (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2014 p. 97). The presiding Bishop was stressing the need to preserve the Methodist tradition, which gives the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe a unique identity. During the same conference in 2014, there was a heated debate among ministers concerning the phenomenon of healing and deliverance which was threatening to divide the Church, with a section of ministers accusing those who practice it of dividing the Church. In his concluding remarks on the matter, the Presiding Bishop reminded the ministerial session that when practicing healing and deliverance they needed to observe the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe's traditions and practices and desist from carrying out practices from other Churches and from the television and go back to the original healing and deliverance practiced by Methodists (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2014, p. 12). The connexional lay president also weighed in, at the same conference, on the importance guarding the uniqueness of Methodist identity. She remarked;

In my 2012 synods address I was encouraging Churches to invest in modern musical instruments and I would like to reiterate the call. We cannot ignore this need, or should I say phenomenon. On the other hand, there is outcry that there is more use of choruses than hymns. The use of such instruments should not be to the detriment of our hymns. There is need to strike the balance between the two. Let us guard our heritage and identity jealously. The onus is on all of us more so the local preachers and ministers. Music committees should play their role in assisting congregants to appreciate the richness of our hymn book (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2014, p. 91).

Although both the Presiding Bishop and the Connexional lay president were not referring specifically to the guarding against the corruption of the Methodist identity by tenets of African traditional religion and Culture, they are showing concern by the Church to preserve uncorrupted the brand of Methodism.

The imposition of discipline especially on the tenants on the Methodist Farms who participated in or invited apostolic sects on their allocated plots can be viewed as an attempt by the Church to preserve its identity from being polluted by the beliefs of these sects. The same can be said when the Church attempts to close its boundaries to regulate African traditional religion, that its concern is its unique identity. It should be noted that the Methodist Church in many cases chooses to preserve its identity, traditions and practices ahead of anything else, even the positives that come from other religious traditions. Udis-Kessler (2008) brings out the extent of this obsession with

identity among Methodists when she narrates the response of one participant at a forum to discuss the inclusion of homosexuality into the Methodist Church. The participant argued,

If the denominational rules on homosexuality are Changed, Methodists won't be different from everyone else and we are called to be different, just as the whole Church is called to be different from the world (Udis- Kessler. 2008:154).

The above participant does not care whether it is the right thing or not to include homosexuality in Methodist ecclesiology but is concerned with the Methodist identity more than anything else. So, the only option is to remain different from other at any cost to maintain the uniqueness of Methodism.

The granting of autonomy to Zimbabwean Methodism in 1977 accorded the opportunity to the young conference to deal with issues that they could not deal with when they were still a missionary Church. The issues at hand among others included the research into African traditional religion and culture and the place of polygamous marriages in the Church. The question that begs answers currently is why Church has not made headway in trying to address these concerns. As far back as 1981, then vice President Mr A. Mabeza called for dialogue between Christianity and African traditional religion (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 1981) and because of the call the African customs and beliefs was tasked to engage in an ongoing exercise of research, to hold seminars and consultations and to bring their findings, resolutions and recommendations to conference which related to the dialogue between Christianity and African traditional religion (Madhiba 2000:63). However, to this day, issues to do with African traditional religion are still topical in Methodist Church in Zimbabwe conferences (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2014). The Rhodesia District Synod of 1976 received a proposal from the Area council that an initial legal customary marriage be considered complete when the woman's family take her to the man's home, the synod however agreed to have a week-long seminar in Gweru to discuss matters relating to African customs and beliefs with special emphasis on African customary marriages (Minutes of Rhodesia Synod, 1976, CAP E3). The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe conference 2014 had similar discussion and came up with a similar resolution on customary marriage when it resolved that the Church blesses monogamous customary marriages and remove the stigma that a white wedding is the only true wedding, and that further scrutiny be done on the Church's view of polygamous marriage (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2014, p. 69). Since the missionary Church did not deal decisively with the issue of African traditional religion, Madhiba (2000:78) argues

that it is the reason the Methodist Church has more foreign concepts and components especially in its worship. Makoti (2012:133) argues that the reason for not dealing decisively with African traditional religion was that the Methodist Church is trying to maintain the characteristics of their founding Church. Makoti's argument seems to hold water since the Methodist Church has seen the need to engage African traditional religion and probably incorporate some of its positive aspects in its ecclesiology but has chosen not to. This may be due to the need to align its identity with Methodism the world over. The unique identity will help keep the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe connected to world Methodism, and there is fear that changes will affect this identity and therefore the Methodists will not be different from their environment and from other denominations. The failure by the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe to incorporate and change its ecclesiology even after discovering the need to do so is a result of the need to guard and maintain its unique identity.

5.4 Chapter summary

The chapter dealt with the theological and ideological motivations for policing and surveillance of African traditional religion and culture. The theological motivations include the interpretation of the injunction (Matthew 28:18-20) which urges the readers or hearers to go and make disciples of all nations. The interpretation gave the Church, both the missionary and contemporary, an understanding of herself as having both the missionary and universal mandate. The correct interpretation of the injunction, however, does not only bring out the universality and missionary nature of Christianity, but its non-discriminatory and inclusive nature. This means that it does not encourage targeting other religious traditions, attacking and negative labelling.

The missionaries and the contemporary Church understand that the mission is God's, he is also the sender of missionary agents. *Missio Dei* is God turning to people and not people turning to God. Therefore, in Christian mission the centre of all things should be God and not the agent or the missionary. The contemporary Methodist Church in Zimbabwe inherited an understanding from the missionary Church that salvation of mankind is only found in the Christian religion and not in any other religious traditions. Such understanding led to the hostility of Christianity toward other religious traditions and culture including African traditional religion. The point that was missed by the colonial missionaries, and which is still missed by the Methodist Church currently, is that

salvation is the fundamental concern of all religious traditions, including African traditional religion, therefore it is not a preserve of Christianity.

The missionaries sought, and the current Methodist Church still seeks, to create the kingdom of God on earth. The creation of the Kingdom of God on earth has to do with holiness and separation. It means to be different so as to influence the surrounding, to be exemplary to the outside world. The missionaries created Christian village as a way of achieving the idea of the Kingdom of God on earth and the idea was taken over by the current Church which continues to maintain the Christian villages. Such practices as co-habiting, ancestral worship, polygamy, and traditional ritual are not entertained on the mission settlements. The exclusions and expulsions that took place during the missionary era and still take place in the contemporary Church are ways of making sure the kingdom is not contaminated so the unruly are uprooted.

The ideological motivations for policing and surveillance of African traditional religion and culture include, the missionaries' self-understanding. The stories that the missionaries heard about Africa and their economic and social background made them think that they were superior to Africans. This meant that their culture, language, and their belief systems were superior to that of their African counterparts. This understanding led to the use of derogatory terms to explain aspects of African traditional religion and culture and to relegation of African traditional religion as a non-religion. The effect of this superiority complex of the missionaries is that it was inherited by the contemporary Church which has led to the maintenance of the status quo, the continued use of derogatory terms and looking down upon aspect of African traditional religion.

When the missionaries discovered that conversion of the African population through the preaching of the gospel was not as effective, they resorted to extra-doctrinal techniques for conversion or political methods of evangelisation. The methods included the introduction of rules and regulations for all church members, rules that controlled tenancy in mission settlement, the use of western education and medical systems. The above techniques were meant to wean the Africans from their belief systems and spiritual worldview. It should be noted however that the social engagement by the missionaries and its continuation by the contemporary Church is not meant to induce or force conversion from the Africans but in most cases, it comes out of a genuine desire to help people due to belief in human equality and to fulfil the dictates of the gospel. The regulation of African traditional religion and culture in some instances was meant to help the Church to maintain orderly

and effective governance. The Church therefore sees it as its mandate to define correct and wrong believe for its converts so that there is uniformity of belief and coordination which leads to the smooth running of the Church. The need to maintain the uniqueness of Methodism led the Church to police and maintain surveillance on African traditional religion and culture so that the uniqueness of Methodism is not diluted by mixing with beliefs and practices of African traditional religion and culture.

CHAPTER SIX: ENGAGING THE INDIGENOUS: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The principal purpose of this study was to, firstly, evaluate the attitude of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe toward African traditional religion and culture, and then to interrogate its use of church rules and institutions as a means of monitoring and determining its members' engagement with the indigenous. The evaluation of the Methodist Church's attitude is in two parts. The first part deals with the colonial Methodist church, from its inception in 1891 to the period it became autonomous in 1977, and the second part looks at the attitude of the post- colonial Methodist Church from 1977 to 2015. The attitude of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe towards African traditional religion and culture is judged from the Church's use of rules and regulations that govern Church membership and settlement in the Christian villages, the education and medical systems, and organisational policies, all of which are a way of regulating and attempting to keep African traditional religion out of the Church. The use of membership rules to exclude indigenous spirituality were first used by the colonial Church, however, the post-colonial Methodist Church has uncritically replicated these approaches. While it has made very few reforms in some areas, the basic orientation of the church towards African traditional religion and culture remains one of dismissal and rejection. The study sought to bring out how the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe relates with and views African traditional religion and culture, the theological and ideological reasons for policing and maintaining regimes of surveillance on African traditional religion and culture, and the degree to which this undermines the church's commitment towards inculturation. An examination of the above interrogations led to the following findings.

6.2 The persistence of colonial ecclesiology

When Methodist missionaries came to Africa, including to Zimbabwe, they came at the same time as the colonial officers, hunters, traders, and explorers (Galani-Moutafi 2000:203- 224). Each group with their own alliances and ideas of self as colonisers. The relationship between the missionaries and colonial governments was necessitated by two factors. Firstly, the missionaries saw the settlers as opening up the way for them by crushing local political authorities that were seen to be resisting the preaching of the gospel (Hallencreutz 1998:7, Zvobgo 1991a: 5). Secondly, the missionaries recognised that their work of Christianising Africa could not smoothly take place unless the hold of traditional African system was broken, and so they relied on the colonial authority to install cultural and political forms of rule (Saayman 1991:32; Mandani 1996). After the Shona-Ndebele uprising of 1896, the BSAC took over total control of all affairs in Rhodesia, the missionaries welcomed the fall of the Ndebele kingdom. The BSAC in 1898 came up with a new order of things, through the order in council. The order, among other things, instituted a special administrative system for the African population and Africans were moved to African native reserves, and paramount chiefs lost their traditional roles (Chanaiwa, 1974). These collusion between the Christian missionaries and colonists were received variously, as either heroes, or as brutal as the colonial officers (de Gruchy 1999:2). Chitando (2008) for example argues that

While the Christian presence in Zimbabwe predated the pioneer column of 1890, it is important to observe that the growth of Christianity became notable after the establishment of the colonial state. It therefore remains true that the colonial occupation of 1890 fully opened the way for missionary activities in Zimbabwe. It is this close association between missionary efforts and the colonial enterprise that has led to the emergence of a hostile African intellectual opinion against Christianity. African creative writers have protested against what they regard as the collusion between missionaries and colonial agents (Chitando 2008:51).

Thus, whether the missionaries liked it or not, being seen with colonial soldiers and merchants, undermined their authority and the impartiality of the message they were trying to bring across to the Africans (Udeani 2007:84). The Wesleyan Methodist missionaries had such an ambivalent relationship with the BSAC, which, at the time of their arrival had claimed Zimbabwe as British territory (Peaden 1970:5). As a result, the WMMS received more land than other missionary societies (Hewson 1950:51), and financial support (Whiteside 1906:461, Zvobgo 1991a:17). The Methodists had 10 farms given to them by the BSAC, varying in size, from 1 350 acres to 10 000

acres and these gave them a total of 52 000 acres (Our missions overseas, June 1933, p. 111). This presents the missionary society in a very ambivalent light insofar as they claimed a degree of distance from the colonising endeavours of the empire, and yet they relied on the BASC for land, local introduction and financial support.

The relationship between the Methodist missionaries and the BSAC was not only based on the financial support and the land they received from the Company, it was also based on the political gains involved. The overthrow of the powerful Ndebele state by BSAC army in 1896-7, which had previously stalled evangelisation efforts by other missionary societies, was welcomed by the Methodist missionaries (Hallencrutz 1998:7; Zvobgo. 1991a:5, 1996:11). Christian missionary societies across the denominational divide, not only Methodist rejoiced at the fall of the Ndebele state to colonial power, Fr Prestige a Catholic priest showed his joy in the following expression; “If ever there was a just war, the Matabele war is just. I am delighted that such a tyrannical and hateful rule has been smashed. The Chartered company’s force deserves praise. They have done their work well” (McLaughlin 1996:10). Prestige’s statement reveals the extent of the collusion between missionaries and colonist, in charting a path for Christian evangelism. It should be noted that such a relationship, though it polarised the African population, was necessary for the missionaries and they could not avoid continued collaboration with the colonialists. Udeani (2007) summarises the necessity and indispensability of this relationship when he argues that

The situation most missionaries in Africa found themselves in, contributed to their alliance with the colonialists. In many remote parts of Africa, they were isolated far away from home and had little choice but to collaborate with their fellow foreign citizens. Such contacts were needed in order to obtain aid from colonialists whom they often repaid with information about the areas in which they were active (2007:87)

Missionaries, because of the nature of their relationship with the colonialists, were viewed as ideological forerunners of colonialism, the vanguard that surveyed the landscape and brought an artillery of ideas that softened up the natives for the colonialist infantry that finished the job and ran colonialism (Taiwo 2010:51). Africans, who were at the receiving end of these missionary efforts, considered Christianity to be an ideology that lubricated the process of extracting African resources and destruction of African culture and identity (Chitando 2008:53). However, as many recent postcolonial theorists argue, the identity and self-understanding of the missionaries were

not unaffected by their encounters and exchange with local cultures. For example, Ali Rattansi (1997) argues that

the cultures and psyches of the colonizer were not already defined, and only waiting, as it were, to be imposed, fully formed, on the hapless victims of the colonial project. The idea of the 'West' as white, Christian, rational, civilized, modern, sexually disciplined and indeed masculine was put into place in a protracted process in which the colonized Others were defined in opposition to these virtues. It was in constructing the 'natives' as black, pagan, irrational, uncivilized, pre-modern, libidinous, licentious, effeminate and child-like that the self-conception of the European as superior, and as not only fit to govern but as having the positive duty to govern and 'civilize' came into being.

The failure by African converts to make a distinction between the Christian missionaries and the colonialists resulted in them painting the two with the same brush and therefore making true conversion very difficult. The political relationship between the two, more than the other reasons, for contact had a negative impact on the Church's mission to convert people from their African worldview to the Christian faith because it made people to lose trust in the genuineness of the missionary and to get confused about whether the missionaries stood for something different from the colonialists.

To uphold this self-understanding as morally and religiously superior, missionaries supported the colonial government efforts to violently remove Africans, often with the consent of local African rulers, to native reserves. Prime land was then advertised to European settlers who wished to farm in Rhodesia (The Africa world, 1926, p. 128) and some was given to Christian missionary societies. The missionaries did not condemn the removal of Africans from ancestral land, and instead the missionaries rejoiced when land was parcelled out to them to establish Christian farms or villages. Though the farms were put to effective use by the WMMS and have benefited many Africans, missionaries constructed schools, hospitals, orphanages, and Christian villages – they primarily took this opportunity to create a colonial-European vision of an ideal Christian society, which was largely constructed in opposition to African indigenous worldview(s).

Scholars such as Madhiba (2000) thought that by setting up Christian villages, the missionaries sought to create a replica of the European society. However, it could be argued that the villages came into being from and through contact with African religion and culture. The assertion that it

was contact between the missionaries and the African worldview is buttressed by the words of Rev. A Sharp, a Methodist missionary who argued that the villages were Christian villages, where the missionaries would make civic laws and rules, and were meant to present a striking lesson to the surrounding heathen (Zvobgo, 1991a:74). The words of Rev. Sharp mean that the villages came into being through contact between the missionaries and traditional religion, the missionaries thought it was necessary to bring their convert to one place and then make rules to control them so that they became an envy of the unconverted world through their Christian life.

Dislodging Colonial Ecclesiology

The continuous call for reforms and change in many areas including the Men's organisation and the Youth department is unambiguous evidence that Methodist Missionary ecclesiology adopted by the Church now needs a revamp. The need to reform Methodist ecclesiology dates back to the missionary era where proposals to consider issues around customary marriage, hymn singing and traditional musical instruments, African healing practices, traditional rites, and ancestral worship were tabled before the Rhodesia district Synod. There are continuous calls in the contemporary MCZ to do research on African traditional religion and culture, contemporary methods of evangelisation, healing and the gospel of prosperity, and on social issues such as homosexual tendencies and gender-based violence. This shows that the Church is encouraged to move with time and try as much as possible to address contemporary issues to ensure it remains relevant to its members.

The issue of customary marriage has been a thorn in the flesh for the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. In 1976 the Rhodesia district Synod received a report from the African customs and beliefs asking the Church to consider an initial legal customary marriage complete when a woman's family take her to the man's house, and the synod was made aware that the same resolution had been brought to Synod in 1973 (Minutes of Rhodesia District Synod, 1976, CAP E3). The Synod in response came up with a proposal to hold a seminar in Gweru to look at African customary marriages and lobola, concentrating on helping young people in the Church. The problem of customary marriages has not found a lasting solution and continues to trouble the Church. In 2014 the conference dealt with the same issue as in 1976. This time the resolution, which had been discussed as provisional legislation by Synods, asked the Church to bless customary monogamous marriages and do a further scrutiny on the Church's view on polygamous

marriages (MCZ, Minutes of Conference 2014, p.69). The 2014 resolution on customary marriages cannot be viewed as progress since it continues to undermine the African ways of marriage in favour of the western monogamous type of marriage.

The issue of hymn singing is central to the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe since it does not only give a unique identity but also provides links with worldwide Methodism through singing hymns composed by Charles Wesley in the 1700s. Members of the Methodist, Church especially the youths, find expression and satisfaction by singing choruses, but choruses have no place in the Methodist Church. Hymns, for the young have stolen vibrancy in the Church and this has led to many leaving for other Churches. The Church has been careful in its resolution to include choruses in its worship for the sake of the young. It has agreed to have them but held that they should not overtake the traditional hymns which are a unique Methodist heritage passed from generation to generation (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2012, p. 11, 2008, p. R7, 2007, P,25). The most important thing to note is that the contemporary Methodist Church in Zimbabwe has discovered that there is need for reformation and change in many areas of the Church so that the Church remains relevant to this age. In the 2012 Methodist annual conference, the Presiding Bishop called the Church to be an institution that is functional and relevant to today's Challenges (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2012, p. 28). Addressing the Lay session at the same conference, the connexional Lay president acknowledged the need for change but went on to say there is need for the Church to manage the process of change and emphasised the need to guard jealously our identity by upholding our Methodist heritage (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2012, p. 29). The Mission Director of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, at the 2014 conference, was also torn in between. He saw the need for reformation and change, but he did not want it at the expense of the Methodist heritage. He argued

The Zimbabwean theological landscape has shifted in a remarkable way. It is given that mainline Christianity has an unquestionable history in the service of the people. However, the dominance of the same in the new dispensation is highly interrogated. In the unfortunate event that the situation continues unabated it means the future of mainline Christianity is bleak. The observation calls us to be resolute in implementing our strategies and to be open to change as we do our mission. More so it calls us to be very judicious as we preserve our heritage particularly those aspects of our being that make us Wesleyans first and Methodists second (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2014, p. 39).

The Presiding Bishop in 2016 acknowledged that there is need for change and reformation in Methodist ecclesiology when he described a vibrant Church as one that is willing to move from the past, creating visionaries and dreamers. He argued;

Our mandate with mission imperatives as beacons demands that we constantly review how we can effectively be a Church of the 21st Century (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2016, P. 22).

In response to the presiding Bishop's address at this 2016 conference, the meeting emphasized the issue of research if the Church was to effectively respond to the 21st Century society. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe should engage with contemporary social issues for it to remain relevant to the contemporary society. Social issues that include homosexual tendencies, gender-based violence, healing and deliverance, the gospel of prosperity, and the issue of dual membership. These issues have an impact on the membership of the Methodist Church, therefore, they need to be researched on. As far back as 2005, the lay members of conference were concerned with the loss of members to other Churches due to lack of a healing and deliverance ministry in the Church, which cannot be tolerated due to the power and effect of Methodist tradition (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2005, P. 37). The session recommended that the Church takes healing and deliverance ministries seriously to the extent of including it in the Standing Orders, and the recommendation was approved. But to this day nothing in that direction has been implemented. The connexional Lay President in 2011 complained that the Church is having discussions on the same issues year after year without proper implementation of resolutions that could be followed up (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2011, p. 37).

When the Christian missionaries, including the Methodist Missionary Society, came to Africa, they proceeded with an idea of mission as going out to conquer other religious traditions, to take out their African converts from their spirituality (Okure 2000:5; Taiwo. 50 Udeani 2007:67). The approach was non-inclusive, but it was to classify and condemn other religious traditions in order to conquer and subdue them. The approach does not encourage co-existence of belief systems, this is mostly influenced by the belief that Christianity is a universal religion and is the only religion that can guarantee salvation for mankind. The understanding meant that the missionaries were on an assignment to go and challenge the belief system of all nations in the universe and to rescue them from the path of destruction, which is their belief system and culture (Harris 1999:10). The

point that the Christian missionaries missed, according to Sanneh (1989), is that Christian mission implies not so much judgement on the cultural heritage of the convert as on the missionary, because the gospel will bring judgement on both with the passage of time (1989:25). The Church for the missionaries was supposed to represent the kingdom of God on earth and so there was need for rules and regulation to make sure that kingdom was not corrupted, through the use of these rules and regulations to discipline, exclude and expel those found wanting from the Church, Christian villages, and the Church organisations.

The Methodist church in Zimbabwe today still holds on to the belief that Christianity is a universal religion and the only source of salvation for humanity. The Church continues to hold the non-inclusive stance from the missionary era and does not believe in the co-existence of the beliefs of Christianity with those of African traditional religion, and still believes African Methodists need to be saved from the destructive paths of African spirituality and culture. Monopolisation of salvation and condemnation of African traditional religion remain in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. This continues to deal a blow to African traditional religion and culture, which makes any reforms that would incorporate positive aspects of the African worldview impossible. The understanding of the Church as the kingdom of God on earth inherited from the colonial Church makes the contemporary MCZ to continue disciplining, excluding, and expelling members that fail to abide by the rules and regulations that are meant to maintain the purity of the Kingdom. By maintaining the rules and regulations that govern membership and tenancy in the Church, Church organisations, and in the Christian villages, the Methodist Church seeks to make sure there is no corruption of the purity of the Church as an organisation that represents God's kingdom on earth.

The intolerance and misconceptions about African traditional religion and culture that the Methodist Church also inherited from the missionary Church makes it to continue being judgemental, dismissive and to use derogatory terms when referring to African traditional religion. The categorisation of African traditional religion as a non-religion is maintained by the current Church, and this negative attitude and characterisation continues to deny African traditional religion validity and respect by the Zimbabwean Methodists. As P' Bitek (1970:44) argues, the continued use of derogatory terms and negative categorisation of African traditional religion supports the theories of western superiority. There is still hostility against African traditional religion and culture in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, which stems from the intolerance and

misconceptions held by the missionaries, and this has become an impediment to dialogue between the Christian faith and African traditional religion.

The MCZ became independent from the British Conference in 1977, and took over ownership of the Church including assets, accounts and the administrative role. The Church was under black leadership, which was supposed to lead the Church in making reforms. However, the schedule of institutions and structures of administration remained the same, except for some cosmetic and administrative adjustments. For instance, in 2014 the Church agreed to bless all monogamous marriages but not polygamous or any customary type of marriage (previously discussed on p.197) and allowing the use of traditional instruments in Church worship (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2011). This means that the model of church remained unchanged and that the criteria for membership, orders and disciplines remained firmly in place, especially relating to polygamy, ancestor ritual, alcohol (African beer) etc

The failure by the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe to deal decisively especially with issues to do with the relationship between the Church and African traditional religion is that she is trying to maintain the Characteristics of the founding Church (Makoti 2012:133). The Christian villages on Methodist Church farms, through the farms committee policy document and agreement of lease, still forbid acts like beer parties, ancestral worship, cohabiting, visiting or consulting traditional healers, and customary marriages. Organisations such as the Ruwadzano\Manyano and the MCU have maintained the missionary constitutions, which forbid among other things, brewing and drinking of beer, ancestral worship, polygamous marriages, and visiting or consulting traditional healers (*N'angas*). The Church in general is also regulated by the same rules that regulated the Church during the missionary era. People are disciplined and excluded for contracting customary marriages, drinking beer, ancestral worship, and participation in traditional rites. Young people in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe continue to be disciplined and excluded for anticipating marriage, and the marriage that they are said to have gone ahead of is the so called Christian marriage. The teaching and belief that the white wedding or Christian marriage is the only true wedding recognised by God has led to the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe stigmatising all African marriages as evil. The belief in the superiority of the Christian marriage over the African customary marriages was inherited from the missionary Church and is part of the Methodist ecclesiology.

The discussion above shows that the MMS handed to the contemporary MCZ the Church in different modes and I will demonstrate how these modes are reflected in the Church today. I will use the six-model developed by Dulles Avery (2002) for this purpose. The six models of the Church discussed by Avery are: The Church as an institution, the Church as a community, the Church as a herald, the Church as a servant, the Church as sacrament, and the Church as a community of the followers of Jesus Christ (Avery, 2002). The contemporary MCZ inherited the Church as an institution, with rules and laws and a hierarchical structure (Mawire, 2015). The rules and laws give guideline for Christian life and defining right and mistaken belief. The rules and laws are emphasized and observed by members and failure to abide leads to discipline and exclusion. The continued discipline in Church, farm settlements, and in the Church's adult organisation is testimony that the MCZ is an institutional Church. Secondly, the Church handed down to the contemporary Church is communal by nature, which means that it creates a strong sense of belonging and is welcoming. Members of the MCZ want to identify with this society and are proud to belong to it. The fact that people are involved in acts forbidden by the Church surreptitiously, is a sign that they want to belong to this community. Thirdly the MCZ is sacramental. It is the visible sign of the presence of Christ and this makes it not only complicated but deeply spiritual. This, according to Avery (2002), calls for a high level of catechesis and theological training. The contemporary MCZ sends its ministers and lay preachers for theological education and training so that they are able to interpret the sacramental Church. Ordinary members are taught on matters of faith in the catechism classes and in class meeting. Fourthly, the MCZ inherited the understanding of the Church as servant. The Church puts words into action and strives to make better the lives of the people and therefore emphasizes social responsibility. The Church continues to care for people physically both members and non-members by assisting them during drought and natural disasters. The Church also run children's homes to take care of orphaned children, and it has a health services department to take care of HIV infected persons and people living with AIDS. Fifthly, the MCZ inherited the Church as the herald of the gospel, which emphasise the proclamation of the word of God as an important part of the Christian faith. The MCZ has the evangelism department which is responsible for the spread of the message of the gospel. In circuits and societies evangelism crusades are held from time to time as a way of fulfilling the calling to spread the good news. Lastly, the MCZ inherited the as Church as a

community of Jesus Christ, which means the Church strives to imitate Jesus in word and deed. The Church is prepared to sacrifice and suffer like Christ suffered for the salvation of human kind.

6.3 Contemporary MCZ ecclesiology and indigenous beliefs or practices

The question of how far the contemporary MCZ has gone and is prepared to Africanize and adopt the concept of inculturation can be answered by interrogating the developments, debates and conclusions that have been reached in recent times concerning the place indigenous spirituality. The developments include the withdrawal from the ministry of ordained ministers for contracting polygamous marriages, and drinking beer (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2004, 2007 & 2013). Ministerial students in training have also been expelled for anticipating marriage, which means they had married through other customary ways other than the recognised Christian marriage (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2009 & 2012). In the MCZ farm settlements, there is evidence which shows suppression of traditional religion and practices, for instance, in 2002 and 2011 the mission farms reports and reveal that the Church was concerned that tenants were defying Church rules and engaging in prohibited activities such as brewing and drinking beer, performing traditional rituals and beer parties, and refusing to bury to bury deceased relatives on designated cemetery sites (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2002 & 2011). The conclusions reached by the stakeholders meeting held at Marshal Hartley farm on 20 July 2011 shows no appetite for Africanising the Church or embracing the concept of inculturation. The meeting concluded that, no traditional practices should be performed on the mission farms, for instance, beer brewing and beer parties, ancestral appeasement, deceased relatives were to be buried on designated sites, and that anyone with desire to perform the above should move out of the mission. Letters of reprimand, exclusion, and threat of exclusion from the farm settlements have been written to tenants in different mission farms who continue to defy Church rules and regulations (See Appendix for some of the letters). The organisational policy documents (Ruwadzano\Manyano and MCU) forbid such practices as polygamy, ancestral worship, visiting or inviting traditional healers, and beer brewing and drinking. The examples cited above all show the Church as negating any attempt to allow the infiltration of aspects of African spirituality in its ecclesiology. However, the MCZ Conference in 2014 resolved that the Church blesses all monogamous customary marriages, but all polygamous unions remain unacceptable (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2014). The 2005 MCZ Conference

agreed to include in its constitution aspects of healing that were foreign to its ecclesiology, but this however was not implemented to date.

The discussion above revealed that the MCZ continues to deny the incorporation of aspects of African spirituality in its ecclesiology, but there were cosmetic changes that the Church has implemented over the years. The Changes include the acceptance of the use of traditional musical instruments in Church worship (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2012). The discussion also reveals that the MCZ is consciously or unconsciously relating with the African worldview in several ways, which Githogo (2017) argues is characteristic of 21st century Christianity. This conscious or unconscious relationship with African indigenous religion shows the persistence, resilience and power of African spirituality (Githogo, 2017). I will discuss below two ways that the MCZ is relating with traditional religion and cultural practices. Firstly, there is denial and exclusion of aspect of traditional religion and culture in the MCZ and this is a repeat of the missionary mode. The institutional model that the contemporary MCZ inherited from the MMS discussed earlier means that the Church adopted the administrative structure, including the rules and laws that mitigate against the African worldview. The MCZ has not reformed its ecclesiology to the extent of celebrating and giving full recognition of African ways of knowing, seeing and being. Practices such as traditional rituals including commemorating the dead are not recognised and are not part of the Church calendar.

The institutional Church emphasizes the laws and procedures, and the colonial laws make it impossible to accept the tenets of African traditional religion in the Church and the Church remains in denial and continues to exclude aspects of African worldview. The weakness of this way of relating with African traditional religion and worldview is that it overlooks very important contrasts that exist within the Church. Allister (1989) discusses seven contrasts in the Christian Church: that the Church is historical but also changing, universal but also local, corporate but also individual, guarding but also exploring, eternal but also temporal, missionary but also pastoral, and that it is comprehensive yet cultic.

The continuous denial and exclusion of African traditional religion shows that the Church is stuck with missionary ecclesiology and theology which has no place for African indigenous spirituality and it is a sign that the Church is oblivious of the contrast that though it is an institution with a historical background it must change with time. The Church is both comprehensive and cultic:

although it emphasises rules and laws, it should recognise that it must be inclusive but as it is, the church is emphasizing the cultic side at the expense of the comprehensive. The Church should also accept that while it is guarding, it must be exploring as well. It has to guard the doctrines and the gospel truth but continue to search for more revelation and insight. The second way of relating with the African worldview revealed by the discussion is incorporation and inculturation. The MCZ has accepted the use of African traditional instruments such as the traditional drums and *hosho* (Makoti, 2012), and, in 2014 Conference, accepted the blessing of all monogamous customary marriages. Although the Church accepted these practices, it did not change much in terms of colonial policies and rules. As already mentioned, these changes are only cosmetic because, for instance, the changes on marriage did not address the real problem concerning other African ways of marriage. These continue to be marginalised and have no place. The only hope that the Church in taking the direction of inculturation is the resolution of the 2014 Conference to continue research on customary marriages to see how the Church can treat them. The problem, however, is that the resolution can be forgotten on the table like the other previous recommendations and resolutions that were never mentioned. The failure of the Church to adopt incorporation and inculturation as a way of relating with African indigenous spirituality is that the Church is failing to recognise the contrast that the Church is universal but also local. The attitude and some of the rules governing the membership of the MCZ belong to the worldwide MCZ and these ignore that the indigenous people must experience the Church locally. The decision to accept or exclude aspects of African spirituality should take cognisance of the experiences of the local people who are the most affected.

The contemporary MCZ has been under pressure of late from various sections of the Church to consider its position regarding the place of indigenous spirituality. The mission committee in 2013 recommended to Conference that both the Lay and Ministerial sessions as well as the youth Conference discuss the issue of marriage and the idea was to accept traditional marriages in the Church. The response of conference 2013 was to send the resolution back to synods to be discussed as provisional legislation. The following year, 2014, as already mentioned, Conference accepted to bless only monogamous unions and resolved that there was need for further scrutiny on polygamy but up to now no progress has been made in that regard. As early as 2005, the Conference approved, after pressure from the Lay session to include aspects of African spirituality on the Church calendar, however, that resolution was never implemented.

Policing and surveillance through pastoral care and church discipline

The study reveals that the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe uses its theology and discourse to police and do surveillance on the belief systems of her members, and mostly to regulate the infiltration of features of African traditional religion and culture into the Church's belief system. This is possible because Church discourse and theology define and classifies orthodox belief and unacceptable belief. Religious institutions' discourse and theology are inseparable since institutional theology informs the institution's discourse, that is, its laws, rules, and regulations. Discourse is the institution's ideas and language that gives uniqueness to the institution (Foucault 1979:27). By applying its teachings, laws, rules, and regulations, the Methodist Church polices African traditional religion and culture and regulates its members' daily activities and behaviour. The Methodist Church discourse, like any religious discourse, controls individual members and the Church at large, it gives them identity and discipline. The control and discipline which Church discourse offers the Church makes it possible to maintain order and coordination within the Church.

Church discourse makes control, discipline and order possible because it defines what is to be included and what is to be prohibited, as true belief or right behaviour (Edwards 2008:28). Church discourse and theology are tools of control because of their power of restraint and enablement, which makes it possible for the Church to realise its will over its members and to do away with what they deem unacceptable (Mills 2003:33). Members of religious institutions are made to conform to the belief system that is considered acceptable by the institution without questioning, and this makes them think and behave in an undeviating way and by so doing are given a unique identity by religious discourse and theology. The use of religious discourse as a disciplinary apparatus helps religious institutions to attain ordered existence without striving because the people internalise the dictates and teaching of the Church to the extent that individual members end up policing themselves as well as others. Since religious discourse spells out the said and unsaid (Carrette 2000:42), it means those who do the unexpected face consequences that are also spelt out in the discourse since it involves institutional rules and regulations. Those who fail to conform face discipline or exclusion from the institution and this makes members to always stay vigilant and ensure that they do not cross the Church's red lines. This calls more for self-restraint and discipline.

Religious discourse dictates to people how they ought to live, behave, what they must believe and at the same time spells out how those who do not want to conform should be dealt with. The truth and right belief are defined by the institution and the individual is coerced to accept that truth. In so doing, the religious institution establishes systems of surveillance because in the end there is a strong culture and shared internalized values that provide the desired control and coordination (Stanley 2010:1-20). The result of the above is that everyone becomes a proponent and apologist of the surveillance system (Tran 2011:29).

Pastoral care and the systematic violence of exclusion

While Church discourse brings positive results such as the control of the individuals and the institution, discipline, uniformity, and coordination (Edward 2008:22), in its discharge of discipline and restraint it is both violent and negative. Religious discourse is used to qualify or exclude one from being a member of a religious institution because it lays down what is expected of the members of the religious institution. Members who are excluded from the religious institution are mostly those with deviant behaviour and views who fail to uphold the Church's teachings. Such members are considered threats to the entire community's coordination, identity, and belief system (Mayes 2010:111-126). The exclusion of such members of the religious community does not cause physical harm to the individuals but causes harm, nonetheless. Zizek (2008:8) argues that violence in pastoral care is subtle and invisible because the excluded members are stigmatized and pilloried thereafter. Discourse acts beneficently towards the many by acting violently towards the individual that endangers the salvation of the majority (Mayes 2010: 111-126).

In the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, using discourse, those accused of any faults are excluded, rebuked, condemned, and named and shamed. The aim of the Church in applying discourse, in the form of rules and regulations, is not necessarily to cause harm to the individual or individuals who become victims of the disciplinary impact of the law. The major objective is the good of all the members of the Church. Discipline is exercised for the benefit of all the people, the maintenance of order, but there is the tendency to ignore the impact of this discipline on the feelings of those who face the wrath of exclusion and are exposed to subjective violence. Church discourse makes surveillance possible even if Church members are spread out in the entire nation. As a political tool, Church discourse brings order, coordination, and uniformity of belief and practice by using

punishment or threat of punishment. However, as a power of care, Church discourse aims at shielding people from being corrupted by unorthodox belief which would make them miss their desired destination, namely, salvation. When pastoral power is viewed as a power of care, it is cordial, affectionate and without complications and only aiming to save.

Anti-indigenous rules and regulations

The hard and fast rules in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe that were crafted during the missionary era and adopted by the autonomous Church have had a negative impact on the Church, especially on its numbers. The Church has experienced decrease, especially in the number of men and young people in the Church, and the number of tenants in the farm settlements, due to the strict and unbending rules and regulations of the Church. Some of the members are forced out of the Church or farm settlements by the system when they break or fail to abide by the rules and regulations, yet some willingly opt out of the Church or Christian settlement when they fail to cope with the demands of the rules and regulations. Those tenants who opt out, or are forced out, go to join settlements under the government where there is freedom in many areas of human life, and those who leave the Church later join Churches with less restrictions and demands.

The problem with the effects of the rigidity of the rules and regulations on Church growth can be traced back to the missionary era. Reporting on the year's work in 1962 in the Rhodesia District, the magazine of the Methodist missionary society acknowledges that the rules were making it difficult to convert men into the Church. It stated that,

Our present rules make it almost impossible to secure the menfolk. All the new areas are occupied by a polygamous society. In effect, we have to say to the men that it is no good for them to accept the call to repentance because of their marital status (Kingdom overseas magazine, July – August 1962).

The problem of the decrease in the number of men due to the non-permissive rules and regulations of the Church continues to haunt the Methodist Church today. The faith and order report to the Methodist Church conference in 2013 shows concern on the decrease of men in the Church and made recommendations for consideration by conference, it stated that;

Due to the decrease in the number of men in the Church because of civil marriage expectations which have been adopted by the Church, it was observed that the following issues required further analysis; a blessing certificate be issued to those who previously married under registered marriages such as Chapter 5:07. Secondly

the Church should assess the impact of registered Chapter 5:11, unregistered and polygamous marriages to the Church, and thirdly, the Church must clarify where marriage begins, and allow marriage to take place even before completing *lobola* (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2013, p. 45).

The Church conference in 2013 could not come up with a resolution on the impact of the demands of Christian marriage on the declining number of men in the Church, instead conference resolved that the issue be sent back to be discussed as provisional legislation by the district Synods.

Mission settlements have also had such a history which dated back to the era of the missionary Church, where the rules and regulations of the Church have forced people out of these settlement, either on their own volition or after being forced out as part of the disciplinary process of the Church. The first annual report of the Methodist Missionary Society of 1932 states that,

In the past days, we have had many healthy causes on the farms, but now the numbers are dwindling, owing to the policy of government in inducing the Africans to settle on the reserves where they have permanent tenure (Our Missions Overseas, June 1933, pp. 108- 112).

The reason people moved out of the farms in numbers after the introduction of the settlement in the reserves controlled by the government was that they wanted their freedom, which was muzzled in the Christian villages. In the government settlements there is freedom of association and freedom to belong to any religious tradition or even belong to more than one faith tradition. Young people in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe continue to leave the Church to join other Churches that are accommodative and have no strict rules as those in the Methodist Church. The youths, as a group that is energetic, want to be part of a vibrant Church but sometimes that vibrancy is lacking in the Methodist Church due to the Church's desire to stick to its traditions, especially that of hymn singing, which is against the singing of choruses. The Methodist conference in 2012 resolved that due to the decrease in the number of young people in the Church there was need to incorporate modern methods of worship and teaching to attract the youth back to the Church (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2012). However, at the same conference, the connexional lay president seemed to advocate for this change but was also hesitant to give it a try because of the need to maintain the singing of Methodist hymns. She challenged the Church to manage the process of change and emphasized the need to guard jealously the Methodist identity by holding on to our hymns than promote choruses (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2012, p. 29). Apart from the problem related to worship, the youth are affected by the Church's stance on marriage. Most youths in the Methodist

Church are unemployed and cannot afford the soaring prices of paying lobola and later financing a 'Christian wedding' and those who marry using customary ways are disciplined by the Church or they simply recede into oblivion. The youth conference in 2013 brought a resolution to the main conference asking that the Church harmonises the traditional and Christian marriages (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2013, p. 61). The youth conference resolution was response to the main conference that had asked the Youth department to find ways of arresting the worrying flight of the young people to emerging Churches (MCZ, Minutes of Conference, 2012, p. 46).

The rules of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe have a negative impact on its numerical growth since the laws on customary marriage affect the youth and men in the Church. The laws also do not promote change in terms of worship and this has led to young people leaving the Church in search of vibrancy in the emerging Churches. Most old people who are caught and shamed because of participating in traditional religion and culture leave the Church and join other Churches or continue with cultural practices outside the Church.

6. 4 Towards a reformed indigenous ecclesiology

The study revealed that the MCZ is stuck with theology and ecclesiology that was inherited from the missionary Church which has not been reformed or revised since the Church became autonomous in 1977. This, however has had negative effects on the Church, especially on numerical growth and relevance during this era. The reasons for not reforming include the fear of being diluted and the desire to maintain a unique Methodist identity, which is traced back to the mother Church in Britain, and the orderly Church governance that comes with it. The problem is that the Church has many foreign concepts and therefore making it foreign to its African members since it does not address problems of African spirituality. The MCZ's ecclesiology was crafted as a way of excluding tenets of African traditional religion and culture. This concluding chapter suggests ways in which the contemporary MCZ should engage with African traditional religion

and culture, which are: repeat or maintenance of the missionary mode, incorporation and inculturation, and indigenisation of ecclesiology. However, before I discuss these three ways of engagement, I will discuss the concepts of deconstruction and reformation which, in my view, should inform the three ways the Church should approach the African worldview.

6.4.1 Deconstruction and Reformation of MCZ Ecclesiology

The African missionary Churches' theology and ecclesiology require deconstruction and transformation to allow new insight and thought. The call for deconstruction and reforming the theology of the former missionary Churches comes at the backdrop of people leaving these Churches to either join new movements or to stay at home, leaving the once mighty Churches' white elephants. Reformation is an acknowledgement that times change and institutions, including the Church, must move with the times if they are to remain relevant. The nature, structure, and polity of most former missionary Churches make it difficult for the incorporation of new insight and thought, to the extent that the Churches have made recommendations for Change in several areas but due to the bureaucratic structure, the resolutions have remained on paper and were never implemented.

Deconstruction is an interpretive style, a detailed examination of text to show that there is no fixed meaning, but that it can be understood in different ways by each reader. It is a critique of long robed totalizers of capitalised truth (Caputo 2007: 30). In deconstruction, the people's beliefs and practices are not destroyed but forced to reform and configure (Caputo 2007:27). The goal of deconstruction is not to attack the Church but to offer a critique of the systems, rules, laws and polity, and this helps to ascertain the hidden intentions of the author. The former missionary Churches should engage this interpretive style to their literature, constitutions, rules, and laws, so that it challenges what has been accepted as orthodox belief over the years. Deconstruction brings out the truth, which according to Caputo (2007), once it is out, the beliefs, practices, the texts, or the institutions begin to tremble (2007:30). Deconstruction will help the former missionary Churches to approach their policies, rules and laws, in a way that will listen to the truth as told by the 'other', forcing these Churches to realise that in their ecclesiology, this 'other' is not represented and that reformation is required.

When deconstruction as an interpretive hermeneutic is applied very well by the African Church, the Church will realise the need for reformation of its ecclesiology, polity, and theology. In this way, reform in the Church is not done for its own sake, but is guided by the outcome of deconstruction, which brings out the truth that will direct the Church on what needs to be changed or upgraded. I argue that reformation should follow after a proper deconstruction because, as Ghosal (2011) argues, poorly conceived reform can be worse than leaving substandard regulations in place (2011:x). Reform, when properly done, opens new possibilities for effective governance (Jordana and Levi-Faur 2004:2). The reformation required by the former missionary Church in Zimbabwe today can be viewed the same way as the sixteenth century reformation of Luther and his contemporaries, which followed upon a crescendo of rising protest against the spiritual and dogmatic claims of the Catholic Church (Cameron 2004:3). The former missionary Churches in Zimbabwe today are faced with spiritual and dogmatic ecclesiology and theology defined by their denominational colonial missionaries. The sixteenth century reformation removed obstacles which the papal Church had imposed between Christ and the believer and opened doors to direct union with him (Schaff 2002:11). Like the sixteenth century reformation, the former missionary Churches, by reforming their theology and ecclesiology, would be carrying out an act of emancipation from spiritual tyranny, and vindicating sacred rights of conscience in matters of religion and belief (2002:31). Having done a deconstruction, the Church must then use its findings to be able to weigh and agree on how to relate with African traditional religion and culture. Below I discuss four ways of engaging African traditional religion and culture, which could be adopted by the Church.

6.4. 3 Incorporation and inculturation of the indigenous

The call for genuine dialogue between the Christian faith and African traditional religion and culture runs across from the missionary era to the contemporary era in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. It is not only the Methodist Church that has discovered the need for dialogue but other denominations too, including the Catholic Church. The failure by some denominations to pay attention to this call is due to the influence of the missionary attitude inherited by these Churches, which viewed African traditional religion and culture as evil, and Christianity as the only religious tradition that could offer salvation to humanity. If the African Church engages in deconstruction

as suggested above, as a hermeneutic to read its discourse, the policies, rules and regulation, the truth will come which will shake the current beliefs about both African traditional religion and the Christian faith, especially that no religious tradition is all encompassing and superior. Such a discovery makes dialogue necessary and desirable for the future of the Church.

Dialogue between Christianity and African traditional religion in the African Church is necessitated by the resurgence and power of African traditional religion and culture among African converts, and the effects of the Church's efforts to quell this resurfacing and resurgence through the brutal purging of Christians who continue to adhere to traditional religion and culture. Dialogue between the two faith traditions is also a way toward reformation because it fights against the dismissive tendencies and superiority of any religious tradition. Critical dialogue between the two religious traditions will help identify the inoffensive tenets in African traditional religion that can be used to enhance the Church both numerically and spiritually (Haar, Moyo, Nondo 1992:53). Each religious tradition has its own goodness and at the same time its own negatives. Thus, critical dialogue will help identify both the good and the bad, and in the end, neither of the two is to give up its goodness (Keteyi 1998:36). Dialogue will help the African Church to identify the critical and peripheral elements in both religious traditions. The result of this critical dialogue would be that positive aspects of African traditional religion that have been devalued will be given space in the new dispensation (Osei-Bonsu 2005:21; Udeani 2007:115).

Besides helping the Church deal with the monologue, which has caused systematic violence to those who continued to participate in traditional religion and culture. Critical dialogue helps deal with domination and dictation by one religious tradition. The suppressed voice of African traditional religion and culture will have a chance to be heard during dialogue when it speaks of its glory and strength which was not known because it was never accorded an opportunity to be heard. The contemporary African Church should be guided by its own experiences, its own convictions and its own thinking in carrying out this dialogue, not by the missionary convictions and thinking. The contemporary Church is aware of the environment and spiritual worldview of African converts, such that during the dialogue they are guided by this knowledge of what is positive and negative in African traditional religion and culture. Critical dialogue, if properly conducted, helps the Church not to dismiss for the sake of dismissing, nor accept for the sake of

accepting, but based on a consideration of life-giving aspects of both African traditional religion and Christianity.

Critical dialogue between the Christian faith and African traditional religion helps Africanize the Church. The African Church should engage the grassroots approach or grounded integration, by encouraging ordinary members to use their everyday spiritual and cultural experiences to forge an integration of their specific cultural contexts with the Christian faith. This, of course, should be opposed to the top-down approach used by the colonial missionary Church and has been challenged by recent scholarship due to its shortcomings. The top-down approach emphasizes the input of those on the hierarchical upper echelons of the Church at the expense of the general religious populace. The approach tends to ignore what happens at the grassroot level of the orthodox mission Churches by not taking seriously the experiences and thinking of the ordinary members of the Church (Vanden Berg 2005:47). It could be productive, however, to have theologians and religious studies scholars lead and guide the process through, but they must not dictate or impose their beliefs and feeling on the ordinary members. They must make sure the playing field is level so that ideas and belief systems are exchanged without one faith tradition leading the way.

The other way the MCZ could deal with African spirituality is that it reforms its ecclesiology and theology to the extent of giving full recognition and celebration of African ways of knowing, seeing and being. Traditional ceremonies and practices such as *kurova guva* ceremony, rainmaking ceremonies, ceremonies for remembering the dead and many others would be included on the Church calendar. Gathogo (2017) argues that “African Christianity in the 21st century is characterised by conscious or unconscious continuity of African indigenous rituals that were prevalent in African indigenous society”. I however, argue for conscious continuity as an option of relating with African spirituality where the Church deliberately allows members to participate in indigenous rituals and customs. Having adopted this mode of relating with the African worldview, the Church would no longer restrict members from attending traditional ceremonies and African traditional practitioners would no longer be viewed as threats to the Christian faith but as co-partners in the work of human salvation. The approach allows people to express themselves as African Christians and it enhances their spiritual life, and there would be no need for them to engage in traditional practices surreptitiously.

The approach also saves the Church from the rigorous and meticulous acts of surveillance and having to discipline offenders who break the rules and regulations of the Church. The freedom helps members to perform traditional rites without looking out for Church spies and systems; and the issue of Christians who pretend not to engage in traditional rights, will be a thing of the past. The approach allows people to be themselves rather than pretending not to engage in indigenous practices, while participating during the night or when they think they are out of the Church's surveillance system. Adopting the reformed ecclesiology, which Gathogo (2017:118) refers to as the concept of radical continuity, is a pointer and acknowledgement of the resilience of African spirituality. The weakness of the approach, however, is that the Church becomes too diluted and the important aspects of identity, uniqueness, and orderly worship are lost. Yet for many Christian denominations, these are very important. The Church, according to Allister (1989), is expected to be comprehensive yet cultic, which means that it has to be public and inclusive, but it should not forget that it has specific religious aims, practices, and priorities. Adopting the reformed indigenous ecclesiology as a way of dealing with the problem of the relationship between African indigenous spirituality has a weakness in that it only recognises the Church as comprehensive and ignores its cultic nature, with rules and regulations.

6.5 Chapter Conclusion

The critical analysis of the MCZ discourse regarding its relationship with the African indigenous worldview reveals that there is urgent need for reformation and change. The MCZ must first do a deconstruction of its discourse, mostly its rules and laws related to African traditional religion and culture. Deconstruction as a method and way of reading texts helps to recover the voice of the formerly marginalised and side-lined, and it also helps to reveal the injustice committed against them throughout history. This means that deconstruction is useful because it informs reformation by laying bare the discrepancies, injustices and any ills that need correction. The MCZ should come up with new ways of relating with the African worldview stemming from a well conducted deconstruction process. This study suggests ways in which the Church could relate with African spirituality. Firstly, the Church could continue denying and excluding the African worldview in its ecclesiology. The MCZ could take such a position because of fear of diluting the Christian brand of Methodism and losing their unique identity. However, in taking such a position, the Church

ought to remember that there is need to be dynamic and move with the times and keep exploring for new insight and revelation in this regard. Secondly, the Church could adopt the position of incorporation and inculturation by accepting practices and elements that do not conflict with the gospel. The Church here ought to understand and accept that both Christianity and the African worldview are forms of spirituality and none is superior to the other. The grassroots approach or grounded integration should be applied rather than the top-down approach when doing inculturation, so that the ordinary members whose experiences are more important in the process will be accommodated.

The MCZ could also engage in reformed ecclesiology, where it takes and recognises all traditional practices and beliefs and make them part of its ecclesiology, including putting them on the Church's calendar. The weakness of this approach is that although it saves the Church time from maintaining regimes of surveillance and control, it loses the cultic side of the Church and overemphasizes the comprehensive side, which is more open and welcoming. Aspects that are important to the Church could be compromised here, including the issue of a unique Methodist identity and order in the Church.

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APPENDIX 1: Ethical Clearance



17 March 2016

Mr Greenwell Chigova 215000256
School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mr Chigova

Protocol reference number: HSS/0242/016D

Project Title: Policing Religious Identities and Boundaries in Ezra 9-10 and in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe

FULL APPROVAL – No Risk / Exempt Application

In response to your application received 11 March 2016, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

.....
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc. Supervisor: Federico Settler & Wilhelm Meyer
Cc. Academic Leader: Professor P Denis
Cc. School Administrator: Ms Catherine Murugan

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

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APPENDIX 2: 'The Rules of the Society of the People called Methodists' drawn by John and Charles Wesley (1743)

Source: The constitution practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church, Book v, Part 1 (Historic texts)

General Rules of the Society of the People called Methodists

"The Rules of the Society of the People called Methodists," drawn up by John and Charles Wesley in 1743, still enshrine the spirit of fellowship and universal goodwill to which members of the Methodist Church acknowledge allegiance in the social, civic and economic conditions of the present day.

These Rules, published in the year 1743, under the title, "The Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies in London, Bristol, Kingswood, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, etc." are as follows: -

1. In the latter end of the year 1739 eight or ten persons came to me in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired (as did two or three more the next day) that I would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That we might have more time for this great work, I appointed a day when they might all come together; which, from thenceforward, they did every week, viz., on Thursday, in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them (for their number increased daily), I gave those advices from time to time which I judged most needful for them; and we always concluded our meetings with prayer suited to their several necessities.

2. This was the rise of the United Society, first in London, and then in other places. Such a Society is no other than "a company of men having the form, and seeking the power, of Godliness; united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation."

3. That it may the more easily be discerned whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each Society is divided into smaller companies, called Classes, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in every Class; one of whom is styled the Leader. It is his business-

(a) To see each person in his Class once a week, at least, in order to inquire how their souls prosper; To advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require; To receive what they are willing to give towards the relief of the poor.

(b) To meet the Ministers and the Stewards of the Society, once a week in order to inform the Minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reproved; To pay to the Stewards what they have received of their several Classes in the week preceding; and To show their account of what each person has contributed.

4. There is only one condition previously required in those who desire admission into these Societies, viz., "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and be saved from their sins." But wherever this is really fixed in the soul it will be shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation, First~By doing no harm, by avoiding evil in every kind; especially that which is most generally practised. Such is: The taking the name of God in vain; The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work thereon, or by buying or selling: Drunkenness; buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity. Fighting, quarrelling, brawling; brother

going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling: The buying or selling uncustomed goods: The giving or taking things on usury; i.e., unlawful interest: Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation, particularly speaking evil of Magistrates, or of Ministers.

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us: Doing what we know is not for the glory of God; as, The "putting on of gold, or costly apparel"; The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus. The singing those songs, or reading those books which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God: Softness, and needless self-indulgence: Laying up treasure upon earth: Borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

5. It is expected of all who continue in these Societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation, Secondly~By doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and as far as is possible to all men:

To their bodies, of the ability that God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison:

To their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all they have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine of devils, that "we are not to do good, unless our hearts be free to it."

By doing good especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others, buying one of another, helping each other in business; and so much the more, because the world will love its own, and them only. By all possible diligence and frugality, that the Gospel be not blamed. By running with patience the race that is set before them, denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ; to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should say all manner of evil of them falsely, for the Lord's sake.

6. It is expected of all who desire to continue in these Societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation. *Thirdly*~By attending upon all the ordinances of God: such are, The public worship of God;

The ministry of the Word, either read or expounded;

The Supper of the Lord;

Family and private prayer;

Searching the Scriptures; and

Fasting or abstinence.

7. These are the General Rules of our Societies; all which we are taught of God to observe, even in His written word, the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these we know His Spirit writes on every truly awakened heart. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be made known unto them who watch over that soul, as they that must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways: we will bear with him for a season. But then if he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own soul.

May 1, 1743

(Signed)

JOHN WESLEY

CHARLES WESLEY

APPENDIX 3: Presiding Bishop's message to all tenants on prohibited activities on the Farms (14 June 2011).
Source: Farms file, Projects office, MCZ Connexional office.

14

**THE METHODIST CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE
CONNEXIONAL OFFICE**



Serving with Courage (2 Chronicles 19: 11)

Wesley House
17 Selous Avenue
Box Cy 71, Causeway
HARARE, Zimbabwe
Tel: +263-04-764498/764499
Fax: +263-04-764500
Cell: 0712 360660/0712 613786
Email: methodistconn@zol.co.zw
Website: www.methodistzim.org.zw

14 June 2011

All Mission Farm Tenants

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDING BISHOP

Christian greetings to you all.

I hope this letter finds you well and that our Lord, God may continue to shower you with his blessings at this point in time when most of you are busy in their fields; harvesting, winter ploughing and preparing for the season to come.

Let me however, take this opportunity to share with you that the Connexional Office has realized that some of you are engaging in activities that are not compatible with rules and regulations of the Church as stated in your agreements. It is common knowledge amongst you that the following activities/behaviour is strictly prohibited on Methodist Mission Farms:

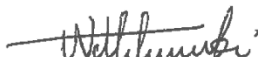
- a) Brewing and drinking beer/alcohol and engaging in traditional beer parties or ancestral worship.
- b) Disturbing peace and causing disharmony and conflict among other tenants.
- c) Cutting down of trees, causing veld fires, soil erosion and practicing environmental unfriendly activities on the farm e.g. keeping unwanted livestock and more than the stipulated number of cattle.
- d) Unlawful allocation of land without the knowledge and blessings of the Church.
- e) Burying the deceased at undesignated places or homesteads. Burial places are well designated in all Mission farms.
- f) Failure to pay farm rentals and council rates as and when required to do so.
- g) Affiliation and attending to other Churches.

- h) Resisting and protesting against programmes, projects, plans and policies that are aimed at developing the farms.

N.B.: Mission Farms remain Methodist Church in Zimbabwe property in line with Government Policy on Land and as such I would like to appeal to you to uphold such important laws of the country and it is my sincere hope that we continue to harmoniously cohabit and support the Church and develop our schools, clinics, orphanages and agriculture for the economic development of our country Zimbabwe.

I sincerely wish you some good harvest despite the challenges that we faced during the season and that you will remember to give back to your God.

Yours in Christ


Revd A. Ndhumbi
PRESIDING BISHOP

APPENDIX 4: Letter from the Church instructing a tenant to vacate the Mission for failure to observe Church rules and regulations (21 June 2012).

Source: Farms file, Projects Office, Connexional Office.

**THE METHODIST CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE
CONNEXIONAL OFFICE**



Wesley House
17 Selous Avenue
Box Cy 71, Causeway
HARARE, Zimbabwe
Tel: +263-04-764498/764499
Fax: +263-04-764500
Cell: 0712 360660/0712 613786
Email: methodistconn@zol.co.zw
Website: www.methodistzim.org.zw

Pray without Ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5: 17)

21 June 2012

Mrs. Mary Jimu
Kwenda Mission Farm
P. O. Sadza
Sadza

Dear Mrs. Mary Jimu,

RE- NOTICE TO VACATE KWENDA MISSION FARM

It has come to the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe's attention that you are now attending an Apostolic Denomination Church and that you regularly invite your Church members to carry out their activities at your allocated plot in Kwenda Mission Farm. Your behaviour is in contravention of the rules and regulations of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe as far as Mission farm life is concerned and these are clearly spelt out in the lease agreement contracts which are signed by each and every farm tenant residing at Methodist Mission Farms. You are allowed to worship at any Church of your choice as is accepted by the law of this country and the Methodist Church cannot force you to attend its services.

You no longer abide by the rules and regulations of the Methodist Church, who are the owners of the farm. You are therefore being given notice to vacate Kwenda Mission Farm by the 31st of August 2012 so that you may exercise your freedom elsewhere

Yours faithfully

A. K. Nyanjaya (Revd)
Administrator

cc: District Administrator- Chikomba District ✓
District Lands Officer
Kwenda District Bishop
Kwenda Farm Superintendent

PRESIDING BISHOP: Revd Amos Ndhlumbi

LAY PRESIDENT: Mrs Sithembile Ncube

SECRETARY OF CONFERENCE: Revd Ananias K. Nyanjaya

APPENDIX 5: Letter from the Church reprimanding a tenant for failure to uphold mission rules and regulations (20 October 2015)

Source: Farms files, Projects Office, MCZ Connexional Office.



**THE METHODIST CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE
CONNEXIONAL OFFICE**

God's Agents of Transformation (Romans 12: 2)

Wesley House
17 Selous Avenue
Box Cy 71, Causeway
HARARE, Zimbabwe
Tel: +263-04-250523
Cell: 0712 360660/0712 613786
Email: methodist@mczconnexional.co.zw
Website: www.mczmethodist.org.zw

20 October 2015

Mr O. Natiti
Plot Number 20
Marshall Hartley Farm
P. Bag 502
SELOUS

Dear Mr O. Natai

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe wishes to register its concern about your Conduct in as far as general rules and a regulation governing the running of its Mission Farms is concerned. It has come to the Church's attention that you continue to defy the rules which include non-payment of farm rentals and council rates and failure to obey lawful orders from farm authorities.

You are therefore being given up to 31st of December 2015 to prove that you still abide by the Church's rules and regulations as enshrined in the lease agreement forms that you signed, or face consequences of your actions.

Yours in Christ

Revd A. Ndhumbi
Presiding Bishop

Cc Chegutu District Administrator
 Bishop of Kadoma District
 Marshall Hartley Farm Superintendant

PRESIDING BISHOP: Revd Amos Ndhumbi

LAY PRESIDENT: Mrs Sithembile Ncube

GENERAL SECRETARY: David Dr Annet M. Mhambane

APPENDIX 6: Missionary Agreement of lease Form.

Source: Farms file, Projects Office, MCZ Connexional office.

Agreement of Lease.

Whereas the METHODIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY (hereinafter referred to as "the Lessor") is the registered owner of
FARM, situate in the District of in extent

AND WHEREAS in terms of Section 23 of the Land Apportionment Act (Cap. 240) the Native Land Board has approved of the Lessors allotting arable land and residential sites not exceeding in number to rent paying tenants respectively, subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter more fully set forth.

AND WHEREAS in consideration of the foregoing the Lessor has agreed that all rentals and fees received from the tenants shall be utilised for the benefit of such tenants on the said farm, and furthermore that the maximum number of large stock (bovine) which may be depastured on this property shall not exceed..... head (five head of small stock to be equal to one head of large stock).

AND WHEREAS the Lessor has agreed to Lease one portion of the said farm to (hereinafter referred to as "the Lessee").

NOW THEREFORE THIS AGREEMENT WITNESSETH:—

1. The portion leased to the Lessee has been duly identified and pointed out to him.
2. The lease shall be for a period of 12 months commencing on the day of 19..... and terminating on the day of 19..... and shall continue thereafter from year to year unless terminated in manner hereinafter provided for, namely:—
 - (a) The Lessor or his Agent may terminate for any breach of or non-compliance with the conditions by giving notice not later than the first day of March in any year, to take effect after the harvesting of the crops then on the land.
 - (b) For any breach of the conditions numbers 11, 12, 13 and 14, or for other sufficient reasons, the Lessor or his Agent shall have the right to determine summarily the lease of any lessee, provided that should the Lessee have planted crops he shall be granted facilities for their harvest.
 - (c) Either party may terminate the lease by giving to the other twelve months' notice at any time.
 - (d) All notices of termination of any lease shall be given by either party to the other through the Native Commissioner of the District.
3. The rental shall be the sum of per annum, payable on the day of in each and every year during the subsistence hereof.
4. The Lessee shall not graze more than head of cattle at any time on the leased property (5 head of small stock shall be equal to 1 head of large stock).
5. Dipping of cattle:—
 - (i) The owner of the cattle is responsible for supervising the dipping of his or her cattle and for dipping the cattle.
 - (ii) The charge of per head per year (or per dipping) shall be paid to the Methodist Missionary Trust Association's accredited representative at the time appointed by him.
 - (iii) No liability whatsoever shall attach to the Methodist Missionary Trust Association in respect of loss of or injury to the cattle, or their contracting of disease, or their death through being dipped or brought to be dipped at the aforesaid dip tank, that is to say, the cattle shall be dipped entirely at the risk of the owner.
 - (iv) A person appointed by the Methodist Church shall record the number of cattle dipped by every cattle owner.
6. The Lessee shall be subject to the Lessor or his Agent with regard to the land he ploughs, the sites of dwellings and cattle kraals, and all other matters relating to tenancy.
7. The Lessee shall, when called upon by the Lessor or his Agent, work without payment for a period of 14 days per annum, for the purpose of opening up and maintaining paths and roads upon the Mission farm, or shall provide or pay for a substitute if for any valid reason he is unable to give this service in person.

8. The Lessee as directed by the Lessor or his Agent shall without payment for such labour take all such reasonable and requisite steps, and shall assist in the construction and maintenance of work necessary for the protection of land liable to erosion, in respect of any part of the said farm.

9. The Lessee shall take such precautions as are required by the Lessor or his Agent to prevent grass fires on the Mission Land by means of fire-guards or burnt strip or otherwise, and shall make every endeavour to extinguish grass fires which break out on or enter the said land from outside.

10. The Lessee when called upon to do so by the Lessor or his Agent shall assist in the destruction of locust hoppers when they may be found upon the Mission Land.

11. The Lessee shall not make or bring to the Mission Land any Kafir Beer or other intoxicating drink.

12. The Lessee will be responsible for seeing that his children and/or the children of which he may be guardian, between the ages of 6 and 14 years, attend school.

13. The Lessee shall not be permitted to enter into a polygamous marriage, or to cohabit with any person without marriage (either Christian or Registered Native Marriage).

14. The Lessee shall not undertake any non-essential work on Sundays.

15. The Lessee shall report to the Lessor or his Agent the presence of any disease amongst his stock. No stock shall be brought into the Mission Farm or removed from the farm without the consent of the Lessor or his Agent.

16. The Lessee shall be entitled to collect and use dead wood for domestic purposes and to cut such poles for building purposes as are authorised by the Lessor or his Agent, but shall not cut down, sell or otherwise destroy any other timber.

17. The Lessee shall not hunt or trap game of any kind on the Mission Land.

18. School Reservations are not available for the grazing of lessee's stock. Damage to crops or other property of the Mission in the school Reservations by straying live stock shall be assessed, and paid for by the owner of such live stock.

19. The Lessee shall not admit to or give accommodation on Mission Land to any person for more than one week without the consent of the Lessor or his Agent.

20. That upon the termination of the agreement by the effluxion of time or otherwise, the Lessee shall not be entitled to claim from the Lessor or his Agent compensation for any improvements effected by him upon the land, but shall have the right to sell or transfer the said improvements with the consent of the Lessor or his Agent.

21. The Lessee shall not assign this Agreement or sublet the leased property or any portion thereof without the Lessor's written consent first had and obtained.

SIGNED by the Lessor at this day
of 19.....

AS WITNESSES:—

1.
2.

SIGNED by the Lessee atthis day
of 19.....

AS WITNESSES:—

1.
2.

I in my capacity as Native
Commissioner for the district ofdo hereby certify that the
foregoing Agreement of Lease was duly read over by me to the above-named Lessee and ex-
plained to him and that he declared that he fully understood the same and agreed to the terms
and conditions.

..... 19.....

.....
NATIVE COMMISSIONER.

I, in my capacity as Native
Commissioner for the District of do hereby certify that notice
to terminate the foregoing Agreement of Lease on was
duly given by the Lessor/Lessee through me on.....

.....
NATIVE COMMISSIONER.

APPENDIX 7: Contemporary Agreement of lease Form (2015).

Source: Farms file, Projects office, MCZ Connexional office.

Greenwell Chigova

THE METHODIST CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE

AGREEMENT OF LEASE

WHEREAS the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (hereinafter referred to as 'the Lessor' is the registered owner of _____

Farm, situated in the District of _____ in extent of _____

_____ acres AND WHEREAS in terms of Section _____

has approved of the allotting arable land and residential sites not exceeding _____

In number to rent paying tenants respectively, subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter more fully set forth,

AND WHEREAS the Lessor has to be leased one portion of the said farm to _____

_____ ID No. _____ (hereinafter referred to as 'the Lessee')

NOW THEREFORE THIS AGREEMENT WITNESSETH:-

1. The portion leased to the Lessee has been duly identified and pointed out to him.
2. The lease shall be for a period of 12 months commencing on the _____ day of _____ 20____ and terminating on _____ day of _____ 20____ and shall continue thereafter from year to year unless terminated in a manner hereinafter provided for namely:

- a. The lessor or his agent may terminate for any breach of or non-compliance with the conditions by notice not later than the first day of March in any year, to take effect after the harvesting of the crops then on the land.
- b. For any breach of the conditions numbers 11, 12, 13, 14..... or for other sufficient reasons the lessor, or his/her Agent have the right to summarily terminate the lease of any lessee, provided that should the lessee have planted crops he/she shall be granted facilities for their harvest. If a child of the lessee who is above 18 years breaches the same conditions, he/she shall be expelled from the farm

- c. Either party may terminate the lease by giving to the other twelve months notice at any time and if no such notice is given, the lease will be considered to be renewed automatically provided that: (i) rentals and other charges are being paid (ii) other provisions of the lease are being adhered to.
- d. All notices of termination of any lease shall be given by either party to the other through the District Administrator
- e. The lease terminates automatically at the death of both lessee and spouse. Lease on Mission farms is not inherited, thus any interested child (who qualifies) can apply and be considered in the event of the death of the lessee and spouse. Through the approval of the lesser, next of kin are given 12 months from the date of death to vacate the Mission land

3

- a. The rental shall be a sum stipulated per annum by Conference of the Methodist Church Of Zimbabwe, payable on or before 30 June in each and every year
- b. The lessee shall pay rates to the respective local authority as and when required
- c. The lessee shall pay development levy as recommended annually by the Farms Annual General Meeting
- 3. The lessee shall not graze more than 12 head of cattle at any given time on the leased property. Furthermore that the maximum number of large stock (bovine) which may be pastured on this property shall not exceed _____
 ____ head

No donkeys, sheep and goats shall be allowed to graze on the mission farm (except for Thekwane Farm where small stock 'goats' can be kept)

5. Dipping of Cattle

- a. The owner of the cattle is responsible for supervising the dipping of his or her cattle and for dipping the cattle.
- b. No liability whatsoever shall attach to the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe in respect of loss or injury to the cattle, or their contracting of disease, or their death through being dipped or brought to be dipped at the aforesaid

dip tank, that is to say, the cattle shall be dipped entirely at the risk of the owner

c. A person appointed by the Methodist Church shall record the number of cattle dipped by every cattle owner

6. The lessee shall be subject to the lessor or his Agent with regard to the land he ploughs, the sites of dwellings and cattle kraals, and all other matters relating to tenancy
7. The lease shall, when called upon by the lessor or his Agent, work without payment for a period of 14 days per annum, for the purpose of opening up and maintaining paths and roads upon the mission, or pay for a substitution if for any valid reason he is unable to give this service in person. The Lessee is obliged to attend farm meetings always.
8. The lessee as directed by the lessor, or his/her agent shall without payment for such labour take all reasonable and requisite steps and shall assist in the construction and maintenance of work necessary for the protection of land liable to erosion in respect of any part of the said farm
9. The lessee shall take such precautions as are required by the lessor or his Agent to prevent grass fires on the Mission land by means of fire – guards or burnt strip or otherwise, and shall make every endeavor to extinguish grass fires which break out on or enter the said land from outside
10. The lessee when called upon to do so by the lessor or his Agent shall assist in the destruction of locust hoppers when they may be found upon the mission land
11. The lessee shall not make or bring to the mission land any beer or other intoxicating stuff or engage in traditional ancestral worship
12. The lessee shall not be permitted to enter into polygamous marriage or to cohabit with any person without marriage (only chapter 5:11 is accepted)
Any child or dependent of the lessee who gets into marriage or cohabits with any person shall cease to stay on the farm
13. The Lessee shall not undertake any non-essential work on Sundays and must endeavour to attend MCZ services every Sunday.

The Lessee who practices, attends or brings in the mission farm other denominations will be expelled from the farm.

14. The Lessee shall not be permitted to cultivate tobacco or barley crops on the mission farm under whatever circumstances
15. The lessee shall report to the lessor, or his agent the presence of any disease amongst his stock. No stock shall be brought into the Mission farm or removed from the farm without the consent of the lesser or his agent
16. The Lessee shall be entitled to collect and use dead wood for domestic purposes and to cut such poles for building purposes as authorised by the lesser or his agent, but shall not cut down, sell or otherwise destroy any other timber
17. The lessee shall not hunt or trap game of any kind on the mission land
18. School reservations are not available for grazing of lessee's stock. Damage to crops or other property of the mission or the school reservations by straying stock shall be assessed and paid for by the owner of such livestock
19. The lessee shall not admit or give accommodation on mission land to any person for more than one week without the consent of the lessor or his Agent
20. That upon the termination of this agreement by the effluxion of time or otherwise, the lessee shall not be entitled to claim from the lesser or his Agent compensation for any improvements with the consent of the lesser or his Agent
21. The lessee shall not assign this agreement or sublet the leased property or any portion thereof without the lessor's written consent first having been obtained.
22. The Lessee shall bury his/her deceased relative/family at designated places on the farm, failure of which will lead to eviction.

Signed by the lessor at this

Day of 20

As Witnesses

1.

2.

Signed by the lessee atthisday.....
Of20.....

As Witness

1.

2.

I In my capacity as the District
Administrator for the district of do hereby certify
that the foregoing agreement of lease was duly read over by me to the above named
lessee and explained to him and that he declared that he fully understood the same and
agreed to the terms and conditions

Date: District Administrator

I in my capacity as District Administrator
for the District of do hereby certify that notice to terminate the
foregoing agreement of lease on was duly given by the
lessor/lessee through me on20.....

Date District Administrator



Figure 5: BSAC land and settlement advert (Rhodesia)

Source: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANdGcQUc44DB3YdnTA-1hIHJ>

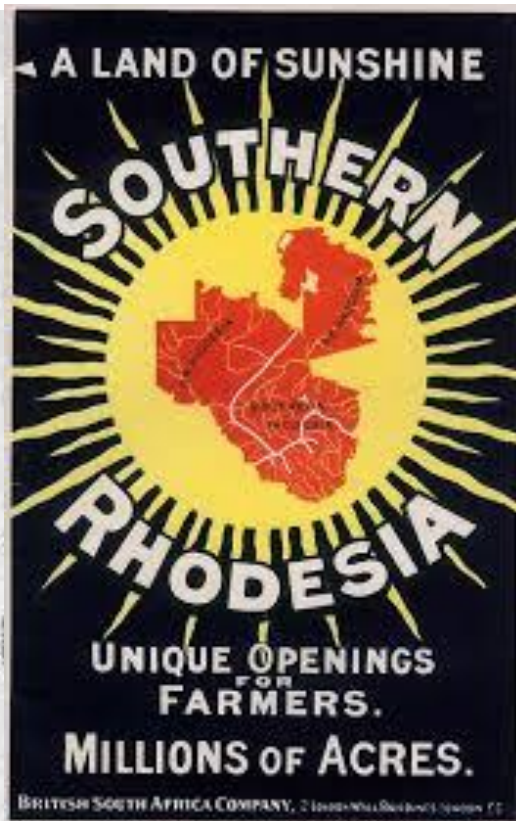


Figure 6: BSAC Land advert in Rhodesia

Source: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANdGcR-YB89o-3610zwWn-6>

TABLE 1: RACIAL DISTRIBUTION OF LAND BY THE SETTLER GOVERNMENT IN 1930

Category	Acres	% of the country
European Areas	49,149,174	51
Native Reserves	21,127,040	22
Unassigned areas	17,793,300	18.5
Native purchase areas	7,464,566	7.8
Forestry areas	590,500	0.6
Undetermined areas	88,540	0.1
Total	96,213,120	100

Source: R. Palmer (1977)

Figure 7: Racial land distribution during the colonial era.

Source: www.focusonland.com/silo/image/land-report-table