

THE ORIGINS AND FORMATION OF THE ZULU CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,  
1896-1908.

by

Deanne Philippa Collins

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the  
degree of Master of Arts in the Department of History, University  
of Natal.

Durban, 1978.



Simungu Bafazini Shibe, founder of the Zulu Congregational Church.

## CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

<u>Chapter.</u>	<u>Page.</u>
I. INTRODUCTION : THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF AFRICAN INDEPENDENT CHURCHES.	1
II. THE AMERICAN ZULU MISSION : POLICIES AND PROBLEMS, 1835-1895.	27
III. CONFLICT AND SECESSION : THE FORMATION OF THE ZULU CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.	60
IV. THE ORIGINS OF THE ZULU CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH : PROBLEMS OF INTERPRETATION.	96
V. THE ZULU CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH 1900-1908 : EARLY GROWTH AND COLONIAL REACTION.	128
CONCLUSION	141
BIBLIOGRAPHY	143

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is impossible to mention by name all those who have contributed to this thesis in its various stages. My greatest debt of gratitude is to my supervisor, Dr Paul Maylam, for his patient and thoughtful guidance. Special thanks should also be extended to the staff of the following libraries and institutions: The National Archives, Pietermaritzburg and Pretoria, Cory Library, Rhodes University, Kille Campbell Africana Library, Durban, William Cullen Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Harvard University Library, Inanda seminary, and the University of Natal Library, Durban. Mrs J.M. Shibe of Denver Zoar Mission Station, Umzumbe, gave valuable information on her father-in-law and kindly lent the photograph which appears as frontispiece. Ms M.Bhengu translated Zulu letters and other documents. Dr Lester Switzer of Rhodes University assisted me in uncovering source material. Professor J. Horton of the Department of History, University of Natal, Durban gave encouragement and assistance. Thanks are also due to Ms L. Waterford, Ms P. Samuels and especially Ms A. Di Paolo, who typed the thesis.

The financial assistance of the Human Sciences Research Council is hereby acknowledged. The opinions expressed and the conclusions reached are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Council nor of any of the individuals mentioned.



## ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used in the footnotes and text:

ABC	American Board Collection, Harvard University.
ABCFM	American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.
ABM	American Board Collection, National Archives, Pietermaritzburg.
ACC	African Congregational Church.
ANC	African National Congress.
AZM	American Zulu Mission.
CMS	Church Missionary Society.
LMS	London Missionary Society.
NCU	Natal Congregational Union.
NHFMS	Native Home and Foreign Missionary Society.
SC	Supreme Court Reviews and Appeals.
SNA	Secretary for Native Affairs.
USNA	Under Secretary for Native Affairs.
ZCC	Zulu Congregational Church.

## CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION : THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF AFRICAN INDEPENDENT CHURCHES

African independent churches - autonomous church groups with African leaders and a wholly African membership - have, in the last twenty years, been the subject of intensive study by representatives of almost every branch of the social sciences. The unprecedented growth of these churches is a major reason for this interest. It is estimated that there are today at least 9 000 such churches in Africa, with a membership of over ten million. South Africa alone has approximately 3 500 churches.<sup>1</sup>

The approaches and standpoints adopted in the numerous studies of independent churches are too numerous to be dealt with individually. Generally, scholars have either undertaken an exhaustive case-study of a particular church or group of churches<sup>2</sup> or have attempted to put forward a general explanation for the emergence of independent churches in a specific region.<sup>3</sup> Ten years ago, Barrett, in a mammoth study, established a "tribal zeitgeist", or scale of religious tension which must be present to some degree in an African society if independency is to develop.<sup>4</sup> Both these kinds of studies have yielded fruitful results; indeed, they complement each other. What has been lacking, however, is any kind of interdisciplinary/....

1. Oosthuizen, G.C., "The 'Separatist' Churches in South Africa", unpublished lecture, University of Durban-Westville May, 1978, p 1.
2. See, for example, Turner, H.W., African Independent Church, (2 vols). (Oxford, 1967); Saunders, C., "Tile and the Thembu Church", Journal of African History, Vol. XI, 1970; Welbourn, F.B. and Ogot, B.A., A Place to Feel at Home, (London, 1966); Mqotsi, L. and Mkele, N., "Ibandla Lika Krestu: A Separatist Church", African Studies Vol. 3, 1946.
3. See Pauw, B.A., Religion in a Tswana Chiefdom (Oxford, 1964); Daneel, M.L. Old and New in Southern Shona Independent Churches, (2 vols) (The Hague, 1974); Oosthuizen, G.C., Post-Christianity in Africa, (London, 1968).
4. Barrett, D.B., Schism and Renewal in Africa, (London, 1968)

disciplinary approach to the study of African Independent Churches. Turner observes that "... studies are being made from within so many different disciplines that the communication necessary between workers in any field of study is not taking place as it should".<sup>5</sup> In the study of a phenomenon like religion, co-operation between practitioners of the different social sciences would seem to be essential.

In comparison with the numerous works which have appeared on African independent churches in other parts of the continent in the last twenty years, South African independent churches have received very little attention. This is surprising in view of the remarkable proliferation of independent churches in this region. In the first quarter of this century, when "Ethiopianism" was viewed by many in South Africa as a grave threat to the maintenance of the existing political order, government officials and commissions conducted surveys into the phenomenon.<sup>6</sup> Missionaries, for whom the independent churches represented a direct challenge, also produced works on this subject.<sup>7</sup> In 1948, Bengt Sundkler's Bantu Prophets in South Africa was published.<sup>8</sup> Sundkler's work was based on extensive field-work in Natal and Zululand; he pioneered the academic study of independent churches in this region. His major contribution was to provide an in-depth analysis of the structures of leadership and membership in Zulu independent churches.

Although/....

5. Turner, H.W., "A Methodology for Modern African Religious Movements", Comparative Studies in Society and History, vii, 3, 1966, p 284.
6. The Secretary for Native Affairs papers in the Pretoria and Pietermaritzburg Archives contain numerous reports on independent churches. See also U.G. 39-'25, Report of the Native Churches Commission, 1925.
7. The most well-known of these is Rev. A.A. Lea's The Native Separatist Church Movement in South Africa (Cape Town, 1926).
8. Sundkler, B.G.M., Bantu Prophets in South Africa, (London, 1970, revised edition).

113 Although Sundkler laid firm foundations for future researchers in South Africa, very little has been done since Bantu Prophets first appeared. A few case-studies of independent churches have been conducted,<sup>9</sup> but no coherent explanation for the emergence of independent churches in this region has been formulated. This state of affairs is not peculiar to the study of independent churches. Shula Marks has noted that in the field of South African studies as a whole, there has been "an apparent dearth of any analytical breakthrough until comparatively recently".<sup>10</sup> Moreover, interdisciplinary co-operation has been conspicuously absent in South African studies.

*Unfulfilled aspirations*

Most of the literature dealing with the African Independent Church Movement recognises two main types of church. Ethiopian churches are those which have "seceded from white mission churches largely on racial grounds".<sup>11</sup> They are often motivated by nationalist aspirations. Doctrinal differences are seldom the cause of secession and the Ethiopian churches normally retain the liturgy and church organisation of the parent body.<sup>12</sup> Zionist churches, on the other hand, represent a "pentecostal healing movement, stressing the influence of the Holy Spirit in various ways, and combining both African and European cultural/....

9. See Dubb, A.A., Community of the Saved: An African Revivalist Church in the East Cape, (Johannesburg, 1976); West, M., Bishops and Prophets in a Black City, (Cape Town, 1975); Saunders, "Tile and the Thembu Church".
10. Marks, S., "South African Studies Since World War Two", in Fyfe, C. (ed.) African Studies Since 1945, (London, 1976), p 186.
11. Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, p 53.
12. For details of this distinction, see Oosthuizen, "The 'Separatist' Churches", pp 5-7; West, M., "People of the Spirit", Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, vol. 7, 1974, pp 23-24; Turner, H.W., "Classification and Nomenclature of Modern African Religious Groups", in Hayward, V.E.W. (ed.), African Independent Church Movements, (Edinburgh, 1963), p 14.



cultural elements."<sup>13</sup> They have normally had little contact with white missionaries. An African church leader in South Africa states that the main difference between Ethiopian and Zionist churches is that the Ethiopians offer "physical liberation", while the Zionist leaders are "prophets of psychological liberation".<sup>14</sup>

There are obvious difficulties involved in the classification of African churches. Individual churches do not always fit neatly into one or other category. Sundkler found that "within one particular organisation which is in principle either Zionist or Ethiopian, there may be strong tendencies towards the other type of independent church."<sup>15</sup> There are also bound to be "deviant" churches which fit into neither category. While these problems are not serious enough to warrant abandoning this classification system altogether, a more direct challenge has come from several African writers, especially in South Africa, where classification has always been a delicate issue. Some years ago, L.N. Mzimba deplored the way in which African churches were "ostracized and stigmatized by some unbecoming name".<sup>16</sup> A more recent writer sees the "derogatory labels" which "westerners" apply to these churches as being part of a campaign to discredit leaders and members.<sup>17</sup> The problem with categorisation is that it tends to dehumanize those to whom/....

---

13. West, "People of the Spirit", p 24.

14. Mayatula, Rev. V.M., "African Independent Churches Contribution to a Relevant Theology" in Becken, H.J. (ed.), Relevant Theology For Africa, (Durban, 1973) p 173.

15. Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, p 55.

16. Mzimba, Rev. L.N., "The African Church" in Taylor, Rev. J.D. (ed.) Christianity and the Natives of South Africa, (Lovedale, 1928), p 86.

17. Ramusi, C., "Church and Homeland" in Sundermeier, T. (ed.), Church and Nationalism in South Africa, (Johannesburg, 1975) p 120. The writer refers here to terms like "schismatic", "secessionist", and even "nativistic", all of which have been used to describe independent churches.

whom it is applied. On this score, the words of Sundkler must be borne in mind: ".... the leaders and members of these churches are more than just objects for our sociological conceptualization, or our western categories and typologies. They are people, men and women before God, very much like you and me".<sup>18</sup>

The major concern of writers who have studied African Independent Churches has been to explain why the movements emerged. Independent churches are usually seen as arising in a conflict-situation. Thus much attention has been devoted to the emergence of independent churches in response to European missionary policies. It has always been recognised that the missionaries were on the whole pious and well-intentioned individuals; yet it has been acknowledged that many of these missionaries pursued policies that were short-sighted and often intolerant.<sup>19</sup>

In the first place, independent churches may be seen to have arisen in reaction to missionary denunciation of traditional beliefs and practices. Because religion is tied to other aspects of the social order, it is not possible to have have a "culturally-naked" Christianity.<sup>20</sup> The missionaries who carried the Christian message to Africa in the second half of the nineteenth century brought with them, as part and parcel of their religion, the presuppositions and cultural trappings of their mother countries. These included very definite ideas about traditional African societies.<sup>21</sup>

It is for/....

18. Sundkler, B.G.M. "What is at Stake ?" in Hayward (ed.) African Independent Church Movements, p 30.
19. See Baeta, C.G. in the introduction to Baeta, C.G. (ed.) Christianity in Tropical Africa, (Oxford, 1968)
20. Shorter, A., African Culture and the Christian Church, (London, 1973), p 69; O'Dea, T.F., The Sociology of Religion (New Jersey, 1966), Chapter 1.
21. Africans were generally regarded as "heathens", living under "primitive" and "barbaric" conditions.

It is for this reason that recent writers have stressed the need for a close examination of missionaries' home backgrounds as an essential ingredient in the understanding of missionary strategies in Africa.<sup>22</sup>

While mission societies in other parts of the world, notably India, made determined efforts to "indigenize" Christian beliefs and practices, in Africa, with a few exceptions,<sup>23</sup> "a distinguishing mark of missions has been their almost unanimous refusal to incorporate elements of the local traditional cults in any shape or form within the Christian system of religious thought and practice".<sup>24</sup> Christianity was brought to Africa clearly stamped "Made in Europe" or "Made in America".<sup>25</sup> For the African convert, acceptance of the message of the Gospel was not sufficient proof of his commitment to Christianity; the missionaries demanded that he renounce not only his former religious beliefs, but all aspects of the traditional social order. The very hymns which converts sang and the prayers they repeated were imported directly from the missionaries' home countries. An African participant at the World Council of Churches Conference on African Independent Church Movements in 1962 remarked that "(the) missionaries did not just give Africa Christ and leave Africa to repent. They ... said: 'If you want to belong to Christ, you must speak and act like the white man'." <sup>26</sup>

*Handwritten:* ? \* | To what degree talked of C.F.R. Missionaries/....

22. See, for example, Baeta in the introduction to Christianity in Tropical Africa, p xiii; Beidelman, T.O., "Social Theory and the Study of Christian Missions in Africa", Africa, Vol. XLV, 1974. For an example of this kind of study see Hinchcliff, P., "The 'English-speaking' Churches and South Africa in the Nineteenth Century," Journal of Theology for South Africa, No. 9, 1974.
23. Bishop Colenso of Natal is a famous exception to this rule. He strongly advocated the setting up of indigenous churches and opposed missionary attempts to do away with "traditional" customs. In the 1850's he entered into a bitter debate with American missionary Lewis Grout over the question of polygamy. His views were to bring him into disrepute not only with other missionary societies, but with his own church.
24. Baeta in the introduction to Christianity in Tropical Africa.
25. Mangope, L.M. "The Role of the Church in Independent Homelands" in Sundermeier (ed.) Church and Nationalism, p 107



Missionaries mounted an early attack on the traditional institutions of lobola, polygamy and the leverite. Converts were normally removed from the "tribal" setting and went to live on mission "stations".<sup>27</sup> The distinguishing marks of these stations were their rectangular houses and the Western dress and implements used by the inhabitants. It was acknowledged by missionaries that the purpose of the station system was to remove prospective converts from the influence of "heathen" practices.<sup>28</sup> It has been noted that it was this aspect of missionary policy which earned for missionaries the dislike of African chiefs. The attitude of chiefs towards Christianity depended partly on the political benefits which missionary work could secure for them. The Sotho chief Moshoeshoe personally invited French missionaries into his territory because he hoped they could mediate between him and the British imperial authorities. Dingane, king of the Zulus and the ruler of an independent territory, wished to have as little to do with the white man as possible and placed severe obstacles in the way of missionary work.<sup>29</sup> Many chiefs were opposed to missionary work because the Africans who went to live on mission-stations were removed from their jurisdiction, and often failed to continue to fulfil their tribal obligations/....

- 
26. Hayward (ed.), African Independent Church, p 8.
27. These were parcels of land which were granted to missionary bodies by the colonial authorities. This policy was widespread in South Africa and was also practiced in other parts of Africa.
28. Hutchinson, B., "Some Social Consequences of Nineteenth Century Missionary Activity among the South African Bantu," Africa, Vol. xxvii, 1957, p 162. See also Dinnerstein, M., "The American Board Mission to the Zulu, 1835-1900", (unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Columbia University, 1971), Ch 1.
29. Williams, D., "African Nationalism in South Africa, Origins and Problems", Journal of African History, Vol. XI, No. 3, 1970, p 375; Ayandele, E.A., The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria, 1842-1914, (London, 1971), p 5.



tions. The chiefs' opposition also stemmed from the fact that their authority was vested in the very traditions which the missionaries were trying to destroy.<sup>30</sup>

The missionaries' attitude towards traditional African customs seemed to stem from "(an) unwitting ignorance of the positive values of the African way of life."<sup>31</sup> A glaring example of the missionaries' lack of any sociological understanding of African social practices is the way in which most of them viewed lobola. Instead of seeing this practice, as it is seen today, as the cementing of a social relationship between two contracting families, missionaries viewed lobola as the purchasing of a wife.<sup>32</sup> It is easy, in the light of recent findings on these practices, to censure missionaries for their shortcomings. Once again, however, it is necessary to look at the missionaries' background for an explanation. Many of the missionaries who worked in Africa were too pre-occupied with the running of their own affairs to engage in ethnographic studies of the societies among which they laboured.<sup>33</sup> As they were among the first Europeans to enter the colonial territories, there were very few available works which they could consult.<sup>34</sup>

While some Africans were prepared to forsake their "traditional" way of life in order to enjoy the benefits accruing to them from conversion to Christianity, many reacted strongly to the assault on their traditions. After an initial/....

- 
- 30. Kuper, H., "The Swazi Reaction to Missions", African Studies, Vol. 3, 1956, p 178.
  - 31. Barrett, Schism and Renewal, p 86.
  - 32. Hutchinson, "Some Social Consequences", pp 171-172.
  - 33. Hinchcliff, "The 'English-speaking' Churches", p 30; Barrett, Schism and Renewal, p 88.
  - 34. The missionaries came to Africa before anthropology became a recognised discipline. Even if they had been keen to do so, therefore, it is unlikely that they would have been able to conduct studies into traditional customs.

Wide variety of resistance techniques

9.

initial interest in missionary teachings, African societies began to employ a wide variety of resistance techniques against missionaries, and church attendance dropped considerably.<sup>35</sup> For those converts who, for religious reasons or otherwise,<sup>36</sup> remained within the Church, the struggle against missionary demands continued. Many found it well-nigh impossible to comply with the requirements imposed on them. A convert who before he became a Christian, had married a number of wives, or a woman who was married to a polygamous husband, found it difficult to fulfil the missionaries' standard of monogamy.

Forms of Resistance - Indep Church X

For many Africans who found themselves in these kinds of situations, the Independent Churches offered an attractive alternative. Independent churches, on the whole, have adopted a far more flexible attitude towards African traditional practices. Indeed, among the Zionist group in particular, there is often a specific adherence to polygamy and other aspects of the traditional social order.<sup>37</sup> All the independent churches have "indigenized" African Christian worship, by the introduction of African music and African hymns, and by the use of "ecstatic" elements of worship.

It would thus seem that independent churches are primarily a "negative reaction to mission", and indeed, this is how they often have been portrayed. A more recent school of thought, which counts among its chief proponents H.W. Turner and D.B. Barrett, has challenged this interpretation and sees independent churches rather as "an indigenous renewal of Christianity/....

- 
35. Etherington, N., "Mission Station Melting-Pots as a Factor in the Rise of South African Black Nationalism", The International Journal of African Historical Studies, Vol. IX, No. 4, 1976, pp 593-594.
36. There were many reasons for Africans becoming Christians and, in many cases, the religious motive was not the dominant one. Economic and social factors played an important role. See Ibid, pp 593-599.
37. Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, p 55.

Christianity in Africa".<sup>38</sup> Barrett and others have likened the growth of independent churches in Africa to the European Reformation of the sixteenth century.<sup>39</sup> Like the Protestant churches which grew out of the Reformation, the African churches are not denying the truth of the Christian message, but are dissatisfied with the particular form in which Christianity has been presented to them. The African reformation, like its European predecessor, relied heavily on the availability of the scriptures in indigenous languages. Initially, African converts relied on the European missionaries as interpreters of the Gospel: "At the start the missionary was the sole and absolute authority; he alone had access to the sources and his word was accepted as infallible."<sup>40</sup> In the last quarter of the nineteenth century the Bible was made available in many different African languages, and a large proportion of African Christians were literate: "The moment the African Christian could read the Bible for himself, especially the Old Testament, he found himself introduced to a world much more closely resembling his own than the world of the European. Inevitably he began to ask questions."<sup>41</sup> Converts found, for instance, that polygamy was not forbidden in the Bible; that, indeed, the forefathers had practised it. Independent churches in South Africa place great stress on the teachings of the Bible; and customs and laws of individual churches are supported by reference to the scriptures.<sup>42</sup>

Apart from reasserting African customs and traditions, the independent churches have provided opportunities for leadership and for self-government in church matters which the mission/....

---

38. Barrett, Schism and Renewal, p 161.

39. Ibid; see also Budaza, G.S., "The Native Separatist Church Movement", (unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of South Africa, 1948), p 19.

40. Bishop S.C. Neill in the introduction to Barrett, Schism and Renewal, p XV.

41. Ibid.

42. See Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, Ch VII.



the missions churches, particularly Protestant Missions, have often withheld. Theoretically, most Protestant missionary societies which sent missionaries to Africa in the nineteenth century subscribed to Henry Venn's <sup>43</sup> formula of a "self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating" African church. <sup>44</sup> The role of the missionaries was to establish churches and to train an African pastorate. Once congregations had reached the stage of being able to support their own clergy the missionaries would move on to fresh, unevangelized fields. In this way, the conversion of the entire continent would be speedily accomplished. In practice, missionaries proved very reluctant to hand over the reins of control to an indigenous ministry. <sup>45</sup> African men who had been educated at mission schools were employed as preachers and a few were ordained. In Nigeria, Venn himself appointed ex-slave Samuel A. Crowther Bishop of the Niger Mission. <sup>46</sup> But ordinations were the exception rather than the rule; and in almost all instances the missionaries retained control over finance and the formulation of policy.

It has been frequently noted that many of the leaders of independent churches have been men who have either quarrelled with missionary superintendents or have entered into disputes concerning church finances. <sup>47</sup> Mangena Mokone broke away from the Wesleyan church in Johannesburg in 1892 and formed the Ethiopian Church after a disagreement with the/....

43. Church Missionary Society CMS Secretary, 1842-1872.

44. Ayandele, The Missionary Impact, pp 180-181; Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, p 29.

45. Beidelman, "Social Theory and the Study of Christian Missions", p 248; Shepherd, R.H.W., "The Separatist Churches of South Africa", The International Review of Missions, Vol. XXVI, 1937, pp 458-459.

46. Ayandele, The Missionary Impact, p 182.

47. See, for example, Lea, The Native Separatist Church Movement, p 30; Report of the Native Churches Commission, p 26.

the missionaries.<sup>48</sup> In Barotseland, "the African Methodist Episcopal Church ... was, among other things, a means of protest ... against the barriers to promotion imposed by the mission churches on Africans".<sup>49</sup> For those Africans who served for years as preachers and waited in vain for the powers and privileges of ordination, the independent churches have offered opportunities for leadership and responsibility. Church members who contributed to mission funds and yet had no voice in policy-making have found these churches more representative of their interests.<sup>50</sup>

Independent churches develop in a Protestant rather than a Catholic missionary environment.<sup>51</sup> Only a handful of secessions have taken place from Catholic missions.<sup>52</sup> The Catholic Church is regarded by its adherents as indivisible and to challenge this oneness is a serious transgression. Catholic missionary bodies have incorporated traditional practices into the ritual of the church<sup>53</sup> and have made conscious efforts to install an indigenous ministry.<sup>54</sup> Protestantism, on the other hand, entered Africa severely divided.

Many/....

- 
48. Lea, The Native Separatist Church Movement, p 30.
49. Henderson, I., "The Origins of Nationalism in East and Central Africa: The Zambian Case", Journal of African History, Vol. XI, No. 4, 1970, p 593.
50. This is not, of course, to suggest that no exploitation of followers by independent church leaders occurs. Indeed, these leaders are frequently as (or more) autocratic as missionaries, and financial exploitation is a relatively common occurrence.
51. Vilakazi, A., Zulu Transformations: A Study of the Dynamics of Social Change, (Pietermaritzburg, 1965) pp 95-9
52. Mbiti, J.S., African Religions and Philosophy, (London, 1974), p 233.
53. Kuper, "The Swazi Reaction to Missions", p 182.
54. Vidler, A.R., The Church in an Age of Revolution. (The Pelican History of the Church, 1968), vol. 5, p 253.



Many writers have observed that, in establishing independent churches, Africans have merely been following the example of denominationalism set for them by the mission churches: "The logic, from the African point of view, is that since missionaries belong to so many denominations, why should Africans not have their own churches, founded and led by fellow African Christians?"<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, it has been the Protestant missions which have been most vociferous in their denunciation of the traditional way of life, and which have been most reluctant to entrust Africans with self-government.<sup>56</sup>

Independent churches appear to have arisen as a "reaction to mission", but this is not the only reason for their existence. The missionaries did not work in isolation and their achievements and shortcomings must be viewed against the background of the colonial milieu in which they operated.

*Shaped by history*

The debate over the nature and extent of the alliance between missionaries and imperial authorities is still very much alive. In the post-colonial phase of African studies, it has been common to view missionaries as "agents of imperialism". An example of this kind of analysis is Ayande's statement that "In Yorubaland and the Niger Delta there was a necessary connection between missionary enterprise and British imperialism; the missionaries prepared the way for the trader and administrator."<sup>57</sup> Etherington maintains that missionary societies in Natal and Zululand attempted initially to work within the confines of the "tribal" structure, but welcomed British intervention and the destruction of the Zulu power once they realised the extent/....

55. Mbiti, African Religions, p 233. This point is particularly relevant for South Africa, where practically every Western denomination has at some time undertaken mission work.
56. See above, pp 6-12.
57. Ayandele, The Missionary Impact, p 42. For a radical analysis of this kind see Majeke, N. The Role of the Missionaries in Conquest, (Johannesburg, 1952)

*shaped by colonial administrators* 14.

the extent of chiefly opposition to their work. <sup>58</sup>  
Once the imperial presence had been established, missionaries worked in close co-operation with the colonial authorities. Missionary societies, with scant financial resources, were dependent on the goodwill of colonial governments for grants of land and for other forms of aid. For their part, colonial administrators viewed missionary work as a "valuable instrument for the pacifying of the conquered."<sup>59</sup>

It was hardly surprising that the missionaries, sharing as they did the social and cultural values of the white colonists, should identify more closely with this group than with their African converts: "given the European source of imperialism, how far could any European (or, for that matter, any white) missionary hold himself aloof from the European (white colonial government of the territory in which he worked ?" While a great deal of work still remains to be done on this subject, however, a closer examination of the relationship between missionaries and colonial authorities reveals that the straight collaboration thesis is a simplistic one. While missionary societies accepted gratefully the protection and practical benefits afforded by imperial rule in Africa, many became outspoken critics of the colonial regimes. Between the colonial authorities and the missionaries there existed sharp distinctions in aim and method. <sup>61</sup> Missionaries found very dubious value in many of the "benefits" which the introduction of European rule brought to Africa. Particularly in the towns, Africans were exposed to a wide variety of secular influences which often ran contrary to missionary teachings. At the same time, "Europeans (in the colonies) frequently complained that the influence of the missionary was less than had been hoped for", <sup>62</sup> and some aspects of missionary/....

58. Etherington, N., "Social Theory and the Study of Christian Missions in Africa: A South African Case Study," Africa, vol. 47, No. 1, 1977, pp 36-37.

59. Barrett, Schism and Renewal, p 87.

60. Baeta (ed.) Christianity in Tropical Africa, p 11.

61. Kuper, "The Swazi Reaction to Missions", p 177

62. Hutchinson, "Some Social Consequences", p 169,



missionary policy were strongly disapproved of. One of the reasons why missionaries found it so difficult to invest African congregations in Natal with self-government was that the colonial government viewed with suspicion any attempts to allow the African a say in the management of his own affairs.<sup>63</sup>

*Wider Africa resp to the colonial presence Africa*

X It has long been recognised that independent churches emerge not merely in reaction to mission, but also as part of the wider African response to the colonial presence in Africa. Indeed, it has been argued that anti-mission and anti-colonial protest are closely related, since the missionary is seen by Africans as a "colonial type".<sup>64</sup> Oosthuizen

In attempting to pinpoint specific aspects of colonial policy which may have contributed towards the growth of the independent church movement, it is difficult to provide an explanation which embraces all those areas in which the phenomenon appeared. Barrett remarks that "it is always possible ... to suggest factors which offer satisfactory explanations for specific movements in specific areas. Unfortunately these explanations are seldom if ever valid for the entire movement on a continental scale".<sup>65</sup> In South Africa, for example, it has been argued that independent churches were primarily a response to the presence of a large white settler population and to the policy of racial segregation which permeated church and state. In other parts of the continent, notably West Africa, these factors have not been present, yet there are numerous independent churches in these regions/....

63. In 1902 The Natal Native Trust, to whom had been entrusted the management of the mission reserves, laid down a rule that every mission station must be under the direct control of a white missionary supervisor. See Welsh, D., The Roots of Segregation: Native Policy in Colonial Natal, 1845-1910, (Cape Town, 1973), p 255.

64. Oosthuizen, Post-Christianity, p 6.

65. Barrett, Schism and Renewal, p 96.



*Dougall*  
 these regions.<sup>66</sup> It is for these reasons that some writers have maintained that the policies of missionaries are of more importance in explaining the origins of independent churches; missionaries were a factor common to almost the whole of Africa and they adopted very similar attitudes towards traditional beliefs and practices.

*Shepperson*  
 There is one explanation for the independent church movement which has been applied on a continental scale. This explanation is based on an attempt to establish a connection between independent churches and African nationalism.<sup>67</sup> Until quite recently the word "Ethiopianism" was used as a "synonym for African nationalism";<sup>68</sup> and the term still carries racial, nationalistic connotations.<sup>69</sup> For some writers these churches represent the religious or ideological strand of African nationalism, and they have been described as the "forerunners of later political movements."

Oosthuizen/....

- 
66. Dougall, J.W.C., "African Separatist Churches", The International Review of Missions, Vol. LXIV, No. 179, 1956, pp 257-258.
67. A problem here lies in defining the precise meaning of the term "nationalism". Several authors have suggested that early resistance movements in Africa (including the independent church movement) differed from later nationalist movements in that they were essentially backward-looking and embraced tribal loyalties. Modern African nationalism is 'modernistic in outlook and directed towards the concept of territorial loyalty.' For a discussion of this issue see Ranger, T.O. "Connexions between 'Primary Resistance' Movements and Modern Mass Nationalism in East and Central Africa", Part I, Journal of African History, XI, 3, 1968.
68. Shepperson, G., "Ethiopianism and African Nationalism", Phylon, Vol. XIV, 1953, p 10.
69. The modern definition of "Ethiopianism" includes these characteristics; see above p 3.
70. Barrett, Schism and Renewal, p 93; Rich, P., "Black Peasants and Ethiopianism in South Africa, 1896-1915", (paper presented to the Conference on the "History of Opposition in Southern Africa", University of the Witwatersrand, January, 1978), p 1.

Oosthuizen and others maintain that these churches provided an outlet for "frustrated nationalism" at a time when all avenues of political activity were closed to the African population.<sup>71</sup> Independent churches have sometimes embraced distinct ethnic groups and have been set up as "national" churches, owing ultimate loyalty to their chiefs. The best-known example of this kind of church is Tile's Thembu Church (1884), which was the first independent church to be established in South Africa. Tile formed close links with the Thembu paramount, Ngangeliswe, and the church was used as a platform for the articulation of Thembu grievances against the Cape Government. A more modern example is the African Congregational Church (ACC) which enjoys a large following in Natal and Zululand. The ACC has set itself up as the "national church of Zululand" and has attempted to gain the patronage of the Zulu Royal Family.<sup>72</sup>

Despite these connections, independent churches have tended to remain outside the mainstream of African nationalism. With the growth of formal African political organisations in South Africa, particularly the African National Congress (ANC), independent church leaders ceased to play an active role in politics.<sup>73</sup> Saunders observes that "those ministers most active in politics remained in the orthodox churches".<sup>74</sup>

In Nigeria/....

- 
71. Oosthuizen, Post-Christianity, p 31; Mokitimi, S.M., "African Religion" in Hellmarr, E., (ed.) Handbook on Race Relations in South Africa, (Cape Town, 1949), p 570.
  72. For Tile, see Saunders, "Tile and the Thembu Church", pp 557-558; for the ACC see Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, p 94.
  73. Rich, "Black Peasants", p 10; Welsh, P., The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, (London, 1970), p 9.
  74. Saunders, C.C. "The New African Elite in the Eastern Cape and some Late Nineteenth Century Origins of African Nationalism", in Collected Seminar Papers on the Societies of Southern Africa in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries Vol. I, No. 10, London, 1969-1970, p 55.

In Nigeria, Ethiopianism had become a "spent force" by 1909, and educated Africans were looking to political organisations which "had nothing whatsoever to do with religion".<sup>75</sup>

Although the links between African nationalism and the independent church movement may be seen to have been somewhat tenuous, white observers in South Africa, where official policy has always been to "keep politics out of religion", were convinced that independent church leaders were involved in politics. These fears were reinforced by the connection between these churches and Negro American ideas and organisations, particularly by the alliance which was set up between South African independent churches and the American Methodist Episcopal Church (AME).<sup>76</sup> The AME was a Negro independent church, founded by Richard Allen in Philadelphia in 1816 in response to the colour bar practised by the white American Methodist Church.<sup>77</sup> In 1896 the South African Ethiopian Church, under the leadership of James M. Dwane,<sup>78</sup> affiliated with the AME. Sundkler suggests that South African Ethiopian leaders had learnt of the AME through reading its newspaper, Voice/....

- 
75. Ayandele, The Missionary Impact, pp 237-238.
76. At times these fears reached hysterical proportions. See G.H. Nicholl's novel, Bayete !, (London, 1923) for an example of the fears with which white South Africans contemplated the "American Connection".
77. For details, see Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, p 40; Hughes, H., "A Warning to White South Africa ; G.H. Nicholl's and his novel, Bayete!" (unpublished paper presented to the African Studies Literary Seminar, University of the Witwatersrand, 13 June, 1978) p 4.
78. Dwane was a Wesleyan minister who broke away from the mission church in 1896 after a dispute over finances. He subsequently joined Mokone's Ethiopian Church.



Voice of Missions, which was distributed in South Africa.<sup>79</sup>

In 1898 Bishop H.M. Turner of the AME paid a visit to South Africa and proceeded to ordain sixty-five African ministers and to consecrate Dwane as an assistant bishop. Although Dwane's connection with the AME was to be shortlived,<sup>80</sup> the church continued to maintain a large following in South Africa.

Negro American connections with South African independent churches were not restricted to the activities of the AME. The slogan "Africa for the African", which was to become the watchword of these churches, had its origins in Negro American thought as far back as the 1860's.<sup>81</sup> Nor did the "American Connection" operate only in South Africa. Negro Americans influenced the growth of independent churches in Sierra Leone,<sup>82</sup> John Chilembwe, founder of an independent church and the leader of the 1915 uprising in Nyasaland, was closely allied with the "Africa for the African" movement while studying in America.<sup>83</sup>

Recent writers, while acknowledging that Negro American ideas contributed towards the emergence of African independent churches, have suggested that the American input was not crucial to the/....

---

79. Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, p 40.

80. Dwane became disenchanted with the AME; particularly with what he regarded as his inferior status vis à vis the Negro bishops. In 1900 he and a portion of the Ethiopian church left the AME and affiliated with the (Anglican) Church of the Province of South Africa.

81. Shepperson, G., "Notes on Negro American influences on the Emergence of African Nationalism", Journal of African History, ol. I, No. 2, 1960, p 301.

82. Shepperson, "Notes on Negro American", p 302.

83. Shepperson, "Ethiopianism", p 16.

to the growth of the movement. Shepperson speculates that "if no American Negro had even set foot in Africa, it is more than likely that Ethiopianism would have taken the same course";<sup>84</sup> and Rich suggests that the "independent determinants" behind Ethiopianism were far more important than Negro American ideas.<sup>85</sup>

*Colour Bar*

Sundkler and others maintain that the major determinant of the independent church movement in South Africa is the "colour-bar" that exists between white and black: "It is impossible to condemn the African for being separatist when he is treated as a separated person, particularly when he is subordinated as well as separated."<sup>86</sup> Independent churches are also seen as a response to the economic deprivation experienced by the African population in South Africa. Some years ago Dr. D.T. Jabavu stated that the independent church movement symbolized "a general ambition for liberation from economic necessity".<sup>87</sup> More specifically, South African independent churches must be viewed against the background of the growing landlessness of the African population.<sup>88</sup> Sundkler notes that "the increase in the number of ... independent churches could be shown on a diagram as a parallel to the tightening squeeze of the natives through land legislation."<sup>89</sup> Until 1913, African independent Church leaders could purchase land freely. Members of these churches who had contributed money towards the purchase of a farm were allowed to settle on the land. The churches thus provided economic security at a time when all sectors of the African population/....

84. Shepperson, "Ethiopianism", p 16.

85. Rich, "Black Peasants", p 2.

86. Dougall, "African Separatist", p 258; Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, pp 32-33.

87. Budaza, "The Native Separatist", p 38; see also D.D.T. Jabavu in the foreword to Lea, The Native Separatist, pp 10

88. Rich, "Black Peasants", p 3.

89. Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, p 33.

*and  
egorbal*



population were suffering great uncertainty. The Land Act of 1913 severely curtailed the amount of land available for African settlement and prohibited Africans from buying land except in certain scheduled areas. It is significant that in the five years after the passage of this legislation the number of independent churches more than doubled.<sup>90</sup>

Although independent church leaders are now restricted in the matter of buying land, they have continued to offer a measure of economic security to their followers. Most churches have an aid scheme whereby members who are unemployed or ill are helped out in their time of need.<sup>91</sup>

Independent church leaders normally wield a certain amount of authority over their followers. This stems from their access to economic security and, as in the case of the Zionist prophets, from the healing and other powers which they claim to possess. More important, their authority is derived from the status they achieve as founders of an independent church. The setting up of an independent church is usually the result of individual initiative; very few churches have grown out of the collective action of congregations. Noting this situation, a school of thought has emerged which explains the African independent church movement in terms of the ambitions and frustrations of church leaders. Earlier analyses of this kind tended to be simplistic and failed to examine the background situation against which independent church leaders operated. Thus Budaza observes that "many a native teacher or priest, either because of pride or some other selfish motive, has thought it wiser to secede from his church rather than undergo disciplinary action".<sup>92</sup> Recent writers have attempted to be more specific about/....

---

90. From 30 in 1913 to 76 in 1918. See Oosthuizen, "The 'separatist' churches", p 4.

91. An outstanding example is Bishop Limba's "Church of Christ" in Port Elizabeth. This church not only helps members in times of need, but leases and cultivates farms and owns shops and butcheries. Members are employed in these concerns. See Mqotsi and Mkele, "A Separatist Church", pp119-11

92. Budaza, "The Native Separatist", p 47 (emphasis added).

Welsh

about the characteristics of church leaders, who have been identified as belonging to the "educated elite", the "evolve" or "petit bourgeoisie" class of Africans.<sup>93</sup> Independent church leaders were relatively well-educated men, most of whom received their education in mission schools and institutions. Many were employed as preachers or teachers. They occupied an "anomalous" position in the colonies. By virtue of their education and their Christian beliefs they were separated from the general African population. They were, however, denied access to the privileges of European society.<sup>94</sup> Moreover, it was they who felt most keenly the ceiling on achievement imposed on Africans by the missionaries and the colonial authorities. Rich adds the important rider that this group of Africans was anxious to accumulate capital.<sup>95</sup> Independent churches provided the opportunity for the fulfillment of some of these desires. Independent church leaders achieved status through the control they exercised over their followers, and sometimes even recognition from the colonial government.<sup>96</sup> With the aid of contributions from church members, they could buy land and engage in commercial activity.<sup>97</sup>

This particular line of inquiry has opened up new dimensions in the study of African independent churches, although more case-studies of individual leaders need to be undertaken/....

- 
93. See Welsh, The Roots of Segregation, pp 238-247; Rich, "Black Peasants", pp 4-5; Saunders, "The New African Elite".
94. Etherington, "Mission-Station Melting-Pots", p 603.
95. Rich, "Black Peasants", p 4.
96. The South African Government, acting on the recommendations of the Native Churches Commission, set up machinery for the official recognition of independent churches in 1925. Very few churches have managed to comply with the stringent requirements for recognition. Recognition is much coveted, not only for its status, but for the material benefits it confers on a church; and those churches which are recognised are assured of a large following.
97. See above p 20.



be undertaken in order to test its viability. One question which still remains open is the way in which independent church leaders differed from African Nationalist leaders, who came from similar backgrounds, and yet stood aloof from the independent church movement.<sup>98</sup> Another question to which attention must still be directed is the reasons why Africans joined independent churches. In his study of Shona independent churches, Daneel emphasizes that "in the effort to provide a penetrating analysis of the causative factors involved in independent church formation ... we must concern ourselves with the life histories, not only of the principle leaders, but also of their followers."<sup>99</sup> He himself attempted to do this through the use of questionnaires. There are problems involved in the collection of this kind of information, especially with churches that are more than fifty years old, but it is essential that attempts be made in order to gain a more complete picture of the movement. Interdisciplinary co-operation would seem to be invaluable in this regard.

In its attempt to explain the origins of the Zulu Congregational Church (ZCC), this study poses two major questions. First, why did Usimungu Shibe sever a long connection with the American Zulu Mission (AZM) and launch a project which would bring him into disrepute not only with the mission and the Natal government, but also with the African pastors and converts of the mission? Second, why did the people at the Table Mountain Mission Station follow Shibe when the/....

---

98. A possible solution to this problem may lie in the recent re-emphasis on the religious aspect of the independent church movement. Independent church leaders seem to have opted for religion as a vehicle for change, while Nationalist leaders have directed their energies into more secular channels.

99. Daneel, Old and New, vol. 2, p 2.



when the large majority of AZM converts remained loyal to the Mission ? Was this merely out of loyalty to their preacher, or were conditions at Table Mountain different from those at other stations ?

It will be argued that the policies of the AZM especially concerning traditional beliefs and practices and the granting of self-government to its African congregations, caused African converts to become dissatisfied with the Mission. The discrepancy between the AZM's reluctance to confer self-government and the Home Board's stated policy of granting this privilege as soon as possible, was a crucial factor in creating a conflict situation. At most AZM stations this dissatisfaction, although at times openly expressed, did not reach the stage of rebellion against the Mission. The major reason for this is to be found in the situation of Africans in Natal in the last decade of the nineteenth century. With the advent of responsible government in Natal, Africans could no longer look to the imperial authorities for the protection of their interests.<sup>100</sup> While conditions on the mission stations were not ideal, they at least offered security of tenure at a time of great economic uncertainty. Rebellion against the Mission would jeopardize this security.

The case of the Table Mountain Mission Station provided the testing-ground for the self-government issue. This station differed from other AZM stations in a number of ways. While other stations enjoyed the almost constant ministrations of a permanent/....

---

100. It may be argued that imperial protection was an illusion rather than a reality for Africans in Natal. Before responsible government, however, they did receive a measure of protection. The case of the Table Mountain Mission Station is illustrative of this. In 1887 the Imperial Government intervened to prevent the annexation of the station. No aid was forthcoming when, in 1895, (two years after responsible government), the Natal government took over all the mission stations.

permanent resident European missionary, Table Mountain had only one missionary, for a period of ten years throughout the nineteenth century; and he was not a fully accredited member of the mission. In the 1880's, the congregation at Table Mountain, on its own initiative and with the full approval of the Mission, secured the services of a full-time African preacher in the person of Usimungu Shibe. Eight years later, in what seemed to Shibe and his people an arbitrary action, the AZM transferred the oversight of the station to the Natal Congregational Union (NCU), which dispatched Reverend Pugh as its missionary. Trouble erupted when Pugh demanded that Shibe be removed from Table Mountain.

In the subsequent dispute between Shibe and the Mission, resulting ultimately in the formation of the ZCC, it will be argued that Shibe had clear-cut reasons for being dissatisfied with his treatment at the hands of the mission and the NCU. The founding of the ZCC must not, however, be seen simply as the action of one malcontent. Evidence will be provided to suggest that Shibe not only had the full backing of most of the people at Table Mountain, but also that the course of action he pursued was taken with the wishes of his congregation in mind.

Furthermore, the formation of the ZCC must not be portrayed only as a response to the shortcomings of the AZM. The unique situation of the Table Mountain Mission Station also arose out of the actions of the Natal government. While the majority of the AZM's converts remained within the Mission in order to retain economic security, at Table Mountain the converts' hold on land rights was far more tenuous. In the 1880's this station became the focus of an attempt by the Natal government to reclaim mission lands, with the ultimate object of opening them up to white settlement. Even before this, the people at Table Mountain had been subject to constant encroachment by white farmers. In breaking away from the Mission, the/....

the Table Mountain converts had far less to lose than converts at other stations. There is evidence to suggest, moreover, that in founding an independent church, the Table Mountain people were consciously motivated by the hope of gaining a secure right to land. In another respect, the formation of the ZCC was tied in with the policies of the Natal government. The sending of Pugh to Table Mountain was connected with the government's insistence on the presence of a resident white missionary at all mission stations.

CHAPTER II. THE AMERICAN ZULU MISSION : POLICIES AND PROBLEMS,  
1835-1895.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) grew out of the evangelical revival which swept North America in the second half of the eighteenth century. Up until this period, the Protestant churches in America, in common with their counterparts in Western Europe, did not regard missionary work as an important aspect of the Christian endeavour. A major reason for this lay in the nature of the Calvinist theology which they embraced; Calvin's doctrine of predestination and the fundamental depravity of man offered little hope for salvation through good works.<sup>1</sup> The emergence of the Protestant missionary movement had to await the modification of these beliefs.

Throughout the eighteenth century, Protestant scholars in Germany, Britain and America were engaged in a reinterpretation of Calvinist doctrine. In America, a breakthrough occurred with the publication, in 1754, of Jonathan Edwards' "On the Freedom of the Will". Edwards argued that "man had the latitude of escaping damnation by repentance and the determination to serve God".<sup>2</sup> His preaching gave rise to a series of revivals, the most famous of which, the Great Awakening in Massachusetts, inspired the first missionary impulse in America. Edwards himself pioneered missionary work among the Negroes and the American Indians. His work was continued by his friend and disciple, Samuel Hopkins who has been /....

1. Hogg, W.R., "The Rise of the Protestant Missionary Concern, 1517-1914," in Anderson, G.H. (ed), The Theology of the Christian Mission, (London, 1961) p 98.
2. Booth, A.R., The United States Experience in South Africa, 1784-1870, (Cape Town, 1976) p 44.



has been called the "Father of American Missions".<sup>3</sup> Hopkins propounded the theory that man himself, and not God, is the key to salvation. The way to salvation lies in pure altruism, or, as he termed it, "disinterested benevolence"; and "the sincerest form of that was missionizing".<sup>4</sup> As a result of Hopkins' teachings, the first American Missions overseas were launched.

At the same time as these developments were taking place, a controversy was raging within the Congregational Churches of New England, between the Unitarians and the Orthodox Christians.<sup>5</sup> In an attempt to protect their position and to produce ministers sympathetic to their standpoint, the orthodox sector, under the leadership of Reverend Jedediah Morse, founded their own theological college at Andover, Massachusetts, in 1807. Morse was an ardent supporter of the missionary movement and the students at Andover were well-versed in the theory of missions. A group of these students formed themselves into a prayer-group, known as "the brethren", whose purpose was "to effect in the persons of its members a mission or missions to the heathen".<sup>6</sup> In 1810 they appealed to the Association of the Congregational Ministers of Massachusetts to set up the machinery for the launching of missionary work. After much deliberation<sup>7</sup> the association accepted the proposal and began to collect funds and to explore possible fields for mission/....

- 
3. Sweet, W.W., Religion in the Development of American Culture, 1765-1840, (New York, 1952), p 235.
  4. Booth, The United States Experience, p 44.
  5. The Unitarians, who were members of the new merchant class in the United States, rebelled against the strict doctrines of Calvin. This brought them into conflict with the Orthodox Congregationalists, who adhered to these beliefs. For details, see Sweet, Religion in the Development of American Culture, Chapter VII.
  6. Strong, W.E., The Story of the American Board, (Boston, 1910), p 7.
  7. For details, see Goodsell, F.F., You shall be my Witness : an interpretation of the history of the American Board, (Boston, 1959), Chapter II.

for mission work. The ABCFM was formally constituted in June, 1812. Although it was theoretically an interdenominational body, most of its support came from the Congregational Churches.

The Board's first foreign mission work was undertaken in India, to which five missionary couples were despatched in 1812. Work was also begun among the Indians in the American South and in Latin America. In 1833 a mission station was established at Cape Palmas, on the West Coast of Africa. This station was envisaged as the first step towards the conversion of the entire continent:

(the) purpose was not to develop one large station at Cape Palmas; rather to make it a base from which to extend a line of stations inland ... the vision before the founders was ... a chain of missions, planted by both American and European societies, with such wise co-operation that at length from the east and the west, from the north and the south, their representatives should meet upon some central mountain to celebrate in lofty praise Africa's redemption! <sup>9</sup>

Malaria and a shortage of funds were responsible for the abandonment of the Cape Palmas station. The Board then embarked on a search for an alternative base from which to conduct its plans for the salvation of Africa. In 1832 a representative of the ABCFM had written to Dr. John Philip, superintendent of the London Missionary Society( LMS ) in South Africa, inquiring about the possibility of the Board undertaking work in that country. Philip responded very favourably, and suggested that the Americans consider working amongst the Zulus/....

- 
8. Switzer, L.E., "The Problems of an African Mission in a White-Dominated, Multi-Racial Society" (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Natal, 1971), p 1.
  9. Strong, The Story of the American Board, pp 126-127.

Zulus, under Dingane and Mzilikazi.<sup>10</sup> As a result of this correspondence, six American missionaries and their wives were sent to South Africa in December 1834.

On the advice of Dr. Philip it had been decided to split the group after their arrival into two parties. Three couples were to form the "Interior Mission", to minister to Mzilikazi's people at Mosega, while the remaining three, organized as the "Maritime Mission", were to work in Zululand under Dingane.<sup>11</sup> By the beginning of 1836 both parties were at work in their respective territories.

The trials and tribulations suffered by these pioneer missionaries have been well-documented<sup>12</sup> and require only a summary. At Mosega, the missionary party was struck down first with fever, and was then forced to abandon their station when the Voortrekkers attacked Mzilikazi. The surviving members of this group then joined their colleagues in Natal. The Maritime Mission was, however, also doomed to failure. Dingane initially welcomed the Americans and granted them land on which to establish stations. As time progressed, his attitude changed and he refused to allow his people to attend church services.<sup>13</sup> When Retief and his followers were murdered in February 1838, the missionaries, fearing for their safety, left Zululand and returned to Natal.

Two/....

- 
10. A copy of the original letter to Philip is in Kotze, D.J. (ed), Letters of the American Missionaries, (Cape Town, 1950), pp 21-27. See also Booth, The United States Experience, p 48.
  11. The missionaries were split on sectional lines. Thus the three southerners (Lindley, Wilson and Venable) went to Mosega, while the Northerners (Adams, Grout and Champion) worked in Zululand.
  12. See Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", pp 2-4; Booth, The United States Experience, pp 50-75; Booth, A.R., (ed), Journal of the Rev. George Champion, (Cape Town, 1967).
  13. See Booth (ed), Journal of the Rev. George Champion, pp 73-124.

Two weeks later the entire party, with the exception of Adams and Lindley, sailed for America.<sup>14</sup>

The American Board was beset by grave financial difficulties during this period and the prospects for missionary work in South Africa appeared to be extremely bleak. In 1843 it issued instructions to the remaining members of the Mission to abandon the field. It was under these circumstances that the American missionaries first came into contact with the imperial authorities in South Africa. In the same year as the Board decided to withdraw from South Africa, Natal became a British colony. This was to have far-reaching consequences for the future of the ABCFM in that territory. In the first place, the Cape authorities, to whom had fallen the task of administering Natal, had learnt from their experiences on the Eastern Frontier that missionaries could perform a useful function in pacifying the people of conquered territories.<sup>15</sup> Although the Americans had thus far been unsuccessful, they had gained some knowledge about the Zulus and might aid the imperial government in ruling these people. Since the Board was no longer prepared to support them, the Governor of the Cape, Peregrine Maitland, offered Grout and Adams appointments as "government missionaries".<sup>16</sup> Faced with this situation, the Board/....

- 
14. Lindley gave up attempts to work among the Zulus and for seven years acted as predikant to the Voortrekkers in Pietermaritzburg. He later rejoined the mission. In 1839 Grout returned to South Africa and made a final attempt to establish a mission station in Zululand.
  15. Hutchinson, "Some Social Consequences", pp 160-161.
  16. Grout accepted this offer and for a while worked as a government missionary at a salary of £150 per annum. Adams, who had independent means, declined.



Board, "with some doubt as to the wisdom of such alliance between political and missionary interests", <sup>17</sup> reversed its decision. Grout and Adams returned to Natal in 1844. They were soon joined by reinforcements from America. By 1848 there were eight missionary families in the field. <sup>18</sup>

With the British annexation of Natal the missionaries <sup>19</sup> decided to give up the idea of working in Zululand. They now confined their attentions to the Zulus in Natal. This necessitated the formulation of a strategy very different from that which they had previously adopted. In Zululand "they had concentrated on winning over the ruler of a unified kingdom wholly inhabited by Africans". <sup>20</sup> ~~The Africans among~~ whom the AZM worked in Natal consisted of small tribes or fragments of tribes who had returned <sup>21</sup> to Natal in ever-increasing numbers after the British takeover. Moreover, the territory was inhabited not only by Africans, but by white settlers, the majority of whom denied that the Africans had any right to the land. <sup>22</sup>

From/....

- 
17. Strong, The Story of the American Board, p 136.
  18. Booth, The United States Experience, p 101.
  19. Once the missionaries became securely established in Natal, they reconstituted themselves as the "American Zulu Mission". (AZM).
  20. Dinnerstein, "The American Board Mission," p 34.
  21. During the period of the Difaqane, Natal had been almost entirely depopulated. Once settled conditions had been established, many of these people returned to the territory. These Africans were joined by the many refugees who poured into Natal from Zululand to escape the unsettled conditions during Mpande's reign.
  22. See de Kiewiet, C.W., A History of South Africa, social and economic, (London, 1972), p 74; Welsh, Roots of Segregation, pp 2-6; Brookes, E.H. and Hurwitz, N., The Native Reserves of Natal, (Cape Town, 1957), p 2.

From the beginning of their stay in Natal, the missionaries of the AZM became heavily embroiled in Natal politics: "It was inevitable that they should do so. 'Native policy' was as paramount an issue there as it was and remains, in all of South Africa, and the missionaries were by definition in its midst".<sup>23</sup> Throughout the nineteenth century the missionaries' relationship with the imperial authorities and with the Natal colonists was dominated by the question of access to land. The Americans had always favoured the setting up of mission stations as a strategy for mission work. By 1844 both Grout and Adams were at work on their respective stations. The AZM, however, desired the assurance that they would retain security of tenure in the areas they occupied. "The missionaries had to be assured that the land in and around the stations they occupied was under their control and set apart for the exclusive use of the Chiefdoms among whom they were working".<sup>24</sup> In order to achieve these aims, the AZM willingly entered into an alliance with the Natal government in 1846. In that year Governor West appointed a Location's Commission to "demarcate African Reserves in such a manner as to 'best prevent any collision between their interests and those of the emigrant farmers' ".<sup>25</sup> Adams, and later Lindley, were members of this Commission, which recommended the setting aside of a number of locations, to be occupied exclusively by Africans, and drew up plans for the administration of these areas. The extent of the Americans' influence in the final report is difficult to gauge. Lindley is said to have been opposed to the idea of locations in general, although he left on record no alternative suggestion.<sup>26</sup> In any event, the recommendations of the Commission were never/....

---

23. Booth, The United States Experience, p 102.

24. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", pp 15-16.

25. Welsh, The Roots of Segregation, p 12.

26. Brookes and Hurwitz, The Native Reserves, p 3.

were never put into effect. In 1848, in an attempt to stem the rising tide of emigration from Natal, the new Governor, Sir Harry Smith, dissolved the Locations Commission and appointed a settler-dominated Lands Commission, which was wholly unsympathetic to the needs of missionaries and Africans alike. The Commission attacked the size of the proposed locations and conducted a bitter campaign against the American missionaries.

The position of the AZM regarding access to land remained insecure until 1854, when George Grey was appointed High Commissioner at the Cape. Grey was more sympathetic towards the missionaries' viewpoint than his predecessors had been and he was anxious to make provision for the African population in Natal. The American missionaries lost no time in laying their case before him and found, to their "delight and disbelief" <sup>27</sup> that not only was he prepared to grant them full title to the stations which they occupied, but he envisaged the creation of large "reserves", which would adjoin each station and provide the missionaries with a "fixed population" to work among. <sup>28</sup> By Ordinance 5 of 1856, Grey's recommendations became law. Between 1856 and 1875 the AZM was granted title to twelve mission stations and appointed trustees over twelve reserves. <sup>29</sup> While other missionary societies were beneficiaries of this scheme, the AZM received by far the largest amount of land. Out of a total area of 149,162 acres granted by 1902, the AZM controlled 95,575 acres/....

---

27. Booth, The United States Experience, p 107.

28. Goodenough, Rev. H.D., "The American Mission Reserves", (paper presented to the Natal Missionary Conference, July 1895), pp 1-3. (K.C. Library).

29. The reserves were administered by a Board of Trustees, made up of the Secretary for Native Affairs, and the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer of the Mission.



acres. 30

For more than thirty years, the AZM missionaries occupied a position of supreme authority in these areas. Civil, as well as religious matters came under their jurisdiction; indeed, much of the time of individual missionaries was devoted to carrying out routine administrative tasks, such as collecting rents or settling conflicting land claims. On the mission stations, the relationship between missionary and convert was defined by reference to a rigid hierarchical structure: "each station became a mission estate, with the missionary at the head. The geographical isolation of the stations from one another underscored this almost feudal sense of a landed estate".<sup>31</sup> Lindley described his position at Inanda in significant terms: "it is well understood by all parties that over this region the Inanda missionary is the Bishop, the Lord Bishop of Natal to the contrary notwithstanding".<sup>32</sup> Ostensibly, the only requirement imposed on Africans who wished to settle on the mission stations was that they renounce traditional religion and adhere to the teachings of Christianity. The missionaries view of Christianity, however, entailed far more than the mere acceptance of a set of beliefs. Buttressed by its position of authority, the AZM launched into a campaign to eradicate all vestiges of the "traditional way of life" from the mission stations.

The religious re-awakening which prompted the formation of the ABCFM did not occur in isolation, but was part of a wider phenomenon, known as the "American Enlightenment". One source of this movement was what has been termed "self-confident Americanism". Dinnerstein and others maintain that  
Americans/....

- 
30. Report of the Natal Lands Commission, Pietermaritzburg, 1902.
31. Dinnerstein, "The American Board Mission", p 79.
32. Quoted in Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", pp 80-81.

to the extent - Mission book  
 → down handwriting →

Americans in the second half of the eighteenth century were convinced that theirs was a superior way of life and that it was their duty to carry the benefits of "American civilization" to less fortunate peoples of the world".<sup>33</sup> "That the missionary was to be a prime agent in this process was an assumption almost universally held".<sup>34</sup> The American missionaries carried with them the idea that they belonged to a superior culture, so they adopted a very negative attitude towards the traditions of the people among whom they worked. The Zulus were classified simply as "heathen". The pioneer missionaries to South Africa were horrified by the evidences of "heathen superstition" which they encountered,<sup>35</sup> and resolved to stamp out all aspects of the traditional social order which did not accord with their view of the teachings of Christianity. Chief among the practices forbidden to those Africans who wished to live on the mission stations was polygamy, which Tyler described as a "gigantic obstacle to the elevation of the Zulus".<sup>36</sup> The missionaries subscribed to the widely-held view that lobola involved the selling of a woman and all members of the AZM churches were expected to renounce this practice. Other traditions which came under severe fire, were the leverite, the drinking of utshwala,<sup>37</sup> and the smoking of insangu.<sup>38</sup>

For the first two decades of the Mission's work in Natal, these issues did not cause an open confrontation between missionaries and converts, although there is evidence to suggest that one explanation for the low number of converts gained during this period is the exacting standards which were imposed/....

- 
- 33. Dinnerstein, "The American Board Mission", pp 10-11.
  - 34. Booth, The United States Experience, p 49.
  - 35. See Booth (ed), Journal of the Rev. George Champion.
  - 36. Tyler, J., Forty Years Among the Zulus, (Cape Town, 1971), (first published 1891), p 117.
  - 37. Beer made from fermented grain.
  - 38. Dagga, or wild hemp.



posed on prospective church members.<sup>39</sup> In the 1850's, a group of Africans expressed the following sentiments to Lewis Grout:

Teacher, white man! We black people do not like the news which you bring us ... you trouble us, you oppose our customs; you induce our children to abandon our practices; you break up the kraals ... you will be the ruin of our tribe .<sup>40</sup>

A large proportion of those individuals who were converted were Africans who had found sanctuary in missionaries' homes after rebelling against traditional customs, and who were therefore likely to adapt more easily to a new way of life.<sup>41</sup> Another factor which explains the lack of conflict during this period is that the pioneer missionaries, although more or less united in their opposition to traditional practices had not as yet agreed on a uniform policy to be adopted in dealing with these matters. Individual missionaries were allowed a great deal of discretion in deciding upon the standards for admittance into the church.

The real rebellion against the missionaries' prohibition of traditional practices began in the 1860's. Dinnerstein suggests that the revolt was stimulated by the publication, in 1865, of portions of the scriptures in the vernacular: "The converts were thus able to read the Bible directly, rather than having it interpreted for them by the missionaries",<sup>42</sup> and they found that many of the customs which the missionaries condemned/....

---

39. Booth, The United States Experience, p111.

40. Quoted in Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 19.

41. Dinnerstein, "The American Board Mission", p 40; For example, Umbalasi, the mission's first convert, was a widow who sought protection under Adams as she did not wish to marry her husband's brother.

42. Dinnerstein, "The American Board Mission", p 167.



condemned received sanction in the scriptures. Relatively few converts, however, had received sufficient education to be able to consult this independent source of reference, and it is more likely that the rebellion was a response to a changed attitude on the part of the missionaries themselves. By the 1860's the second generation of American missionaries had arrived in South Africa. They represented a somewhat different school of thought from the pioneer missionaries and, in particular, they adopted a far more rigid standpoint on the question of traditional practices. In an attempt to clear up the confusion resulting from the absence of any uniform policy, these missionaries set about drawing up a fixed code of conduct, to be adhered to by all church members. The first fruits of their labour appeared in 1867, with the publication of a "binding set of regulations" on ukulobola. Under these regulations, a convert who accepted lobola for his daughter was subject to disciplinary action, and if he refused to abstain from this practice he might be expelled from the church.

The regulations stimulated an immediate reaction from the African converts,<sup>43</sup> and the pioneer missionaries joined them in their protest. The issue split the mission to the extent that it was forced to send a deputation to the American Board, asking for its judgement on the matter. The Board's reply indicates that in opposing traditional customs to the extent that it did, the Mission was not acting in accordance with Board policy. Secretary Nathaniel Clark wrote to the Mission:

The proper work of missionaries ... is to introduce  
the new/....

---

43. ABM A/3/42, The American Zulu Mission Annual, "Historical Sketch of the Mission", 1902, p 6.

the new divine life, not the forms it shall assume ...  
 A morality enforced upon unwilling minds is of little  
 value ... Your work is not to make American but Zulu  
 Christians ... The great thing is to bring men to  
 Christ, not to change their social customs . 44

By the 1870's, the pioneer missionaries had left the  
 field and, as may be seen in the matter of self-support, the  
 missionaries were not averse to ignoring the directives of  
 the Board. At its annual meeting in 1879, the Mission  
 adopted an "ironclad pledge for purity from heathenism", 45  
 known as the Umsinduzi Rules. These rules forbade polygamy  
 outright:

No one living in polygamy shall be received into the  
 fellowship of the churches of the American Board,  
 and no one shall be permitted to continue in the  
 membership of such church who shall enter into poly-  
 gamy after having been received into membership . 46

The practice of lobola was also forbidden, as was the making  
 or drinking of beer and the smoking of insangu.

With the drafting of this code, the missionaries set them-  
 selves up as supreme judges of the African Christians. The  
 converts were given no say in the formulation of the rules.  
 They were presented to the churches for their approval only  
 after they had already been adopted by the Mission, and  
 they met with severe opposition, the Africans being parti-  
 cularly opposed to the polygamy clauses. Finally, however,  
 after/....

- 
44. Quoted in Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission",  
 p 29.
45. ABM A/3/42, "Historical Sketch of the Mission", p 6.
46. ABM A/4/54, "Umsinduzi Rules, adopted at a meeting of  
 the Mission and the churches at Umsunduzi Mission  
 Station, September 1 1879", p 1.

after much persuasion from the missionaries, the churches accepted the Rules. They have remained the code of the Mission up until the present day.<sup>47</sup>

There followed a period of what Briggs and Wing describe as "witchhunts" within the churches.<sup>48</sup> Those who did not conform to the Code were rooted out and either excommunicated or suspended from church membership, only being allowed to return when they had mended their ways. Holbrook described from Mapumulo what must have been a fairly typical scene in the 1880's:

I showed the church ... that they must resolutely take up the work of casting out from the church all those who were evidently fully set in the ways of Satan and had turned their backs on Christ.

There were 23 church members present, and the first vote (which expelled a man for polygamy) was 21 to 0 ... another woman was suspended for beer-drinking, after having solemnly promised to leave it forever ... a man was suspended for selling his daughter in marriage. As his wife participated in the offence, she also was suspended. Among all the above, only one seemed at all repentant. The last three cases show no repentance and will probably call for expulsion before many months .<sup>49</sup>

Holbrook claimed that "all the above action was taken by the church" itself, but it is likely that without the missionary's presence, such harsh action would not have been taken. His final remarks are revealing, "in each case, I first pointed out what treatment seemed to be required/....

- 
47. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 33.  
 48. Briggs, D.R. and Wing, J., The Harvest and the Hope : the story of Congregationalism in South Africa, (Johannesburg, 1970), p 123.  
 49. Holbrook, C., "Letter from the Zulu Mission", in The Missionary Herald, Vol LXXXIII, No. ix., September 1887, p 358. Holbrook was the missionary in charge of the Mapumulo Station.



required".

The missionaries' efforts notwithstanding, "backsliding" continued in the churches throughout the last two decades of the nineteenth century, thereby demonstrating that although the converts had abided by the Rules, they by no means agreed with them. Prospective converts found themselves unable to accept the requirements of the Mission, and the church admission figures were very low throughout the 1880's. Congregations voiced their disapproval of the missionaries' standpoint by substantially reducing their annual monetary contributions.<sup>50</sup> MB

The debate over traditional practices was one of a number of areas in which missionaries and converts came into conflict. Another issue which was to have serious repercussions on the work of the AZM was the question of self-support. From the time of its inception the American Board had placed great stress on the necessity of developing "self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating" churches in its foreign mission fields. The idea of an indigenous pastorate had been present in the early writings of Samuel Hopkins.<sup>51</sup> Rufus Anderson, the first foreign secretary of the Board, was in close contact with Henry Venn, who is credited with being the originator of the formula.<sup>52</sup> In the 1830's, however, the problem was of theoretical rather than practical interest. The formula was discussed and accepted by the Board in Boston, but it had never/...

---

50. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 41.

51. Booth, The United States Experience, p 129.

52. Goodsell, You shall be my Witness, p 31.

had never been tried out in the field.<sup>53</sup> Among the instructions issued to the pioneer missionaries was the command to "raise up native assistants in sufficient numbers for the Mission".<sup>54</sup> For more than twenty years, this challenge was not taken up. During this period the missionaries were concerned with the task of establishing and maintaining mission work in the face of severe disabilities.<sup>5</sup>

By the late 1850's, the position of the AZM had become more stable. The missionaries had gained secure title to land. By 1858, seven churches had been organised and church membership stood at 180.<sup>56</sup> With the setting up of schools on most of the stations, and particularly with the opening of the Amanzimtoti Seminary in 1853,<sup>57</sup> educated Africans were beginning to emerge who could be trained as pastors. Moreover, by 1860 the African Churches were contributing regularly to the support of the Mission. As early as 1849 the 43 members of the three churches then in existence had raised a record sum of fifteen dollars.<sup>58</sup> Eleven years later the congregation at Umvoti paid the entire salary of its preacher/...

- 
53. Sundkler, "Bantu Prophets", p 29.
54. "Instructions of the Prudential Committee to the Rev. Daniel Lindley etc." Boston, November 22 1832 "in Kotze (ed), Letters of the American Missionaries", p 48.
55. See above pp 30-35.
56. Figures taken from Hunt, B.N., "The Amanzimtoti Mission, 1850-1900", (unpublished Honours dissertation, University of Natal, 1970), p 71.
57. Hunt discusses the changing fortunes of the seminary over the years.
58. ABM A/4/58, "The American Board Mission in South Africa : a Sketch of Seventy-Five years", n.n. 1910, p 25.

its preacher, amounting to thirty dollars.<sup>59</sup>

In response to these favourable conditions, and because of a manpower shortage, the AZM sanctioned the organization of the "Native Home and Foreign Missionary Society" (NHFMS) in 1860. This society, which was controlled almost entirely by the African converts, had as its major purpose the licensing of African preachers for work in these areas in which there was no resident missionary.<sup>60</sup> For some time the Mission had employed educated African converts as preachers. These men were normally placed on the outstations<sup>61</sup> or in the more remote districts for which a missionary could not be spared. The NHFMS undertook to collect funds for the support of the preachers. By 1869, out of a total of 12 preachers, three received their entire support from this society.<sup>62</sup>

The NHFMS represented "the earliest church responsibility of the African converts of the AZM."<sup>63</sup> Its successful working indicates that the congregations were willing and able to take upon themselves the support of their own preachers. Given the opportunity, it might have gone on to become the vehicle whereby an African pastorate could have been inaugurated. The missionaries' attitude prevented this from taking place; they regarded the work of the NHFMS as an end in itself. The employment of African preachers was thought/...

---

59. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 26.

60. ABM A/4/58, "The American Board Mission", p 25.

61. The "outstations" were preaching places which were established in the Reserves.

62. Switzer, "The problems of an African Mission", p 24.

63. Ibid.



thought of as a stopgap "until more missionaries came from America". <sup>64</sup>

It would be inaccurate to convey the impression that the AZM missionaries adopted a uniform standpoint on the question of self-support and the creation of an African pastorate. As with the debate over traditional practices, strong differences of opinion emerged over these issues. Pioneer missionary Aldin Grout was so firmly opposed to the ordination of African converts that he refused to allow any members of his congregation to study at Amanzimtoti, lest they aspire to this position. <sup>65</sup> At the other end of the scale, W.C. Wilcox expressed himself unable to continue in the service of the Mission in 1887, and gave as his main reason the failure of the Mission to adopt a concrete plan for self-support. He set forth his ideas in a pamphlet entitled "self-support among the Kaffirs", in which he severely criticized the methods of the AZM. <sup>66</sup> In its representations to the Board, however, the Mission was obliged to adopt a united front, and under these circumstances the conservative element won out. In reply to Anderson's repeated calls for the creation of an African pastorate, the Mission maintained that the Africans "were not yet ready for ordination". <sup>67</sup> The missionaries paid lip-service to the principles of self-support and self-government but "they were thought to apply to more advanced fields elsewhere, and to Natal only some time in the distant future". <sup>68</sup>

This/....

- 
- 64. Dinnerstein, 'The American Board Mission', p 141.
  - 65. Booth, The United States Experience, p 130.
  - 66. A copy of this is to be found in ABC : 15.4, vol. 48. Switzer wrongly states that this document is missing.
  - 67. Booth, The United States Experience, p 131.
  - 68. Dinnerstein, "The American Board Mission", p 141.

This situation changed with the appointment of Dr. Nathaniel Clark to the post of Foreign Secretary to the Board in 1866. Frustrated at the Mission's failure to respond to his plans for an African pastorate, Clark went above the missionaries' heads and in 1869 sent a letter directly to the African Christians, urging them to take upon themselves the support of their own pastors and missionaries.<sup>69</sup> He then ordered the Mission to proceed at once with the ordination of pastors over the churches at seven of the stations. Faced with this challenge, the Mission could do little but back down. In May 1870 Mguzana Mngadi was ordained over the church at Umzumbe. Within two years, five more men had been ordained.<sup>70</sup>

A representative of the Mission later acknowledged that "the American missionaries had delayed too long ... and that it was owing to pressure exerted by the American Board that they had at length taken action in this matter".<sup>71</sup> That the AZM was not seriously committed to the idea of an African pastorate was, however, clearly demonstrated in 1877. In that year Mngadi was dismissed from his post for alleged adultery. Another pastor was suspended for "insubordination" and was never reinstated. Two pastors died and were not replaced. "By 1878 there was only one ordained African left on the field".<sup>72</sup>

The pastors'/. ....

- 
69. ABM A/4/58, "The American Board Mission", p 28.  
 70. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 23.  
 71. Proceedings of the Natal Missionary Conference, 1877, p 11. (K.C. Library).  
 72. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 31.

The pastors' shortcomings seemed to vindicate the missionaries' contention that the time was not yet ripe for Africans to be entrusted with their own spiritual direction. Pixley, in a letter to Judson Smith <sup>73</sup> wrote of the moral lapses of the pastors: "You will understand why we are becoming more and more cautious in ordainign (sic) native men for the work of the ministry". <sup>74</sup> From the 1870's through to the 1880's the Mission suffered from a severe shortage of staff as one by one the pioneer missionaries either died or were forced, through ill-health, to return to America. Even in the face of this situation the AZM steadfastly refused to ordain African pastors, and instead sent a constant stream of appeals to the American Board asking for more recruits. <sup>75</sup> The Board, now under the secretaryship of Judson Smith, remained unyielding; indeed, it has been suggested that Smith deliberately withheld recruits and financial support in order to push the Mission towards ordaining more pastors. <sup>76</sup> In 1888 he wrote to Holbrook:

I see no other way (than) to move toward the idea of a self-supporting and aggressive church among the Zulu believers, and providentially a time seems to have come when we are almost driven to this resolve . <sup>77</sup>

In the same letter he stressed that "no missionary should be a pastor of a native church and no missionary should occupy the place of a pastor". He suggested that the missionaries/....

---

73. Judson Smith was foreign secretary to the Board from 1884.

74. ABM A/3/39, Pixley to Smith, 26 December 1887.

75. See, for example, Bridgman's appeal in The Missionary Herald, Vol. LXXXII, No. ix, September 1886, pp 331-332.

76. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 50.

77. ABM A/2/16, Smith to Holbrook, 21 August 1888, p 5.



sionaries lower their standards for entrance to the pastorate and that pastors might learn "on the job" the responsibilities the position entailed.<sup>78</sup>

The Mission's response to Smith's suggestions was to adopt a policy of "passive resistance".<sup>79</sup> No further ordinations took place, but the AZM did attempt to satisfy the converts' growing need for self-expression and a share in the running of church affairs by creating various outlets and opportunities. From 1869 an annual meeting with the African preachers was held. In 1885 the NHFMS was placed on a more permanent basis with the formation of the "Abaisitupa". This consisted of a committee of six - four Africans and two missionaries - which was to function as the executive organ of the NHFMS.<sup>80</sup> Although the Abaisitupa was to become a powerful force in articulating the grievances of the African Christians,<sup>81</sup> the missionaries' control of the treasury prevented it from developing into a fully independent organization.

For the next decade the problem of the ordination of African pastors was left unsolved. In 1895, the whole matter received fresh emphasis with the Board's announcement to the Mission that the African churches would no longer receive financial assistance from America. For the past few years the Board had suffered from a shortage of funds. In 1890 the Missionary Herald noted a general fall-off in donations from the American Churches and forecast a difficult year ahead/....

---

78. ABM A/2/16, Smith to Kilbon, 9 January 1889, p 3.

79. Booth, The United States Experience, p 130.

80. ABM A/1/8, "Report of the Committee appointed to report on the origin, scope, status and authority of the Abaisitupa", June 1898.

81. The Abaisitupa initially supported Shibe in his quarrel with the Mission.

ahead.<sup>82</sup> The financial situation had not improved by 1895 and it seems that the Board saw this as an opportune moment to once again bring the questions of self-support and self-government out into the open.

For three years, representatives from the foreign missionary societies of the United States and Canada had been meeting in New York "to confer together about the best methods to pursue in our mission work".<sup>83</sup> At the 1894 meeting, a special committee was appointed to deal with the question of self-support. In 1895 the committee presented its report and the result was a circular letter, to be sent to all missions connected with the conference. This letter stated unequivocally that "It is the distinct aim of all our societies to plant a native church, drawing its material support entirely from the native community, which will be ministered to by a native pastorate and be self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating".<sup>84</sup>

In forwarding this letter to the AZM, Smith gave instructions that it was to be translated into Zulu and made available to as many members of the Christian community as possible.<sup>85</sup> In the meantime, the Mission appointed a committee to consider the circular. In its report, this committee "call(ed) attention to the fact that the Mission had often given expression to the principle of self-support, and had, in a variety of ways and by repeated effort sought to inculcate/....

---

82. The Missionary Herald, Vol LXXXVI, No. viii, August 1890, p 305.

83. ABM A/4/53, "Suggestions as to Methods of Self-Support", 1895-1899, p 1.

84. ABM A/4/53, "Suggestions as to Methods", p 2.

85. ABM A/2/17, Smith to Goodenough, 21 May 1895, p 1.

inculcate this principle among the native Christians".<sup>86</sup> The committee wholeheartedly adopted the principle of self-support and recommended that no further financial aid be given to the Zulu churches. On the question of self-government, however, it was far more reticent: "Your committee does not understand by self-support that every church will call and provide for its own pastor". In other words, the Mission was still not prepared to proceed with the ordination of African pastors.

On this occasion, Smith stood firm. He informed the Mission that "if these churches are able to provide the support of their own native pastors and preachers then it is clear that they ought to be led to do this at the earliest practicable date".<sup>87</sup> Smith had issued these kind of orders before, and to no avail. In the end, the impetus for action on the part of the AZM came not from Boston, but from the African converts themselves. The circular was translated into Zulu and five hundred copies were printed on the Mission press. These were distributed at the annual meeting of the converts at Mapumulo. The Africans, to whom the idea of self-support was hardly new, adopted its recommendations enthusiastically. Ransom reported that "the idea of self-support has come ... in an electrical wave; it took the native meeting by storm".<sup>88</sup> Unlike the missionaries, however, the converts' idea of self-support was linked very closely to the concept of self-government:

"The Zulu/....

- 
86. ABM A/1/7, "Report of the Special Committee on Self-Support", 5 July 1895, p 11.
87. ABM A/2/17, Smith to Goodenough, 25 March 1895, p 2.
88. Ransom C., writing in The Missionary Herald, Vol. XCI, No. 11, November 1895, p 462.



"The Zulu Churches interpreted (the letter) to mean not only self-support but self-control, with emphasis on the latter. They seemed to take the letter to be official notification from the Board that the missionaries were no longer needed".<sup>89</sup> At the Mapumulo meeting the converts appointed their own committee to decide on what action should be taken. The missionaries were not consulted on this matter, nor were they invited to sit on the committee.<sup>90</sup>

The Mission acted swiftly to correct what it regarded as a misapprehension on the part of the Africans.<sup>91</sup> A special committee was appointed "to correct the misunderstanding of the self-support circular" and the converts were informed that the action they had taken was unconstitutional. At the same time, the missionaries attempted to appease both the Board and the converts by ordaining four pastors in 1895. This gesture silenced for a while the protests of the Board, but the spirit in which it was made ensured that it would be unacceptable to the churches. The missionaries were prepared to ordain pastors, but refused to allow these men the independence and authority which, under any other circumstances, would have gone with this position. In the same report in which it informed the Board of the ordinations, the Mission noted that: "We do not/....

---

89. ABM A/1/9, Bridgman, F.B., "The Ethiopian Movement and Other Independent Factions Characterized by a National Spirit", 5 June 1903, p 12.

90. ABM A/1/8, "Report of the Committee Appointed to Correct the Misunderstanding of the Self-Support Circular", June 1896, p 1.

91. From a speech by Judson Smith, it appears that, while the Board did not intend to dispense immediately with the services of the missionaries, it did envisage the churches enjoying a large measure of self-control. It is possible, therefore, that the converts' interpretation of the circular was nearer the truth than that of the missionaries. See A/2/17, "Self-Support in Mission Churches", January 1894, p 23.

not mean to say that there is any station which no longer requires supervision. We have not reached that goal yet and may be at a considerable distance from it".<sup>92</sup>

The new pastors were not given charge of their own stations but were placed under the supervision of missionaries. The pastors' dissatisfaction with this situation was illustrated by a series of questions which Sunguza Nyuswa<sup>93</sup> put to the annual meeting of the Mission in 1897. Nyuswa wished to know why it was that he was controlled by Harris<sup>94</sup> when no white missionary was supervised in this way. In answer to the Mission's assertion that they were all workmen of the American Board, which had decided on this order of things, he questioned the right of the Board to legislate for the Zulu churches when it contributed nothing towards their support.<sup>95</sup> The protest against the methods of the Mission was not confined to the pastors. In 1895 the congregation at Umtwalume wrote to the AZM expressing its utter disapproval of Harris and complaining that "he thinks he is the king and does not listen to us".<sup>96</sup> The converts resented the Mission's control of the funds which they had contributed and its failure to inform them how this money was spent. Rumours began to circulate that the missionaries were using the contributions of the churches for their own private needs.<sup>97</sup>

By 1895/....

- 
92. A 746, "Annual Report of the Zulu Mission, 1895-1896", p 4.
93. Nyuswa was ordained over the church at Umtwalume in 1895. He was later to become the leader of the Zulu Congregational Church in Johannesburg.
94. Missionary in charge of Umtwalume.
95. ABM A/1/8, "Sunguza's questions : Annual Meeting, June 1897.
96. ABM A/2/10, "Denomination of Umtwalume" to Goodenough, 25 April 1895, p 2 (translated by M. Bhengu.)
97. ABM A/1/7, "Committee Report on the Native Annual Meeting", 1895, p 2.

By 1895, relations between the missionaries and the converts had reached a crisis-point. Matters were made worse by the hostility which arose between the AZM and the Natal Government, and in particular, by the colonists' attempts, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, to remove from the Mission the control of the Mission reserve lands.

The AZM had always enjoyed a cordial relationship with the imperial authorities in Natal. Through its administration of the bulk of the reserves and by assuming a large measure of responsibility for the education of the Africans in Natal, the Mission relieved the government of the burden of providing for a large proportion of the African population. Speaking at the Jubilee Celebrations of the Mission in 1885, Sir Charles Mitchell<sup>98</sup> conveyed to the missionaries "the hearty sympathy of the government of this colony ... the government were conscious that in the task of governing the natives of the colony the work of the missionaries was a very material assistance".<sup>99</sup> The large majority of the Natal colonists<sup>100</sup>, however, did not share this viewpoint. The colonists were opposed to missionary work in general. Taylor observed that "the new comer (to Natal)/....

---

98. Administrator of Natal.

99. Quoted in The Missionary Herald, Vol. LXXXII, No. iv, April 1886, pp 132-133.

100. It is as impossible to generalize about "the colonists" as it is to generalize about "the missionaries" or "the Africans". Great differences of opinion existed between, for example, the stock farmers of the interior and the inhabitants of Durban. Because of their position as a small white population in the midst of a large African population, however, the colonists adopted an almost uniformly-conservative stand on "native policy".



(to Natal) must never manifest any interest in the natives, except to abuse them, and he will not need a second warning against bringing up the subject of missionaries. Should he do so at a reputable town house, he will find his remarks received in a chilling silence, the host adroitly changing the conversation".<sup>101</sup>

This attitude toward Mission work was tied up with the two paramount issues of Natal politics - land and labour. Throughout the nineteenth century the colonists complained of a shortage of these vital commodities. Recent research has shown that in both cases it was an artificial shortage. Natal did not attract as large a number of settlers as did the other colonies in South Africa and had it not been for the fact that thousands of acres were tied up in the hands of speculators, there would have been sufficient land for all.<sup>102</sup> De Kiewiet maintains that had labour been utilized more efficiently, there would have been no need to increase the number of Africans in employment.<sup>103</sup> The colonists either could not, or did not desire to see things in this light. In their view the shortage of land and labour were attributable to the existence of the reserves, which not only deprived the white settlers of large portions of choice land, but provided a protected environment for Africans who did not wish to enter the labour market. It was claimed that Africans who lived on the reserves and who were educated/....

101. ABM A/1/9, Taylor, J.D., "The Attitude of Government and Colonists towards Missionary Work Among the Natives" 17 July 1903, p 1.

102. The best treatment of land speculation in Natal is Slater, H., "Land, Labour and Capital in Natal: The Natal Land and Colonization Company, 1860-1948", Journal of African History, Vol XVI, No. II, 1975. See also Marks, S., Reluctant Rebellion : The 1906-8 Disturbances in Natal, (Oxford, 1970), pp 120-121.

103. De Kiewiet, A History of South Africa, p 83.

were educated by the missionaries were "spoilt" as labourers: "It was the custom to divide the natives into the kraal kaffirs and the makholwa <sup>104</sup> kaffirs, and it was said that the kaffirs who had not been taught anything made a capital servant, and that the Christian kaffir was spoilt". <sup>105</sup>

The AZM was particularly resented by the colonists because it controlled most of the Reserves. The colonists strongly opposed the recommendations of the 1846 Locations Commission and singled out the American missionaries as their prime target for attack. In a platform and newspaper campaign Adams and his colleagues were accused of plotting to undermine the security of the colony and of attempting to set up a "native republic". <sup>106</sup> For their part, the missionaries found little with which to identify in the colonist standpoint. Although they formed friendships and engaged in social activity in colonial society <sup>107</sup> their interests were too different from those of the colonists for such activities to form the basis for united action. In the instances where they did share a common viewpoint, they usually did so for very different reasons. The controversy over traditional practices is a case in point. In opposition to Shepstone's policy of retaining traditional marriage customs, in the hope that they would ultimately die a natural death, the colonists maintained that these customs encouraged laziness in African males and contributed towards the shortage of labour. The missionaries opposed these customs on the grounds that they were contrary to Christian teachings. <sup>108</sup>

All the/....

---

104. Literally, "believer".

105. Natal Mercury, 17 June 1897, p 9.

106. Booth, The United States Experience, p 105.

107. Dinnerstein, "The American Board Mission", p 195.

108. Welsh, The Roots of Segregation, pp 88-91.

All the while Britain retained control over the affairs of Natal, the missionaries were assured of a sympathetic hearing. As early as 1874, however, the colonists had been pushing for self-government and in the 1880's the campaign mounted in intensity. Shula Marks maintains that the major objective in the agitation for responsible government was "to get control of the natives into the hands of the colonists".<sup>109</sup> With the granting of responsible government to the colony in 1893 this goal was achieved. Theoretically the Governor retained responsibility for the welfare of the African population, but, "in the event, no Governor of Natal ever exercised these powers".<sup>110</sup> For all practical purposes the colonists now became the government and they immediately launched into a campaign to transfer the trusteeship of the reserves from the missionary societies into the hands of the government.

The Natal Government, under pressure from the colonists, had appointed a Commission in 1886 to consider "the extent to which lands granted in reserve for mission purposes have been utilized for the objects for which such grants were originally made".<sup>111</sup> The Commission had earmarked one of the AZM reserves as being insufficiently worked and a bill had been passed to enable the Governor to resume control of this land. The Mission was aware that this was just the beginning of a campaign, the ultimate aim of which was to divest it of the control of all its land; consequently, it strenuously resisted this decision. The bill was finally defeated through the intervention of the imperial/....

---

109. Marks, Reluctant Rebellion, p 9.

110. Ibid.

111. Cd. Number 1307-100-4 November, 1886.



perial government.<sup>112</sup> With the advent of responsible government, the AZM feared that another attempt would be made. In its annual report to the Board in 1895 the Mission observed, "One cloud is the possibility that the Mission Reserve lands may be thrown open to white settlement ... while Natal remained a crown colony the rights of the natives were protected. Under the present Responsible Government their continuance on these lands is not as sure".<sup>113</sup>

The missionaries' fears were soon realized. That same year the government introduced a bill "to regulate the use of Mission Reserves".<sup>114</sup> The bill envisaged important changes in the administration of the reserves. The Secretary for Native Affairs was to cease to be a member of the trust board and the Natal Native Trust<sup>115</sup> was to replace the missionaries as Trustees.

The Mission's response to this situation was an anomalous one. On the one hand, it welcomed the proposed government takeover of the reserves. Over the years the missionaries had come to realize that their position as administrators of the reserves was an onerous one, especially as they were not granted proper authority to deal with civil matters in these areas. They objected strongly, however, to the proposal that the Natal Native Trust assume the trusteeship of

the Reserves/....

- 
112. See Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", pp 103-105.
113. A 746, Dorward to Smith, 26 June 1895.
114. CB No. 18, 1895. A copy of this is in A 748.
115. The Natal Native Trust was created in 1864 to act as a trust board for land set aside for African occupation. See Welsh, The Roots of Segregation, pp 39-40.

the Reserves as they felt that this unjustly excluded them from any say in the running of the areas.<sup>116</sup>

The representations of the missionaries as a society and as part of the Natal Missionary Conference delegation succeeded in delaying the implementation of the Mission Reserves Act until 1903. In the intervening years the AZM had managed to modify several of the clauses to which it objected,<sup>117</sup> and the bill as finally passed represented a balanced compromise between the interests of the Mission and those of the Natal government.<sup>118</sup>

Throughout the negotiations the African converts, to whom the trusteeship of the reserves was a crucial issue, had not been consulted. The converts reacted adversely to the 1895 bill and did their best, by means of petitions and letters, to persuade the missionaries to stand firm in their opposition to the government. An African writing to Goodenough in 1899 noted that should the Mission give up the reserves, it would be leading the converts "into the mouth of a lion, the government".<sup>119</sup> The members of the deputation from the American Board which visited Natal in 1903 were inundated with petitions on this subject.<sup>120</sup> The final passing of the bill caused/....

---

116. See Kilbon, C.W., "The Mission Reserves Bill", (paper presented to the Natal Missionary Conference, 1895), (K.C. Library).

117. The Mission's major objection to the bill was that it would be deprived of the revenue which it received from the reserves. The 1903 bill laid down that half the revenue was to be retained by the AZM.

118. For details, see Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", pp 150-191.

119. ABM A/2/12, Langa M. Ngcobo to Goodenough, 24 January 1899

120. ABM A/4/51, "Report of the Deputation sent by the American Board to its Missions in South Eastern Africa in 1903", pp 7-14. The converts' main reason for opposing the bill was that it removed for good their chances of obtaining freehold tenure on reserve land.

caused lasting damage to relations between the Mission and its converts: "The tenants never forgot what they regarded as a breach of faith on the part of the Mission".<sup>121</sup> The AZM's influence on the reserves was substantially reduced: "The influence of the church began to decline in the Mission Reserves and the religious element became almost nil".<sup>122</sup> The affair is still remembered with bitterness by present-day members of the Zulu Churches.

The situation in which the African converts of the AZM found themselves in the 1890's called for some kind of action. Their position arose out of the actions of both the AZM and the Natal government. The Mission had aroused dissatisfaction by its failure to implement the principle of self-government and by its attempts to purge the African converts of all vestiges of the "traditional way of life". The Government's attempts to deny the converts security of tenure on the Mission Reserve lands served only to increase this dissatisfaction. At first sight, the avenues open to the converts appear to have been closed on all sides; their protests against the Mission had been received in stony silence and no political organizations existed through which they could express their grievances against the government.<sup>123</sup> The majority of the converts either accepted their position and decided to remain silent for fear of losing what little privilege they did possess, or resolved, like John Dube,<sup>124</sup> to work for change within the existing structures. A small group of Africans, however/....

---

121. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission, p 193.

122. Inanda (unclassified), "Address delivered by G.G. Nxaba at the Mission Council Conference held at Adams Mission Station, 4 July 1953", p 1.

123. Even had political protest been possible it is likely that it would have been quickly put down.

124. For Dube, see Marks, S., "The Ambiguities of Dependence: John L. Dube of Natal", Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1975.



however, came to the conclusion that their position was untenable and that some kind of decisive action was necessary. Given their background, it was natural that they should choose to work through the church for change. The peculiar circumstances prevailing at the Table Mountain Mission Station ensured that it would be the centre of this protest movement.

### CHAPTER III. CONFLICT AND SECESSION : THE FORMATION OF THE ZCC

The Table Mountain Mission Station, situated forty miles north-west of Durban in Pietermaritzburg County, was founded by American missionary, Samuel D. Marsh in 1848. Shortly thereafter, Marsh was forced to abandon the station owing to ill health, and from 1850 it was administered by Reverend Jacob Döhne, formerly of the Berlin Missionary Society.<sup>1</sup> In 1860 Döhne left the AZM to rejoin his parent society and from that date until 1896 Table Mountain was without the services of a resident white missionary. The Mission, which was beset by a perennial shortage of staff throughout the nineteenth century, found it impossible to spare a missionary for a station which was not only isolated from the other AZM centres,<sup>2</sup> but as late as the 1880's was barely accessible by wagon.<sup>3</sup> The population at Table Mountain had proved unreceptive to the message of the Gospel<sup>4</sup> and it seems that the only reason the AZM retained control over the station/.....

- 
1. Döhne was a "curious member of the Mission." He became the only non-American member of the AZM after quarrelling with his own society. The AZM soon regretted its decision as Döhne ill-treated the Africans at Table Mountain. He is best-known for producing the first complete Zulu dictionary. For more details see de Kock, W., Dictionary of South African Biography, (Pretoria, 1968) pp 247-248; Dinnerstein, "The American Board Mission," p 201; file on Döhne in the South African Missionary Museum, King Williamstown.
  2. Most of the AZM stations were on, or near, the coast.
  3. ABM A/3/49, Rood to H.C. Shepstone 4 January 1887.
  4. ABM A/3/41, "Report for the Table Mountain Mission Station", (n.d.), but appears to have been written in Döhne's time.

station was the revenue it received from the sale of firewood and timber from the area. <sup>5</sup>

In 1870 the non-occupancy of the Table Mountain Station came to the notice of the Natal Government, which sent a letter to the Mission inquiring about its future plans for the station. In reply, the AZM offered to waive all claims to the station and to return the land it occupied to the government. <sup>6</sup> This offer was never taken up, however, and in 1875 the title deed to the Table Mountain Mission Reserve, amounting to 5,623 acres, was granted to the Mission. <sup>7</sup> Two years earlier an African preacher, Daniel Njaleki, had been appointed by the AZM to take charge of the station. Njaleki began the construction of a church and by 1877 it had a membership of twenty-four. <sup>8</sup> A school was started and an African school teacher employed. Members of the Mission made periodic visits to the station to conduct missionary work and to admit new members into the church. <sup>9</sup>

In the early 1880's there emerged at Table Mountain what has been described as the "first separatist church movement within the AZM," <sup>10</sup> when Njaleki and most of his congregation left the station and established an independent settlement/.....

- 
5. Firewood was cut from the reserve under a license of 16 shillings a load and the money received was paid into the Board of Trustees.
  6. ABM A/1/1, Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the AZM, May 1870, p 73; S.N.A. 1/1/20 R226/1870, Rood to S.N.A., 18 May 1870.
  7. A copy of this is in S.C. 1/16/38, 1898. (Pietermaritzburg Archives).
  8. Figures taken from Dinnerstein "The American Board Mission", p 201.
  9. ABM A/3/49, Rood to Shepstone, 9 January 1887.
  10. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", 126 n.86.



settlement in Zululand. This action was motivated largely by economic grievances. For some time the Mission had been receiving complaints from the Africans at Table Mountain because white farmers from the surrounding districts were using the Mission Reserve land as grazing-ground for their cattle during the winter months. These cattle were not properly controlled and a number of African farmers had had their crops destroyed. The Africans also accused the white farmers of spreading lung-sickness among their own cattle.<sup>11</sup> As the trustees of the reserve, the missionaries were duty-bound to investigate these complaints; but they took little or no action in this matter. From 1880 to 1882 the Africans' problems were highlighted when the Table Mountain area experienced severe drought. Many of the converts living on the station suffered crop-failure. Since the AZM was not prepared to offer them assistance they decided to settle elsewhere.

Njaleki does not appear to have wanted to set up an African church independent of Mission control. To describe the migration which he led as a "separatist church movement" is therefore somewhat inaccurate.<sup>12</sup> Rood<sup>13</sup> later recalled that the preacher "hop(ed) that our mission might consent to still regard him as belonging to us and would aid in his support."<sup>14</sup> Finding that the AZM was not prepared to do this, Njaleki returned to Table Mountain in 1887 and began work afresh. Within six months there were ten Christian families living on the station.<sup>15</sup>

In 1886/...

11. Report of the Native Mission Reserves Commission, No. 1307, -100 - 4, November, 1886, p 6.
12. Nonetheless, this earlier movement is important because it contributed towards the growth of the "independent spirit" at Table Mountain which was to be crucial to the emergence of the Z.C.C.
13. Chairman of the AZM, 1887.
14. ABM A/3/49, Rood to Shepstone, 4 January 1887.
15. ABM A/3/49, Pixley to Judson Smith, 31 August 1887.

In 1886 the Mission Reserves Commission began its task of investigating the use of reserve land by missionary societies in Natal. The members of this commission visited Table Mountain while Njaleki was still in Zululand, with the result that they found little evidence of missionary work being conducted there. The buildings which had been constructed on the station had fallen into decay and there were only nine houses belonging to Christian families on this land. The Commission found that £2 088 had been received by the Mission from the sale of firewood from the reserve, which was now almost completely denuded of its natural resources, and that only £25 of this money had been spent on the station itself. In its opinion, the Table Mountain Reserve "was not being utilized for the purposes for which it was granted" <sup>16</sup> and it recommended that the land be reclaimed by the government. In December 1886, the Secretary for Native Affairs (SNA) informed the AZM that the government intended to annex Table Mountain. <sup>17</sup>

In the Mission's opinion, the Commission had provided a false impression of affairs at Table Mountain, particularly with regard to the financial situation. The missionaries claimed that they had spent a considerable sum of money in maintaining mission work at the station; far more, in fact, than they had received in revenue. <sup>18</sup> Nonetheless, they were obliged to concede that "all that might have been expected has not been done and is not being accomplished on the ... Reserve." <sup>19</sup> On the advice of the Board, the AZM proposed/....

- 
16. Report of the Native Mission Reserves Commission, 1886.
  17. ABM A/2/22, Shepstone to Pixley, 6 December 1886.
  18. ABM A/3/49, Wilder, G.A., "Reasons for not complying with his Excellency's communication of 6 December 1886," 1887. Most of the money that the Mission had spent had gone into maintaining Döhne at the station for ten years.
  19. Ibid.

proposed to the government that the station be exchanged for an additional grant of land at one of its other stations.<sup>20</sup> This was never put into effect because in the ensuing months the missionaries began to entertain suspicions about the government's real intention in reclaiming the Reserve. As Pixley expressed it: "We fear that if we yield now in this case and give back this reserve to the crown we should open a door that we cannot shut and give a chance to land-coveting colonists who wish to push the natives to the wall."<sup>21</sup> The Mission now launched into a determined campaign to retain Table Mountain. Plans were hastily drawn up for the erection of buildings on the station; the missionaries themselves contributing towards the expense involved.<sup>22</sup> The Board used its influence in London to bring the matter to the attention of the imperial authorities, who ultimately vetoed the proposed annexation.<sup>23</sup>

The congregation at Table Mountain were not unaware that the government intended to annex the Reserve, and followed with anxious interest the debate between the Mission and the government. When Pixley visited the station in 1887, he was besieged by questions on this issue.<sup>24</sup> Even though they had suffered neglect at the hands of the AZM the Africans on the station were eager to remain under its control, and in the late 1880's they took active steps to re-establish missionary work in the area. In one year the members of the church raised £10 towards the construction of a school-house and a chapel.<sup>25</sup> In 1888 Njaleki, whose health was failing, left/....

---

20. ABM A/2/16, Smith to Pixley, 1 June 1887.

21. ABM A/3/39, Pixley to Smith, 4 April 1887.

22. ABM A/3/39, Pixley to Smith, 31 August 1887.

23. For details, see Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission," pp 103-105.

24. ABM A/3/39, Pixley to Smith, 31 August 1887. Pixley was appointed missionary-supervisor over the station.

25. This was a large sum of money, considering that there were only 10 families living on the station.



left Table Mountain and the church applied to the Mission for a replacement. From mission reports during the 1890's it appears that Usimungu Shibe,<sup>26</sup> who took up the position, was personally selected by the congregation and subsequently approved by the Mission.<sup>27</sup> The appointment of a permanent preacher marked a turning-point in the history of the station. Within five years Shibe, who by all accounts was an extremely eloquent preacher, was attracting an average congregation of eighty each Sunday,<sup>28</sup> and was receiving a large measure of his support from the people themselves.

In the eyes of the missionaries, the problems at Table Mountain had been satisfactorily overcome, and they were content to leave the station in Shibe's hands. The Natal government, however, was determined that if the AZM was to retain control over the station, it had to supply a resident white missionary to take charge of it.<sup>29</sup> It was under/.....

- 
26. Usimungu Bafazini Shibe was born at Franklin, 100 miles South West of Durban, in about 1826. He was converted to Christianity by being employed by AZM Missionary, Bridgman, as a bricklayer and road-maker. He moved to Umzumbe Mission Station, where he attended school. In the 1870's he was selected to study at Adams College, where he remained for seven years. He then returned to Umzumbe, where he soon established himself as a leader in the small Christian community. He played a prominent role in the temperance crusade and religious revival which swept the Mission in the late 1870's. Information from Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 384, and Interviews with Mrs. Shibe, 27 March 1978 and 15 April 1978.
27. He was one of the preachers who was supported by the N.H.F.M.S. See A747, "Report of the 55th Annual Meeting of the AZM," 25 June 1890.
28. ABM A/3/48, Annual Tabular Views for the Table Mountain Mission station for the years ending 1888-1895.
29. A747, Bunker, F.R., "General Letter of the AZM", June 1898.

under these circumstances that the Mission entered into negotiations with the Natal Congregational Union NCU, a colonial church with its headquarters in Pietermaritzburg. Many years before, the American missionaries had established close contacts with this body, whose doctrinal beliefs were akin to their own. The AZM hoped that ultimately the NCU might be persuaded to undertake missionary work among the Africans in Natal.<sup>30</sup> Since the Mission could not see its way to providing a missionary for Table Mountain, it proposed that the NCU take over the station and use it as a base from which to launch a missionary project. After extended negotiations, it was agreed that the NCU control Table Mountain for a trial period of ten years, after which the whole matter would be reviewed. From the conditions attached to the agreement it is clear that at this stage the AZM wished to retain a substantial degree of control over the station. The NCU was to "make a report to the Mission annually, and to accept our general plans and rules for mission work."<sup>31</sup> The church at Table Mountain was to continue to make an annual contribution to the Abai-situpa.

In 1896, G.J. Pugh, the former treasurer of the NCU, took up his position as missionary-in-charge of Table Mountain. Although the church members had not been consulted about the takeover, they accepted him and his wife in good faith and willingly set about building them a house. Church and school attendance continued to be good and Pugh expressed optimism over the prospects of the station.<sup>32</sup> The concord between/....

---

30. A 751, Pixley to Smith; (no date), 1898.

31. ABM A/1/7, "Report of the Semi-Annual Meeting of the AZM," February 1893.

32. ABM A/3/46, "General Letter of the AZM," read at the annual meeting June 1896.

between missionary and converts was shattered, however, when Pugh put a request to the AZM asking for Shibe's removal from Table Mountain.

On Pugh's arrival, Shibe, who had been suffering from ill-health, applied for four months leave of absence. On being granted permission by the Abaisitupa, he went to Lovedale institution in the Cape Colony to study and recuperate. <sup>33</sup> Pugh's acquaintance with the preacher must therefore have been brief; yet it was sufficient for him to decide that they could not work together. The Mission, which had assumed that Shibe would stay on at Table Mountain, was unhappy and perplexed by the turn which events had taken, particularly since Pugh offered no reasons for his decision. To the AZM Shibe was a trusted and able preacher, whose work had been commended by every missionary who had visited the station. <sup>34</sup> Kilbon expressed the general opinion of the Mission when he wrote:

We feel in some measure ... that principles of justice have not been respected ... We ourselves need more light on the grounds of the disunion in order to form and express an unequivocal judgment ... If Mr. Pugh were one of our own missionaries we should feel like having him state to us why the concord that existed when he was stationed at a given place was broken. <sup>35</sup>

Thinking that Pugh's action might be based on a misunderstanding of the principles of the AZM, the Mission appointed a special committee to "explain to the Missionary committee of the Congregational Union the relation which exists between the members of the Mission and the native pastors and churches under them." The extent of the missionaries' support/....

- 
33. ABM A/1/8, "Report of the Native Agency Committee" Annual Meeting, 1896.  
 34. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 384.  
 35. ABM A/2/29, Kilbon to Fernie, 7 September 1897.



support for Shibe may be measured by a resolution passed at the same meeting, agreeing that if the church at Table Mountain wished to have him ordained as their pastor, this should be done.<sup>36</sup>

The Abaisitupa reacted in a very similar manner to Pugh's request. At its annual meeting in 1896 it expressed surprise that a preacher "(who) has given great satisfaction to the church and the people at Table Mountain should be removed from his post."<sup>37</sup> Neither the protests of the Abaisitupa nor the action of the Mission were to prove effective, however, because both were rendered powerless by the agreement which the AZM had contracted with the NCU: "The NCU had become the rider and the Mission the horse in directing Table Mountain policy."<sup>38</sup> Pugh refused to revoke his decision and in the end the Mission and the Abaisitupa reluctantly agreed that Shibe should be transferred to the Noodsburg.<sup>39</sup>

On his way back to Table Mountain from Lovedale, Shibe was met in Durban by a delegation consisting of Pixley and two African pastors and told that he was not to return to the station. On inquiring why this decision had been taken he was merely informed that this was what Pugh wanted.<sup>40</sup> Unlike the missionaries, Shibe was unable to accept what to him appeared to be an unfair and arbitrary action. He returned/....

- 
- 36. ABM A/1/8, "Report of the Committee on Table Mountain," 1896.
  - 37. ABM A/1/7, "Report of the Native Agency Committee," Annual Meeting, 1896.
  - 38. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission," p 388.
  - 39. Another of the AZM stations, quite close to Table Mountain.
  - 40. ABM A/2/10, Shibe to Pixley, 25 July 1898. (translated by M. Bhengu).

returned to Table Mountain and began to hold church services at which he openly criticized Pugh. More than half of the converts joined him in his opposition to the missionary.<sup>41</sup> By the beginning of 1897 the congregation at Table Mountain had split into two hostile camps.

Relations between the AZM and its converts were already at breaking-point over the matter of self-support; and the Table Mountain controversy, which touched very closely on this issue, had repercussions throughout the Mission. A large proportion of the converts came out openly in support of Shibe, and joined the dissident party at Table Mountain in calling for his ordination.<sup>42</sup> From the missionaries' point of view, by far the most serious aspect of the situation was the amount of support which Shibe received from the African pastors.<sup>43</sup> At the pastors' conference in June 1897 the pastors cited the self-support circular from America as justification for their demand that the congregation at Table Mountain be allowed to select its own minister. The missionaries were condemned for treating the pastors as subordinates and for not consulting them over the matter. Pugh came under a great deal of fire. It was claimed that, "It is not the spirit of God that sends Usimungu to the Noodsburg ... it was Mr. Pugh's will."<sup>44</sup>

In common/...

- 
- 41. ABM A/2/29, Searle to Goodenough, 1 April 1897.
  - 42. ABM A/2/29, Kilbon to Pixley, 31 July 1897.
  - 43. ABM A/1/9, Bridgman, F.B., "The Ethiopian Movement and other Independent Factions Characterized by a National Spirit", 5 July 1903, p 12.
  - 44. ABM A/4/54, "Minutes of the Pastors' Conference", 22 June 1897. (translated by M. Bhengu).

In common with Shibe himself, the pastors wished to know the reasons for the preacher's removal. The missionaries could not provide an answer to this question because they themselves had not yet been informed of the charges which Pugh was levelling against Shibe. Only in September 1897, did Pugh finally release this information and he did so at a meeting which Shibe, the members of the Table Mountain Church and the African pastors were excluded from attending.

By this time, the conflict between the two parties at Table Mountain had become so acute that the NCU had written to the Board of Trustees of the American Mission Reserves requesting Shibe's removal from the Reserve.<sup>45</sup> The Trustees were reluctant to take this action without being in possession of all the facts and resolved to wait until they could meet in conference with the NCU. At this meeting, Pugh put forward four reasons for his initial decision to dispense with Shibe's services. First, he maintained that Shibe had only been given permission to go to Umzumbe for his leave, whereas he had gone to Lovedale and had stayed away longer than the stipulated time. Second, Shibe had unlawfully grazed cattle on the reserve, and had been doing so for profit. Third, he had employed school-children to make bricks for him after being given money by the Mission to purchase them; fourth, he had employed the school-children to the detriment of their studies and had treated the teacher as his personal servant.<sup>46</sup>

The first/....

- 
45. ABM A/2/29, Searle to Goodenough, 1 April 1897.  
 46. ABM A/2/29, "Report of Table Mountain Matters dealt with in Congregational Union Meeting", Durban, 15-16 September 1897, p 2.



The first charge did not carry much weight with the AZM, which had been fully aware that Shibe was at Lovedale and had raised no objections to his going.<sup>47</sup> From letters written by Shibe to Pixley during his stay at Lovedale it appears that the preacher was extremely ill, and under these circumstances the Mission could hardly carp at his staying away longer than had been expected.<sup>48</sup> The other four charges, however, carried grave implications, and the American missionaries were astonished that Pugh could have seen fit to suppress this information for so long. They were further disturbed that Pugh clearly believed Shibe to be unsuitable as a preacher, and yet was not averse to the Mission continuing to employ him in this capacity at another station.<sup>49</sup> The missionaries had expected no positive results from their meeting with the NCU. Indeed, they resented being pushed into active participation in the dispute when at all costs they wished to remain neutral.<sup>50</sup> In fact, this position was untenable because as trustees of the Table Mountain Reserve the AZM was the only body which had the power to evict Shibe. For this reason the NCU required that the missionaries give their approval to a series of resolutions which in effect recognized Pugh as the sole authority at Table Mountain and stated that unless Shibe was prepared to accept the dictates of the Missionary, he was to leave the reserve.<sup>51</sup>

The AZM/....

- 
47. The Mission clearly knew that Shibe was at Lovedale. See ABM A/1/8, "Report of the Committee on Table Mountain", 1896.
48. ABM A/2/10, Shibe to Pixley, 10 June 1896 and 27 April 1896. (translated by M. Bhengu).
49. ABM A/2/29, Kilbon to Fernie, 27 September 1897.
50. ABM A/2/29, Kilbon to Fernie, 7 September 1897.
51. ABM A/2/29, "Report of Table Mountain Matters dealt with," p 4.

The AZM had handed over control of Table Mountain to the NCU and it was obliged to agree to the resolutions reaffirming that control. It felt constrained to protest, however, that "these difficulties ought to have been adjusted in their earlier, incipient stages" and that "injustice had been done Simungu."<sup>52</sup> The missionaries were acutely aware that they would be accused by the converts of condemning Shibe unjustly. Consequently, they vigorously opposed the NCU's proposal that one of their number be appointed to a committee to inform the congregation at Table Mountain of the decisions taken at the meeting. Kilbon later wrote,

It was most important that the C.U. should appear to the Table Mountain natives as a body distinct from the American mission ... we want to be able to tell them that the C.U. controls Table Mountain and not the American Mission, and they will naturally say to themselves, if not to us, - 'How can that be when the Americans go there to lay down the laws?'<sup>53</sup>

The Mission's feelings notwithstanding, Pixley was appointed to the committee. In October, 1897 he visited Table Mountain and delivered a "definite message" to Shibe and his followers. He was given a very hostile reception and informed that if Pugh carried out his threat of destroying the building in which Shibe had been holding "counter" services, "there would be bloodshed."<sup>54</sup> As the missionaries had foreseen, Shibe refused to submit to Pugh's authority and, since the Mission appeared to support the NCU, he now prepared to make an open break with the AZM.

Switzer/....

- 
52. ABM A/2/29, "Report of Table Mountain Matters," pp 4-5.  
 53. ABM A/2/29, Kilbon to Fernie, 27 September 1897.  
 54. ABM A/2/29, Rugh to Goodenough, 4 October 1897.

Switzer suggests that Shibe's decision to set up his own church, independent of Mission control, was the final response of a man who had found every other avenue closed to him.<sup>55</sup> In November 1897, two prominent members of the Table Mountain congregation wrote to Judson Smith on Shibe's behalf, complaining about the way in which "the missionaries of the Board have dealt with matters at Table Mountain, and especially with Smungu (sic) Shibe,"<sup>56</sup> and requested that the Board arbitrate in this matter. It is likely that had the Board intervened at this stage, Shibe's final separation from the AZM could have been averted. As it was, Smith, who knew very little about the dispute, hesitated to interfere in the internal affairs of the Mission and replied, via Pixley, that he could not pass judgement<sup>57</sup>: "For the separatists, this was the final straw. If the American Board, so responsible for the present predicament, refused to intervene, they saw no alternative but a complete withdrawal from the Mission."<sup>58</sup> In February 1898, Shibe travelled to Johannesburg, where, in company with Fokoti Makanya of the Johannesburg Church, he was ordained pastor of the Zulu Congregational Church (ZCC).

In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, thousands of Natal Africans were driven, through economic necessity, to seek employment on the newly-discovered gold-mines of the Witwatersrand. Among these migrants were numerous  
AZM converts/...

- 
55. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission," p389.  
 56. A 748, "Committee of Table Mountain" (Samuel Mzolo and Elijah Zondi) to Smith, 10 November 1897.  
 57. ABM A/2/17, Smith to Pixley, 14 December 1897.  
 58. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 389.



AZM converts, who were finding it increasingly difficult to eke out an existence on the overcrowded Mission Reserves. <sup>59</sup>

In Johannesburg, the converts found themselves in an alien and often hostile environment, where no provision was made for their religious needs. <sup>60</sup> In the late 1880's they founded their own church and engaged the services of a white minister, Harper Riley. <sup>61</sup> From the outset the church was entirely self-sufficient, Riley's salary and all other expenses being provided for out of monthly contributions by church members. An evening-school was started and several preaching-places were established in the vicinity of Johannesburg. By 1892 the church could boast a membership of over two hundred. <sup>62</sup>

The partnership/...

- 
59. Many factors contributed towards the upsurge in labour migration from Natal in the 1880's and 1890's. Taxes and duties imposed by the Natal government forced Africans to work for at least part of the year in order to raise the money to pay these dues. Migrancy was also related to the gradual dispossession of land which Africans in Natal suffered. Locusts and famine, culminating in the rinderpest outbreaks in 1897, also played their part. According to the Annual Letter of the Mission in 1897, 300 000 Africans had by that time left Natal to work on the mines and a large proportion of these were AZM converts. See A 748 "General Letter of the AZM," 15 June 1897. For overcrowding on the mission reserves see Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 95.
60. For a time the converts worshipped at the Presbyterian Mission in Johannesburg, but they became dissatisfied because the services were not conducted in Zulu.
61. Riley had formerly served as a Congregational Minister in the Cape Colony and was at this time engaged in business in Johannesburg. See ABM A/1/7, "Report of the Committee on Mission Work Among the Zulus in Johannesburg," presented to the Annual Meeting of the AZM, July 1892.
62. Ibid.

The partnership between Riley and the Zulu church proved to be an unhappy one. Barely a year after his appointment the minister was accused of mishandling church funds and in 1892 he vacated his post.<sup>63</sup> The congregation now appealed to the AZM for assistance in acquiring a site for the erection of a chapel and requested that the Mission appoint an African pastor to take charge of the work.

The AZM had considered with growing interest the possibilities of undertaking mission work in Johannesburg and it soon became convinced that it was duty-bound to respond favourably to these requests. As Goodenough put it, "Our mission has a special work in looking after the many natives from our own stations who go to Johannesburg and are there exposed to many temptations ... Apart from this work, there is a grand opportunity to get hold of heathen boys and make them light-bearers to their friends in darkness."<sup>64</sup> At its annual meeting in 1893 the Mission decided to send Benjamin Hawes to Johannesburg.<sup>65</sup> In the meantime, Reverend H.D. Goodenough was despatched to Johannesburg to purchase a site and to arrange for the construction of a chapel. Since there was no prospect of the AZM receiving an additional grant from the American Board,<sup>66</sup> it was envisaged that the project would be financed by the converts themselves. In June 1894, Goodenough reported that he had bought a site at New Doorn-

fontein/....

---

63. For details, see ABM B/1/70, Goodenough to Kilbon, 25 September 1893 and 29 September 1893.

64. ABM A/3/41, Goodenough, H.D., "Report of the Johannesburg Mission," presented to the Annual Meeting of the AZM, June 1894.

65. Hawes had been ordained in 1872 after Clark had ordered the AZM to proceed with the ordination of pastors.

66. The Board was at this time experiencing severe financial difficulties.

fontein <sup>67</sup> and that a chapel and lean-to had been erected, at a total cost of £300. Nearly half of this amount had already been raised by the congregation and the missionary was confident that, given time, the church could become completely self-supporting. <sup>68</sup>

During his stay in Johannesburg, Goodenough had become convinced of the necessity of appointing a white missionary over the church. In a letter to Kilbon he maintained that "(a white missionary) is more needed here than at any of the other stations because of the distance from any of our stations, because in this country a black man has no standing and because the field is so large that a white missionary is needed to properly develop it." <sup>69</sup> Implicit in his correspondence at this time, however, is the assumption that the Africans in Johannesburg were not yet fit to be entrusted with the running of their own church. At least one member of the Mission agreed whole-heartedly with Goodenough. When asked to express his opinion on the Mission's plans for Johannesburg, J.C. Dorward wrote, "I don't like the idea of placing a Zulu there alone - place a white man there from the start and don't begin it until you can do so ... They (the Africans) like to take things into their own hands and they are not very wise yet - and too far away to be helped by our advice much." <sup>70</sup> From statements made by various missionaries during this period <sup>71</sup> it appears that Goodenough/....

- 
- 67. About a mile from the centre of Johannesburg.
  - 68. ABM A/3/41, Goodenough, "Report of the Johannesburg Mission."
  - 69. ABM B/1/70, Goodenough to Kilbon, 17 November 1893.
  - 70. ABM A/2/29, Dorward to Kilbon, 16 October 1893, Dorward was missionary-in-charge of the Umsunduzi Mission Station.
  - 71. Especially during the debate on self-support. See above pp 41-51.



Goodenough and Dorward were expressing widely-accepted opinions. Consequently, the AZM raised no objections to Goodenough's proposal that he and his wife be appointed missionaries-in-charge of the Johannesburg church.

The Goodenoughs arrived in Johannesburg early in 1894. With the aid of an African preacher, Fokoti Makanya,<sup>72</sup> they established what was to become one of the most successful mission stations on the Witwatersrand. Apart from catering to the needs of the Natal Africans, the missionaries set out to reach as many members of other groups as possible. Work was begun among the African labourers in the mine-compounds and special services were held for the large numbers of Cape Coloureds who were working in Johannesburg. In co-operation with other missionary societies,<sup>73</sup> multi-racial open-air services were conducted at Market Square in the city-centre.<sup>74</sup>

As the work of the church grew, so did its financial requirements. Although both Europeans and Africans made regular and generous contributions to the church, these were not sufficient to cover its expenses, and the AZM could offer no assistance, apart from paying the salaries of its missionaries. It was under these circumstances that Mrs. Goodenough offered to lend the Johannesburg church a sum of money which she had inherited, to be used for purchasing the site adjoining the one which the church already owned. A house for the missionaries would be built on this land, together with several rooms, which would be let out to tenants/....

---

72. Fokoti Makanya, also referred to in mission correspondence as Ndeya Makanya, was born at Amanzimtoti and educated at Adams Theological College. Goodenough was responsible for his appointment to the Johannesburg Church.

73. Particularly the South African General Mission.

74. ABM A/1/8, "Report of the Johannesburg Committee", presented to the Annual Meeting of the AZM, June 1896.

to tenants, the proceeds to be used for conducting missionary work in the area. The loan, plus interest, was to be repaid by the Johannesburg church, and when the debt had been fully paid the land and building would become the property of the AZM.<sup>75</sup>

Although both the AZM and the Johannesburg Church gave their approval to the terms of this agreement the scheme, once implemented, became the subject of a bitter dispute between Goodenough and the church, resulting ultimately in the separation of the church from the Mission. In May 1896, T.B. Curson<sup>76</sup> wrote on behalf of the African converts to the AZM requesting that Goodenough be recalled from Johannesburg. In this letter, he claimed that the missionary was devoting less and less time to looking after the church, being almost fully preoccupied with the administration of his property. Furthermore, Goodenough refused to give the converts an account of the way in which the money which they themselves had contributed, was being spent, and was retaining a stranglehold over the financial affairs of the church. The missionary was treating Makanya as a subordinate and had moved the preacher to Germiston without consulting the church.<sup>77</sup> When the converts complained to the missionary, they were told that "he who did not like what was done/....

---

75. ABM B/1/70, Goodenough to Kilbon, 17 November 1893; Mrs. C.L. Goodenough to Kilbon, 20 November 1893.

76. Curson was "a European (who) has identified himself with the work, expressing a great liking for the methods of the American Missionaries. He has been a whole-hearted and very generous supporter of the Mission (who) makes himself perfectly one with the natives." See ABM A/1/8 "Report of the Johannesburg Committee," 1896.

77. ABM A/2/10, Curson to "whom it may concern," 1 May 1896.

was done might pack his bags and go." <sup>78</sup> Curson's letter concluded by remarking that "there is now no work for Goodenough to do except what a native preacher could do" and called for the ordination of Makanya over the church. <sup>79</sup>

The Mission's response was to appoint a special committee to investigate the whole affair. In June 1896, two members of this committee visited Johannesburg to consult all parties concerned. After conducting interviews with Goodenough, Curson and members of the congregation, the committee came to the conclusion that the charges which had been laid against the missionary were without foundation. The converts were then informed that they had no right to criticize Goodenough: "he was under the censure or approval of the American Board, not under theirs; they had no business whatever with (his) private affairs. It was for the Mission and the American Board to deal with that - to approve or disapprove." <sup>80</sup>

In his report, Kilbon hinted that Goodenough's method in dealing with the criticism directed at him had been rather high-handed and that in this way the missionary had contributed towards the discontent in Johannesburg. <sup>81</sup> The Mission was afraid, however, that if it yielded to the demands of the Johannesburg church, it might encourage rebellion at other stations, particularly at Table Mountain.

Consequently/....

---

78. ABC 15.4. vol. 15, Bridgman, F.B., "An effort now in progress to effect an understanding with the independent movement known as the 'Zulu Congregational Church'", monthly letter of the AZM, 15 December 1899, p 16.

79. ABM A/2/10, Curson to "whom it may concern", 1 May 1896.

80. ABM A/1/8, "Report of the Johannesburg Committee, 1896.

81. Ibid.



Consequently, it approved the committee's recommendation that Goodenough remain in Johannesburg. The converts initially accepted this situation and attempted to work in harmony with the missionary, but Goodenough's growing indifference to their wishes ensured that compromise was impossible.<sup>82</sup> At the beginning of 1897 Makanya withdrew from the church with a portion of the congregation and began holding separate services. Switzer suggests that in taking this action the preacher was encouraged by reports of the rebellion taking place at Table Mountain. Like the Table Mountain congregation, the Johannesburg Church did not separate finally from the AZM without appealing to the American Board for arbitration. In March 1897, Makanya wrote to Smith, but received a discouraging reply.<sup>83</sup> In February 1898, \* Makanya joined with Shibe to form the ZCC. \*

The AZM had heard rumours that the African pastors intended to ordain Shibe and Makanya, and had taken steps to prevent this from taking place. In August 1897, a letter was sent to all the pastors warning them that:

If you take such action without the consent of the representatives of the American Board you will give the impression that you no longer need the guidance of the American churches ... the American Board will not recognize any church organized or pastor ordained by native pastors alone. The organization of churches and the ordination of pastors can only be done with the approval and co-operation of the Mission itself.

The missionaries/...

- 
82. For details, see Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", pp 381-382.
83. ABM A/2/17, Makanya to Smith, 8 March 1897; Smith to Goodenough, 12 April 1897.

The missionaries requested that the pastors defer further action until they could meet in conference and talk these matters over.<sup>84</sup>

Because he commanded a considerable amount of support, not only from the pastors, but from converts throughout the Mission, the missionaries hesitated to take any action against Shibe himself. Indeed, they were still hopeful at this stage that the preacher might be persuaded to remain in the service of the Mission. With this end in view, W.C. Wilcox<sup>85</sup> was sent to Table Mountain to hold revival meetings on the station. His efforts proved largely unsuccessful; a few converts were drawn back into the fold, but "there was most powerful opposition on the part of the disaffected party in the church. They would neither come to meetings, nor allow those over whom they had any influence to come. Not only that, but they got up some opposition meetings and would lay hold of those who had started to come to our meetings and see if they could not turn them back to theirs."<sup>86</sup> In the same year, visiting American Evangelist, Elder Weavers,<sup>87</sup> spent several days at Table Mountain conducting revival services. He was more successful than Wilcox, but nonetheless was met with "violent opposition from the adversary and some of his minions."<sup>88</sup>

Although/....

- 
- 84. ABM A/4/54, Pixley to the African pastors, 14 August 1897; Ransom to Wilcox, 9 August 1897.
  - 85. Missionary-in-charge of Umvoti.
  - 86. ABM A/3/41, Wilcox, W.C., "Report on Table Mountain", presented to the Annual Meeting of the AZM, June 1897.
  - 87. Weavers was the head of the independent Hephziban Faith Mission of Tabor, Iowa. For more details, see Wood, A.A., Shine Where You Are : A History of Inanda Seminary, 1869-1969, (Lovedale, 1972) pp 57-58, 175.
  - 88. "Pentecostal Times in South Africa," n.n., in "The Missionary Review of the World, Vol xi, No. 1., January 1898, p 44. (William Cullen Library, University of the Witwatersrand.)

Although these attempts to solve the problem proved unsuccessful, the AZM appeared content to leave matters as they stood. No further effort was made to solve the difficulties at Table Mountain, even though Pugh produced overwhelming evidence to suggest that Shibe's activities on the Reserve were seriously undermining the work of the Mission in the area. In May 1898, Pugh informed Goodenough<sup>89</sup> that Shibe had established his own "Ukandhla"<sup>90</sup> on the station and had been clearing a site for the construction of a church.<sup>91</sup> He also complained that Shibe was committing acts of aggression against those Africans who accepted the missionary's authority. Pugh warned the American missionaries that "the whole native community are looking on to decide whether we are weak or strong,"<sup>92</sup> and maintained that if they did not take decisive action in the matter "you will have fifty Simungu's to deal with on the various reserves."<sup>93</sup> Pugh's standpoint in the whole dispute differed substantially from that of the AZM.<sup>94</sup> For him, what was at stake was the maintainance of his personal authority on the Reserve; he grew bitter and frustrated at the Mission's apparent indifference to Shibe's disregard of that authority.<sup>95</sup> Since the AZM was not prepared to remove Shibe, he now turned to a higher authority.

On 10th May/....

---

89. Secretary of the AZM

90. ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Goodenough, 29 April 1898. Pugh also informed Goodenough that the name of the Ukandhla was the "Zulu Congregational Church".

91. ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Goodenough, 4 May 1898.

92. ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Kilbon, 5 May 1898.

93. ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Goodenough, 4 May 1898.

94. To the AZM, what was involved was a challenge to its very existence, and for this reason it was forced to proceed very cautiously.

95. Pugh's correspondence with Goodenough during this period at times verges on hysteria. The phrase "I must have control" recurs in many of the letters.



On 10th May, Pugh laid his case before the Secretary for Native Affairs, and requested that the Natal Government take steps to evict Shibe.<sup>96</sup> Ironically, the very man whom the Mission had employed to avert government interference at Table Mountain had deliberately reintroduced this factor into the situation.

In Samuelson's view, the matter "resolved itself into a political question, as Simungu was influencing the native mind."<sup>97</sup> He immediately sent a letter to the Mission inquiring whether Shibe was still in its employ.<sup>98</sup> The AZM was now galvanized into action. At its annual meeting it resolved to notify the government that Shibe's ordination had been irregular and that the American missionaries did not recognize him as a pastor. It was further resolved that Shibe be summoned to a meeting with the Mission, where he would be required to sign a declaration denouncing his ordination and promising to place himself under the jurisdiction of the AZM.<sup>99</sup> Should he fail to do so, the Board of Trustees would be asked to remove him from Table Mountain.<sup>100</sup>

If Shibe's activities were to be effectively curtailed, it was essential that the Mission destroy the support which he was receiving from the pastors and the churches. By the beginning of 1898 the preacher not only commanded large followings at Table Mountain and Johannesburg, but had weaned away a portion of the congregation in Durban and had/....

- 
- 96. See ABM A/2/29, Fernie to Kilbon, 16 May 1898; Pugh to S.O. Samuelson, 18 May 1898.
  - 97. ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Kilbon, 16 May 1898.
  - 98. ABM A/2/23, Samuelson to Goodenough, 19 May 1898.
  - 99. A copy of this is in ABM A/2/29. (translated by M. Bhengu.)
  - 100. ABM A/1/2, "Minutes of the 63rd Annual Meeting of the AZM," 27 June 1898.

and had taken over several out-stations.<sup>101</sup> A meeting of the converts in February of that year sanctioned his remaining at Table Mountain and recommended that the Abaisitupa continue to pay his salary.<sup>102</sup> By July, however, the majority of the converts and practically all the pastors ~~had pledged their support to the Mission.~~ Bridgman later suggested that the irregular manner<sup>103</sup> in which Shibe's ordination had been conducted caused this change of heart: "The Zulu has an inborn respect, amounting almost to reverence, for precedent, for law. Now the ordinations in question displayed so manifest a disregard for regularity and ecclesiastical procedure that our native leaders drew back."<sup>104</sup> Also important was a message which the mission delivered to its churches which appealed directly to this supposed respect for law and order and stated that "this movement (the ZCC) does not have regard to the wishes of the American churches who formed churches among you, and who have heretofore been regarded as your guides ... You discard the fellowship of the American churches when you reject the advice and co-operation of the missionaries."<sup>105</sup> It is likely, however, that for many of the African Christians a more crucial consideration in their decision to support the Mission was that they occupied land on the Mission Reserves at the pleasure of the AZM and that any act of rebellion/....

---

101. \* ABM A/1/8, "Report of a Special Committee to Prepare a Message to the Annual Native Meeting at Umvoti," presented to the Annual Meeting of the AZM, July 1898.

102. ABM A/1/8, "Report of the Native Annual Meeting Committee", February 1898.

103. Shibe was ordained not by the pastors, but by the members of the Johannesburg church, in consultation with a Johannesburg lawyer. A copy of his ordination certificate is in S.C. 1/16/38.

104. ABM A/1/9, Bridgman, "The Ethiopian Movement", p 13.

105. ABM A/1/8, "Report of a Special Committee", July 1898.

rebellion could jeopardize their security of tenure.

As could have been expected, Shibe refused to sign the declaration and submit himself to the authority of the American Missionaries. The AZM thereupon wrote to the Board of Trustees requesting that he be evicted from the Reserve. At their annual meeting in July 1898 the trustees noted that, "Simungu Bafazini Shibe, whose only right on the Table Mountain Reserve was as a preacher of the American Mission, had ceased his connection with the Mission and had become a source of disturbance to their mission work," and resolved to instruct their solicitors to take the necessary steps to secure Shibe's removal.<sup>106</sup> On 13th July Shibe was sent a letter giving him one week to vacate the reserve and informing him that should he fail to do so, legal proceedings would be instituted against him.<sup>107</sup> He disregarded this letter and the AZM now prepared to defend its case in court. The case of Shibe vs the AZM was scheduled for hearing in the Pietermaritzburg Magistrate's Court on 15th August, but had to be postponed until 2nd September, because Shibe contrived to be absent from his home each time an attempt was made to serve summons on him.<sup>108</sup> When the case finally came up, judgement was given in favour of the Mission, with costs. Shibe was instructed to leave Table Mountain within one month.<sup>109</sup>

Now that/....

- 
- 106. ABM A/3/34, "Report of a Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the AZM", 11 July 1898.
  - 107. ABM A/2/10, Bale and Greene to Goodenough, 13 July 1898
  - 108. ABM A/2/10, Bale and Greene to Goodenough, 9 August 1898 and 18 August 1898; ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Goodenough, 19 August 1898.
  - 109. Unfortunately the original record of this case is missing, but a copy of part of it is to be found in S.C. 1/16/38.



Now that Pugh had achieved his purpose, he could write, "It is a victory for us, but I must admit I feel much as David must have felt when he heard of the death of Saul."<sup>110</sup> The victory was to be shortlived, however, for Shibe had no intention of accepting the verdict of the court. The preacher's reaction to the news that the Mission intended to take him to court had been one of shock and disbelief. He wrote to Pugh: "I did not know that ministers could lay charges, I thought they only preached the Word."<sup>111</sup> Initially, he had supposed that Pugh had caused the summons to be served on him.<sup>112</sup> When he found out that the AZM was responsible, his anger knew no bounds. He informed Kilbon that he was "happy that you have opened a way for me to lay charges because ... I will lay charges on you."<sup>113</sup> He secured the services of a white lawyer, whose fees were paid by the members of the ZCC at Table Mountain and Johannesburg.<sup>114</sup> In September 1898, Shibe's supporters provided further funds to enable him to lodge an appeal in the Supreme Court against the magistrate's decision.<sup>115</sup>

Shibe's appeal was based on the contention that, under the original deed of trust, only the Governor of Natal had the authority to remove an African from Table Mountain, and that the magistrate had therefore had no authority to try/....

- 
- 110. ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Goodenough, 3 September 1898.
  - 111. ABM A/2/29, Shibe to Pugh, 21 July 1898. (translated by M. Bhengu).
  - 112. ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Goodenough, 22 July 1898.
  - 113. ABM A/2/10, Shibe to Kilbon, 25 July 1898 (translated by M. Bhengu.)
  - 114. ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Goodenough, 9 September 1898.
  - 115. Security for the appeal was lodged by Elijah and John Zondi, and Samuel Mzolo, all of whom were office-bearers in the ZCC.

Successful protest  
induced other  
198

87.

try the case.<sup>116</sup> On 30th September the Supreme Court judges upheld this appeal: "The merits of the case were not gone into at all and the judges in giving judgement said that they had in no way decided whether Shibe was legally on the Reserve or not."<sup>117</sup> The court ruled that the costs of both cases were to be borne by the Mission.<sup>118</sup>

It was with a "very heavy heart" that Pugh received the news of this "reverse". He reported that "since the return of Simungu's party the news of our defeat has gone like wildfire over the country. They have come back with all kinds of stories and are intent upon mischief."<sup>119</sup> He urged the AZM to lay the case before the Governor without delay. Once again, he warned the Mission that if it did not secure the removal of Shibe it would suffer repercussions on its other stations. This time the American missionaries needed no prompting from Pugh. Once the AZM converts found that it was very difficult for the Mission to remove an African from a reserve, they began to join the ZCC in increasing numbers. The missionaries were alarmed by the number of converts they were losing and they realized that the only way to destroy Shibe's influence was to have him denied access to all their stations. A special committee was appointed to draft a petition to the Governor. To their disappointment, however, the missionaries discovered that the governor did not have the power to remove Shibe because he was an "exempted native".<sup>120</sup>

Now that/....

- 
116. ABM A/2/10, Bale and Greene to Goodenough, 2 September 1898.
117. ABM A/2/10, Bale and Greene to Goodenough, 30 September 1898.
118. The two cases cost the AZM approximately £100. See ABM A/2/29, Wilcox to Goodenough, 15 October 1898.
119. ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Goodenough, 3 October 1898.
120. For Shibe's exemption, see below pp 103-106.

Now that the Mission had tried all the channels open to it, Shibe himself took the initiative. He offered to leave the Reserve on condition that the AZM pay him out for his property.<sup>121</sup> It is open to question whether he ever intended to leave Table Mountain and it is likely that in making this offer he was simply playing for time. The Mission made him several offers for his house, all of which he refused to accept.<sup>122</sup> From time to time the missionaries heard rumours that he intended going to Lovedale<sup>123</sup> or Johannesburg,<sup>124</sup> but this never materialized.

At the end of 1898 Shibe was still firmly ensconced at Table Mountain and throughout the following year he continued to disrupt Pugh's attempts at conducting mission work on the station. Although the missionary wrote glowing reports of his progress to the NCU<sup>125</sup> it is evident that Shibe's presence was a serious hindrance to his work. At the end of 1899 he reported that he had built up a station of only 50 converts;<sup>126</sup> that was the product of four years of constant labour. The ZCC also continued to attract converts from the other AZM stations. By 1900 Shibe had built up large followings at Groutville, Ifafa, Umtwalume/....

- 
- 121. ABM A/2/10, Bale and Greene to Goodenough, 9 November 1898.
  - 122. See, for example, ABM A/2/10, Shibe to Kilbon, 7 September 1898. (translated by M. Bhengu.)
  - 123. ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Goodenough, 13 December 1898.
  - 124. ABM A/2/29, Dorward to Goodenough, 23 September 1898. It was rumoured that, Makanya having died, Shibe intended to take up the leadership of the Johannesburg Church.
  - 125. See, for example, the report he presented to the NCU in February 1899, as reported in the Natal Mercury, 11 February 1899.
  - 126. A 755, "Report of the Missionary in Charge of the Work at Table Mountain", presented to the Annual Meeting of the AZM", 1900.



Umtwalume and Umzumbe and had gained control of three of the out-stations. <sup>127</sup>

The American missionaries were inclined to agree with Pugh that "Simungu has got the best of the case." <sup>128</sup> A number of them felt that the Mission should not have prosecuted the preacher without first making sure that it would be successful. Wilcox expressed his opinion on the matter in language which succinctly expresses the missionaries' perception of their relationship to the African converts:

(All) would agree that once you had undertaken to correct a child it would not be well to leave it at just that point where the child might say, 'Dad undertook to lick me but he got the worst of it after all.' It would have been better ... not to have undertaken it at all, or else to have carried it far enough so as not to leave any misunderstanding as to who is master. <sup>129</sup>

Having found that it could not remove Shibe from Table Mountain, the AZM decided to "let the movement run its own course and come to its own end." <sup>130</sup> The African pastors, however, were dissatisfied with this decision. By this time, they had come to realize that the ZCC was as much a threat to their own work as it was to that of the Mission. Indeed, the isolated stations which they controlled had been the first target of that movement. At their annual meeting with the missionaries in July 1899, the pastors requested that a final attempt be made to achieve/....

- 
127. A 754, "General Letter of the AZM," 1899-1900, p 8.  
 128. ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Goodenough, 2 November 1898.  
 129. ABM A/2/29, Wilcox to Goodenough, 17 November 1898.  
 130. ABC 15.4. Vol. 15, Bridgman, "An effort now in progress", 1899, p 2.

to achieve a reconciliation between the AZM and the ZCC.

The missionaries were of the opinion that matters had progressed too far for such an attempt to be successful, but "out of deference to the pastors", they agreed to appoint two of their number to a joint committee to open negotiations with the ZCC.<sup>131</sup> In August 1899, this committee sent a letter to the "scribe" of the ZCC proposing that the church elect delegates to meet with the missionaries and pastors in Durban.<sup>132</sup> Two replies were received to this letter. The Johannesburg church, now under the leadership of Reverend Nyuswa<sup>133</sup> replied that they saw no point in such a meeting, while Shibe himself replied from Table Mountain that he and his party would be happy to meet with the AZM.<sup>134</sup>

It appears that at this stage the ZCC had already split <sup>Nyuswa</sup> into two opposing factions - the Johannesburg church under <sup>X</sup> Nyuswa and the Natal churches owing allegiance to Shibe. <sup>Shibe</sup> The reasons for this disunion are not immediately apparent, but a possible explanation may have been that Nyuswa did not participate in the original separation from the mission and, having joined the ZCC at a later stage of its development, had a different conception of its relationship to the AZM/....

- 
131. ABC 15.4. Vol. 15, Bridgman, "An effort now in progress", 1899, p 3; ABM A/1/2, Minutes of the 64th Annual Meeting of the AZM", June 1899.
132. A copy of this letter (translated by Bridgman) is in ABC 15.4. Vol. 15.
133. Contrary to the rumours that the missionaries had heard, Shibe did not take over the leadership of the Johannesburg church when Makanya died. Instead, Nyuswa, who had been pastor of the Umtwalume church, took up the position. His "defection" was a great blow to the AZM.
134. ABC 15.4. Vol. 15. Bridgman, "An effort now in progress", pp 6-7.

AZM from that of Shibe. The dissension within the ZCC must not only be seen as resulting out of a difference of opinion between its leaders, however; the Johannesburg sector of the church, operating as it did in an urban environment, obviously experienced very different needs from those ZCC members who occupied land on the Mission Reserves in Natal. <sup>135</sup>

The emergence of two factions within the ZCC was to be crucial to the outcome of the reconciliation talks. Although Nyuswa initially declined to attend any meetings with the AZM, he later assumed a dominant position in the proceedings and in the end his plan for reconciliation became the basis for an agreement between the Mission and the ZCC.

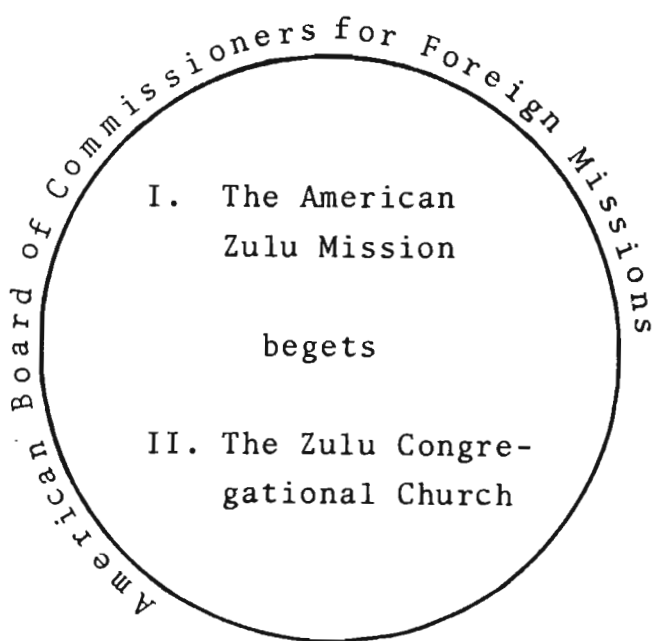
The first meeting between the church and the AZM was held in Durban on 15 November 1899. Very little was achieved on this occasion because the two parties could not agree on a basis for discussion. The missionaries were inclined to "let the past be past" and to concentrate on a future understanding, whereas the ZCC insisted that no solution could be reached without the meeting first discussing the grievances of the people at Table Mountain and Johannesburg. <sup>136</sup> Accordingly a sub-committee was appointed to draw up/...

- 
135. A great deal more research needs to be conducted into the differences between rural and urban independent church movements, particularly the economic differences between these two types of churches. In the case of the ZCC, a crucial difference between the Johannesburg and the Natal sectors was that the former were operating within the confines of a money economy, while the latter were primarily concerned with access to land.
136. ABC 15.4. Vol. 15., Bridgman "An effort now in progress", pp 11-12.



draw up a list of points that ought to be discussed at the next meeting.

On 29 January 1900 the two parties came together again and this sub-committee presented its report. The report, however, "contained no particular recommendations,"<sup>137</sup> and Nyuswa now presented a counter scheme, which he claimed "(represented) the attitude and principles of the ZCC"<sup>138</sup> and set out the basis on which they were prepared to form an alliance with the AZM. His scheme was presented diagrammatical as follows:



139.

The ZCC was prepared to reaffiliate with the Mission only if the missionaries gave a guarantee that they would grant self-government to all the African churches. The African pastors were to be equal to the missionaries, "each pastor having/....

137. ABM A/1/8, "Report of the Committee on Reconciliation of the ZCC and the AZM and its churches", 5 February 1900.

138. Ibid.

139. ABM A/4/53, "Scheme presented by the Reverend S. Nyuswa at a joint meeting of the Representatives of the AZM ZHM society and ZCC", 30th January 1900. (translated by C.W. Kilbon.)

having power in that church which calls him." The name ZCC was to be retained and all churches which had "sprung up by themselves" were to be called ZCC churches.

The Missionaries were unable to accept Nyuswa's plan as the basis for reconciliation. Although they appreciated the spirit in which it "makes no demands for the settlement of past contentions, but deals with the case as it stands today from their point of view" <sup>140</sup>, they were horrified by the claims it made for independence from missionary control. Consequently Kilbon put forward a counter-scheme which aimed at "making self-support on lines of Congregational usage prominent and (restricting) absolute independence". <sup>141</sup> This scheme laid down that "a pastor may be called by a church and make such arrangements with that church as it and he shall agree to, under the advice of a properly-called council of sister churches," and that the missionaries were to be consulted in all action either the pastor or the church took. <sup>142</sup> Furthermore, the name of the African Churches was to be chosen at "a meeting of delegates from the churches appointed for this purpose."

The AZM was not very hopeful that the ZCC would agree to this proposal: "Knowing the temper that had been displayed to start with and the strong independence spirit that was felt it was hardly supposable that the counter-scheme would find favour." <sup>143</sup> To the missionaries "inexpressable joy",  
however/....

- 
- 140. ABM A/1/8, "Report of the Committee on Reconciliation", 5 February 1900.
  - 141. ABM A/1/8, "Report of the Committee on Reconciliation of the Zulu Congregational Church", presented to the Annual Meeting of the AZM, July 1900.
  - 142. ABM A/4/53, "Counter-scheme presented by the AZM and FM Society Committee", 13 March 1900.
  - 143. ABM A/1/8, "Report of the Committee on Reconciliation", 1900.

however, they found that the delegates from the Johannesburg Church were prepared to accept the plan, but asked for an adjournment of the final agreement until June 1900, so that they might study the document carefully and consult with their followers. On 14th July, the Johannesburg congregation informed the Mission that they were prepared to sign an agreement with the AZM. They were instructed to convene a council to draw up a final plan for reconciliation. On 11 September members of the Mission and delegates from the Abaisitupa met with Nyuswa and his followers to offer them "the right hand of fellowship of the Natal Churches." <sup>144</sup>

This meeting effectively ended the independent existence of the Johannesburg Church. A new name was chosen for all the African Churches under the control of the AZM: "The 'African Congregational Church' was decided upon with great unanimity, sixteen out of nineteen voting for it ... not one vote was cast for the 'Zulu Congregational Church' ... What seemed to carry the vote against it was that it was too tribal, sectional, limited - 'African' having a wider meaning than 'Zulu'." <sup>145</sup>

Shibe and his followers had refused to accept Kilbon's counter-scheme. The Mission invited them to call a council similar to the one the Johannesburg Church had called but they were "not accessible to an agreement". <sup>146</sup> In January 1901, the AZM received a letter from Shibe stating that "(the church) has decided not to re-unite with the Natal churches and wishes to be left alone". <sup>147</sup> Kilbon was still confident that a reconciliation between the AZM and the Table Mountain/....

- 
- 144. ABM A/1/8, "Report of the Native Annual Meeting Committee", 1901.
  - 145. ABM A/1/8, "Report of the Native Annual Meeting Committee".
  - 146. ABM A/1/8, "Report of the Committee on Reconciliation", July 1900.
  - 147. ABM A/1/8, "Report of the Committee on Reconciliation", January 1901



Mountain church could be achieved particularly as Pugh had by now relented in his attitude towards Shibe and was doing his best to reach an agreement with the preacher.<sup>148</sup> As it turned out, this reconciliation was never achieved and the ZCC continued to operate at Table Mountain and on the other AZM stations. Only in 1903 was Shibe forced to leave Table Mountain, and this was caused not by the action of the AZM, but by the Natal Government.<sup>149</sup>

---

148. See letters between Kilbon and Pugh in ABM A/2/29.

149. For details, see below Chapter V.

#### CHAPTER IV. THE ORIGINS OF THE ZCC : PROBLEMS OF INTERPRETATION

At no stage in their negotiations with the ZCC had the American missionaries made any real attempt to analyse the reasons behind the formation of the church. Bridgman expressed the generally-accepted viewpoint when he wrote, " ... the whole question was simply that of control".<sup>1</sup> The ZCC was seen as a premature attempt on the part of a few misguided individuals to throw off the yoke of missionary control. Very little effort was made to understand why these individuals should have reached a stage in their relationship with the AZM where they were no longer prepared to tolerate missionary supervision.

It is hardly surprising that the missionaries were unable to adopt a more objective attitude towards the ZCC. The church represented a challenge to their very existence and as such their efforts were directed towards undermining its influence rather than towards understanding it. The missionary viewpoint has, however, been perpetuated, largely because no full-scale investigation has as yet been conducted into the origins of the ZCC. The church is mentioned in two recent histories of the AZM, but both are concerned primarily with the activities of the Mission and consequently they tend to underplay the importance of the ZCC. Booth's study, while providing a sound account of AZM strategies, devotes very little space to the ZCC, and the section on the church contains a number of inaccuracies.<sup>2</sup> Switzer provides an able narrative/....

1. ABM A/1/9, Bridgman, "The Ethiopian Movement", p 12.
2. Booth, The United States Experience. For example, Booth leaves Fokoti Makanya out of the picture altogether, and incorrectly ascribes the founding of the ZCC in Johannesburg to Sunguza Nyuswa.

narrative account of the origins of the church, but makes little attempt to analyse the reasons for its formation.<sup>3</sup> Both studies reflect a tendency in the writing of South African history to concentrate on the individuals who formulated policy rather than on those who were on the receiving-end of that policy.<sup>4</sup>

This study attempts to examine more closely the reasons for the formation of the ZCC and to place the church in a wider socio-economic and political background. Since very little work has hitherto been done on the ZCC, it is useful to apply on a comparative basis the findings of previous studies of African independent churches. A major problem has been the limited source-material available, and attention needs to be directed towards exploring sources other than the AZM records, upon which this study is largely based.<sup>5</sup> A further handicap arises out of the dearth of studies on South African independent churches. In many respects the experience of African Christians in this region differed substantially from their counterparts elsewhere in Africa and consequently it is not always possible to apply theories formulated for churches in other areas to those in South Africa.<sup>6</sup>

Because/....

- 
3. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", pp 374-406.
  4. In this respect Dinnerstein's, "The American Board Mission", is a more satisfactory work. Dinnerstein concentrates on the group of converts who, while expressing dissatisfaction with AZM policies, decided to work for change within existing structures.
  5. A limited amount of oral evidence has been collected; this has taken the form of interviews with present-day leaders of the church. I have been told that records of ZCC meetings exist, but have been unable to track these down. More work also needs to be done on government records, such as the S.N.A. papers and local magistrates' reports.
  6. In particular, the presence of a large white settler population in South Africa, and the policies it adopted towards the African population, appears to have been a crucial factor in the emergence of African independent churches in this area. This factor was not present in other areas which also saw the establishment of these churches.



IMP.

Because of these limitations, the conclusions reached here are extremely tentative. Nonetheless, the study is able to suggest several areas in which existing explanations for the emergence of independent churches may require modification if they are to be applied in the South African context.

Previous studies of African independent churches have tended to explain the movement in terms of the ambitions and frustrations of individual church leaders. This approach has yielded some fruitful results, but it has presented a somewhat one-sided picture of the movement by its failure to explore the reasons why Africans joined independent churches.<sup>7</sup> Simungu Shibe had clear-cut reasons for being dissatisfied with his position vis à vis the AZM and the Natal Government, and by establishing an independent church he achieved for himself a status which both had denied him. But the church did not emerge solely as the result of the frustrations of a single individual. The decision to break away from the AZM appears to have emanated from the Table Mountain converts. Moreover, in joining the ZCC these Africans hoped to achieve for themselves certain rights of which they were deprived through the combined action of the Mission and the Natal Government.

At first sight Shibe's decision to break away from the AZM and form an independent church appears to be the hasty action of a man who had everything to lose and little to gain by taking such a step. A closer examination of the preacher's background and of his relation to the Mission reveals that in establishing the ZCC he was attempting to realize certain aims and ambitions which the American missionaries had nurtured in him, but which in the end they refused to fulfil.

Shibe's/....

7. See above pp 21-23.

Shibe's perception of the Table Mountain controversy was coloured to a large extent by the nature of the education he had received at the hands of the missionaries. During his seven-year stay at Adams College, the preacher had devoted himself almost entirely to the study of the Bible and other religious texts.<sup>8</sup> He emerged from Adams committed to the teachings of Christianity. His participation in the religious revival which swept the Mission in the late 1870's served only to reinforce this commitment. Etherington notes that "Men of strong will, theological bent and fervent piety may have brought to mission stations the germs of later separatist religious movements", and that "men who were adventurous enough to forsake old creeds were capable of founding new ones".<sup>9</sup> In Shibe's case, it was not so much a matter of wanting to found a "new creed"; Shibe believed that the one which he had embraced so fully was being violated by the American missionaries. In his view, the Mission's actions regarding Table Mountain were out of keeping with Christian principles. In a letter to Kilbon in August 1898, he stated that the AZM's handling of the dispute had "extensively questioned the Lord's rules".<sup>10</sup> In another letter, he informed the missionary that the Mission had no right to set itself up as a judge in the matter, as God could be the only judge.<sup>11</sup> Shibe was convinced that his standpoint was in full accordance with Biblical teaching; he also saw himself as a Christ-type figure, being persecuted for his beliefs. Shortly after his final separation from the Mission he compared his position/....

- 
8. Shibe attended Adams College in the days before the missionaries, under pressure from the Natal Government, began to teach skills other than reading, writing, and a knowledge of the Bible.
  9. Etherington, "Mission-Station Melting-Pots", p 599.
  10. ABM A/2/10, Shibe to (?) Kilbon, 22 August 1898 (translated by M. Bhengu.)
  11. ABM A/2/10, Shibe to (?) Kilbon, 2 August 1898 (translated by M. Bhengu.)

position to that of Christ and noted that "one dies in the church like Jesus Christ; he was ill-treated, but he died in it." <sup>12</sup>

In another respect, Shibe's education at Adams was to play an important role in his decision to form an independent church. The converts who gained admission to Adams in the nineteenth century were part of a small, élite group, who, having proved their acceptance of the religious tenets of the Mission, were selected to be trained as aides to the missionaries. Graduates from Adams were employed as teachers and preachers on almost all the AZM stations. In a few cases, Africans who had served the Mission for long periods of time were rewarded by being ordained as pastors. Ordination carried with it not only a great deal of prestige and authority, but certain practical benefits, such as Government recognition and the right to travel concessions on the railways. <sup>13</sup> It therefore became the pinnacle of achievement for any preacher in the service of the AZM.

The Native Churches Commission of 1925 stated in its report that "many new sects are started by natives who wish to acquire the status of ministers". <sup>14</sup> Shibe was clearly dissatisfied with his position as an approved preacher. In an interview with "Vermont" in 1897 he complained that "preachers were just sent about as the white men proposed to send them ... these evangelists raise up congregations in places, perhaps after a few years work, and then the white ministers come in and take over their work". <sup>15</sup> He stated further that he was tired/....

12. ABM A/2/10, Shibe to (?) Kilbon, 22 August 1898 (translated by M. Bhengu.)

13. Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, Ch. 3.

14. Report of the Native Churches Commission, p 27.

15. ABM A/2/29, Vermont to Stewart, 23 August 1897. Vermont appears to have been a member of the NCU. The situation of the preachers as described by Shibe is, of course, a very accurate description of his own position.



tired of being a preacher and that he wished to become a "minister of a settled charge". It may be argued that by being selected to study at Adams, Shibe was encouraged to believe that he might one day become a preacher in charge of one of the AZM churches. This, after all, was the ostensible purpose for which Africans were sent to the theological school.<sup>16</sup> A number of converts who had attended Adams at the same time as Shibe had been ordained,<sup>17</sup> yet he had always been bypassed. This was not due to any failing on his part. During his years as preacher-in-charge of Table Mountain Shibe had amply fulfilled the trust the missionaries had placed in him. In less than ten years he had built up a congregation of eighty members in an area which in the past had proved unreceptive to the Gospel.<sup>18</sup> Several missionaries testified to his high moral standards and to his commitment to the religious beliefs of the Mission.<sup>19</sup> His church wanted him as its pastor and was prepared to pay his salary.

Shibe was not ordained because the AZM, under pressure from the Natal Government, had decided to re-establish white control at Table Mountain. With Pugh's arrival at the station, it became/...

- 
16. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 23.
  17. For example Sunguza Nyuswa was ordained in 1895. It is possible that Shibe's exclusion in 1895, when the AZM ordained a fresh group of pastors, served to increase his awareness that he had no hopes of improving his position while in the service of the Mission.
  18. Pixley reported in 1887 (the year of Shibe's arrival) that there were only ten Christian families resident on the station. This was after forty years of Mission work at Table Mountain. See ABM A/3/39, Pixley to Smith, 31 August 1887.
  19. See, for example A 746, Mrs. W.C. Wilcox to Smith, 20 June 1894.

it became clear to the preacher that his ambitions were not going to be fulfilled. This was brought home even more forcibly by the missionary's decision to secure Shibe's removal from Table Mountain. It is worth noting that the occasion of Shibe's formal separation from the AZM in 1898 was his ordination by the Johannesburg Church, and that he found it impossible to become reconciled with the Mission in 1900 because the missionaries refused to recognize this ordination. 20 By establishing the ZCC, Shibe gained access to the powers and status derived from ordination; the missionaries had encouraged him to aspire to these, but had refused to grant them to him.

The 1925 Commission suggested that African Christians saw in ordination a means of making money and noted that the leaders of independent churches in South Africa were paid high salaries by their congregations. 21 In a slightly wider context, Rich maintains that "one clear motive ... of the Ethiopian leaders in South Africa was the desire to accumulate capital". 22 It is possible that Shibe desired ordination for this reason. Part of his dissatisfaction with his position as preacher seems to have stemmed from the low salary he received. In a letter to Inkanyiso in 1891 he complained that preachers employed by missionary societies were paid such low salaries that "their children will go back to traditional wear because of need". 23 Shibe had always been keen to improve his economic position. He joined the mission in the first place out of economic motives. 24 If Pugh is to be believed/....

- 
20. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 398.  
 21. Report of the Native Churches Commission, p 27.  
 22. Rich, "Black Peasants", p 4.  
 23. Inkanyiso, 16 April 1891, p 5.  
 24. He was attracted to the Umzumbe Mission Station by rumours that the missionaries there were offering employment to Africans.

he believed, Shibe used his position as preacher at Table Mountain to engage in a number of money-making schemes. In 1897 Pugh claimed that Shibe was making a profit out of grazing cattle on the Reserve. He also maintained that the preacher had employed school-children to make bricks for him after being given money by the AZM to purchase them.<sup>25</sup>

Whilst in the service of the Mission, the preacher's scope for such activities was obviously limited. Official AZM policy frowned on its missionaries engaging in economic enterprises,<sup>26</sup> and under no circumstances would an African preacher be allowed to do so. No record exists to show whether Shibe received a higher salary from the ZCC than the Mission had paid him, but he did improve his economic position by founding the church. In 1903 he was able to purchase a piece of crown land at Umzumbe with money contributed by the various ZCC congregations. Theoretically, this land belonged collectively to those who had contributed towards its purchase, but the title deed was registered in Shibe's name and in practice it became the private property of the Shibe family.<sup>27</sup> The farm is occupied today by Shibe's daughter-in-law.

The AZM was not the only body in Natal which encouraged African Christians to aspire to a higher status in life, yet placed a limit on how far they might progress. The Natal Government adopted a very similar attitude, especially in the years following the granting of responsible government to the Colony/....

- 
- 25. ABM A/2/29, "Report of Table Mountain Matters", p 2.
  - 26. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 92.
  - 27. Interview with Mrs. Shibe, 15 April 1978. Dissatisfaction among ZCC members with this situation was to lead to the first secession from the Church in 1902.



Colony. In 1864 the Natal Legislative Council had passed a bill providing for the exemption of Africans from the operation of "native" law.<sup>28</sup> Most of the Africans granted exemption were converts belonging to the various missionary societies at work in Natal. Theoretically an exempted native<sup>29</sup> was placed on the same footing as a white colonist; he was subject to the same laws and was eligible for the franchise. In practice exempted natives were still subject to various "discriminatory laws",<sup>30</sup> and the Natal Government passed a number of resolutions aimed at impeding their enfranchisement.<sup>31</sup> Exempted natives therefore found themselves in a peculiar position; they had renounced the authority of their chiefs and given up the "traditional" way of life in the hope of being admitted to European society, yet that society would not accept them as full members. A Wesleyan missionary described their situation in the following terms: "exempted Africans are expected to remain, like Mahomet's coffin, between heaven and earth, having neither the privileges of a Kaffir nor the rights of an Englishman".<sup>32</sup>

In 1888/....

- 
28. For details, see Welsh, The Roots of Segregation, pp 60-61
29. I use this term because this is the way in which these Africans were referred to at that time.
30. Marks, Reluctant Rebellion, p 58. For example, exempted natives were not allowed to buy liquor, nor to move at liberty from one place to another.
31. Welsh, The Roots of Segregation, pp 60-62. In order to receive the vote, an African had to "pay three pounds into the Treasury, obtain a receipt from the resident magistrate; apply in writing to the field cornet to have his name placed on the voters' list, forwarding proof of his exemption and a certificate of good character signed by three voters, two of which were to be justices of the peace, magistrates or field cornets". Welsh notes that these regulations "aimed at making it virtually impossible for an African to become enfranchised." At the time of Union, there were only six Africans on the voters' roll in Natal.
32. Ibid, p 238.

In 1888 John Kumalo, an exempted native from Estcourt, founded the "Funamalungelo" society, an organization which aimed at providing a meeting-place where exempted natives could come together and discuss their problems and grievances.<sup>33</sup>

In 1894 Funamalungelo entered into a bitter debate with the Natal Government over a Durban magistrate's ruling that exempted natives were still subject to the curfew laws of that town.<sup>34</sup> The society called all its members to a mass meeting, at which a petition was drawn up to be presented to the Natal Government.<sup>35</sup> The magistrate's decision was eventually reversed, but the incident had served to increase the exempted natives' awareness of their ambivalent position in colonial society.

The controversy over the status of exempted natives formed an important prelude to the growth of the independent church movement in Natal. Welsh notes that many of the independent church leaders in this colony were exempted natives.<sup>36</sup> Finding all other avenues of advancement closed, these Africans opted for religion as the means whereby to achieve change. Shibe was one of the first AZM converts to receive letters of exemption.<sup>37</sup> He was a member of Funamalungelo and was present at the meetings held in the 1890's.<sup>38</sup> He also read Inkanyiso, a weekly African newspaper produced at St. Alban's College in Pietermaritzburg, in which the problems of exempted natives and of the wider African population were a major focus/.....

- 
33. Inkanyiso, 1 June 1894. "Funamalungelo" means "demand civic rights".
34. Ibid, 29 December 1893 and 5 January 1894.
35. Ibid, 12 January 1894.
36. Welsh, The Roots of Segregation, p 247.
37. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 384.
38. Shibe's name appears on the membership roll as published in Inkanyiso, 26 May 1892.

focus of attention.<sup>39</sup> Shibe was therefore aware of the limitations imposed on him and his fellow Africans by the Natal Government. This awareness was to be reinforced by his contact with two individuals who stood at the forefront of the African struggle for political rights in Natal - John Dube and Harriette Colenso.

When Shibe broke away from the AZM, he initially enjoyed the support of most of the pastors in the service of the Mission. One pastor in particular seems to have played an important role in the formation of the ZCC. John L. Dube, pastor-in-charge of the Inanda church, was to be a central figure in African political activity in Natal throughout the first four decades of the twentieth century.<sup>40</sup> Shula Marks suggests that Dube's education at the hands of the AZM missionaries was an important formative influence in his life and that, in particular, the concept of self-support which he learnt from them was to be reflected in all his subsequent activities.<sup>41</sup> The pastor was, however, extremely critical of the missionaries' failure to implement this principle. In 1887, while on a visit to the United States, he assisted W.C. Wilcox in drawing up the pamphlet "Self-Support Among the Kaffirs", which constituted a scathing attack/....

39. That Shibe read Inkanyiso is shown by a letter he wrote to the editor in 1891. See Inkanyiso, 16 April 1891.

40. In 1901, he founded Ohlange, a Zulu Industrial School modelled on the famous Tuskagee Institution in the United States. In the same year he founded the Zulu-English newspaper, Ilanga Lase Natal. In 1912, Dube became the first president of the South African Native Congress. He was a leading figure in mobilizing African protest against the 1913 Land Act; in the 1930's he was active in negotiations over Hertzog's "native bills". He represented Natal on the Native Representative Council from 1936 until his death in 1946. For more details see Marks, "The Ambiguities of Dependence".

41. Ibid, p 168.



attack on the methods of the AZM. He later used his position as editor of Ilanga Lase Natal to continue his criticism of the American missionaries.<sup>42</sup>

As his later career illustrates, Dube's vision extended beyond the somewhat limited objectives of the independent church movement, but because of his views on missionary policies, he sympathized with the movement and, indeed, played a prominent role in the formation of at least one church. Dube was of the same generation as Shibe and retained contact with the preacher after they had been posted to their respective stations.<sup>43</sup> When Shibe found himself in difficulties with the AZM, he turned to Dube for advice and support. A present-day leader of the ZCC maintains that not only did Dube advise Shibe to establish an independent church, but that he himself gave the church its name.<sup>44</sup> Dube was invited to lead the ZCC, but he declined, having "come to the conclusion that the best of the people would not follow him away from the Mission, and that he saw that his greatest influence lay in working in unison with (the AZM)."<sup>45</sup> Nonetheless, he continued to take an active interest in the church. The minutes of the meetings of the ZCC were published in Ilanga Lase Natal<sup>46</sup> and the paper carried an article on the founder when he died.<sup>47</sup> On Shibe's death in 1924, Dube's brother, Bashiese, took over the leadership of the church.<sup>48</sup>

Dube/....

- 
- 42. Ibid, pp 172-173.
  - 43. Ibid, p 171.
  - 44. Interview with Mrs. Shibe, 27 March 1978.
  - 45. Quoted in Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 398.
  - 46. See, for example, Ilanga Lase Natal, 22 July 1903, 28 August 1903.
  - 47. Ibid, 26 December 1924.
  - 48. Interview with Mrs. Shibe, 15 April 1978.

can yfl

Dube was in close contact with Harriette Colenso, daughter of Bishop Colenso and an active supporter of the African struggle for political rights in Natal.<sup>49</sup> Like Dube, Harriette Colenso took a keen interest in the independent church movement and was acquainted with some of its leaders.<sup>50</sup>

In 1906 the leader of the ZCC Church at Amanzimtoti stated during a government inquiry into the activities of the ZCC that "Miss Colenso (is) able to afford the government any information it may seek in connection with their work".<sup>51</sup> From this statement, it would appear that Harriette knew of the ZCC, and to some extent supported it. The Colenso Mission was situated at Bishopstowe, very close to Table Mountain; and she might have met Shibe and become involved in the ZCC through living so close to the source of the movement. It is also possible that Shibe met Harriette through his friendship with Dube.

For Shibe, Harriette Colenso helped to reaffirm the validity of his activities. Bishop Colenso and his daughter had always supported the establishment of an indigenous African Church.<sup>52</sup> It is perhaps more important that Shibe's contact with Dube and Harriette Colenso ensured that he did not view the ZCC as a purely religious body; Shibe probably saw the church as a potential platform from which to articulate the political grievances of Natal Africans.

The extent/....

- 
49. For Harriette Colenso, see Marks, S., "Harriette Colenso and the Zulus, 1874-1913, Journal of African History, iv, 3, 1964.
50. She corresponded with P.J. Mzimba, founder of the "Presbyterian Church of Africa", a breakaway from the Church of Scotland at Lovedale. See Ibid, p 409.
51. S.N.A. 1/1/333<sup>63</sup>/1906, Umgeni Division : Magistrate's Report, 7 February, 1906.
52. Marks, "Harriette Colenso", p 409.

The extent to which independent church leaders in South Africa at the turn of the century were engaged in political activity and pursuing political goals is still very much a matter for debate.<sup>53</sup> One problem has been the difficulty in obtaining information on these matters.<sup>54</sup> A document has been preserved, however, which provides direct evidence to suggest that not only was Shibe dissatisfied with the policies of the Natal Government, but also that he openly preached his antagonism to the government at ZCC services.

In November 1901, after Shibe had applied for a government grant-in-aid for a ZCC school at Umtwalume, an inspector of education was charged with the task of investigating the church.<sup>55</sup> His report contained such serious allegations about Shibe's activities that the Magistrate at Port Shepstone opened a file on the preacher, with a view to bringing a case against him in court. Africans who had had contact with Shibe, or who had attended ZCC services, were brought before the Magistrate and questioned about the church's leader. The evidence which they provided suggests that the ZCC was not a purely religious body, and that Shibe was using the church as a platform from which to preach anti-government sentiments. Chief Jemusi of the Qwabe Chiefdom stated that the preacher had visited him several times and that "his objects were to raise the natives above the white people and put them in a position to rule themselves, as the white/....

---

53. See above pp 13-15.

54. Informants who are likely to be in a position to provide this kind of information are often reluctant to do so, because of the repercussions this might have. Mrs. Shibe, for example, exclaimed "No, no, no ... !" when asked if Shibe was involved in politics.

55. S.N.A. 1/1/294 2772/01, "Alleged disloyal talk of Simungu Shibe", R. Plant's report, 26 November 1901.



white man's government oppressed the natives".<sup>56</sup> Another witness claimed that:

I have heard Simungu talk like this many times - 'you people come and join us, today we are weak, if you all join us we shall be strong, and after a few years we shall get back the old law, the land will be ours, the natives will be on the top, the English at the bottom; then let the English go their way, where they please.'<sup>57</sup>

It is difficult to gauge the accuracy of these statements.<sup>58</sup> The magistrate himself ultimately came to the conclusion that Shibe's goal was religious and not political independence,<sup>59</sup> and no charges were laid against him. But given his experience as an exempted native and as a friend of Dube and Harriette Colenso, Shibe may well have subscribed to such political sentiments. As an exempted native he was aware that the Natal government paid little heed to petitions and requests from Africans. More overt political action was impossible in the circumstances of the time.<sup>60</sup> It is possible that Shibe saw in religious independence the first step towards political freedom for Natal Africans. This would account for his using the ZCC to foster anti-government feeling. In this way the church represented not only a rebellion against the AZM, but a means of political protest against the Natal government.

By virtue of his position as preacher-in-charge of the Table Mountain church, Shibe commanded a great deal of respect/....

- 
56. S.N.A. 1/1/294 2772/01, "Alleged Disloyal Talk", Chief Jemusi's evidence, 3 February 1902.
57. S.N.A. 1/1/294 2772/01, "Alleged Disloyal Talk", Alfred Fynn's evidence, 26 November 1901.
58. It is possible that the witnesses were merely providing what they thought was required of them by the European magistrate.
59. S.N.A. 1/1/294 2772/01, "Alleged Disloyal Talk", Magistrate's report.
60. See above p 58.

respect from the African converts on the station. He was one of the few literate members of the community <sup>61</sup> and under these circumstances the African Christians were dependent on him to act as a go-between between them and the Mission. It is possible that Shibe used his authority to persuade his congregation to join him in his rebellion against the AZM. It was in his personal interests to establish the ZCC and the more Africans he could persuade to join the church the better were his chances of success. To suggest however, as some of the missionaries were wont to do, <sup>62</sup> that Shibe was the sole cause of the "trouble" at Table Mountain is to provide an inaccurate picture of the whole affair. Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that the dispute originated with the congregation and was only later taken up by Shibe. In 1898 F. R. Bunker presented the American Board with a report on the ZCC, in which he stated that while Shibe was still at Lovedale, a section of the Table Mountain Church had become dissatisfied with the decision to transfer the station to the NCU, and that "on his return, Simungu consented to lead that party". <sup>63</sup> In its letter to Smith in 1897 the "Committee of Table Mountain" wrote that Shibe "would have gone away before now only that we can't afford to part with him", <sup>64</sup> implying that the preacher was prepared to accept his removal to the Noodsburg, but that his congregation would not release him. Shibe himself described the situation in the following terms: "I was separated/...

- 
61. ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Goodenough, 8 August 1898. It is possible that Pugh, who throughout this period was doing his best to slander the ZCC, was wrong here. However, since the station-school had been inactive for a long period, he may have been correct.
62. See, for example, ABM A/2/29, Vermont to Stewart, 23 August 1897.
63. A 747, Bunker, F.R., "General Letter of the AZM", June 1898, p 12.
64. A 748, "Committee of Table Mountain" to Smith, 10 November 1897.

separated by the congregation and I have accepted this separation." <sup>65</sup>

The form of protest which Shibe and his congregation adopted was the logical outcome of their experience as AZM converts and as African Christians resident in Natal. In particular, their being members of the Table Mountain Church rendered this group of Africans especially receptive to the idea of establishing an independent church. In their reports to the Board in the 1890's, the AZM missionaries made much of the "spirit of independence" which had begun to manifest itself among their African Churches. <sup>66</sup> This constituted a desire on the part of the converts for greater freedom from missionary control and for a larger say in the running of church affairs. The need for independence was felt on all the AZM stations, but nowhere did it find more fruitful ground than at Table Mountain. Unlike other stations, the church at Table Mountain had not enjoyed the constant services of a white missionary and what mission work was accomplished in this area was achieved largely as a result of the efforts of church members themselves. <sup>67</sup> In these terms, Table Mountain was virtually independent long before any of the other stations began to feel the need for freedom from missionary control. With the arrival of Pugh in 1896, this independence was threatened, especially since Pugh proposed to remove the man who was responsible for establishing successful mission work at the station. Since the Mission was not prepared to listen to their protests, Shibe and his followers decided to form/....

---

65. S.C. 1/16/38, S. Shibe's evidence.

66. See, for example, Bunker, "General Letter", p 9.

67. See above pp 64-65.



form an independent church.

By 1898 the idea and working of an independent church was familiar to most African Christians in Natal. Several major secessions had occurred in the Cape Colony and on the Witwatersrand, and scores of small churches were springing up all over South Africa.<sup>68</sup> The ideas contained in this movement were brought closer to home by the visit to Natal in 1896 of the English missionary, Joseph Booth.<sup>69</sup> Booth, who was a proponent of the slogan "Africa for the Africans", held meetings with Africans in Durban to discuss the setting up of an "African Christian Union". Among other things, he proposed that all mission-stations, schools and industries should be controlled entirely by Africans.<sup>70</sup> Although his scheme was to be shortlived<sup>71</sup> it "acted as a powerful stimulus to the schismatic spirit so prevalent at just that time".<sup>72</sup> Before Booth's arrival in Natal, there had been no major secessions from missionary societies in that colony. Seven years later, nine independent churches had come into existence.<sup>73</sup>

Booth's meetings were attended by educated Africans from all parts of Natal and it is possible that Shibe was present at the gathering in Durban and that he transmitted the ideas

discussed/...

- 
- 68. For details, see Sundkler Bantu Prophets, pp 38-43.
  - 69. The best treatment of Booth is to be found in Shepperson, G. and Price, T., Independent African, (Edinburgh, 1958).
  - 70. A copy of the manifesto of the "African Christian Union" is in A 748. See also Shepperson, "Ethiopianism and African Nationalism", pp 12-13.
  - 71. The plan fell through when the Natal Africans demanded that, in keeping with his principles Booth should be excluded from the Union. Booth refused to do so.
  - 72. ABM A/1/9, Bridgman, "The Ethiopian Movement", p11.
  - 73. Ibid.

discussed there to the Table Mountain congregation<sup>74</sup> The preacher was, however, not the church's only contact with such ideas. Table Mountain was very close to the AZM church at the Noodsburg, where Mbiyana Ngidi, the first African pastor to have been ordained by the Mission, established the Uhlanga (National) Church in 1890.<sup>75</sup> Switzer suggests that this secession was "an important prelude" to the formation of the ZCC.<sup>76</sup> The migration which Njaleki led from the station in the early 1880's, while not constituting a full-scale independent church, also contributed towards the growth of an "independent spirit" at Table Mountain. Faced with the Mission's intransigence in 1898, the converts could recall this earlier occasion on which members of their church had expressed their dissatisfaction with AZM policies by removing themselves from its jurisdiction.

The rise of the African Independent Church Movement has been attributed by a number of authors to the shortcomings of European missionary policies.<sup>77</sup> In one respect at least, the policies of the AZM contributed directly to the formation of the ZCC. Contrary to Rich's assertion that the Mission adopted a "deliberate policy of avoiding religious separatism"<sup>78</sup> by embracing the concepts of self-support and self-government, it may be argued that the missionaries' reluctance/....

74. Shibe was in Durban when the meetings were held. He was on his way back to Table Mountain from Lovedale.

75. For details, see Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", pp 374-376.

76. Ibid.

77. For example Barrett, Schism and Renewal; Oosthuizen, Post-Christianity; Ayandele, The Missionary Impact; various papers in Hayward (ed), African Independent Church Movements.

78. Rich "Black Peasants", p 5. Rich stated in private conversation that in making this statement he had succumbed to AZM propaganda.

reluctance to implement these principles played a crucial role in the disputes at Table Mountain and Johannesburg. At both centres successful missionary work had been established and maintained largely as the result of African initiative. Both churches wanted African pastors ordained over them and were prepared to raise the means to provide their salaries. The AZM however, wished to re-establish white control in these areas <sup>79</sup> and it did so without consulting the converts, barely a year after they had received a letter from America urging them to elect their own ministers. <sup>80</sup>

The converts at Table Mountain used the self-support circular as justification for their refusal to accept Shibe's removal from the station. In their letter to Smith, Mzolo and Zondi reminded the foreign secretary of "the paper ... sent out to us, speaking of the members of our church, that they ought to maintain themselves ... as well as to maintain their own missionaries". <sup>81</sup> When Pixley visited the station in October 1897 and informed the church that they had no authority to select their own minister, the converts replied with the argument that "we obtained (this) authority from letters writted at Mapumulo ... These letters were given to us by the American missionaries. These letters gave us authority to be a church and to appoint (our) own minister". <sup>82</sup> The Mission's attempts to remove Shibe from Table Mountain and its refusal to ordain him were seen as a violation of the directives of the circular. The preacher and his followers bitterly resented being "sold out" to the NCU without being consulted. To them this was further proof of the missionaries' total disregard for their right to participate in decisions/....


- 
79. Although government pressure played a part in the decision to hand Table Mountain over to the NCU, the AZM appears to have decided on this course before 1887. See Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 402.
80. See above p 48.
81. A 748, "Committee of Table Mountain" to Smith, 10 November 1897.
82. S.C. 1/16/38, Mzolo's evidence.



decisions affecting their welfare. <sup>83</sup>

The ordination of Shibe became a central issue in the dispute between the AZM and the Table Mountain church and, as noted above, it was to provide the means whereby the preacher finally separated from the Mission. Shibe was, however, not the only preacher who was dissatisfied with his position. In the interview with Vermont he stated the "no less than seven were seeking ordination among the natives". <sup>84</sup> The ZCC counted among its recruits many who had given up hope of being ordained by the AZM and who thought they might achieve this in the new church. A feature of the ZCC in the early years of its existence was the number of pastors it employed. By 1925 thirty-five Africans had been ordained and a large proportion of these had formerly been preachers in the service of the mission. <sup>85</sup>

The AZM's failure to acknowledge the converts' right to self-government appears to have been the major reason for conflict between the Mission and the Table Mountain church. Other aspects of Mission policy, while contributing towards the growth of dissatisfaction on the part of the African Christians, were not important considerations in the setting up of the ZCC. Shibe and his followers did not separate from the AZM on grounds of doctrinal differences. This is evident/....

- 
83. The phrase "sold out" is used in a number of Shibe's letters. That this was deeply resented is illustrated by a letter Shibe wrote to Kilbon in 1898 in which he stated, "A father always informs a child of any dealings, so as not to arouse any misunderstanding".
84. ABM A/2/29, Vermont to Stewart, 23 August 1897.
85. Roberts, A.W., "Native Churches Commission : Ts. notes on various churches, their origins, founders and leaders, with some comment from 'parent churches' ", (Cory Library, Rhodes University). 

evident from Shibe's statement that "It did not make me spiritually richer to remove myself from the church; if I would have thought I would have realized more riches I would have joined other denominations".<sup>86</sup> A.W. Roberts, who interviewed ZCC leaders in his capacity as chairman of the 1925 Native Churches Commission, found that the church adhered strictly to the doctrines of the AZM.<sup>87</sup> The ZCC has continued to use the American Board hymn book and the order of service followed in its churches closely resembles that of the Mission.<sup>88</sup> The committee established by Shibe in 1900 to administer the affairs of the churches is a carbon-copy of the AZM executive.<sup>89</sup>

While acknowledging that the ZCC did not differ from the Mission on questions of doctrine, the missionaries claimed that it had subverted the moral principles laid down by the AZM and that it was encouraging a reversion to "traditional" practices. In its annual letter to the Board in 1900 the Mission noted that the ZCC "has seemed to lower the standard of Christian living, admitting to its church and communion those generally known to be living lives utterly at variance with church rules and Christian principles", and offered as proof of this the fact that Shibe, "once an abstainer, now carries a large snuff-box".<sup>90</sup> Bridgman later explained the popularity of the church in terms of its willingness to accept as members Africans who, for reason of their low moral standards/....

- 
- 86. ABM A/2/10, Shibe to (?) Kilbon, 22 August 1898 (translated by M. Bhengu).
  - 87. Roberts, "Native Churches Commission : Ts notes. "In these terms, the ZCC may be classified as an "Ethiopian" church.
  - 88. Interview with Mrs. Shibe, 15 April 1978.
  - 89. Information taken from minutes of ZCC meetings as published in Ilanga Lase Natal, August 1903. See also Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 421, n 95.
  - 90. A 754, "General Letter of the AZM", 1899-1900, p 9.

standards, would not have gained admittance to the AZM churches.

The missionaries' fears notwithstanding, the question of "traditional" practices does not appear to have constituted a crucial issue in Shibe's decision to establish an independent church. The converts at Table Mountain had found it difficult to adhere to the moral standards imposed on them by the Mission and cases of "backsliding" occurred there as much as at any other station,<sup>92</sup> but there is no evidence to suggest that those who joined the ZCC did so because it practised "heathen" customs. Indeed, Shibe, who played such a prominent role in the temperance crusades and moral revivals which swept the Mission in the 1870's, was unlikely to sanction such activities. Roberts stated that "to Simungu's credit, it may be said that for the most part he is reputed to have stood firm for the standards of morality in which he was trained under the American Mission".<sup>93</sup> Pugh, who was no friend of Shibe's and who was responsible for many of the rumours circulating about the ZCC, was obliged to admit in evidence before the Supreme Court that the preacher "has not done anything in the conduct of his services that I have seen and which I can say was improper".<sup>94</sup>

Very few studies of African independent churches have attempted to provide an overall explanation for the emergence of these churches. Instead there has been a tendency to postulate a hierarchy of causes. Barrett's study is typical of this approach/...

- 
- 91. ABM A/1/9, Bridgman, "The Ethiopian Movement", p 18.
  - 92. When Pixley visited the station in 1887, he reported that the church was in a "bad spiritual state" and that very few members were willing to give up beer. See ABM A/3/39, Pixley to Smith, 31 August, 1887.
  - 93. Roberts, "Native Churches Commission : Ts notes".
  - 94. S.C. 1/16/38, Pugh's evidence.



this approach. He maintains that "causation depends on the accumulation of a number of different factors" and that "independency is the product of multiple causes".<sup>95</sup> His "tribal zeitgeist" represents an attempt to group these causes into a coherent explanation for the emergence of independent churches in Africa. While Barrett's study has the merit of emphasizing the complexity of the issues involved, it perpetuates the major drawback of this kind of study in that it fails to make explicit the interconnections between the various causes put forward. This is especially true of the oft-utilized distinction between the "religious" and "political" dimensions of independency.

In the post-independence era in Africa, frequent references have been made to the connection which exists between missionary activity and the activities of the imperial authorities in Africa. While few scholars are prepared to accept the thesis that missionaries were "agents of imperial expansion", most would agree that a relationship did exist between these two agencies and that in many cases the one aided the other in achieving its objectives.<sup>96</sup> In view of the debate which for some time has been raging over this issue, it is surprising that writers on African independent churches have continued to maintain a rigid separation between the "religious" and "political" dimensions of independency. This tendency has been especially prevalent among writers in South Africa, where official policy has always been to "keep politics out of religion". Thus Oosthuizen maintains that "it is a mistake to see the independent movements, especially the Ethiopian movements, as nationalistic enterprises with political aspirations ... The church cannot associate itself unconditionally/....

---

95. Barrett, Schism and Renewal, p 98.

96. See above pp 13-15.

tionally with the freedom movements and ... these movements have realized this very well".<sup>97</sup> In a more recent article he suggests that "the political factors have been overrated" and that independent churches are primarily a "reaction to mission".<sup>98</sup>

The formation of the ZCC was closely linked to the policies of the AZM, particularly on the issue of self-support; in these terms the church may be viewed as representing a "reaction to mission". The missionaries' refusal to grant the African converts self-government ran contrary to official American Board policy. In other parts of the world American Board missionaries had implemented this principle successfully,<sup>99</sup> but the AZM missionaries refused to do so. The missionaries who were sent out to Natal were not different in any way from others in the employ of the ABCFM and their denial of the converts' right to a larger say in the running of church affairs was not due to any personality quirks. Rather, it reflected the attitudes and policies of the Natal colonists, with whom the missionaries were in close contact.

From the time of Shepstone, Natal "native policy" was based on the assumption that Africans could not be entrusted with the running of their own affairs, but had to be guided and "protected" by the Natal government.<sup>100</sup> This policy was, of course, the result of a fear on the part of the white colonists that should Africans receive full political rights they would prove a serious obstacle to the maintainance of white/....

---

97. Oosthuizen, Post-Christianity, p 7.

98. Oosthuizen, "The 'separatist' churches", p 11.

99. For example, in India, Turkey and China. See Strong, The Story of the American Board.

100. For "native policy" under Shepstone, see Welsh, The Roots of Segregation Chs. 2 and 3.

white political and economic supremacy in Natal.<sup>101</sup> Although they found much to criticize in colonial policy the American missionaries were far closer to the white colonists in attitude and lifestyle than to the African converts.<sup>102</sup> Their tacit acceptance of Natal "native policy" is illustrated by the prominent role they played in setting up the Mission Reserves System. The disputes which the missionaries entered into with the colonial government were ostensibly based on a desire to achieve certain rights for the African converts, but were in reality attempts to protect their own interests.<sup>103</sup> In denying its converts the right to self-government AZM policy mirrored very accurately the prejudices of Natal colonial society.

The Missionaries were inclined to deny the AZM churches the right to self-government partly because they acquired the prejudices of colonial society; at the same time that society actively discouraged the policy of self-support. In order to prevent more of its converts joining the ZCC the Mission had been obliged in 1901 to grant its churches a modicum of self-government in the form of the African Congregational Church.<sup>104</sup> The colonists disapproved of this move and advocated a return to the old system of missionary control. The settler-dominated Natal Lands Commission stated in its report in 1902 that:

Those/....

---

101. Ibid, p241.

102. Dinnerstein, "The American board Mission", p 195.

103. For example, the controversy over the Mission Reserves Act of 1895. The missionaries finally agreed to the implementation of the bill on condition that they receive half the reserve rents. The African converts, who bitterly opposed the bill, were sold out in a compromise agreement between the AZM and the Natal government.

104. For details, see Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", pp 400-401.



Those controlling the American Missions believe the time has come when, under native ministers, the natives should be left to control themselves. Commissioners have come to the conclusion that this is an entire mistake, and believe that the true interests of missionary work can only be properly served by a qualified white missionary being resident at and controlling each station . 105

This recommendation was made law in 1902. 106 The missionaries were therefore aware that if they actively pursued a policy of self-government they ran the risk of incurring the wrath of the Natal government, upon whose goodwill the success of their work was ultimately dependent.

In the light of the above analysis, it is impossible to distinguish between the "religious" and "political" reasons for the formation of the ZCC. The church represented a response to the policies of the AZM and the Natal government, not in isolation, but as a compact whole. It is in these terms that the ZCC should be regarded as a reaction to the colonial presence in Natal.

Nowhere is this point better illustrated than in the question of the economic insecurity of the Table Mountain converts. When Shibe broke away from the AZM to form the ZCC he carried with him only a portion of the Table Mountain church. A number of converts decided to accept the authority of Pugh and remain within the Mission. Obviously, different individuals had different reasons for joining the ZCC or not. There is evidence to suggest, however, that those who followed Shibe did so because the ZCC offered them a secure right to land at a time when, as a result of the combined efforts/....

---

105. Report of the Natal Lands Commission, Published under Government Notice No. 136 of 1902, p 29.

106. See below p 136.

efforts of the Mission and the Natal government, their security of tenure at Table Mountain was being threatened.

When the system of mission reserves was inaugurated in Natal, the colonists expressed opposition to the idea, and throughout the second half of the nineteenth century settler politics were directed towards reclaiming these areas for white settlement. The Table Mountain Mission Reserve was particularly coveted by the colonists because it was close to Pietermaritzburg and possessed good grazing for cattle.<sup>107</sup> The African population was made aware of the colonists' designs on their land by the annual exodus of white-owned cattle to the reserve,<sup>108</sup> and by the Natal government's attempt to annex the area in 1887.<sup>109</sup> With the introduction of the Mission Reserve Bill in 1895, their position became even more tenuous. All the while the missionaries retained control over the reserve, they could be expected to protect the Africans' interest to some extent. Once the administration of the area was taken over by the government, there could be no guarantee that they would not be pushed off the land.<sup>110</sup>

All the Table Mountain converts suffered insecurity resulting from this situation, yet only a portion of them joined the ZCC. A clue to an understanding of why certain converts followed Shibe while others accepted Pugh is to be found in Pugh's interference in land disputes on the reserve in the 1890's. The demarcation of the Natal Mission Reserves in the mid-nineteenth century was carried out "without regard to the resident African population".<sup>111</sup> Chiefdoms were split, so that/...

107. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 100.

108. See above p 62.

109. See above pp 63-64.

110. See above pp 55-57.

111. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p82.

so that some followers of a chief found themselves living within a Reserve, while others remained outside its boundaries; and a number of Chiefdoms might be included within a single reserve. The boundaries between Chiefdoms were not clearly defined and as a result the missionaries who administered the areas spent much time sorting out land quarrels. These problems grew worse as the reserves became more and more overcrowded.

The Table Mountain Mission Reserve was more heavily populated than most of the other AZM stations,<sup>112</sup> and the competition for land was consequently greater. These problems were exacerbated by the presence of four independent chiefs on the Reserve.<sup>113</sup> From the time that it assumed trusteeship of Table Mountain the AZM received constant complaints that one or the other of these chiefs was encroaching on another's territory.<sup>114</sup> By 1896, when Pugh took up his position as missionary-in-charge of the station, the situation had escalated into a bitter conflict between the two principal contenders for land, Chiefs Mgangezwe and Mdepa. From the start, Pugh appears to have favoured the former, and he used his influence to persuade the Mission to do likewise.<sup>115</sup> In 1899, the Board of Trustees of the AZM recognized Mgangezwe as the sole authority on the Reserve.<sup>116</sup>

Pugh/....

- 
112. In 1895 the Table Mountain Reserve, amounting to 5,623 acres, supported a population of 1,100. Cf the Amanzimtoti Reserve (8,077 acres; population 1,140) or the Mapumulo Reserve (8,196 acres; population 1,000). Figures taken from Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", Appendix I, pp 566-567, and Appendix II, pp 572-573.
113. Report of the Native Mission Reserve Commission, p 6.
114. See, for example, SNA 1/1/102, 986/87, Pixley to SNA, 31 October 1887.
115. Pugh provided no reasons for his decision to support Mgangezwe, but it is possible that he did so because the chief enjoyed by far the largest following in the reserve and could use his influence to support the missionary.
116. A 755, Pugh, G.J. "Report of the Missionary in Charge of the work at Table Mountain", 1900, p 5.



Pugh later acknowledged that this decision "crippled our influence among the members of the one tribe, owing to the blame having been laid at the door of the missionary".<sup>117</sup> It was to be Mdepa's people who became members of the ZCC. Even before the Mission had decided to recognize Mgangezwe as the sole authority on the Reserve, Mdepa had begun to voice his opposition to the missionary. From letters written by Pugh during this period it appears that the chief deeply resented the missionary's interference in the dispute and that he and his followers joined the ZCC in order to use it as a vehicle for protest against Pugh and the AZM. Shortly after the formation of the ZCC, Pugh informed the Mission that Mdepa had engaged the services of a solicitor to fight his case in court and that "Simungu's party are aiding him in this matter".<sup>118</sup> In another letter he noted that this aid consisted of monetary contributions. In Pugh's view, this was all "part of a plan which Simungu's people are laying", namely, an attempt to establish the right of Africans to residence on the Mission Reserve Lands irrespective of any rulings by the AZM or the Natal government.<sup>119</sup>

Shibe and his followers demonstrated their loyalty to Mdepa by committing acts of aggression against members of Mgangezwe's chiefdom. In October 1897, Pugh reported that Shibe had deliberately ploughed a furrow through a piece of land which had been allocated to one of the "loyal" chief's followers.<sup>120</sup> This prompted Pugh to intensify his efforts/...

---

117. Ibid, pp 5-6.

118. ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Goodenough, 6 April 1898.

119. ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Goodenough, 27 April 1898.

120. ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Goodenough, 18 October 1898 and 25 October 1898.

efforts to secure the removal from the Reserve of not only Shibe, but all members of the ZCC. In July 1898 Pugh wrote to Goodenough requesting the removal of one Samuel Sirutu, a BaSotho living on the station who "since his residence here ... has persistently supported Simungu in all his recent actions". <sup>121</sup>

Pugh's efforts notwithstanding, Shibe and his followers remained at Table Mountain until 1903. It is interesting to note that the negotiations between the preacher and the AZM over his leaving the reserve once again broke down over the issue of property. Shibe maintained that the reason why he would not leave Table Mountain was because the Mission would not reimburse him sufficiently for his house and gardens. With the passage of the Mission Reserve Act into law in 1903, the preacher was obliged to vacate the Reserve. Although his efforts to guarantee a right to residence on the Mission Reserves for his followers were therefore ultimately unsuccessful, he did offer them a measure of economic security by purchasing a piece of crown land, amounting to some three hundred acres, at Umzumbe. <sup>122</sup> It is not clear how many of the ZCC members from Table Mountain joined him at Umzumbe, but in this way the ZCC provided the opportunity for security of tenure to its members at a time when Africans living on the Mission Reserves were facing an uncertain future.

Switzer writes, "One is impressed with the essential conservatism of the separatist movement ... the separatists were not possessed with a vision of society radically different from the one they had learnt so well from the missionaries". <sup>123</sup> If, however, the ZCC is regarded as a reaction to colonialism in Natal, it is impossible to accept this judgement. Shibe and his followers envisaged a society that/

---

121. ABM A/2/29, Pugh to Goodenough, 8 July 1898.

122. See above p 103.

123. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 403.

that was very different from the one in which they found themselves. They aspired to a situation in which Africans would share in the decision-making process of the colony, where they would have free access to land and security of tenure where they settled. In nineteenth century Natal these were revolutionary concepts. The church lacked the cohesion and organization of later African political organizations in South Africa; after the death of its founder it was to be beset by serious leadership disputes and even before this it was rent by further secessions,<sup>124</sup> but its objectives were basically the same. In this sense, it may be regarded as a forerunner of these later movements.

---

124. See below pp 132-133.



## CHAPTER V. THE ZCC 1900-1908 : EARLY GROWTH AND COLONIAL REACTION

Apart from a few scattered references in missionary and government records, very little information exists concerning the activities of the ZCC after its formation. The picture presented here is incomplete, but it provides some idea of the development of the church before 1910.

Switzer maintains that "the ZCC was relatively ineffective until after 1910"; he attributes this to the hostility of the AZM and the Natal government, and to "the strength and prestige of the reconciled churches".<sup>1</sup> Against this, however, it should be noted that the missionaries' hostility stemmed at least in part from the success with which the ZCC weaned AZM converts from the mission churches. Between 1900 and 1910 the ZCC was active on nearly all the AZM reserves and made serious inroads into the Mission's work in these areas. Bridgman was critical of this encroachment by the ZCC:

A conspicuous lack in the whole (Ethiopian) movement is the absence of a genuine missionary purpose. Primarily the idea seems to be not to take the Gospel to the unevangelized, but to form new churches in the very fields long occupied by Mission Societies, the idea being that the new organizations should if possible displace the old. Paul's ambition 'not to build upon another man's foundation' is just reversed by all Ethiopian bodies. Their very hope of existence is based on the expectation of reaping where others have sown.<sup>2</sup>

The ZCC was most successful on the Table Mountain Reserve. After Shibe's removal from the area in 1903, the church was controlled by Samuel Mzolo, a founder-member and the first treasurer of the ZCC. Weekly services were held in a hut specially constructed/...

1. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 400.
2. ABM A/1/9, Bridgman, "The Ethiopian Movement", p 17.

structed for worship. A school was started and a teacher employed.<sup>5</sup> Shibe visited Table Mountain periodically to conduct marriage services and to baptize new church members.<sup>4</sup>

The AZM made several attempts to remove Mzolo and others from the reserve. In 1902 the Mission held a special meeting to consider this matter and resolved to "advise the Trustees to secure the removal of Samuel Mzolo, Elijah Zondi, John Zondi and Charles Zulu".<sup>5</sup> In 1906 Taylor<sup>6</sup> wrote to the Secretary for Native Affairs once again requesting that these men be removed. The Government made investigations and warned Mzolo that, should he continue to conduct ZCC services at Table Mountain, he would be moved "to another part of the colony".<sup>7</sup> The Mission also received the full backing of Chief Mgangezwe, who had remained loyal to the AZM. He was opposed to ZCC activities on the reserve and made several attempts to evict Mzolo.<sup>8</sup>

All these efforts failed, and in 1910 the ZCC was still firmly established at Table Mountain. This was partly due to the Mission's failure to conduct missionary work in the area. In 1904 the NCU united with the Congregational Churches of the Cape Colony to form the Congregational Union of South Africa. Under the terms of the contract the AZM had signed with the NCU in 1894, the latter's control over Table Mountain was terminated by

such/....

- 
3. SNA 1/1/333, <sup>63</sup>/1906, Magistrate, Umgeni Division to USNA, 24 October 1906; "Supervisor", Estcourt, to USNA, 7 September 1906.
  4. SNA 1/1/291, <sup>698</sup>/1901, Pugh to SNA, 11 April 1901.
  5. A754, "Minutes of a Special Meeting of the AZM", 19 and 20 August 1902.
  6. Secretary, AZM.
  7. SNA 1/1/333 <sup>63</sup>/1906, Minister of Native Affairs to His Excellency the Governor, 6 November 1906.
  8. See, for example, Ibid, "Supervisor", Estcourt to USNA, 7 September 1906.

such a union.<sup>9</sup> In September 1904 the NCU asked the Mission to resume control over the station.<sup>10</sup> The AZM agreed and the transfer was completed by the beginning of 1905.<sup>11</sup>

Switzer notes that "when the NCU ... abandoned Table Mountain ... the Christian community was in a far worse condition than it had been ten years earlier".<sup>12</sup> The AZM made little attempt to remedy this situation. There was no missionary resident on the station and once again the church buildings were allowed to fall into disrepair.<sup>13</sup> It was for these reasons that the Natal government was reluctant to put an end to the activities of the ZCC in this area. S.O. Samuelson suggested that the ZCC's success at Table Mountain was the Mission's own fault. In a letter to the Natal Native Trust he remarked that "if (the American missionaries) do not attend to their work they need not be surprised if weeds spring up".<sup>14</sup> The ZCC was able to recruit African Christians resident at Table Mountain because there was no other body to cater for their religious needs.

The church was also active on a number of reserves where the AZM had established successful missionary work. At Umzumbe the work of the ZCC caused a "serious division" among the members of the AZM church.<sup>15</sup> Shibe had lived at Umzumbe for a number of years and had many friends and relations there, and many joined the church/...

- 
9. ABM A/1/2, "Minutes of the Semi-Annual Meeting of the AZM", 23 January 1899.
  10. ABM A/2/29, Cliffe to Bridgman, 20 September 1904.
  11. ABM A/3/37, Secretary, AZM to Cliffe, 15 December 1904.
  12. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 402.
  13. SNA 1/1/333, <sup>63</sup>/1906, S.O. Samuelson, (USNA) to Clerk, Natal Native Trust, 29 October 1906.
  14. Ibid.
  15. A754, "General Letter of the AZM", June 1902, p 3.



the church out of personal loyalty to its leader.<sup>16</sup> Regular services were held on the land which the church had purchased and a school was started. At Esidumbini an African named Mahlagamipana held services under the auspices of the ZCC. Several AZM converts living on this reserve switched their allegiance to the rival church.<sup>17</sup> The work of Elias Tiza on the Amanzimtoti Reserve proved a serious hindrance to the efforts of the AZM in that area.<sup>18</sup>

The ZCC did not just confine its activities to the Mission-Reserves. Switzer notes that Shibe established "a few" congregations in Zululand, where the AZM had been unable to carry on missionary work. The church also set up congregations in Mozambique and Tsongaland.<sup>19</sup> Elias Tiza preached periodically at Richmond, Msinga and Helpmekaar, none of which were AZM centres.<sup>20</sup> By 1925 the ZCC had established a chain of churches in the Transvaal, including such places as Benoni, Springs, Nigel, Ermelo and Standerton. In several of these areas church buildings had been constructed, and schools had been started at three centres. In Northern Natal churches were built at Estcourt, Mooi River, Greytown and Nottingham Road.<sup>21</sup>

Shibe/....

- 
- 16. A746, "Report of the District under the Charge of C.N. Ransom, 1897-1898.
  - 17. SNA 1/1/333, <sup>71</sup>/1906, Magistrate, Umgeni Division to USNA, 22 March 1906.
  - 18. SNA 1/1/333, <sup>63</sup>/1906, J. Scott to Inspector, Natal Police, 16 January 1906.
  - 19. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 399, 420 n 86.
  - 20. SNA 1/1/333, <sup>63</sup>/1906, Local magistrate's report on Tiza, 7 February 1906.
  - 21. Roberts, "Native Churches Commission, Ts notes."

Shibe was conscious of the need to provide for the education of the children of ZCC members. So schools were set up at several ZCC centres. At Bangibizo, inland from Umtwalume, a school was started, and by 1907 it had attracted fifteen pupils. The teacher, a young African woman, said to have been personally trained by Shibe, received a salary of ten shillings a month, paid by the parents of her pupils.<sup>22</sup> The school at Estcourt had forty-five pupils in 1925.<sup>23</sup> No information exists concerning the type of education offered at these schools, but it is likely that they were modelled on the AZM station-schools, where an elementary education in reading, writing and general knowledge was provided. Separate school buildings were rarely erected, lessons being held in the home of the local minister or in a church member's house.<sup>24</sup>

The ZCC claimed to have 6000 members in 1925. Roberts was of the opinion that this was a "gross exaggeration" and estimated membership at "one-sixth that number".<sup>25</sup> It is unlikely that the church was so large, as by this time it had suffered from a number of secessions. Several authors have noted that a major characteristic of African independent churches is their tendency to "split and keep on splitting".<sup>26</sup> This is particularly true of the ZCC.

Very little evidence exists about the reasons for these secessions. The first, in 1902, appears to have been the result of dissatisfaction with Shibe's exclusive control of the land at Umzumbe, /...

- 
- 22. SNA 1/1/387, <sup>3745</sup>/1907, District Officer, Natal Police, to SNA, 12 December 1907.
  - 23. Roberts, "Native Churches Commission, Ts notes".
  - 24. Ibid; SNA 1/1/387, <sup>3745</sup>/1907.
  - 25. Roberts, "Native Churches Commission, Ts notes".
  - 26. See, for example, Mzimba, "The African Church", p 93; Barrett, Schism and Renewal, p 16.

Umzumbe, to the purchase of which all ZCC members had contributed. The Mission noted in its annual letter to the Board in that year that many of Shibe's followers had "turned bitter towards him, thinking that he has cheated them out of money to buy land in his own name".<sup>27</sup> According to a present-day leader of the church, the secessions of 1907 and 1916 were caused by leadership quarrels.<sup>28</sup> In 1918 a group of ZCC members broke away to form the "Zulu of African Ethiopian Church". Sundkler notes that this church adopted a number of "Zionist" practices;<sup>29</sup> doctrinal differences may therefore have constituted the reason for this separation. The ZCC seems to have suffered from a leadership crisis, common to many independent churches, on the founder's death.<sup>30</sup> When Shibe died in 1924 the church split into three opposing factions.<sup>31</sup>

Throughout the period under review the ZCC was administered by an executive committee, consisting of a president, secretary and treasurer.<sup>32</sup> This committee presided over the annual meetings, which were made up of a working committee of delegates from all the ZCC churches.<sup>33</sup> Switzer suggests that the "ecclesiastical/...

---

27. A754, "General Letter of the AZM", June 1902, p 3.

28. Interview with Mrs Shibe, 15 April 1978.

29. Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets*, p 45.

30. *Ibid*, Ch.5. The recent court case in Pietermaritzburg over the leadership of the Shembe Church is a good example of this. When the prophet Shembe died, a struggle for leadership of the church ensued between his brother and his son.

31. I can find no further details on this split.

32. See above p 117.

33. "Minutes of a meeting of the ZCC" as reported in *Ilanga Lase Natal*, 21 August 1903.



siastical structure" of the church was "centralized and oriented towards an elite hierarchy," <sup>34</sup> and it would appear that the executive maintained tight control over the running of church affairs. ZCC members appear to have contributed regularly and generously to the church. At the annual meeting in 1903, for example, a sum of over eighty pounds was handed in to the treasurer, more than meeting the committee's expenses for the year. <sup>35</sup>

Very little information is available regarding other ZCC activities, particularly its involvement in political protest against the policies of the Natal government. Shibe appears to have used the church as a platform from which to articulate the grievances of Natal Africans. <sup>36</sup> He was careful, however, to avoid an open confrontation with the Government, which never succeeded in collecting enough evidence to bring a case against him. <sup>37</sup>

In this context, it is necessary to examine the extent of ZCC involvement in the 1906-1908 disturbances in Natal. Official observers at the time of the "rebellion" were convinced that the role of African Christians was "large and prominent", and that members of African Independent Churches in particular had been actively engaged in combat with government forces. <sup>38</sup> Shula Marks suggests that kholwa participation in the disturbances was "far more complex" than government reports made out. She points out that as many African Christians fought on the government's side as took up arms against it. Marks maintains, however, that of those kholwa who did oppose the government, the large majority were members/...

- 
- 34. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", n 95, p 421.
  - 35. "Minutes of a Meeting", Ilanga Lase Natal, 21 August 1903.
  - 36. See above pp 109-110.
  - 37. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 450.
  - 38. Marks, Reluctant Rebellion, p xvii.

members of independent churches.<sup>39</sup> The ZCC enjoyed a substantial increase in membership during this period, but this appears to have been the result of the general unrest rather than any direct involvement in the "rebellion".<sup>40</sup> Marks could find "no references to the ... ZCC as actively taking part in the fighting".<sup>41</sup> The American missionaries, who were inclined to believe the worst of Shibe, dismissed as "incredible" rumours that the church had joined the "rebels".<sup>42</sup>

The ferment in Natal over the contribution of "Ethiopianism" to the disturbances reflected very accurately the Natal colonists' fears of the independent church movement. By 1900 "Ethiopianism" had become a widespread phenomenon in South Africa and as such could not escape the attention of governments and colonists. In the pre-Union era, the South African colonies adopted widely divergent attitudes on matters concerning "native policy"; these differences were to emerge very clearly in their reactions to the independent church movement. The Cape Government, which had generally inclined to a more "liberal" treatment of Africans, adopted a policy of "wait and see" and set up machinery for the recognition of those churches whose leaders could comply with certain educational requirements.<sup>43</sup> In the Transvaal, "the white response to the emergence of Ethiopianism had taken a much more overtly excitable form than it had in the Cape".<sup>44</sup> Independent church leaders, especially those affiliated to the AME, were refused entry to the colony. By 1907, however, the Transvaal government had adopted a more moderate attitude towards the movement and these restrictions were lifted.<sup>45</sup>

Natal/...

---

39. Ibid, p 328.

40. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", pp 399-400.

41. Marks, Reluctant Rebellion, p 334.

42. Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 450.

43. Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, pp 65-67.

44. Rich, "Black Peasants", p 7.

45. For details, Ibid, pp 7-8.

Natal adopted by far the most repressive attitude towards the independent churches. Sundkler maintains that "all activities among natives in Natal and Zululand were viewed by the Europeans of that colony (with) ... intense suspicion".<sup>46</sup> This attitude stemmed from the colonists' position as a small white population living in the midst of a much larger African population. The Natal colonists were in constant fear of a "native uprising". Brookes and Webb describe this fear as "strong, enduring, and at times pathological".<sup>47</sup> The colonial response to independent churches represented the culmination of these fears. "Ethiopianism" was viewed as an attempt on the part of Africans to achieve not only religious, but political freedom. As such, it was "an unmitigated evil, to be extirpated at all costs".<sup>48</sup>

The Natal government proceeded to introduce a number of regulations aimed at restricting the movement. In 1902 the Natal Native Trust laid down that "no new churches were to be built and no evangelists allowed to reside on a reserve unless the station were placed under the personal charge of a resident white male missionary".<sup>49</sup> The following year the government approved a "marriage law", which stated that

No minister shall solemnize any marriage between natives according to Christian rites unless he shall have been licensed for that purpose by the Governor ... The granting or refusal of a license and the period during which it shall remain in force shall be in the sole and absolute discretion of the Governor ... Any person, not being a Minister licensed under this Act, who shall solemnize any marriage of natives by Christian rites ... shall be liable to a fine or imprisonment.<sup>50</sup>

Gubbens,/...

---

46. Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, p 68.

47. Brookes and Webb, A History of Natal, p 114.

48. Welsh, The Roots of Segregation, p 254.

49. Ibid, p 255.

50. Quoted in Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", p 436.



Gubbens, the acting Prime Minister of Natal, stated in 1907 that the object of these measures was to

... strengthen the hands of the European missionary in his endeavours to guide, direct and control the religious, educational and moral life of the native; to check the development and spread of separatist tendencies, and to maintain the ascendancy and supremacy over the native which it is the bounden duty of the government to carry out in the interests of the European race and the ultimate welfare of the natives themselves. <sup>51</sup>

The regulations did succeed in undermining the influence of the independent churches to a certain extent. None of their leaders were granted marriage licenses and members were obliged to bear the costs of civil ceremonies. <sup>52</sup> The 1902 Act was strictly enforced: by 1906 six churches had been closed down by the government because they were not under the control of a white missionary. <sup>53</sup>

Apart from Shibe and other ZCC ministers being refused marriage licenses, no evidence exists to show the extent to which these measures affected the church. At the behest of the AZM, which at this time was striving to undermine the influence of the ZCC on its reserves, government officials conducted a number of investigations into the activities of the church. <sup>54</sup> The government was, however, unable to prove anything against Shibe or any other African connected with the church. <sup>55</sup>

The Natal/...

- 
- 51. Inanda (unclassified AZM collection), C.O'Grady Gubbens to his excellency the Governor, 3 May 1907.
  - 52. In 1904 Shibe and another ZCC minister applied for licenses and were refused. See Inanda (unclassified AZM collection), Report of S.O. Samuelson, 21 March 1907.
  - 53. Marks, Reluctant Rebellion, p 78.
  - 54. See, for example, SNA 1/1/333, <sup>63</sup>/1906; SNA 1/1/387, 3745/1907.
  - 55. Ibid.

The Natal government did demonstrate its disapproval of the ZCC by launching an attack, in the period 1902 to 1907, on its parent body, the AZM. To some extent missionary societies in Natal were also objects of that suspicion with which colonists regarded the independent church movement. Most colonists had distrusted the missionaries and viewed educated Africans with fear and contempt.<sup>56</sup> "Ethiopianism" was seen as the logical outcome of the missionaries' attempts to raise "the native" above his station in life.<sup>57</sup> As the "father" of two independent churches<sup>58</sup> the AZM came under a great deal of suspicion and the regulations of 1902 and 1903 were to be applied to its work as much as to any independent church. Of the six churches destroyed by 1906, two belonged to the Mission. Independent church leaders were not the only Africans to be refused marriage licenses: all the ordained pastors in the service of the AZM were denied this privilege.<sup>59</sup>

The subsequent controversy between the AZM and the government and the government's attempts to implicate the Mission in the 1906-1908 disturbances have been well-documented,<sup>60</sup> and require only a summary. The colonists' attack centred around the AZM's policy of granting self-government to its African churches. Numerous attempts were made to prove that the African Congregational Church (ACC)<sup>61</sup> was an "Ethiopian" body and was beyond the control of the missionaries.<sup>62</sup> During the disturbances the  
government/...

---

56. See above pp 52-54.

57. ABM A/1/9, Taylor, "The Attitude of Government and Colonists 1903.

58. The ZCC and the Uhlanga Church. The phrase is Samuelson's.

59. Marks, Reluctant Rebellion, p 78; ABM A/5/65, Secretary, AZM to Sir Henry McCallum, 16 July 1906.

60. See Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission"; Marks, Reluctant Rebellion; Welsh, The Roots of Segregation.

61. The ACC was the name adopted by the churches in 1901. In this year, the churches were granted a much larger say in the running of church affairs.

62. A756, Bridgman to Drs E.E. and Sydney Strong, 6 May 1904.

government alleged that the African members of the ACC had joined the "rebellion" almost to a man,<sup>63</sup> and used this as proof of its contention that the mission had lost control over its churches

As had been the case in previous disputes between the AZM and the government these difficulties were ultimately sorted out, at the expense of the AZM converts. In 1907 the Mission, under instructions from the prime minister of Natal, drew up a new constitution for its churches. This document abrogated every privilege which the converts had gained during the reconciliation talks of 1901. Once again, the converts were denied a right to a voice in the running of church affairs. All the bodies on which they sat were to have purely advisory functions; the missionaries retained the power of veto over all decisions taken; and any convert who refused to acknowledge missionary authority could be excommunicated.<sup>64</sup> The name "African Congregational Church" was dropped; from henceforth the churches would be known as the "Congregational Churches of the American Board".<sup>65</sup>

The formation of the ZCC in 1898 had had practical benefits not only for those converts who joined its ranks, but also for those who had remained within the Mission. The support which Shibe and his followers had elicited from the pastors and the churches had forced the missionaries to make certain concessions. At the reconciliation talks the churches had been granted a large measure of self-government. Six years later, as a result of the agitation in Natal over the activities of the ZCC and other independent churches, the missionaries withdrew this right. It may be argued that the formation of the ZCC therefore had a retrogressive effect on the development of the AZM churches. On the other/...

---

63. For details, see Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", pp 443-454.

64. See ABM A/4/54, "Principles and Usages Guiding the Operations of the AZM", 1907; Switzer, "The Problems of an African Mission", pp 454-457.

65. The new name signifies a return to a paternal relationship between missionaries and converts.



the other hand, Shibe had demonstrated to these churches a way of protesting against the Mission and the government. In 1917 a number of converts were to follow this example and break away from the AZM to form the independent African Congregational Church.<sup>66</sup>

---

66. For details, see Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, pp 45-46.

## CONCLUSION

---

The ZCC emerged in response to the policies adopted by the AZM and the Natal government towards African Christians living in Natal in the second half of the nineteenth century. By the 1890's relations between the American missionaries and the African converts of the AZM had reached breaking point over the issues of traditional practices and the granting of self-government to the African churches. The Mission's refusal to ordain an African pastorate, even though the creation of an indigenous ministry was official American Board policy, was a crucial factor in the formation of the ZCC. The church emerged at Table Mountain because it was at this station that the missionaries' disregard for the converts' right to a say in the running of church affairs became most apparent. Throughout the nineteenth century the Table Mountain church had experienced neglect at the hands of the AZM and what missionary work was conducted in this area was achieved largely as a result of the efforts of the African converts themselves. In the 1880's the work was placed on a more secure footing with the appointment of Simungu Shibe as preacher-in-charge of Table Mountain. Shibe proved an able preacher and the converts were keen to have him ordained over the church. The Mission, however, wanted to maintain white control in the area and decided, without consulting Shibe or his congregation, to hand the station over to the NCU.

The ZCC did not emerge only in "reaction to mission", however. It also served as a platform from which African Christians could express their grievances against the Natal government. In particular, the church represented a protest against the government's land policies and its attempts, in the second half of the nineteenth century, to open the mission reserve lands to white settlement. Since political protest was impossible, the converts opted for religion as a means of expressing their dissatisfaction with government policies.

The ZCC may thus be described as representing a reaction to the policies of both the AZM and the Natal government. It is impossible, however, to maintain a rigid distinction between these two agencies. Although they disagreed with the Natal colonists on many issues the American missionaries were very much a part of colonial society and the attitudes they adopted towards the African converts reflected the prejudices of that society. The AZM and the Natal government were not separate entities, but facets of a single phenomenon: that of colonialism in Natal. In this sense, the ZCC may be described as representing a reaction to colonialism.

There has been a tendency to regard the African independent church movement as inherently conservative and as subscribing to very different goals from those of later African political organizations. This is possibly the result of an overemphasis on the religious dimensions of independency and a failure to explore more fully the extent to which religious separatism reflected the political aspirations of Africans living under colonial rule. While the objectives of the ZCC may have been somewhat limited, they were basically the same as those adopted by subsequent African political organizations in South Africa. Shibe and his followers looked forward to the day when Africans would participate, on an equal footing with whites, in decisions affecting their welfare. In these terms, the church may be regarded as forming part of the continuum of African protest against political inequality in South Africa.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### A. PRIMARY

#### (a) Published:

##### (i) Official:

Colony of Natal, Departmental Reports, 1894-1900.  
Report of the Native Mission Reserves Commission,  
No. 1307-100, 1886.

Report and Evidence of the Natal Native Affairs  
Commission, 1906-1907.

Report of the Lands Commission, published under  
Government notice No. 136 of 1902.

Report of the Native Churches Commission, U.G. 39-25.

Report of the Native Affairs Commission relating to  
Israelites at Bulhoek, A4-21.

##### (ii) Newspapers:

Natal Mercury.

Inkanyiso Lase Natal.

Ilanga Lase Natal.

The Missionary Herald. (Kille Campbell Library).

#### (b) Unpublished:

##### (i) Government records:

Secretary for Native Affairs (Government Archives,  
Pietermaritzburg), Minute papers, 1875-1910.

##### (ii) Supreme Court, reviews and appeals (Government Archives, Pietermaritzburg), 1898.

##### (iii) Mission Records:

1. American Board Mission Collection (Government  
Archives, Pietermaritzburg.)

Section A: American Board Mission in Natal

## A/1: Minutes of Meetings and Committee Reports:

A/1/7, Committee Reports, 1847-1896.

A/1/8, \_\_\_\_\_, 1896-1902.

A/1/9, \_\_\_\_\_, 1903-1906.

## A/2: Correspondence Received:

A/2/10, General, 1835-1900.

A/2/11, \_\_\_\_\_, 1901-1920.

A/2/15, From the Board, 1834-1869.

A/2/16, \_\_\_\_\_, (Letter Books) 1860-1899;  
1876-1889.

A/2/17, \_\_\_\_\_, 1887-1898.

A/2/18, \_\_\_\_\_, 1899-1910.

A/2/23, From the Government, 1888-1902.

A/2/24, \_\_\_\_\_, 1903-1910.

A/2/29, Between missionaries, 1892-1904.

A/2/30, \_\_\_\_\_, 1905-1920.

## A/3: Correspondence Dispatched:

A/3/34, General, 1835-1930.

A/3/38, To the Board, 1837-1930.

A/3/41, \_\_\_\_\_, Annual Reports, 1848-1897.

A/3/42, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 1898-1903,  
1905-1920.

A/3/46, \_\_\_\_\_, Annual Letters, 1853-1897.

A/3/48, \_\_\_\_\_, Tabular Views, 1841-1959.

A/3/49, To the Government, 1835-1910.

## A/4: Internal:

A/4/51, Misc. Mission Material, 1835-1964.

A/4/52, \_\_\_\_\_

A/4/53, Native Churches, general, 1883-1963.

A/4/54, \_\_\_\_\_, councils and government,  
1897-1963.

A/4/55, \_\_\_\_\_, record books, 1844-1905.

A/4/56, Historical, newspaper clippings, 1881-1895

## A/5: Diverse Matters:

A/5/65, Papers re Rebellion, 1906-1907.Section B: Transvaal and Inhambane.B/1/70, Correspondence between Missionaries,  
1893-1944.

2. United Church Board for World Ministries Papers  
(Government Archives, Pretoria.)

Microfilms A746-A759.

(contains reports and letters addressed to the ABCFM during the 1890's.)

3. American Board Collection (Inanda Seminary, Natal  
(unclassified material covering AZM activities  
throughout the nineteenth century.)

4. American Board Mission Collection (Harvard Uni-  
versity.)

ABC 15.4.vol.15, Letter concerning independence  
movement of ZCC, 140.

ABC 15.4.vol.23, Annual Reports of Stations.

ABC 15.4.vol.48, Manuscript, "Self-Support Among  
the Kaffirs", by W.C. Wilcox.

ABC 15.4.vol.14, Notes on the Wilcox paper, by  
Dr Bridgman.

ABC 15.4.vol.14, Notes on the Wilcox paper, by  
Rev. Dorward.

5. Annual Reports of the American Board of Commis-  
sioners for Foreign Missions, 1890-1910. (William  
Cullen Library, University of the Witwatersrand.)

6. Proceedings of the Natal Missionary Conference,  
1877-1908. (incomplete, Kille Campbell Library.)

7. The Lovedale Collection. (Cory Library, Rhodes  
University.)

(iv) Private Papers:

Roberts, A.W., "Papers, Native Churches Commission".  
(Cory Library, Rhodes University.)



(v) Interviews:

Mrs J.M. Shibe, (Denver Zoar Mission Station, Umzumbe  
27 March 1978, 15 April 1978.

B. SECONDARY(a) Bibliographical Guides:

- Mitchell, R.C. and Turner, H.W., A Bibliography of Modern African Religious Movements, (Evanston, 1966.)  
Webb, C. de B., Guide to the Official Records of the Colony of Natal, (Pietermaritzburg, 1965).

(b) Books:

- Ayandele, E.A., The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria, 1842-1914, (London, 1966).  
Ajayi, J.F., Christian Missions in Nigeria, 1841-91 : The Making of a New Elite, (London, 1965).  
Anderson, G.H. (ed), The Theology of the Christian Mission, (London, 1961).  
Baëta, C.G. (ed.), Christianity in Tropical Africa, (Oxford 1968).  
Barrett, D.B., Schism and Renewal in Africa : An Analysis of six thousand contemporary Religious Movements, (London, 1968).  
Bates, E.S., American Faith, (New York, 1957).  
Becken, H.J. (ed.), Relevant Theology for Africa, (Durban, 1973).  
Berger, P.L., The Social Reality of Religion, (Penguin, 1973)  
Booth, A.R. (ed.), Journal of the Reverend George Champion, (Cape Town, 1967).  
——— The United States Experience in South Africa, 1784-1870, (Cape Town, 1976).  
Briggs, D.R. and Wing, J., The Harvest and the Hope : the Story of Congregationalism in South Africa, (Johannesburg, 1970).

- Brookes, E.H., The History of Native Policy in South Africa (Cape Town, 1924).
- A Century of Missions in Natal and Zululand (Cape Town, 1936).
- and Hurwitz, N., The Native Reserves of Natal, (Cape Town, 1957).
- and Webb, C. de B., A History of Natal, (Pietermaritzburg, 1967).
- Bryant, A.T., Olden Times in Zululand and Natal, (London, 1929).
- Callaway, H., The Religious System of the Amazulu, (London 1870).
- Clark, E.T., The Small Sects in America, (Nashville, 1957).
- Cohn, N., The Pursuit of the Millennium, (London, 1962).
- Dachs, A.J. (ed.), Christianity South of the Zambezi, (Gwelo, 1973).
- Daneel, M.L., Old and New in Southern Shona Independent Churches, Vol.I and II, (The Hague, 1974).
- Davenport, T.R.H., South Africa, A Modern History, (London, 1977).
- Davies, H. and Shepherd, R.H.W., South African Missions, 1800-1950 : an Anthology, (London, 1954).
- de Kiewiet, C.W., A History of South Africa : social and economic, (Oxford, 1972).
- de Kock, W.J. (ed.), Dictionary of South African Biography, Vol. I, (Pretoria, 1968).
- Dubb, A.A., Community of the Saved : an African Revivalist Church in the East Cape (Johannesburg, 1976).
- du Plessis, J., A History of Christian Missions in South Africa, (Cape Town, 1911).
- Fyfe, C. (ed.), African Studies Since 1945, (London, 1976).
- Gerdener, G.B.A., Recent Developments in the South African Mission Field, (London, 1958).
- Gluckman, M., Custom and Conflict in Africa, (Oxford, 1963).
- Goodsell, F.F., You Shall be my Witness : an interpretation of the History of the American Board, 1810-1960, (Boston, 1959).

- Gray, M.W.T., Stories of the Early American Missionaries in South Africa, (1933).
- Groves, C.P., The Planting of Christianity in Africa (3 vol (Birmingham, 1948-1958.))
- Hammond-Tooke, W.D. (ed), The Bantu-Speaking Peoples of Southern Africa, (London, 1974).
- Hance, G.R., The Zulu Yesterday and Today, (New York, 1916.
- Hanekom, C., Krisis en Kultus : Geloofsopvattinge en Seremonies Binne'n Swart Kerk, (Cape Town, 1975.)
- Hasting, A., African Christianity : an essay in interpretation, (London, 1976.)
- Hayward, V.E.W. (ed), African Independent Church Movements, (Edinburgh, 1963).
- Hodgkin, T., Nationalism in Colonial Africa, (London, 1960.
- Hudson, W.S., Religion in America, (New York, 1965.)
- Hunter, M., Reaction to Conquest, (London, 1936.)
- Kotzé, D.J. (ed), Letters of the American Missionaries, 1835-8, (Cape Town, 1950.)
- Krige, E.J., The Social System of the Zulus, (Pietermaritzburg, 1974.)
- Lea, A.A., The Native Separatist Church Movement in South Africa, (Cape Town, 1926).
- Majeke, N., The Role of the Missionaries in Conquest, (Johannesburg, 1952.)
- Marks, S., Reluctant Rebellion : The 1906-8 Disturbances in Natal, (Oxford, 1970.)
- Mayer, P., Townsmen or Tribesmen, (Cape Town, 1961.)
- Mbiti, J.S., African Religions and Philosophy, (London, 197
- Meiring, P., Stemme Uit die Swart Kerk, (Cape Town, 1975.)
- Mokitimi, S.M., "African Religion", in Handbook on Race Relations in South Africa, (Johannesburg, 1949).
- Mott, M., The Decisive Hour of Christian Missions, (New York, 1912.)
- Nicholls, G.H., Bayete! "Hail to the King", (London, 1923.)
- O'Dea, T.F., The Sociology of Religion, (New Jersey, 1966).
- Oliver, R., The Missionary Factor in East Africa, (London, 1952.)



- Oosthuizen, G.C., Post-Christianity in Africa, (London, 1964.)
- Paden, J.N. and Soja, E.W. (eds), The African Experience, (Evanston, 1970.)
- Pauw, B.A., Religion in a Tswana Chieftdom, (London, 1964.)
- Ranger, T.O. and Weller, J., Themes in the Christian History of Central Africa, (London, 1975.)
- and Kimambe, I., The Historical Study of African Religion, (London, 1972.)
- Roux, E., Time Longer Than Rope, (Madison, 1964.)
- Schapera, I. (ed), Western Civilization and the Natives of South Africa, (London, 1934.)
- Shepperson, G. and Price, T., Independent African, (Edinburgh, 1958.)
- Shorter, A., African Culture and the Christian Church, (London, 1973.)
- African Christian Theology, (London, 1975.)
- Smith, E.W., The Life and Times of Daniel Lindley, (London 1949.)
- The Blessed Missionaries, (Cape Town, 1950.)
- African Ideas of God, (London, 1950.)
- Strong, W.E., The Story of the American Board : an account of the first 100 years of the ABCFM, (Boston, 1910.)
- Sundermeier, T. (ed), Church and Nationalism in South Africa (Johannesburg, 1975.)
- Sundkler, B.G.M., Bantu Prophets in South Africa, (London, 1970.)
- Zulu Zion and Some Swazi Zionists, (London 1976.)
- Sweet, W.W., Religion in the Development of American Culture 1765-1840, (New York, 1952.)
- Taylor, J.D., Christianity and the Natives of South Africa, (Lovedale, 1928.)
- The American Board Mission in South Africa, (Durban, 1911.)
- Taylor, J.V., The Primal Vision : Christian Presence Amid African Religion, (London, 1965.)

- Turner, H.W., African Independent Church, Vols. I and II, (Oxford, 1967.)
- Tyler, J., Forty Years Among the Zulus, (Boston, 1891.)
- Vidler, A.R., The Church in an Age of Revolution, (Pelican, 1968.)
- Vilakazi, A., Zulu Transformations : a study of the Dynamics of Social Change, (Pietermaritzburg, 1965.)
- Walker, E.A., A History of South Africa, (London, 1957.)
- Walshe, P., The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, (London, 1970.)
- Welbourn, F.B. and Ogot, B.A., A Place to Feel at Home, (London, 1966.)
- Welsh, D., The Roots of Segregation : Native Policy in Natal, 1845-1910, (Cape Town, 1973.)
- Westermann, D., Africa and Christianity, (London, 1937.)
- West, M., Bishops and Prophets in a Black City, (Cape Town, 1975.)
- Wilson, M. and Mafeje, A., Langa : A Study of Social Groups in an African Township, (Cape Town, 1963.)

(c) Articles:

- Aquina, M., "The People of the Spirit : An Independent Church in Rhodesia," Africa, XXXVII, 2, 1967.
- "Zionism in Rhodesia", Africa, XXXIX, 2, 1969.
- Beidelman, T.O., "Social Theory and the Study of Christian Missions in Africa", Africa, XLIV, 1974.
- Berthoud, A.L., "The Missionary Situation in South Africa", International Review of Missions, XLIX, 193, 1960.
- Burnett, A., "Ethiopianism", Church Missionary Review, LXXIII, 837, 1932.
- Dougall, J.W.C., "African Separatist Churches," International Review of Missions, XLV, 1956.
- du Plessis, J., "The Missionary Situation in South Africa", International Review of Missions, 1, 1912.
- Etherington, N.A., "An American Errand into the South African Wilderness", Church History, XXXIX, 1970.

- 
- "Mission-Station Melting-Pots as a Factor in the Rise of South African Black Nationalism", The International Journal of African Historical Studies, IX, 4, 1976.
- 
- "Social Theory and the Study of Christian Missions in Africa : A South African Case Study," Africa, 47, 1, 1977.
- Gray, R., "Christianity and Religious Change in Africa," African Affairs, 77, 306, 1978.
- Henderson, I., "The Origins of Nationalism in East and Central Africa : The Zambian Case," Journal of African History, IX, 1970.
- Hinchcliff, P., "The 'English Speaking' Churches and South Africa in the Nineteenth Century", Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, 4, 1974.
- Horton, R., "African Conversion", Africa, XLI, 2, 1971.
- Hutchinson, B., "Some Social Consequences of Nineteenth Century Missionary Activity Among the South African Bantu", Africa, XXVII, 1957.
- Ilogu, E., "Independent African Churches in Nigeria", International Review of Missions, 63, 1974.
- Kuper, H., "The Swazi Reaction to Missions," African Studies 3, 1946.
- Lonsdale, T.M., "Some Origins of Nationalism in Africa", Journal of African History, 9, 1, 1968.
- Loram, C.T., "The Separatist Church Movement", International Review of Missions, 1926.
- Mair, L.P., "Independent Religious Movements in Three Continents", Comparative Studies in Society and History, 1,2, 1959.
- Marks, S., "The Ambiguities of Dependence : John L. Dube of Natal", Journal of Southern African Studies, 1, 2, 197
- 
- "Harriette Colenso and the Zulus, 1874-1913", Journal of African History, 4, 3, 1963.
- Mqotsi, L and Mkele, N., "Ibandla Lika Krestu : a Separatist Church", African Studies, 1, 3, 1946.

- Norton, G.R., "The Emergence of New Religious Organization in South Africa : a discussion of causes", Journal of the Royal African Society, XL, CLVIII, 1941.
- Parsons, Q.N., "Independency and Ethiopianism Among the Tswana in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries", Collected Seminar Papers on the Societies of Southern Africa in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, 1, 10, 1969-1970.
- Ranger, T.O., "Connexions between 'Primary Resistance' Movements and Modern Mass Nationalism in East and Central Africa", Part I, Journal of African History, XI, 3, 1968, Part II, Journal of African History, XI, 4, 1968.
- Saunders, C.C., "The New African Elite in the Eastern Cape and Some Late Nineteenth Century Origins of African Nationalism", Collected Seminar papers on the Societies of Southern Africa in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, 1, 10, 1969-1970.
- "Tile and the Thembu Church", Journal of African History, XI, 1970.
- Shenk, W.R., "Mission Agency and African Independent Churches", International Review of Missions, 63, 1974.
- Shepherd, R.H.W., "The Separatist Churches of South Africa", International Review of Missions, XXVI, 1937.
- Shepperson, G., "Ethiopianism and African Nationalism", Phylon, XIV, 1953.
- "The Politics of African Church Separatist Movements in British Central Africa, 1892-1916", African Studies Review, XXIV, 3, 1954.
- "Notes on Negro American Influences on the Emergence of African Nationalism", Journal of African History, 1, 2, 1960.
- Slater, H., "Land, Labour and Capital in Natal : The Natal Land and Colonization Company, 1860-1948", Journal of African History, XVI, 2, 1975.
- Strayer, R., "Mission History in Africa : New Perspectives on an Encounter", African Studies Review, XIX, 1, 1976.



Turner, H.W., "A Methodology for Modern African Religious Movements", Comparative Studies in Society and History, VII, 3, 1966.

———— "Problems in the Study of African Independent Churches", Numen, XIII, 1, 1966.

Van Onselen, C., "Reactions to Rinderpest in Southern Africa 1896-97", Journal of African History, XIII, 3, 1972.

West, M., "People of the Spirit : the Charismatic Movement Among African Independent Churches", Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, 7, 1974.

Williams, D., "African Nationalism in South Africa : Origin and Problems", Journal of African History, XI, 3, 1970

(d) Papers and Lectures:

Hughes, H., "A Warning to White South Africa : G.H. Nicholl and his novel Bayete!" (unpublished paper presented to the "African Studies Literary Seminar", University of the Witwatersrand, 13 June 1978.

Oosthuizen, G.C., "The 'Separatist' Churches in South Africa" unpublished lecture, University of Durban-Westville, May 1978.

Rich, P., "Black Peasants and Ethiopianism in South Africa, 1896-1915", (paper presented to the "Conference on the History of Opposition in Southern Africa", University of the Witwatersrand, January 1978.)

(e) Unpublished Theses:

Budaza, G.S., "The Native Separatist Church Movement", (M.A. thesis, UNISA, 1948.)

Dinnerstein, M., "The American Board Mission to the Zulus, 1835-1900", (Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University, 1971.)

Etherington, N.A., "The Rise of the Kholwa in Southeast Africa : African Christian Communities in Natal, Pondoland and Zululand, 1835-1880", (Ph.D. thesis, Yale University, 1971.)

- Hunt, B.N., "The Amanzimtoti Mission, 1850-1900", (Honours dissertation, University of Natal, 1970.)
- Kellerman, P.S., "Die Werk van die ABCFM in Suid-Afrika", (B.Ed. thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1946.)
- Shiels, R., "Newton Adams, 1835-51", (Honours dissertation, University of Natal, 1963.)
- Switzer, L.E., "The Problems of an African Mission in a White-Dominated, Multi-Racial Society", (Ph.D. thesis, University of Natal, 1971.)
- Van Antwerp, C.M., "Die Separatistiese Kerklike Beweging onder die Bantoe van Suid-Afrika", (Ph.D. thesis, University of Cape Town, 1938.)
-