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THE SPREAD OF THE AFRICAN INDEPENDENT CHURCHES IN POSTCOLONIAL SOUTHERN AFRICA IS A CHALLENGE TO POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES: A CASE OF THE LUMPA CHURCH IN ZAMBIA

BY

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KNDKAP001

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June 2008

DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in this dissertation from the works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature Signed by candidate

Date 14/02/08

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I am what I am today because of her, thanks a lot mum.

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ABSTRACT

The study reflects on the rise and spread of the African Independent Churches in postcolonial Africa. It moves from the perspective that African Independent Churches are both African and Christian (Masondo, 2005:101) "engaged in detailed appropriations of religious resources that can be mobilized in working out the meaningful contours of the world" (Chidester, 1997:11). The major part of the study focuses on the Lumpa Church of Alice Lenshina in Zambia. It traces the founding of the church based on a series of vision by Lenshina.

Lenshina's message was styled along the same lines as that of John the Baptist. She put emphasis on the eradication of witchcraft and sorcery. Her message was expressed in Bemba hymns sung in traditional tunes and she encouraged the beating of drums. She preached against beer and polygamy and she called for Biblical Christianity. Her leadership style was that of a chiefly nature.

The Lumpa Church had a huge impact on pastoral practices and modes of worship in the mainline churches. Alice Lenshina's teachings were responsible for the fall-out with the Zambian nationalist organization, United National Independence Party (UNIP), which resulted in 700 people losing their lives. The Lumpa Church was banned but nevertheless it has remained strong under the new name 'Jerusalem Church'.

Theories behind the phenomenal growth of AICs have been identified as social-political and racial tensions. Others are disappointment with Christianity introduced by the missionaries and negative impact that missionary culture had on the African cosmology and culture. Through AICs, Africans sought to reinstate honor and purpose and to resist white Christian rule.

The study has also highlighted that there were tendencies of discrimination against AICs by mission churches. It has therefore suggested that today, mission churches need to see value in what AICs do. Co-operation between AICs, mission churches and the state has been encouraged. Ecumenism has been encouraged as one way of forging unity. Notably, AICs are now part of ecumenical bodies in Zambia.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIC	African Independent/Instituted/Initiated/Indigenous Church
AFM	Apostolic Faith Mission
ANC	Africa National Congress
CAF	Central African Federation
CCZ	Christian Council of Zambia
ECZ	Episcopal Conference of Zambia
EFZ	Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia
ICBP	Inter diocesan Committee for Bemba Publications
KBBK	Kwafwana Banamayo Bena Kristu
MPLA	Movimento Popular para a Libertação de Angola
	(Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola)
OAIC	Organization of African Instituted Churches
RCZ	Reformed Church in Zambia
UCT	University of Cape Town
UCZ	United Church of Zambia
UNIP	United National Independence Party
WARC	World Alliance of Reformed Churches
WCC	World Council of Churches
WCF	Women Christian Fellowship
ZANU	Zimbabwe African Nationalist Union
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union

University of Cape Town

TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION ..... **I**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... **II**

ABSTRACT ..... **IV**

ABBREVIATIONS ..... **V**

CHAPTER 1 ..... **1**

INTRODUCTION **1**

1.1 INTRODUCTION 1
1.2. PROBLEM 2
1.3. RATIONALE 2
1.4. METHODOLOGY 3
1.5. LIMITATIONS 3
1.6. DELIMITATION 3

CHAPTER 2 ..... **5**

THE SPREAD OF THE AFRICAN INDEPENDENT CHURCHES IN POSTCOLONIAL SOUTHERN AFRICA **5**

2.1. INTRODUCTION 5
2.2. WHO ARE THE AFRICAN INDEPENDENT CHURCHES? 5
2.3. TYPES OF AFRICAN INDEPENDENT CHURCHES 6
2.4. ETHIOPIAN TYPE 7
2.5. ZIONIST TYPE 8
2.6. REASONS FOR THEIR SPREAD 9
2.6.1. Cultural reasons *10*
2.6.2. Racial- Political reasons *11*
2.6.2.1 Racism 11
2.6.2.2 Political reasons 11
2.6.3. AICs and Party Political involvement *12*
2.6.4. Polygamy *13*
2.7 OTHER REASONS 14
2.8 THE PROLIFERATION OF AICS IN ZAMBIA 15
2.8.1 Sacred Heart Church *16*

CHAPTER 3 ..... **18**

THE GENESIS OF THE LUMPA CHURCH IN ZAMBIA **18**

3.1 INTRODUCTION 18
3.2. ALICE MULENGA LENSHINA 18
3.2.1 Her Life *18*
3.4 FORMATION OF THE CHURCH 22
3.5 MEMBERSHIP 29
3.6 TEACHINGS AND ACTIVITIES 30

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 4 ..... **37**

LUMPA CHURCH: CHALLENGE TO POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES **37**

4.1 INTRODUCTION 37
4.2 LUMPA AND THE POLITICAL ARENA: THE IMPACT 37
4.3 CHALLENGE TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES 38
4.4 LUMPA AND MISSION CHURCHES: THE IMPACT 42
4.5 LUMPA AS 'JERUSALEM CHURCH' 49

CHAPTER 5 ..... **53**

REFLECTION **53**

5.1 INTRODUCTION 53
5.2 POLITICAL CHALLENGES 53
5.3 LITURGY 54
5.4 CULTURAL 55

CHAPTER 6 ..... **62**

CONCLUSION: A WAY FORWARD **62**

6.1 INTRODUCTION 62
6.2 ECUMENICAL INITIATIVES AND RECONCILIATION 62
6.3 THE PROPHETIC VOICE OF THE CHURCH 65
6.4 UNDERSTANDING EACH OTHER'S ROLE 67

BIBLIOGRAPHY **70**

University of Cape Town

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: ALICE MULENGA LUBUSHA LENSHINA 19

FIGURE 2: THE LUMPA CHURCH AT THEIR HEADQUARTERS AT KASOMO IN CHINSALI. 24

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The phenomenon of African Independent Churches (AIC) has been in existence for a long time. David Chidester (1992:112) traced this phenomenon in the beginning of the 1880s in South Africa. However, Lamin Sanneh (1983:168-169) declared that there was evidence that this spirit of independency was noticeable in West Africa much earlier. By 1950, the AICs were a familiar part of the religious scene in many areas of Africa (Hastings, 1979:67) and ever since; there has been a rapid growth in the number of these churches and in their membership (Daneel, 1987:25). During the last days of the colonial era in Southern Africa, the political edge of apparent nationalism and the potential threat of an opposition integrated and charged with religious enthusiasm unsettled the governments of the time. African Independent Churches gained certain notoriety among political authorities (Prozesky, 1995:120). This resulted in hostility from political and religious authorities. MacGaffey (1976:40) writing on the Kimbangu Church in Zaire, commented that AIC "leaders have constantly had to struggle to assert the right of their Churches to exist in the face of hostility founded ostensibly on claims that they do not conform to Christian orthodoxy".

In South Africa at the beginning of the 20th century, the colonial government established commissions to investigate what they called separatist churches. The government feared that they might pose a political challenge but all investigations concluded that they did not pose any threat. This did not stop mission churches from accusing them of being illegitimate establishments aimed at dissuading believers from the truth and returning them back to heathenism. They were also accused of sustaining their operations through "sheep stealing"- stealing members from mainline churches.

The current study, will demonstrate the extent to which AICs have posed a challenge to both political and religious authorities. It will argue that the widespread success of AICs in postcolonial Southern Africa has brought about significant, long-term

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challenges for post-colonial political and religious authorities. By challenge is meant something of a predicament that required political and religious authorities to stretch their faculties in order to overcome. One specific example of challenge posed by these churches is the ideological conflict with the elite in both political and religious circles. The Lumpa Church of Alice Mulenga Lenshina in Zambia is an example of an AIC that, through its teachings, beliefs, and code of ethics, conflicted with both political and religious leaders. The Lumpa Church, instead of promoting Zambian nationalism of the United National Independence Party (UNIP), created an alternative enclave of religious authority and power. In other words, they had an alternative to both (UNIP) and mission churches. The Lumpa alternative encapsulated political components, aspects of Bemba traditional religions, as well as, revivalist Christianity. This was a radical alternative as it merged aspects of church and state. The Lumpa alternative did not leave any space for members to either participate in the activities of the state or mission churches. The church also usurped the powers of chiefs and other local authorities.

1.2. Problem

The research problem addressed in this study is, firstly, how the emergence and spread of African Independent Churches challenged the political and religious authorities and what the consequences of such challenges have been. Secondly, the study addresses the responses of the political and religious authorities to challenges posed by African Independent Churches. Finally, it establishes whether it is possible for the state, the mission churches, and the African Independent Churches co-exist in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

1.3. Rationale

There is a widespread tendency in Zambia and other Southern African countries for members of the public to look down upon the African Independent Churches and its members. The study aims to present a positive picture of the African Independent Churches and elaborate on their beliefs and practices. Thus, the study will offer a contribution that will enable people, and in particular authorities in political and religious spheres, to appreciate contributions of African Independent Churches to the

University of Cape Town

universal Church and learn from them. This will also enable church leaders in mission churches to focus their attention to good pastoral practices and reserve judgment on the pastoral practices of the AICs. On the other hand, the study is vital for Zambia as a state that has enjoyed unity for the past forty-three years, as it will suggest ways in which Church leaders and Political leaders would implement ecumenical programs. Such programs would be inclusive of all regardless of their religious affiliation. It is hoped that there will be mutual recognition of the right of each group to exist and the fact that each one is genuine and has the ability to promote the interest of the people of Zambia. The study gleans lessons for the future handling of threats to peace and security which may be prompted by religious innovation in Zambia and beyond her borders.

1.4. Methodology

This study is based primarily on the literature available on various themes of AICs. There is a great deal of reliable academic literature available both at the UCT libraries and on the Internet on AICs. In other words, the research is mainly based on library research, relying on secondary sources, that is to say; books, journals, reports and Internet sources.

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1.5. Limitations

This study is limited by the literature that is available on the subject. The focus on the Lumpa Church on one hand is a limitation but a necessary one in order to avoid the danger of meaningless generalizations in an impossibly wide field (Daneel, 1987:19).

1.6. Delimitation

To conveniently place the perspectives of this study, the dissertation is divided into seven chapters. These seven chapters are arranged in a chronological order. Chapter 1 gives a picture of the rationale behind the research and an outline of research. Chapter 2 is an historical description of the origins and influences behind the growth of the AICs. Chapter 3 outlines the rise and teachings of Alice Mulenga Lenshina and how she founded the Lumpa Church in Zambia. Chapter 4 gives a detailed description of

the challenges posed by the Lumpa Church to both political and religious authorities in Zambia and how the authorities responded. Chapter 5 gives a general reflection on the rise and spread of the African Independent Churches in postcolonial Southern Africa. The focus is on the challenges posed. Specific examples from the Zambian context are drawn. Chapter 6 is the conclusion and it suggests ways of encouraging dialogue and acceptance between the politicians (the state), the leadership of mission churches, and the AICs

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CHAPTER 2

THE SPREAD OF THE AFRICAN INDEPENDENT CHURCHES IN POSTCOLONIAL SOUTHERN AFRICA

2.1. Introduction

African Independent Churches experienced significant growth during the postcolonial era in Southern Africa. The growth and spread of these churches was fueled by various factors. Masondo (2004:70) identified some of these factors as "white domination, the ceiling imposed by white domination on the aspirations of African Church workers, the ease with which Africans were expelled from the church, especially for plural marriages, and growing segregation between black and white congregations". These, among many other factors are highlighted. Some factors have been isolated for more particular attention. The chapter also gives a narrative about the spread of AICs in Zambia, particularly the Lumpa Church.

2.2. Who are the African Independent Churches?

African theologian Kofi Appiah-Kubi (1983) defined African Independent churches as a group of churches founded by African religious innovators to meet the spiritual needs of African adherents. In the words of Masondo (2004:70);

> ... there was a tendency among missionaries to force Africans to transform their cultural outlook and worldview in order to be Christian. In other words, Africans had to adopt a European or Western cultural outlook before becoming Christian. Missionaries could not separate Western culture from Christianity, thus the insistence on both. The AICs drew elements from African Culture and Christianity.

Masondo (2005:93) further pointed out that, the translation of the Bible into vernacular languages proved to be an essential tool for conversion. Consequently, "the Bible was appropriated as a local symbol which could be interpreted by indigenous people in ways they found appropriate" (Ibid.). The AICs introduced African forms of singing into the church in local languages and to African tunes (Baur, 1994:429). AICs also preserved aspects of African religion which where regarded as heathen by missionaries. Such innovations appealed to an African religiosity.

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Unfortunately, theologians and other scholars have used various derogatory terms to describe these churches. Some of the derogatory terms used are separatists, syncretistic, protest, nativistic, tribal, neo-pagan, spiritist, sectarian, cultic, messianic, and post-Christian (Kalu, 2005:312). Some simply refer to them as "black sectarian groups wearing all kinds of interesting robes and dresses, funny African religious groups" (Ngada, 2001: vi). Such characterizations and claims by outsiders often give the impression that the African Independent Churches are not proper churches and are inferior (West, 1975:3). AIC theologians and intellectuals accuse their critics of using western theological categories and assumptions to judge them.

> Outsiders suffer serious handicaps. They have their own frame of reference; the assumptions of anthropology or sociology or a western Theology. We find ourselves judged in terms of these norms. The view from outside, especially from outside of our African culture, tends to distort the picture and to prevent the outsider from seeing the real point about what we believe and what we are doing. They sometimes overlook what is important to us and emphasize what is not so important (SPEA, 1985:5).

The above observation points to the failure of critics to grasp the complexity and richness of African Independent Churches. The failure is as a result of the western lenses used by scholars and outsiders. The use of the term syncretic is problematic. According to Masondo (2005:96), syncretistic implies illegitimacy, meaning that these churches are illegitimate and therefore could not be called Christian. It is important to appreciate the observation made by Chidester (1992) and Pobee (1992) that African Independent Churches represent dissatisfaction with Christianity inherited from the west.

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2.3. Types of African Independent Churches

Bengt Sundkler, in his pioneering work on the South African Independent Churches, identified two types of AICs, which he broadly described as Ethiopian and Zionist churches (Githieya, 1997:9). The major difference between the two, according to Sundkler, is that (a) the Ethiopian type retained the style and format of worship and liturgy from the mission churches. They also retained the core values of mission churches, like education, hard work and private property. Masondo (2001:15) pointed out that the idea developed by Sundkler, in his 1948 book *Bantu Prophets*, that AICs are syncretic was very important in the later development of studies of the AICs. He elaborates that Sundkler drew a distinction between two types of churches within the

independent fold. Firstly, he identified the Ethiopian type, which was regarded as a "book" (*incwadi*) religion and whose leadership was that of a chiefly nature. Secondly, he identified the Zionist types, which were regarded as "spirit" (*umoya*) churches and whose leadership structure was that of a prophetic nature (Ibid.). They emphasized on the movement of the spirit. There was no formal structure in their worship and liturgy.

In any case, Venter, (2004:22) indicated that later on, other scholars added on other categories like Messianic and Apostolic to Sundkler's list. These churches show a more programmed worship and concentrated leadership than other Zionist churches. The promise of prophetic or messianic deliverance from the evils of the modern world is a distinctive characteristic of these churches (2004:49). Venter narrates that these churches emerged after Zionism was founded and they are better known by their founder's names (Ibid). They focus on the power and sanctity of their leaders. Often the leaders are thought by their followers to possess Christ-like characteristics. Venter cites an example of Shembe's Nazareth Baptist Church and the Zion Christian Church of Lekganye (Ibid). On the other hand, Apostolic churches are similar to Zionist congregations but often place more emphasis on formal theological training.

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2.4. Ethiopian Type

Ethiopian churches emerged in the 19th century (Chidester, 1992:114; Venter, 2004:19) and,

> Exhibited antiracist and Pan-Africanist tendencies while retaining the organization and doctrines of the white dominated Protestant churches from whom they broke away but now under African leadership (Venter, 2004:19).

In terms of theology and liturgy, the Ethiopian churches did not depart from the mission churches (Mosala, 1986:77). The difference was that they had black people as leaders and did not rely on external donors for funding. A number of studies have indicated that they even started their own schools but those closed down because of lack of funding. The ministers had to contend with lower stipends compared to their colleagues in the mission churches (Chidester, 1992:4).

Ethiopian churches marked the first serious attempt by black people at religious independency in South Africa. They mobilized religio-cultural resources from Christianity and African culture. Ethiopia was one of the points around which their identity was constructed. Furthermore, Ethiopia became an important rallying point because (i) it was the only African country that was not colonized at the end of the 19th century. (ii) It defeated Italy at the battle of Idowa. (iii) There are Biblical references to Ethiopia stretching her hand to God (Psalm, 68:31). Innovators interpreted the Biblical reference to Ethiopia to refer to "independent African Christianity" (Chidester, 1992:117). Ethiopia, thus, became a symbol of independence and redemption (Chidester, 1992:117; Oostuizen, 1992:3). According to Chidester (1992:117) when the Ethiopian movement began in South Africa, leaders "elevated Ethiopia to an important symbolic status in Christian faith".

However, there is evidence that their reasons for breaking away from mission churches were not only political but there were religious reasons as well. Chidester (1992:122) comments that "rather than concentrating on political action, the Ethiopian churches provided greater scope for an independent religious identity". This refers to their aspirations to be leaders.

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2.5. Zionist Type

Zionism owes its origin to the Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion founded by John Alexander Dowie in 1896 in the United State of America (Sundkler, 1961:48; Chidester, 1992:117; Oostuizen, 1992:3). The central pillars of Dowie's teachings were divine healing, triune immersion, and the conviction that the second coming of the Lord was near at hand (Sundkler, 1961:48). According to Chidester (1992:123) Zionist interest in South Africa were "began with the visit to Zion city, Illinois by Reverend J. U. Buchler". The Reverend Buchler was 'a South African Congregationalist' and was assigned by Dowie to be responsible of African work (Ibid.). One of the early converts was P. L. le Roux, a man of devout and childlike faith (Daneel, 1987:54). Through Le Roux, the Zionist movement gradually acquired a marked Pentecostal slant. Le Roux himself was baptized in the Holy Spirit in 1908 (Ibid.). In the same year Le Roux and several Black leaders founded the Zion Apostolic Church. Lucas Thomas Madhleni Zungu, another convert, also led a schism

after being refused ordination by Daniel Bryant. This was followed by a series of schisms. As a result of these splinter groups Independent Churches proliferated.

Generally, Zionist churches put a lot of emphasis on divine healing, the Holy Spirit, exorcism, speaking in tongues, prophecy, dietary prohibitions, triune immersion, and the conviction that the second coming of Jesus Christ was near at hand (Chidester, 1992:123-124 and Githieya, 1997:9). Masondo (2001:5) argued that healing is the main draw card for new members in the AICs. Divine healing coincides with African beliefs and practices of healing. As a result, these churches have been able to attract people from the mission churches to their healing services. He observed that some of these people attend these services because they cannot afford to live with the stigma attached to going to traditional healers. Kiernan (1990:238-240), in his study of Zionist at KwaMashu, concluded that they took African beliefs in witchcraft seriously. They prophesy that the victim had become defenceless to those evil powers as a result of decay in morals (Chidester, 1992:141). This lack of spiritual protection could be corrected by an infusion of the Holy Spirit (Ibid.).

In the Zionist Churches, the prophet is perceived as the messiah and Moses, leading his people into the Promised Land and his calling comes from above (Falk, 1979:455). The prophet promises total liberation from suffering, political domination, gives assurance of material prosperity, and good health (Mosala, 1986:73).

Daneel (1987:59) identified the following churches as the ones that experienced accelerated growth in the 20th century, the amaNazareta of Isaiah Shembe and the Zion Christian Church of Engenas Lekhanyane in South Africa; Mutendi's Zion Christian Church and Johane Maranke's African Apostolic Church in Zimbabwe; Alice Lenshina's Lumpa Church in Zambia and Simon Kimbangu's Church of Jesus Christ in Zaire.

2.6. Reasons for their spread

The subject of the reasons for the emergence and spread of AICs has attracted the attention of scholars from diverse disciplines. Allan Anderson (2001) commented that, writers have speculated on the causes for their emergence and growth. He

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continued to note that a great number and variety of opinions on the subject often tend to be highly selective, subjective, and reductionist depending on what particular interest or experience they reflect (Ibid.). For instance, Sundkler (1961:37) and Balandier (1966:41-65) have stressed the social political factor as the cause of separatism. They argued that Africans sought to strive for social justice. This view is also held by Ndiokwere (1981:16) and Kofi (1983:117). In support of this argument, Balandier (1966:41-65) cites an example of the origin of messianic movements in the Congo and the desire for political co-determination. He commented that "this phenomenon originated in a colonial situation where the colonizers oppressed the colonized" (Ibid).

On the other hand, Venter (2004:33) noted religious factors as reasons behind the spread of African Independent Churches. He observed that Africans were disappointed with Christianity introduced by the missionaries. Missionaries failed to meet local needs of the people. There was a desire for physical healing and a desire for community. Seeing the negative impact that missionary culture had on their cosmology and culture, Africans created Independent Churches to reinstate honor and purpose and to resist white Christian rule (Sundkler, 1961:29-32,295-297; Barrett 1968:83-158; Verryn, 1972:17-30; Thomas, 1999:18).

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2.6.1. Cultural reasons

The majority of missionaries and colonists had a flagrant disregard and contempt for African religion and culture. Mosala (1986:75) argued that when missionaries came to preach the gospel in Africa, they brought along a whole range of western values. He further stated that, they appeared determined to instill in their converts western values and distaste for African traditional religious values. They continued mounting continuous attacks against African traditional society (Daneel, 1987:18). There were also other missionaries who believed that Africans were empty vessels to be filled with the goodness of the gospel. They believed that it was crucial to take them away from all pagan influences. Consequently, African converts were expected to adopt a new identity based on the western Christian template. This was due to the missionaries' inadequate understanding of traditional African society. They had inadvertently attacked certain elements in African societies crucial to its existence, but

concerning which biblical faith was silent. However, there were some missionaries, like Colenso, who were interested in having meaningful dialogue with Africans. He did not believe in missionary methodology of taking converts to mission stations. For him, the gospel was powerful enough to sustain itself where people were. In other words, there was no need to uproot people.

In response to this cultural discrimination, the African Independent Churches sought to develop a type of worship, organization, and community life rooted in both biblical Christianity and African culture (Falk, 1979:457; Githieya, 1997:1). The re-imagining of Christian faith from an African perspective was an indigenous African contribution to Christianity (Ibid.). For Parratt (1987:16), the African Independent Churches sought for cultural integrity and spiritual autonomy.

2.6.2. Racial- Political reasons

2.6.2.1 Racism

Racism has been identified as one of the reasons for secession by early AICs (Chidester 1992:112; Thomas 1999:16; Hackett, 2001:189). Chidester has examples of how competent black ministers were overlooked for promotion; instead positions were given to inexperienced white ministers. African ministers had no say in how church finances were used- the example of James Dwane, a Methodist minister, who raised one hundred pounds on his trip to England. Church leaders promised him that he was going to have a say on how the money was going to be used but on his return he was refused a say (1992:114-117). Dwane was disappointed and he left the Methodist Church to join the Ethiopian Church led by Mokoni. For Linda Thomas (1999: 17), "African Independent Churches were a vehicle for a dignified and resilient people to fight against white racism and ecclesiastical control".

2.6.2.2 Political reasons

Allan Anderson (2001), David Chidester (1992:112), and Nathaniel Ndiokwere (1981:16-17) are of the view that the development of political struggles against colonialism and various forms of white minority rule in Africa contributed, to a

University of Cape Town

certain extent, to the rise of the numerous independent movements. They point to the fact that the impact of colonialism extended to the mission churches too, most of whose white leaders accepted uncritically the socio-political status quo and the paradigms of colonialism. As a result, little attempt was made to give African church leaders any real authority. Chidester cites an example of the unwillingness to ordain Africans as ministers of the word and sacrament (clergy) by white controlled protestant mission churches (1992:112). This limited black opportunity to exercise leadership. Limited opportunities for blacks to exercise leadership was frustrating, especially to those with talent. Consequently, some black Christians were inspired to form Independent churches. Allan Anderson (2001) amplified this by commenting that;

> Social and political factors have affected the formation of new religious movements all over the world and those in Africa are no exception. The situation was particularly aggravated in colonial Africa with the imposition of discriminatory laws that created migratory labor, the loss of land, alienation and impersonal mass housing. The full impact of colonialism was often felt in the latter half of the 20th century resulting in a sense of oppression, disorientation and marginalization that left people seeking to form new relationships in smaller social groups where they could really belong and regain some human dignity.

In this regard, African Independent Churches thus provided a place to feel at home (Thomas, 1999:17). However, this could also be seen in later developments of black mainline churches when they became independent of foreign control (Venter, 2004:15).

2.6.3. AICs and Party Political involvement

Daneel (1987:129) has noted that in the early sixties, "among the Shona Churches, their reticence with regard to national and party politics was conspicuous. The preaching of Independent Church leaders reflected sympathy for the Black struggle for political power and Black Nationalist sentiments. However, this did not lead to wholesale participation in party politics or militant political activities". Venter (2004:45) pointed out that the AICs were exonerated of complicity in the Bambata Rebellion of 1906 in Natal. For Venter; "African Independent Churches adopted an attitude of political quiescence which they still retain and which rendered them innocuous, if not, quite invisible in the eyes of the government".

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Anderson (1999:291-295) noted that the Zion Christian Church (ZCC) made some interesting political statements but regarded itself as above party politics. Government authorities were concerned about the political nature of AICs which were experiencing exceptional membership growth (Thomas, 1999:19). Barrett (1968) pointed out that such a concern was not confined to one country but was reflected throughout the whole continent.

However, within the political arena, "there have been occasions when some of these groups came into conflict with the authorities" (Daneel, 1987:128). A well-documented example is that of a South African Group, the Israelites in 1920s, which resulted in the Bulhoek massacre. This is an example of the AIC group that challenged the authority of the state. They refused to pay taxes and occupied land without proper authority. In their response they pointed out that they were simply obeying God. Enock Mgijima, who was the leader of the Israelites, instructed his followers to erect a settlement at Ntabelanga. For Mgijima, it was a case of responding to the dictates of the Old Testament religion (Anderson, 1999 and Ngada, 2001:8-9).

Daneel (1987:129) concluded that, "a careful scrutiny of such church-state conflicts reveals that only in rare instances was there any question of deliberate subversion by the Independent Churches". He gives examples of the Kimbangu movement "which was investigated and key figures were cast into prison or deported, but not primarily because these church leaders proclaimed a deliberate policy of resistance and subversion. The radical suppression was rather a result of the prejudices of Catholic priests as expressed in reports to the colonial regime and the popularity of a burgeoning movement which the government experienced as a threat" (Daneel, 1987:129).

2.6.4. Polygamy

Polygamy is one of the traditional institutions that came under heavy attack by the missionaries. As a result, it became one of the motivating factors for some leaders to form their own churches. (Chidester, 1992:112 and Ndiokwere, 1981:24) have observed that schisms have occurred among the African Independent Churches

University of Cape Town

themselves as a result of this phenomenon. Many Independent Church leaders and prophets, for example Simon Kimbangu, Alice Lenshina and Mai Chaza, forbade polygamy while others like Harris, Lekganyane, Josiah Oshintelu, John Mmuo-Nso of Holy Chapel of Israel Church, and Johane Maranke of the Apostolic Church, Zimbabwe, have encouraged the practice of polygamy in their churches. Prophet Isaiah Shembe declared that "European monogamy was St Paul's invention; it was Paul's legislation but not God's" (Ndiokwere, 1981: 24). Shembe said from his vision, he was told to be monogamous as a form of spiritual discipline. Polygamy was fine for his followers. On the other hand, Elijah Masinde founder of Dini Ya Msambwa, in western Kenya, after an exhaustive study of the Bible came to the conclusion that the prohibition against polygamy was an arbitrary rule of the church unsupported by biblical testimony (1981:25).

2.7 Other reasons

The reasons above may not be generalized because they do not apply to all the independent churches in Africa. Ndiokwere (1981:16) sited an example of the Nigerian situation where political factors have never exercised any influence on the Independent Churches but widespread separatism has been experienced since 1888. This is also noted by Hastings (1979:69) when he observed that these movements are not to be seen purely or even primarily as a reaction against missionary Christianity. Most of them did not begin in conscious schism from an existing missionary church and most of their members had never been full members of the mission churches. In some cases they emerged because there was no mission church in a particular area rather than because there was. This is to say, they just arose spontaneously around a charismatic or prophetic personality (Kalu, 2005:415).

It is also true that some Independent Churches have been formed because of church discipline in the established church. In some cases, Africans who wanted to reform Christianity were either excommunicated or compelled to leave their mother churches, others where disciplined for various offences committed and as a result they gathered others in similar circumstances to form an Independent group (Falk, 1979:457).

University of Cape Town

On the other hand, West (1975:139) has observed that leadership disputes in the African Independent Churches are other overt causes. He further commented that leadership is an important aspect of these churches; their hierarchies provide outlets for the exercise of leadership abilities at the same time ascribing status to office bearers. Those who do not find immediate scope for advancement within their church become potential secede (Ibid.).

The factors discussed above form part of the various theories concerning the causes for the origin of the African Independent Churches. However, whereas it is a fairly simple matter to establish which general political, sociological and economic factors are conducive to the formation of new churches, it is by no means easy to arrive at a representative or justifiable theory when it comes to the individual groups or their members (Daneel, 1987:68). This is so because over the years people in their individual capacity have joined the AICs for a diversity of other reasons ranging from the political and sociological to the religious factors in which the original cause of the reaction hardly features any more (Ibid.). Today, unless one has a historical perspective on the variety of successive factors, one could easily arrive at a mistaken theory based on the initial phase of the group's origin. Thus one could incorrectly typify a particular AIC as for example, a political reactionary phenomenon, whereas in actual fact it could have developed into a missionary movement whose existence and growth are attributed to reaction against the historical (mission) churches (Ibid).

2.8 The proliferation of AICs in Zambia

Dillon-Malone (1983:204) that argued in the proliferation of African Independent Churches, "Zambia has been no exception" even though comparatively not many "have received the attention which they deserve among the peoples of Zambia". This is because of the general apathy given to them by the peoples of Zambia who are not keen to join these churches. However, their origin and effective presence usually dates back to a much earlier period. An example of the earliest movement of such phenomenon in Zambia is the Mutumwa Church that dates back to early 1930s (1983:205).

University of Cape Town

The origin of the Mutumwa Church can be traced to Isoka district of northeastern Zambia. This phenomenon was widespread along the corridor area between Lake Tanganyika and Lake Nyasa and in Malawi. The word Mutumwa means one who is sent and is equivalent to an apostle. The Mutumwa churches have appropriated to themselves in a very special way the book of the Acts of the Apostles and they consider themselves as the new African apostles specially sent to carry on the healing ministry of Christ among their own peoples (1983:2004).

Hinefelaar (2004:430) said that more signs of Independent Church proliferation occurred in the 1950s in Zambia. Furthermore "it was as if the people finally unwrapped the parcel, got rid of the western trimmings and discovered the real teachings of the Bible" (Ibid.). At first, the missionaries were taken aback, but they slowly learned to value this development as something good (Ibid.). Chuba (2005:157) pointed to the fact that since then, these churches have been increasing very rapidly in Zambia. Scores of them are new in as far as official registration since national independence in 1964 is concerned (Dillon-Malone, 1983:204). One prominent African Independent Church worth commenting on is the Sacred Heart Church of Emilio Mulolani.

University of Cape Town

2.8.1 Sacred Heart Church

The Sacred Heart of Jesus sprang up and struck at the heart of Catholicism around the same time when entire Protestant and some of the Catholic communities mostly on the periphery of Bemba centrality, were joining the Lumpa Church of Lenshina Mulenga (Hinefelaar, 1994:101). The movement was led by an ex-seminarian named Emilio Mulolani. His appeal was for a genuine religiosity (*Amafunde yachishinka*).

He preached to the people about love and devotion to the sacred heart. His reputation for Holiness and eloquence made him to be invited to address the Christian communities. Emilio attracted the cream of the teachers, catechists and other lay leaders who were fascinated by the inculturated way of preaching the Good News (Hinefelaar, 2004:183). Unfortunately, most of the expatriate priests were not ready for a genuine contribution by a common lay man and questioned his theology. They condemned him as heretical.

This caused Emilio severe mental anguish. He left Zambia for Southern Rhodesia and South Africa where he visited some of his friends. During his visits, he personally witnessed the deep-seated racism and apartheid policies of whites and he became convinced that Africans had to find their own way towards divinity.

Upon his return to Zambia, on his way he experienced a revelation in which he saw the entire continent of Africa united harmoniously in the hearts of Jesus and Mary. He also heard a voice encouraging him to continue his work (Ibid). He then traveled to Lusaka and registered his movement as the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This movement became a protest against religious authorities within Catholic circles (2004:184).

One day the Bible verse where Jesus said that genuine happiness only came to people who were like little children (Luke, 18:15) came to Emilio's mind. Hinefelaar (2004:184) said that from that moment onwards, he exhorted his followers to be childlike, by playing and bathing together. It is this teaching which later made his church to be very unpopular with the public. On the other hand, Hinefeaar (1994:107-116) accounts that Emilio saw both social and Christian life as harshly deprived by the traditional segregation of sexes. He wondered why male and female could be kept apart when they mingled freely in their homes. He emphasized on the togetherness of male and female in prayers and in the celebration of sacraments. This togetherness slowly became the visible sign by which the members could be known. Regrettably, this encouraged promiscuity among some of his members. The promiscuity of some of his followers distressed Emilio and made him to reflect on the direction his church should take. He then focused his attention on the Holy family of Nazareth as the ideal example for Christians to follow. Today, the Church is still vibrant with its inculturated way of preaching the gospel.

Among African Independent Churches in Zambia that have been analyzed to a greater or less extent are African Watchtower, the Masowe Apostles, the Maranke Apostles, (Dillon-Malone, 1983:220) and the Lumpa Church. A detailed account of the Lumpa Church is given in the succeeding chapter. Other African Independent Churches that can be found in Zambia include the Zionist Apostolic Church and 'the Church of Jesus Christ on Earth by the prophet Simon Kimbangu' (Chuba, 2005:116) which has its roots in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 3

THE GENESIS OF THE LUMPA CHURCH IN ZAMBIA

3.1 Introduction

The Lumpa Church in Zambia founded by Alice Lenshina is one of the biggest independent churches in the country. It's Genesis "has right from the beginning attracted a great deal of attention from journalists, politicians, historians and church leaders" (Hinfelaar, 1984:293). The reason for such attention was the fact that Lenshina was a simple illiterate African woman who managed to come up with a powerful religious innovation without any formal theological training. The Lumpa Church was able to attract a lot of following from its beginning. It is this kind of mystery that this chapter seeks to understand. The historical developments leading to the founding of the church in 1953 based on the profound spiritual experience of the founder are narrated. The chapter also describes the impact of the Lumpa church in Zambian politics, and in the mainline churches.

3.2. Alice Mulenga Lenshina

3.2.1 Her Life

Alice Mulenga Lenshina was born of Bemba speaking parents in Kasomo village in Chinsali district in Northern Zambia. Her father was Lubusha and her mother Musungu Chimba. Lubusha was a polygamist with three wives. According to Wim van Binsbergen (1964), Lubusha fought against the Germans near the Tanzanian border, and he later became a District messenger. The exact date of Lenshina's birth is unknown, and scholars have speculated that it was between 1920 and 1924.

University of Cape Town

Figure 1: Alice Mulenga Lubusha Lenshina
(Source, Hudson, 1999:15)

Mulenga (1988) pointed out that very little of Lenshina's childhood is known, except that she was humble and people admired and liked that quality in her. Furthermore, she was also known as a peace-loving and well-behaved child. Although there was a school in Chinsali District and Lubwa mission, she never went to school. She was a victim of the widely held belief in African communities that Western education was not meant for girls. According to this belief girls were supposed to learn as much as they could from their mothers about home keeping and child rearing before they got married. When Lenshina reached puberty, she got engaged to Gipson Nkwale whom she later married and together they had a child and named her Monica (Mulenga, 1998:166). However, it was not long before Nkwale fell ill and died. According to Bemba customs the relatives of Nkwale had to look for a man to cleanse Lenshina and inherit her. Consequently, Petros Chintakwa who was a divorcee and a cousin to Gipson was chosen and they got married soon after the cleansing ceremony (Mulenga, 1998:4).

In fact, "both Lenshina and Petros were uneducated" (Hudson 1999:12) and together they had five children, four girls and one boy. Some of Lenshina's living children are; Monica Mumbi Nkwale her first-born daughter with Nkwale, Mbelita Chilima Ngandu, Jennifer Kanyanta and Katherine Ngandu (Mulenga, 1998:166). Strangely, Katherine does not appear to believe in her mother's religion and does not associate herself with the rest of the family on religious matters. Apparently, no reasons of her

University of Cape Town

not being part of her mother's religion are given and she is simply described as 'a deviant daughter' (Ibid.).

Wim van Binsbergen (1964) pointed out that, Alice Lenshina was raised a Presbyterian under the Church of Scotland mission and "she attended services at Lubwa mission Church" (Hall, 1969:47). Though growing up near Lubwa mission, Lenshina was not a baptized Christian when she received her first visions in 1953. According to Norbert (1994) Lenshina was a baptismal candidate with a Presbyterian mission when she received a series of visions. In these visions she believed that she was taken to heaven and given divine messages instructing her to destroy witchcraft and sorcery. In November 1953, Lenshina was baptized by a Presbyterian minister, and she was Christened Alice (Mulenga, 1998:9). At baptism Africans were required to change their names which were regarded as pagan (Villa-Vicencio 1994:115) hence the assumption of the new name Alice and the name Lenshina was an Africanization of the Latin name Regina which means Queen (Hastings, 1979:125). After her baptism, Lenshina continued to attend worship regularly at Lubwa. She also gathered people for prayers in her home area at Kasomo. Speaking of Lenshina's life, Hudson (1999:12) pointed out that "her life had been completely uneventful" at most times "she seemed a quite motherly woman usually to be seen with a baby in her arms" (Rotberg, 1970:527). She was also not known to indulge in quarrels, fighting or using vulgar language (Mulenga, 1998:3).

It is, however, important to mention that Lenshina's prophetic ministry was not easy. She spent most of her life in detention in various isolated places of Zambia (Hinfelaar, 1984:292). Three years prior to her death, she was released from detention and put under house arrest in Chilenje township of Lusaka. Alice Lenshina Mulenga Lubusha died in her sleep at her home in Lusaka on 7th December, 1978. It was a mysterious death. Kampamba Mulenga said that it was as mysterious as her rising from the dead in 1953 at Kasomo village (1998:135). After her death, "her body was carried back to her birthplace and placed reverently within the ruins of her Temple and a modern shrine was constructed around her remains" (Hinfelaar, 1984:292).

University of Cape Town

3.3 The visions and the message

In 1953, Alice Lenshina Mulenga Lubusha was believed to have died after a serious illness (Hastings, 1979:125). According to Mulenga (1998:5), Lenshina claimed that when she died and the Angel of God took her to heaven where she was laid down on a rock near seashore. She was told to cross the sea. The Angels sang for her as she started to cross the sea and go yonder where God in the person of Jesus waited to receive her. The Angels sang;

Lesa ayebele Yesu, Posa ulusale palibemba *Nabo abashalungama nokusumina muli ine bakafilwa* *Ukwabuka* *Lesa ayebele Yesu ati Pekanishisha abantu ifyabupe fyamupashi. Nao Yesu atile, ubufwayo bwenu buchitike pantu fyonse fyenu.*	*God told Jesus throw a cord across the sea and those who are not righteous will fail to cross the river and reach where I am* *God told Jesus, prepare spiritual gifts for your people* *Jesus answered; thy will be done for your people, for everything belongs to you the provider*

Encouraged by the Angels she crossed and was taken to God (1998:6).

Furthermore, Lenshina claimed that while she was in heaven, she learnt that John the Baptist had asked God to send a prophet to earth to warn people of the impending punishment (Mulenga, 1998:6). She was told that she was the chosen one, the prophetess of God. After receiving all her instructions, she returned back to earth with a special mission (Hastings, 1979:125). The mission was to build the community on a solid rock (Hinfelaar, 1984:292). This meant that she was to build a community which would last with proper biblical teachings, positive Bemba values, aspects of Bemba music and anti-witchcraft sentiments.

Lenshina was commanded to preach the message of repentance to people and they were to stop doing the following: adultery, hatred, cursing, stealing, lies and swearing (Hudson, 1999:14). The only way for people to survive or escape the punishment was to return to God (Mulenga, 1998:6). The call to repentance was very reminiscent of John the Baptist, who was not afraid to speak up against the sinfulness of the religious elite and political authorities of first century Palestine.

University of Cape Town

Lenshina also claimed that before returning to earth, she was given a guided tour of heaven by the Angels. She found heaven a very wonderful place such that she never wanted to come back. However, she was assured of joining other righteous people in heaven after completing her mission. When Lenshina came back to life, to her surprise, she found her relatives grieving for her. She told them to be glad for God had raised her from the dead so that she would announce the good news of God to humanity (Mulenga, 1998:6).

According to Daneel (1987:57) Lenshina's vision, in many respects can be compared to that of John Masowe, a Shona prophet, whom Sundkler described as a Black Messiah. He further stated that such experiences implying a death and a visit to heaven, where the visionary receives a special commission directly from God have unassailable authenticity.

Hinfelaar (1999:13-16) and Ipenburg (1992:232) have recorded that when Lenshina come back to life, she narrated her experience of death, rebirth and personal encounter with divine presence to the Reverend Fergus McPherson, a missionary at Lubwa. Reverend McPherson was an open minded and sincere person (Hinfelaar, 1999:13). If not, it is feared that missionaries of that time might have dismissed the story as the ravings of a mentally unstable peasant woman. Instead, he accepted the reality of what Lenshina told him (1999:16). The Reverend McPherson encouraged Lenshina that inasmuch as she was given life and health when she was at the gate of death, she should give thanks to God and serve Him wholeheartedly (Hudson, 1999:14).

Lenshina promised not only to attend worship regularly but also to gather people for prayers at her village. She at once began proclaiming the good news with all her power. Based on her charisma, after her baptism, the Presbyterian Church asked her to "help revive the Church in her home area" (McPherson, 1974:179).

3.4 Formation of the Church

Prophetess Alice Lenshina Lubusha founded the Lumpa Church in 1953. In Bemba language, the name Lumpa means, 'better than all. For Nathaniel Ndiokwere

University of Cape Town

(1981:44) the Lumpa Church can simply be described as meaning the Church, which goes far, excels all or hastens to salvation.

When Lenshina received her vision, it is evident that in the early days the mission of the Presbyterian Church expressed faith in the genuineness of her vision and for some months, relations with Lenshina and her growing number of followers was amicable (Hudson, 1999:17). Because of her claim to have been sent back to earth as a messenger and prophet of God, which was later proven through her fame as a healer and prophet, she soon acquired a name of prophetess. As time went on, it also became evident too that the accommodation of Lenshina, a powerful teacher, to mission Christianity proved difficult. In particular, Roman Catholic missions in the area were denuded of their following. Consequently, Lenshina began to incur the hostility of the missionaries. Her enemies, largely Christian catechists and devotees, tried to discredit her movement by emphasizing her atavistic appeal, which they claimed was enhanced by the evil spirits (Werner, 1971:23). According to Douglas Werner colonial and missionary officials encouraged these attempts to denigrate Lenshina since they regarded her movement as regressive, heathen, and potentially disruptive. Kampamba Mulenga pointed out that Father Kakokota of the Catholic Church mission declared that "Lenshina looked a troubled soul and could probably have been possessed by evil spirits" (1998:13). Consequently, in the year 1955, the Presbyterian mission at Lubwa began to see Lenshina as a serious threat and considered action to curb her influence (Ipenburg, 1992:237). In fact, they joined the white Fathers at the nearby mission of Ilondola in declaring her a heretic (Rotberg, 1970:524) and this resulted in a conspiracy to excommunicate her. The Presbyterian "church council met on 15th December, 1955 to discuss the expulsion of Alice Lenshina and the reasons given according to Ipenburg were that Lenshina was preaching that;

- People should reject other churches as they now had the Lumpa Church
- Meeting and praying with other Christians were not allowed as these were the servants of Satan
- The Bible was 'a deserted village', which should no longer be read
- She was also telling people to come and hear God speaking like a human being and
- She had built prayer houses all over the country. (1992:240)

University of Cape Town

The Council did not ask Lenshina to come for a hearing or trial but they simply issued her a letter of expulsion outlining all the charges against her (Ipenburg, 1992:240). In her reply, Lenshina wrote that only God had the right to suspend her. The gist of her letter was that she no longer recognized the authority of the church council but only the authority of God (1992:240).

When Lenshina was excommunicated on 15th December 1955, by the Presbyterians who accused her of being heretical, she organized the Lumpa Church and a huge Temple was built in Kasomo. Hinfelaar (1984:293) writes that "the Temple was larger than the Cathedral Church of the nearby catholic mission" In fact, this was the most impressive physical monumental testimony to the Lumpa and it was begun in 1956 and completed in 1958 (Mulenga, 1998:19).

Figure 2: The Lumpa Church at their headquarters at Kasomo in Chinsali. (Source, Hudson, 1999:21)

When the Lumpa Church began, it attracted a lot of criticism from outsiders, and like other Independent Churches in the region, it was called all sorts of names ranging from "Cultic Movement" (Phiri, 2001:28 and McPherson, 1974:178), "Sect" (Hall, 1969:47), "Separatist" (Milford, 1967:40) and "Fanatics" (Kuna 1966). In any case, despite critics, "an organizational framework was set up in which Lenshina's husband Petros Chintakwa and other senior male deacons held the topmost positions" (Van Binsbergen, 1964:288).

University of Cape Town

During the early days of the church, services were held informally in the open and "in her home area large congregations gathered to hear her teach the gospel" (Mulenga, 1998:9). As the church grew temples were built outside villages. They were similar to those of other denominations being constructed of thatch and poles, with low retaining clay plastered wall, an altar, and a pulpit (Hudson, 1999:25). The faithful were summoned towards sunset by drumbeat three days a week and on Sunday morning. Every service ended with a blessing by Lenshina. Sunday services usually lasted for five hours (1999:25).

Lenshina was at the top of the hierarchy of her church assisted by her husband Petros who was a High Priest and by some ex-preachers from Lubwa (Mulenga, 1998:20). Hudson pointed out that "after the establishment of congregations distant from Kasomo, Lenshina delegated her authority to deacons" (1999:22). The Deacons were also delegated the task of preaching and laying hands on the sick. Most of these were applicants who wanted to serve in the church. Hudson continues to say; "applicants who could be either male or female, were examined by Lenshina's husband" (1999:23) and principle qualities of candidates needed resembled those given by St Paul in his letter to Timothy concerning the episcopates (Mulenga, 1998: 20). It is also stated that choir leaders were the middle managers" (1998:23) in the church. In any case, effective control of the church remained with Lenshina, her husband, a sister and a nephew. During the early 1960s, three of Lenshina's daughters married men who also became senior officials and Hudson added that "outsiders who attempted to infiltrate this inner family circle in order to enrich themselves were unsuccessful and eventually left the church" (1999:25). From the very beginning, "the Church catered for the needs and fears of the people, especially through its promise to protect its followers against witchcraft" (Roberts 1976:219). Furthermore, "its strength reflected the desire of Africans to express themselves through their own mediums and institutions rather than through European Churches and so was part of the rising nationalism of the late 1950s and early 1960s" (Pettman, 1974:94). Apart from her normal preaching, teaching and baptism, Lenshina performed another significant religious act that was a non-sacramental function. It is said that before planting time seeds where brought to her at Kasomo by deacons from distant congregations on their periodical visits for instructions and details of new hymns. Lenshina blessed these seeds as though she were a chief or a traditional healer performing a traditional

University of Cape Town

ceremony. The seeds were then taken back by the deacons and mixed with the rest of the seeds to be planted (Hudson, 1999:25). This act by Lenshina was consistent with African traditional practice in Zimbabwe (Ranger, 2003) and Zambia (Mulenga, 1998:29) a role of traditional authorities. As such she took over the role of traditional chiefs to their displeasure.

It is obvious that "Africans were looking for the validity of the Christian faith in missionaries' lives and circumstances" (Mugambi, 1992:40) which they never got. It is noted that pilgrims arrived at Lenshina's home at Kasomo at the rate of a thousand a week (Hastings, 1979:125). Kasomo was later renamed Zion by Lenshina (Van Binsbergen, 1964:288). She likened Kasomo to the Holy mountain of Sinai recorded in the Bible (Mulenga, 1998:15). Mulenga adds that Kasomo had become something of a household name in the whole of Northern Rhodesia and in 1955, Kasomo had been visited by no less than 60 000 pilgrims" (1998:17). These pilgrims had carried the Lenshina gospel home with them (Rotberg 1970:535).

According to Mulenga (1998:17), Lenshina "applied for the registration of her Church under the Society Ordinance in 1957" and by 1958, there were 148 Lumpa Churches registered in Northern, Eastern and Copper belt provinces of Zambia. Mulenga further explains that the Registrar of Societies had registered 60 Lumpa Churches in Chinsali District, 20 in Kasomo District, 20 in Mpika District, 23 in Lundazi District, 6 in Isoka District and 3 in Kawambwa District (1998:19). He continues to say that there were 9 on the Copper belt Province, 4 in Lusaka and 3 in Kabwe. This is re-enforced by Wim van Binsbergen (1964) when he adds that Scores of Lumpa branches were created throughout Zambia's Northern Province. In addition, some appeared along the line of rail, and even in Zimbabwe. At least between 1955 and 1960 there seem to have been no noticeable or open conflict between the Lumpa Church and UNIP.

The formation of the Lumpa Church occurred around the time that the Central African Federation was created. The countries that were to form part of this Federation were Nyasaland (Malawi), Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Northern Rhodesia (Zambia). This was a controversial step that had greatly enhanced the political awareness of the African population, representing the first major defeat of Zambian nationalism (Binsbergen, 1981:290). The idea of Central African Federation (CAF)

University of Cape Town

became a rallying point for African resistance because it was a threat to Zambian Nationalism and also aimed to safeguard colonial interests (Roberts 1976:195). It was precisely this attempt to subordinate Northern Rhodesia to the White rule which provoked the rise of a popular African movement dedicated to overthrowing colonial rule" (1976:196). In other words, "the imposition of Federation was itself a defensive reaction to the growth of African politics" (Ibid). It was at this time that Africans were being mobilized to the nationalist call. However, Lumpa Church members "never responded to the nationalist call" (Tordoff, 1974:10). The Lumpa Church taught no involvement in worldly projects and no involvement in the resistance movement (Hasting, 1979:156).

During the early years, it is believed that most chiefs and native authorities welcomed the formation of the Lumpa Church and indeed quite a number of them joined the church in its early stages. Little or no control over the Lumpa Church and its activities was considered necessary in the first years. Relations were generally good, but as the Lumpa Church reached new heights, the situation changed. It was evident to chiefs and politicians that Lenshina commanded more respect and support than they did (Mulenga, 1998:41). On the other hand, Rotberg, (1966:75) and McPherson, (1974:238) have noted that "there is specific evidence of the nationalist element in Lumpa in the early years. For example, many of the early senior leaders of Lumpa were nationalists who for that reason had left the Lubwa mission establishment. These radical nationalists saw it as a movement in which they could express their grievance with the progress towards independence. The radical nationalists used Lumpa gatherings for nationalist propaganda. Van Binsbergen (1964:299) reported that "there were tenacious rumors as to Lumpa's links with Welensky's United Federal Party, the nationalists' main opponent, and with Tshombe's secessionist movement in Zaire". This attracted the disapproval of the colonial authorities and official nationalist movements in Zambia. It was now evident that at Zambia's independence in 1964, Lumpa Church constituted an open challenge to the new government's supremacy.

According to Roberts (1976:221) by mid 1964 Lumpa defiance of government authority reached a boiling point. A war broke out with the United National Independence Party (UNIP) and its government in which over 700 people were killed. This is not very far from an account given by Chidester (1992:126) on the Bulhoek

University of Cape Town

massacre of 1921. Chidester explains that on 24th May 1921, 183 Israelites were killed and nearly 100 wounded (Ibid). Ngada (2001:8) further elaborates that the Israelites under the leadership of Rev Enoch Mgijima seceded from the Methodist Church and began to congregate in the land known as Ntabelanga or Bulhoek in the district of Queenstown (Ibid.). The land belonged to Rev Mgijima; however, under the 1913 Land Act, Ntabelanga was part of the land of which Africans were not allowed to own, consequently, the Israelites were told to move. When they refused to claiming that God had given them the land and therefore the white government had no right to take it away from them, the Union of South Africa sent in troops from Pretoria to go and move them by force. This incidence saw a number of them being killed.

The government of Zambia banned the Lumpa Church in 1964 (Roberts, 1976:221). The surviving leaders, including its founder Alice Lenshina and her husband Petros were detained indefinitely" (Ibid.). Lenshina was held first in jail at Mumbwa near Lusaka and later restricted to a remote part of Barotse province nearly 1000 miles from Lubwa" (Hall, 1969:47). Mulenga (1998:126) noted that no charges were laid against Lenshina. In fact, this was an unlawful detention because Lenshina was not told why she was being held. Mulenga argued that it was an unlawful detention because it breached section A (1) of the Zambian constitution, which reads in part;

> Where a person's freedom of movement is restricted, or he is detained under the authority of any such law as is referred to in section 24 to 26 of the constitution, as the case may be, the following provision shall apply;
>
> a. He shall, as soon as is reasonably practicable and in any case not more than fourteen days after the commencement of his detention or restriction be furnished with a statement in writing in a language that he understands specifying in detail the grounds upon which he is restricted or detained

However, after three years of detention Lenshina through her lawyer challenged her detention (Mulenga, 1998:126). The judge concurred with the defense in passing judgment. However, Lenshina was not released. Instead, she was "transferred to Kabwe's Mukobeko Maximum Prison" (Ibid). This could have been as the result of what the judge said after passing judgment. According to Law Report of Zambia (1973:245), the judge is quoted to have said;

University of Cape Town

> I appreciate that the detention order was effected in the interest of the preservation of public security. The bonafide of such order has not in any way been impinged. The detaining authority is always free to make another detention order should it be considered necessary.

After the outbreak of the war with the government many Lumpa followers took refuge in the Congo at Mokambo, just across the border from Mufulira" (Roberts, 1976:219) a mining town on the Copperbelt and "gradually the Lumpa settlement in the Congo grew until it contained nearly 20 000 people" (Hall, 1969:47). For seven years the Lumpa members rejected all appeals to return home. This was because of the dislike they had for UNIP (Hudson, 1999:62). The Congolese Government did not delight in this large number of Lumpa Church members in their country. It began a program of removal by force, which resulted in the return of 5000 refugees in October 1971 (Hall, 1969:47). The UNIP government assisted them with temporary accommodation, transport and food through the commissioner for refugees and the United Nations high commission for Refugees (Hudson, 1999:62).

3.5 Membership

According to Richard Hall (1969:47) among the first people who became members of the Lumpa Church were relatives of the man who became Zambian president, Kenneth Kaunda. His mother Helen and brother Robert. This is an indicator that Lenshina's message did not only appeal to the peasants but to the educated elite as well. In fact, "the more personal irony was that Kenneth Kaunda and Lenshina belonged to the same part of the country" (McPherson, 1974:443) and they were almost age mates. Perhaps the reason why Kenneth Kaunda could not join the Church was that he "had chosen a political career, from 1953 to 1958 he was the Secretary General of Africa National Congress party the second in command in the nationalist movement" (Ipenburg, 1992:277) and later on president of the United National Independence Party. It is also said that like any Independent African Church leader, Lenshina attracted people who felt excluded from full participation in the life of mission churches (Rotberg, 1970:527).

Both Pettman (1974:94) and Rotberg (1970) have recorded that at the time of the Church's inception, "it is estimated that 70 per cent of the total population of Northern Province of Zambia joined the Church". A lot more members came from other parts

University of Cape Town

of the country and across its borders. There were church members in Northern, Eastern, Copperbelt, Luapula and Central provinces. In the 1960s her church had spread to Malawi and Zimbabwe such that by 1964 membership, according to statistical data collected by Kampamba Mulenga from the Northern News of 26th September 1956, had soared to almost 1.5 million in Zambia and beyond (1998:176). Norbert (1994) reported that by 1959 there was an organized church with ministers and between 50,000 and 100,000 members, most of whom had left either Presbyterian, Catholic missions or Traditional religions. With the rapid increase in church membership, came both financial prosperity and the need for formalization of improvised prayer meetings and church management (Hudson, 1999:26). Lenshina felt compelled to spread the gospel to Africans. She was highly mobile and propelled by an acute sense of urgency, she called upon members to embrace Christianity with an African flavor and daily 'many were added' (Acts 2).

For Rotberg (1961:75), the period 1953-1960 marked the heyday of the Lumpa Church. However, "the rural membership of the church began to drop in the late 1950s as a result of clashes with chiefs. Chiefs were not happy because the Church took over their responsibilities like that of judicial functions and Lenshina came to be revered almost as a Bemba chief. Chiefs felt that their authority was undermined by the Lumpa Church (Van Binsbergen, 1964:289).

3.6 Teachings and activities

> The message of Lenshina was typical of Christian revival the world over, with one significant addition: the rejection of sorcery and witchcraft. She preached a puritanical moral code. Her followers were to forswear polygamy. Lenshina also forbade the consumption of tobacco, beer and all primitive dances. Members were also not to engage in divination. The rules of her church, which were codified in 1957, listed these prohibitions along with others taken from the Decalogue; they also included exhortation to prayer and quiet and unselfish living. The hymns seemed to echo a mystical experience; they warned of the fire of hell that awaited evildoers. They also dwelt on the sorrow of being estranged from God and described the joy of those who were made clean and were united with their Savior in Heaven (Mulenga, 1998:11).

Alice Lenshina interpreted her constant visions as a confirmation of her prophetic call. With such a conviction, she set out on a mission of healing, proclaiming the observance of the law of God as prescribed in the Decalogue (first five books of the

University of Cape Town

Bible). To people's amazement, she composed beautiful hymns according to the tonalities of Bemba traditional music (Hinfelaar, 1984:292). The content of the hymns appealed so much to the Bemba speaking people of Chinsali District that large groups of people flocked to her village in order to learn them. Hastings (1979:61) added that "Lenshina's message was expressed in beautiful Bemba hymns very different from the stiff translations of Victorians used in the mission churches". Today in Zambia these hymns are widespread among mainline churches. They are sung by almost all Catholic and Protestant Churches in Zambia (Mulenga, 1998:176).

However, in the Lumpa Church, there appears to have been no form of communion service, the only sacrament apart from marriages that were performed by deacons, was that of confession and baptism, this was handled by Lenshina herself or Petros on behalf of Lenshina (Hudson, 1999:23). Lenshina baptized many people as she continued calling them to abandon and destroy their charms as a sign of repentance for salvation. A lot of emphasis was put on preaching against witchcraft as it was perceived to be evil and destroyed society by instilling fear. This was so because "widespread belief in the reality of witchcraft as the cause of many misfortunes, illness and deaths cast a shadow over the lives of rural people in those days. Even the local intelligentsia and committed Christians were not immune to this belief (Hudson, 1998:17). Piles of surrendered charms rapidly accumulated at a place near her hut in Kasomo. She had constructed it and used it for the storage of the same (Mulenga, 1998:14) and it was also apparent that at that time, "the rules and regulations that governed marital behavior within a legally constituted monogamous marriage were particularly seen as highly conducive to the health of the village" (Hinfelaar, 1984:294) hence Lenshina's strong preaching against polygamy. She taught that polygamy was a social problem.

It was very clear that "the charnel-house of surrendered charms and other witchcraft paraphernalia at Lenshina's village represented a far greater reality to the average African than the windy talk of politicians who seemed sometimes to forget the real problems of the people" (McPherson, 1974:180). The message of Lenshina was so appealing that it touched the souls of many Africans. This is exactly what Ngada (2001: xii) means when he says "we wish to proclaim Christ to the world in an African way, the Christ who died and rose again for the indigenous people of Africa

University of Cape Town

too". Consequently, to emphasize this, Lenshina removed all the impediments to becoming a Christian. She "insisted that Christianity had to be built on a foundation of tradition and that people should return to their original beliefs in order to give Christ's Church a firm foundation" (Hinfelaar, 2004:185). She also told people that they were blind to have accepted everything that the white missionaries told them. She told them that God did not say one could only be a Christian if one adopted a Western name. She advised people to be free to use any name they wanted and still be Christians. She further said God wanted people to praise Him in any language to the accompaniment of whatever musical instruments at their disposal. She also introduced the baptism of John the Baptist that did not require one to undergo lessons before being baptized. Confession of sin was enough to qualify for baptism. People liked that simple and straightforward process of becoming a Christian (Mulenga, 1998:175).

It can be said that Alice Lenshina, was very successful than expatriate missionaries in inculcating into her adherents a puritan morality. She discouraged polygamy and persuaded her followers that sorcery, as well as, witchcraft was against the will of God (Welbourn, 1966:148). Her teachings on witchcraft were contrary to the teachings of the mission Churches who together with the government did not consider witchcraft seriously.

It is also clear that "the Church idiom highlighted God and Jesus, while denouncing ancestors, deceased chiefs, and affliction-causing spirits as objects of veneration" (Van Binsbergen, 1964:288). The movement had to undermine the authority of the chiefs because by 1958 it adopted the controversial rejection of all earthly authority and one of the main causes of annoyance to the chiefs was the so called unauthorized immigration of their people to Lumpa Church settlements and new villages. By doing so, according to the chiefs, Lenshina had taken away people who should have been paying tribute to them (Mulenga, 1998:41).

Lenshina, through her teachings, made a serious impact in the lives of people and the religious community. Rotberg (1970:525) comments that "the seriousness of her message made even the few people who had remained in mission stations to also defect to her Church". Men and women in the Church recognized their roles and each

University of Cape Town

member had to identify his or her gift to the edification of the Lord. Mulenga made the following observation;

> In the Lumpa, there were fellowship organizations for women and men. The women's fellowship was called 'Maria' and had special duties in Church. For their identity, they wore uniforms. Their duties included looking into the affairs affecting women in the church, visiting the sick and performing some work for them. They also organized contributions to give to the needy. Equally, the men's group called 'Joseph' which was also identified by a particular dress, attended to problems that affected men in the church. They also visited the sick and did communal work for the church to raise funds. The choir occupied a special place in the church. Each congregation had a choir group that sang at every service, mid week prayers and at funerals of church members. Choir members were required to wear uniforms. In the Church, hymns were sung to the accompaniment of drums and other traditional musical instruments. At the end of a service, members formed a circle then beat drums, sang and danced in the name of Jesus. Hymns and dancing played a major role in attracting new members to the church. (1998:20)

The Choir held a special place in the Church. Lenshina made rules for the Choir and members were expected to follow them. Church members strictly abided by the Church rules that were largely influenced by the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20: 1ff) and Lenshina's vision and instructions. Somehow, there are striking similarities between the Ten Commandments and the Lumpa Church rules and this demonstrates that the Lumpa rules are a continuation of the Ten Commandments. The Lumpa Church rules are listed below;

1. Lumpa Church is a Church in which God and His Son Jesus Christ are to be praised. It is not a political organization
2. In our congregation, there is no citizen or foreigner, black or white, man or woman but we are all of the same family, therefore we must love each other. A Christian must take no part in;
    - Backbiting
    - Insults
    - Lying
    - Pride
    - Boasting
    - Hatred
    - Anger
    - Cruelty
    - False accusation

University of Cape Town

- Spite
- Disobedience
- Deceit
- Theft etc

3. A Christian must avoid covetousness, witchcraft, stealing, adultery, witch finding, sorcery, discrimination, drunkenness, bewitching, immoral songs, dancing and other pagan things.
4. Every Christian must be of good character and prayerful whether in private or public, when eating or going to sleep, waking from sleep or when starting and ending his/her work, while at play or in times of sorrow or trouble. A Christian must pray to his/her Father in Heaven.
5. There must be no beer or pagan dances during a Christian wedding. If they have these things, those who are being wedded will be punished by the commandment of Jesus. But once married, they must not be separated from each other until death do them part.
6. It is the duty of a Christian to go with others for prayers from time to time, and on every appointed day of worship.
7. A widow should not be inherited. She must only wear a string of white beads. If she wishes to remarry she must be allowed to do so.
8. A Christian must not be a polygamist.
9. A Christian should not participate in any mourning festival ceremonies. There should be no invocation of spirits.
10. At the time of worship, no one should smoke cigarettes or a pipe or take snuff. They must not take any of these things into the Church.
11. Any person who has taken some beer must not come to worship in church, though he had taken only a little.

Abiding by the Ten Commandments, following the Church rules and the charismatic teachings of Lenshina, members of the Lumpa church stopped fearing one another because of witchcraft as the case was before the coming of Lenshina (Mulenga, 1998:172). Wim Van Binsbergen (1964:291) commented that "on the level of sorcery relations, the belief in the eradication of sorcery created a new social climate where the very strict moral rulings of the Lumpa Church were observed to an amazing extent". In this new community, members loved one another and shared food, clothes

University of Cape Town

and whatever they had. It can be said that Lumpa members lived and behaved like the first members of the Christian church as recoded in Acts 2:42-47. The oneness demonstrated by the first Christians as demonstrated above is exactly what Lenshina preached about, and to encourage oneness among her members, Lenshina sang;

Pakutemwa kwakwa Lesa *Lesa atemenwe ifwe bonse* *Imitundu ne mitundu* *Aleti mube pamo* We wakana walishama kubwite bwakwa Lesa	*God loves people of all tribes* *And he wants all people* *From all walks of life* *To unite and be one* *Only the sinners resent the call of God (Mulenga, 1998:172)*

The message conveyed by this song was observed by Martin West in Soweto, and he characterized the AICs as "... caring communities, where individuals 'matter' and are supported by fellow members" (1975:197). Physical and spiritual needs of all members were catered for very effectively in the Lumpa Church. In fact, this is a common characteristic of independent churches as "the daily problems of everyone are attended to by the community or by the prophet" (Kwesi, 1984:112, Venter (2004:35) also acknowledged the fact that "the level of intimacy and care offered by Zionist Churches -financial and otherwise-cannot be matched by larger mainline congregations" (2004:35) and this is precisely what was there in the Lumpa Church.

There was a sense of togetherness in the Lumpa Church. People lived like they belonged to one body, the true reflection of Paul's analogy of the human body (1 Corinthians 12:12-27), "what happens to the individual happens to the whole group, and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual. The individual can only say I am, because we are and since we are, therefore I am" (Muzorewa, 1985:18). The Lumpa Church portrayed a picture that a person is not an individual that is living in a state of independence but he or she is communal, that is living in a state of relationships and interdependence and therefore each one is a brother's keeper, each one is accountable to the other and to God and this is very evident in as far as their prayer life was concerned. This can be true of many AICs. They have demonstrated a practical approach to Christian life through their prayer rituals (Kalu, 2005:322).

University of Cape Town

Alice Lenshina Mulenga Lubusha, her birth, spiritual experience and the inauguration of the Lumpa Church shall live to be remembered by generations to come. She was a dynamic and charismatic woman of the day. Ogbu Kalu (2005:426) is right to mention that "in Alice Lenshina, we have once again the example of a woman revitalizing and reforming both indigenous and exogamous traditions and establishing a new community which provided new values.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 4

LUMPA CHURCH: CHALLENGE TO POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES

4.1 Introduction

The Lumpa Church, through the religious innovations and teachings of Alice Lenshina, created an alternative enclave of religious authority and power (Chidester (1992: 113), which did not fully recognise the authority of both the state and mission churches. Initially, both political and religious authorities played down the influence of the Lumpa Church, thinking that it would fizzle out and disappear. The Lumpa Church became popular with the people and it started to undermine the authority of the mission churches and the desires of nationalist movements, like the UNIP. This chapter deals with the impact of the Lumpa Church on the activities of both religious and political authorities. It will demonstrate how politicians and religious leaders responded to the challenges posed by the Lumpa Church. Finally, there will be a reflection on attempts to revive and restore the Lumpa Church as an acceptable and respectable African Independent Church under the new name 'Jerusalem Church'.

University of Cape Town

4.2 Lumpa and the political arena: the impact

In analyzing the Lumpa Church's challenge to Zambia's political arena, Van Binsbergen (1964:266) observed that the Lumpa uprising at the verge of independence appears as a key episode for an understanding of postcolonial Zambia. He observed that the impact of the Lumpa aftermath was so great that it has become an example to point out dangers of religious sectarianism for national unity and stable government (1964:267). He explained this further by asserting that the event lives on as an important reference point in the idiom of the Zambian elite to an extent that reference is made to it to express government and party assertiveness. For Brockman (1994), the problematic teaching of the Lumpa Church for the government, both colonial and independent, was its opposition to earthly authority.

The Lumpa Church challenged the political authority of UNIP. This can be seen from the ideological conflict between Lumpa and the elite who were in the leadership of UNIP. Van Binsbergen (1964:315) noted that Lumpa leaders were not competing with the nationalist petty bourgeoisie that constituted the United National Independence Party's (UNIP) leadership, over the control of the entire Northern Rhodesian or Zambian state. However, on a more limited geographical scale, Lumpa's rejection of United National Independence Party in northeastern Zambia certainly amounted to a serious challenge of that bourgeoisie's position. The other notable challenge was the decline in the membership of UNIP in the region as a result of the strength of the Lumpa Church and her teachings. Inevitably, a quick growing movement of this kind met antagonism; her popular strength was great, and this emboldened her followers to defy the government on certain issues. Commenting on this, Pettman (1974:29) observed that, "Lumpa opting out of the political process was an act of treason to those whose efforts were directed towards mobilizing people and encouraging their identification with the continuing power struggle".

In 1964 there was the Lumpa Uprising in Northern Zambia, four months before independence. This created a lot of animosity between the two groups and violence that began on a small scale escalated into a small civil war in which about 700 people were killed and thousands of Lumpa members fled into exile most of them into Zaire (present day Democratic Republic of Congo). The United National Independence Party regarded Lumpa as a rival, and there were an increasing number of violent clashes between the two groups. As a result of the sporadic fights between the Lumpas and UNIP, President Kenneth Kaunda declared a state of emergency and it was not repealed until his fall from power (Tordoff, 1974:12). The state of emergency gave Kaunda absolute power. In essence the Lumpa-UNIP relations were badly managed. The situation would not have escalated if a way of seeking a peaceful solution was sought.

4.3 Challenge to local authorities

The Lumpa Church was not only seen as a serious challenge to the United National Independence Party alone but also to other authorities in the area. This occurred especially after the establishment of Lumpa villages from 1962 onwards. It is believed

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that "competition between the United National Independence Party and the Lumpas for recruits only aggravated the situation. Lenshina forbade her followers from participating in any political activities (Pettman 1974:94). The Lumpa members also rejected taxes and the villages established threatened the traditional authority of the chiefs because Lenshina received tribute and voluntary labor (Hudson, 1999:25). In rural areas, administratively, the basic units of government were unpaid village headmen and chiefs who earned their living by way of tributes from local people. Consequently, the establishment of Lumpa Villages meant that tributes were re-routed from the local chiefs to Lenshina.

The Lumpa Church challenged the authority of these traditional local leaders in many respects. For instance, Lumpa tried to revive the old super-structure in which concern for the land, fertility, protection against sorcery, general morality and political, economic power had all been combined so as to form one holistic conception of the rural society. "Lenshina governed the church like a Bemba chief" (Kalu 2005:426). This "elicited hostility from the local traditional chiefs who felt their positions threatened by her overwhelming authority" (Ibid.). This is to say the new society was to be a theocratic one, in which all authority was derived from God and his prophetess Lenshina. As a result of this, the District chiefs and local courts as they had no access to this authority were denounced and ignored. Lumpa members regarded Lenshina as their chief and gave her tributes that were normally intended for the chief. Lenshina used tribute labor and money to build the Temple at Kasomo village, finance her travels and her daily needs.

Van Binsbergen (1964:291) recorded that "in the judicial sphere cases would be taken to Lenshina and her senior church leaders; they would then try them to the satisfaction of the Lumpa adherents involved". She heard cases of inheritance claims, widows and sexual obligations. She held court sessions, in the traditional style of a chief; and she used church buildings as court rooms to hear inheritance cases and to liberate widows from the customary sexual obligations (Ipenburg, 1992:261). The local authority saw this as an intrusion by Lumpa upon the prerogatives of the chief. Ipenburg further commented that "in and around Kasomo, Lenshina had control of a large number of people and her authority and life style were similar to that of a chief" (Ibid.). She lived in a palace with access to tribute labor and with unchallenged authority based on

University of Cape Town

a presumed immediate contact with the supernatural. Nonetheless, it is believed that district officers conceded that in Chinsali district where the Lumpa Church was strongest, morality had greatly improved.

Alice Lenshina played no significant role in the Lumpa Church's political activities. She regretted the fact that the political actions weakened the religious impact of her message, which stressed the sanctity of marriage, opposed both polygamy and traditional African folk magic and promoted the up lifting of common people, especially women. Lenshina was simply reacting to the background that for seventy years of British rule, Zambia had achieved peace, but little prosperity. This obviously resulted into the low standard of living in many people. " Due to this low standard of living, the need to earn money to pay tax, the lack of local economic opportunity and the monotony of village life, a high proportion of men left their homes to seek employment in the urban centers" (Hudson, 1999:5). It is believed that Lenshina taught her members to ignore instructions from earthly authorities. According to Roberts (1970:547), Alice Lenshina, held a rally in May 1962 at Kasomo, where she informed thousands of her followers not to take part in politics.

Kenneth Kaunda, in his attempt to counter the influence of Lenshina, always alluded to his Christian roots, especially in the lead up to independence and in the early years of his presidency. In most cases Kaunda would say "I was brought up in a Christian home and my Christian belief is part of me now. It is still my habit to turn to God in prayer asking for his guidance," (Kaunda, 1962:146). Kenneth Kaunda was a product of the mission schools as was his father, David, who was a well-educated Malawian preacher and schoolteacher, he moved to Zambia as a missionary (Phiri, 1999:330).

Consequently, his Christian beliefs ensured the colonial administration were favorably disposed towards Kaunda and the United National Independence Party (UNIP) that he led. As a result, his faith bought him wide support in the churches both African and European led. However, Kaunda also pointed out that his reading of the Bible and its teachings led him to conclude that colonialism 'was immoral because it denied Africans their God-given dignity' (Phiri, 1999:331). Kaunda's declarations of faith and independence bought him support from the mission churches and they retracted from the political sphere, merely lending support to the government policies when

University of Cape Town

necessary (1999:333). This strategy was meant for all churches including the Lumpa Church. In addition, the new government chose as its motto "One Zambia, One Nation" in order to bring all the seventy two ethnic groups together into one nation and to overcome discrimination based on religion, race and sex (Hinfelaar, 2004:200).

On the issue of gender equality, it is evident that it is only now that women in Zambia can advocate for equal rights with men. Such demands were never heard of in the 1950s when Lenshina started her church. This was the time, particularly in Bemba land, when men had least respect for women. A man could not seek advice from a woman for fear that his fellow men would laugh at him. This is because women were regarded as least intelligent. Lenshina emerged to lead and dominate men in society where male chauvinism was very strong. It is believed that many people, including men, sought her advice (Mulenga, 1998:178). Lenshina was, therefore, one of the first if not, the first woman in Zambia to fight for women's rights. This is to say that her leadership and some of her teachings promoted women's rights. That was a great achievement for a woman at that time of Zambia's development when a man was the achiever and a woman the receiver. This for sure is a great challenge that the nation can proudly say "in Alice Lenshina, we have once again the example of a woman revitalizing and reforming both indigenous and exogamous traditions and establishing a new community which provided new values and new security in the midst of social, political and religious upheavals" (Kalu, 2005:426).

In any case, instead of concentrating on the efforts to meet the challenges, The Lumpa Church was destroyed and banned. According to UNIP, it was a major source of opposition because it refused to allow church members to participate in politics, which went against the 100% participation wanted by the United National Independence Party. It is, however, thought that "politically the decision was taken to proscribe the Lumpa Church permanently while offering to welcome back the thousands of Alice Lenshina's followers who had fled to Zaire" (Tordoff 1974:200). It is believed that "for seven years the Lumpas rejected all appeals to them to return to Zambia, in spite of an amnesty and the offer of financial help for resettlement" (Hall 1969:48). However it has been noted that in June 1968 only some 3000 Lumpa exiles near Mokambo in the Congo returned and plans of the Congolese government to resettle those who had remained away from the border did not work out and Pettman

University of Cape Town

(1974:95) noted that their presence in this area is regularly cited as a reason for extensions of the state of emergency in Zambia" during the Kaunda era. In October 1971 5000 Lumpas returned to Zambia because the Congolese began a program of removal by force. The fall of the Lumpa Church is aptly analyzed by Van Bins Bergen when he says;

> Lumpa represented a threat to processes of mass mobilization at the grass roots level, so crucial for a bourgeoisie aspiring to control the postcolonial state; at the same time, the state contained the military means to exterminate such threats. Therefore, once having secured a considerable degree of control over the state, the secular protagonist in this conflict could effectively crush its religious adversary (1964:316).

4.4 Lumpa and mission Churches: the impact

Mission churches of the late 1950s were faced with a severe challenge on several fronts by AICs (Hastings, 1979:118). This challenge appeared almost overwhelming and it is not questioned that they responded with vigor, not only on the level of control and leadership but in many places on that of the straight religious needs of the mass of men and women in local congregations (Ibid.). In the Catholic circles, it was a period of creative thinking. The Catholic Church realized the need for more local priests and missionaries, all the more startling then was the sudden emergence of a black clerical voice with a sharp message of its own and around 1954 and 1955, there was a remarkable group of young black priests studying in Rome (1979:119). This was indeed a turn of events in the Catholic circles because the Catholic Church had relied on the foreign nationals for church workers. Apparently this turn of events in the Catholic Church coincided with the events of the Lumpa Church in Zambia, which needed a rethink in mission strategy.

Consequently, in Zambia, "missionaries learnt the fact that if they were to succeed in turning people to God, they had to accept, respect, and embody the beliefs of the people they had converted and use local languages" (Mulenga 1998:176). Lenshina did not only challenge the European way of singing but also highlighted the importance of using local languages in the church. The Catholic Church decided to establish the Inter diocesan Committee for Bemba Publications (ICBP). The committee published the first comprehensive Bemba ritual book in renewed Bemba, and there was an emphasis on the keeping abreast of liturgical reforms of Vatican II and the study of Bemba customs (1998:43).

University of Cape Town

In the light of the Vatican II of 21st November 1964, Richard P. Mcbrien wrote that;

> The council produced 16 documents on such subjects as divine revelation, the sacred liturgy, the church in the modern world, the instruments of social communication, ecumenism, renewal of religious life, the laity, the ministry and life of priests, missionary activity, Christian education, the relationship of the church to non-Christian religions, and religious freedom. Of these, the most important and influential for the subsequent life of the Roman Catholic church have been the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, which gave renewed importance to the role of the bishops; the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, which authorized vernacularization of the liturgy and greater lay participation; the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, which acknowledged the need for the church to adapt itself to the contemporary world; the Decree on Ecumenism; and the Declaration on Religious Freedom. Together these documents present a church that is primarily a worshiping and serving community open to various points of view and religious traditions (1997)

Clearly, Catholic missionaries learnt some hard lessons from the bloodshed that resulted from conflicts between UNIP and the Lumpa Church. There was a general agreement among them that the manner in which the Good News of Jesus Christ was announced should be revised in the light of the changes brought about by Vatican II. The missionary orders of the Jesuits, Franciscans and white fathers should work together with other Christian denominations for the good of the country (Hinfelaar 2004:194). They noted that Vatican II urged Catholics to join together in prayers with other denominations in order to pray for unity in spite of their differences (2004:200). By so doing, "the moral and theological problems could be dealt with in union with other Christian Churches" (ibid).

The ecumenical initiative as a result of one of the findings of the Commission of Inquiry into the Lumpa disturbances that rivalry between the Catholics and the Protestants had contributed greatly to the defections of members (Hinfelaar, 2004:200). Apparently, there had been divisive effects of battle between Catholic and Protestant missionaries serving in the Northern part of Northern Rhodesia. This was over some moral and theological problems (2004:200). Although Chinsali district was in a remote part of Northern Rhodesia, it was a battleground for two Christian missions; the Roman Catholic Missionaries of Africa (also known as the White Fathers) and the Presbyterian missionaries and both looked at their teachings as superior. When the Lumpa Church came in, a lot of members from both sides left to join the new church and consequently missionaries were shattered by these defections and felt betrayed by their people. They had been very busy with founding missions, going on tour, giving religious instructions, working in the offices and managing the

University of Cape Town

growing number of schools. When faced with this wholesale apostasy, they did not know what to do and wondered where things had gone wrong (2004:190). Undoubtedly, the ecumenical initiative was very vital at this stage. Hinfelaar pointed out that it took the civil war between United Nation Independence Party and Lumpa Church members for churches to come together and co-operate. Church leaders of various denominations came together in Chinsali at the beginning of August 1964 to deal with the situation as one Christian body. It was one of the first times that Protestants and Catholics worked together in the refugee, detention, and youth camps that had been set up during and after troubles. It was the beginning of a tradition of ecumenical cooperation in many fields (2004:200).

One notable field of collaboration between the churches was the area of religious education in schools. The government wanted a unified approach to avoid confusion and lack of discipline in the schools (Hinfelaar 2004:202). According to Hinfelaar even those missionaries, who had been staunch opponents of the common syllabus and had feared that the pure doctrine of the Catholic Church would be adulterated, were eventually ready to give a series of refresher courses on using the new syllabus (2004:2003). American missiologist McGavaran, an advocate of the church growth method of mission, in his book *Bridges of God*", criticized the mission station model of evangelization. In the book McGavran (n.d) explained that;

> The Bridges of God appeared in 1954, and it become known as the classic summons for missionaries to utilize the "bridges" of family and kinship ties within each people group thereby prompting" people movements" to Christ. This is contrasted with the "Mission Station Approach," dominant in missionary strategy of the nineteenth century, whereby individual converts were gathered into" colonies" or compounds isolated from the social mainstream. McGavran claims that whereas the latter approach was necessary and useful in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, "a new pattern is at hand, which, while new, is as old as the Church itself".

The book had great influence on missionaries and their approach to mission. Missionaries learnt that in their evangelization, family and clan relationships were not to be overlooked (Ipenburg, 1992:247). Consequently, in equipping themselves for the challenges posed to them by the Lumpa Church, this book was studied immediately after its publication with great interest by the missionaries of Lubwa and by the church council (Ipenburg, 1992:247). After a thorough study of the book, mission

University of Cape Town

churches had to rethink their mission strategy and liturgy. This can be deduced from the recordings of Ipenburg (1992:251) when he said that;

> Lubwa mission adopted missiologist, McGavaran's concept that evangelism is most effective if carried out through a people's movement. They decided to hand over their medical and educational work to local government authority, but there was little change in the form of worship although seed blessing services and thanksgiving services for rains were inaugurated. White Fathers concluded that their approach to people had been too intellectual.

They therefore recommended:

- The singing of Bemba tunes
- Religious instruction to be through hymns
- Choirs to accompany tours of missionaries
- More participation of people in the liturgy was needed
- Translation of the liturgy into Bemba had to be organized as well as mass demonstrations like the Rosary Crusade of 1955. These people pledged to say the family rosary everyday.

More to it was the realization that the Lumpa Church was a religious movement. The Lubwa Church was an institutionalized church, which people joined because of the position they held in the educational, medical or evangelistic structure of the mission. Consequently, Lubwa did away with its educational, medical commitments and the management responsibilities this had brought with it (Ipenburg 1992:285). Ipenburg further noted that missionaries brought in the western concept of individualism into a society where people think in groups, i.e., villages and families as units. Thus, the study of McGavaran and an analysis of the success of Lumpa led the missionaries of Lubwa to propose to end quickly the involvement of the church with secular education and health work (1992:247). It was realized that with the growth of schools and health work, converts grew but the family and clan relationships were ignored as a result of the western concept of individualism introduced in schools (Ibid). This attitude by missionaries is explained further by Sindima (1990:191);

> With unquestioned belief in their own self-righteousness and depravity of Africans, missionaries were determined to change indigenous institutions and behavior [and] thus saw themselves as Christian agents of civilization. This conclusion meant that Africans had to be taught different values, goals, and modes of behavior. Consequently, missionary schools became the keystone of the mission's activities. The curricula of those schools either ignored or distorted African culture and emphasized European history and culture, thereby instilling the ideas that the

University of Cape Town

> important developments of the past, even for Africans, occurred in Europe ...It was only with greatest of perseverance, therefore, that mission-trained Africans retained a sense of pride and confidence in their heritage and people, and a commitment to African freedom.

Sindima has even stated the fact that even the British acknowledged that liberal education had a lot of unintended consequences. There was a general erosion of African practices that led to a moral decay and a promotion of individualism (1990:196- 198).

Whatever the case may be, Lenshina contributed greatly to the enculturation of the Christian gospel in Zambia. Owen Sichone also noted this when he observed that "the struggles begun by Alice Lenshina for the right to give Christianity a Zambian meaning have continued and are present even in the established churches" (1996:122). According to Mulenga (1998:176) in the early days of the Lumpa Church, leaders of the United Church of Zambia, Reformed Church in Zambia, and the Roman Catholic leaders laughed at members of Lumpa Church when they saw them singing and dancing either at a wedding or after a church service. When Lenshina introduced dancing in her church, her adversaries said she was possessed by spirits; hence her members beat drums for her to dance. This attitude has since changed. Today in Zambia almost all Zambian Christians dance in their churches. It is also asserted that at the time of banning the Lumpa Church, lay movements, such as the Catholic Legion of Mary, reclaimed many of the former members of the Lumpa Church for their churches, often by incorporating the very hymns and dances that had resonated with Bemba national feelings.

Lenshina also introduced the wearing of uniforms in Church, for example, members of the choir in Lumpa Church wore uniforms, and so did the members of the women's and men's committees. This idea of wearing uniforms in Church by Lumpa Church members drew a lot of criticisms from Lenshina's enemies. However, these other churches have also adopted the wearing of uniforms. Choir members in the Roman Catholic Church, United Church of Zambia, and Reformed Church in Zambia have been uniformed. The Catholic Church had no choirs, slowly choirs were introduced and they have become a permanent feature. These choirs have given some women an opportunity to have some leadership roles in the church as women are traditionally

University of Cape Town

singers (Mulenga 1998:43). Mulenga further pointed out that those choir members in Lumpa Church visited each other or a number of them met at one place where they sang for a day or two, this practice was also criticized. Critics said it was unchristian for choirs to compete in singing, but all churches, except Jehovah's Witnesses, do the same today" (1998:176).

As a result of the Lumpa Church's strong enculturation program, the Roman Catholic Church, the United Church of Zambia (UCZ), Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) and many others no longer give Western names at baptism. Sermons, unlike before, are conducted in local languages. Equally, most hymns in these denominations are sung in local languages and set to the African beat instead of a piano. It is also interesting to see that drums have also been introduced. Before Lenshina came on the religious scene, all this was regarded as pagan and unacceptable forms of religious practice. On one hand, it can be appreciated that the Mutumwa churches have had some significant influence on the religious landscape of Zambia. For instance, Churches have been seen to emulate the Mutumwa Church by combining such activities as worship, medical treatment and counseling in a communitarian setting (Dillon-Malone, 1983:206). Biblical consciousness is the legitimating framework within which activities take place and the Holy Spirit as source of power (Ibid.)

On the issue of witchcraft, it is no secret that mission churches were aware of people's fear of witchcraft but because of their modern western education they were unable to acknowledge the reality of witchcraft. This is to say, the church did not address in any concrete, and visible way, this urgent pastoral problem of the day (Ipenburgh, 1992:245-6). Mission Churches worked under the witchcraft Ordinance of 1914, which deemed the practice of witch and wizard accusations illegal and a criminal act. For this reason, Lubwa Church's remedy against the belief in witchcraft was the teaching of health care and modern medicine, and the scientific approach to life. The Lumpa Church offered a new ritual, a baptism, which cleansed the people from the sin of having practiced witchcraft (1992:276). That is to say, Lenshina convinced people that she and Lumpa Church could protect them from witchcraft. When she called people to repentance they had to bring all their fetishes and charms and baptism was given after exposing all them. Consequently, "in as far as the Lumpa Church promised to eradicate witchcraft, supposedly the root cause of bad luck, evil and disease,

University of Cape Town

Lumpa was a healing church, its baptism suggested that people who received it were cleansed and healed from witchcraft and its consequences" (1992:262) and these transformed lives led to social action. People understood that the Gospel had an important message for society, and involved themselves in justice issues and this led to new friendships, as well as, new understandings. Nathaniel Ndiokwere (1981:45) mentioned that Lenshina's success in this field, where missions failed was due to the eschatological message and the promise of redemption for those who surrendered their magical objects.

In the Lumpa Church, both men and women had equal opportunities in church leadership. All positions in the church were open to women (Ipenburg, 1992:244). Illiterate as she was, Lenshina was the first woman to stand in the now United Church of Zambia pulpit to preach the word of God (Mulenga 1998:177). She challenged gender prejudices as the first African woman in the country to have stood in a pulpit to preach (Ibid). On the contrary, it was not uncommon for women to be leaders in AICs- there are numerous examples in South Africa. For example West (1975:52) cites women like Mrs. Christinah Nku who founded the St. Johns Apostolic Faith Mission. Lenshina broke with tradition by being a woman leader and she castigated polygamy and spoke out against witchcraft.

University of Cape Town

In any case, Lenshina challenged the mission churches in Zambia on the involvement of women in the church. This can be seen from the reorganization of the Women Guild that already existed in Lubwa mission church by 1948. It is reported that in 1955 the Women's Guild was transformed into the Women Christian Fellowship (WCF) which was formerly called in Bemba language Kwafwana Banamayo Bena Kristu (KBBK) translated into English as Christian women who meet to help one another. According to Ipenburg (1992:268), this women's fellowship group had the following aims; (a) to create space for Christian fellowship, (b) to provide an opportunity for Christian instruction, (c) to form a way of expressing beliefs in practical service and, (d) to be a meeting place for women outside the Church to meet Christian women and be introduced to the Christian way of life. By such activities women found themselves in leadership positions in the church and this opened the way for a church based on voluntary pastoral work from the women's fellowship group. Expanding more on this, David Gordon (n.d) commented that Lenshina's

movement challenged male priests and party members for local authority. Her church re-defined the patriarchal orientation of mission churches and political party branches by building on pre-colonial Bemba discourses that emphasized the religious authority of women. This gendered analysis of Lenshina's movement provides a new and enriched account of a crucial moment in Zambian history and contributes to the understanding of the making of gendered identities in post-colonial Africa.

For Ipenburg (1992: 247), the Lumpa Church reflected the Presbyterian ideal of a self-supporting, self-governing, and self-extending church and the Church as a people's movement, better than Lubwa. In propagating the gospel, the Lumpa Church had a social gospel character, it had built up its own organizational infrastructure, independent of churches overseas, and independent of government, the church had its own sources of income and was financially self-supporting (1992:262). Lenshina also introduced Indigenous leadership; many members had an active and significant role in church management making the Lumpa Church entirely self-sustaining. Hinfelaar (2004:191) observed that "the upsurge of the Lumpa Church showed that the lay people could manage without mission tutelage". This was a great challenge to mission churches. As a result of this, in 1967, Lubwa mission church became a rural based self governing, self extending church and apart from the salary of the minister which came from overseas, the church became a self supporting church (Ipenburg 1992:275).

John Hudson (1999:64-65) summarized the impact of the Lumpa Church;

> Despite the sad loss of life, the bitterness and the disruption of village life, there was one good result. The foreign based churches were deeply shaken by the mass defections of so many of their followers to the new faith. Subsequent agonizing reappraisals of policies and attitudes led to closer involvement of local people in church affairs, greater humility and respect for Zambian needs and customs, greater participation of congregations in church services, especially through more singing and music and the introduction of a common religious syllabus in all schools to promote harmony and understanding between different religions.

4.5 Lumpa as 'Jerusalem Church'

The death of Alice Mulenga Lenshina brought a lot of instability in the church. Daneel (1987:58) observed that "as so often happens in the Independent Churches when a founder leader dies, the death triggers off a power struggle". This is very common especially among the AICs in South Africa. Masondo (2004:69) observed

University of Cape Town

that "conflict over succession is an age-old story". He made this point by analyzing the succession battles that followed after the death of Johannes Galilee Shembe. After JG Shembe's death "the Church went through a painful period of in-fighting that led to a schism when two members of the Shembe family, Amos and Londa, were involved in a serious squabble for leadership" (2004:74). However, Masondo's point is that in the Shembe case the predecessor did not plan for succession. There are cases where succession is carefully managed and when the leader dies the movement is able to continue- the ZCC are a good example of that. Truly, the death of a leader in an African Independent Church creates an important challenge to the viability of the Church (2004:74).

As for the case of the Lumpa Church, it is thought that before Lenshina died, she had appointed someone who would be her successor. Mulenga (1998:134-135) explained that six months prior to her death, the prophetess summoned all her deacons to Lusaka to choose her successor. At this meeting, Obed Chileshe, who was Christened Muchinga, was chosen as Lenshina's successor. After the appointment, Muchinga was ordained Archbishop of the church during a handover ceremony on July 18 1978. During the ordination service, Lenshina told Muchinga to feed her sheep and ensure that he did not lose any of them and should some go astray he should look for them until he found them and brought them back to the fold. However, "despite appointing her successor, there were squabbles over who should lead the Church" (Mulenga 1998:154). Mulenga noted that the major reason for power struggle in the church could have had something to do with inheritance of church property and money (1998:155) because during the time of Lenshina, the Lumpa Church had accumulated a lot of wealth ranging from well furnished houses, motor vehicles and other valuables.

During the time when the Lumpa Church was banned, Lumpa followers conducted prayers in defiance of the ban (Mulenga 153:1998). Much later it was agreed that Lumpa members should pray as they used to do before the ban on their church, except that they would be required to change the name of their church. Church elders sent an application to the Registrar of Societies requesting that their church be registered under the name 'New Jerusalem Church', and the United National Independence Party government sarcastically responded that the name implied that there was an old

University of Cape Town

Jerusalem and the one to be registered was to replace the old one. However, despite the reluctance of the government to register the Church, worship continued with members totally unconcerned about the ban (1998:153-154).

New Jerusalem had a different organizational structure from its forerunner. This was done to avoid accusations of reviving the banned Lumpa Church. The Church is headed by the Archbishop and State Overseer, below him is church superintendent, general secretary and the vice secretary, church treasurer and the vice treasurer. These office bearers are assisted by ten sub committees namely; disciplinary, appointments, finance, church security, women's affairs, church secretariat, transport, orphans and disabled (1998:154). As leadership squabbles clipped the church, there was a splinter church called 'Jerusalem in Christ' the members felt that most of the members in the New Jerusalem Church did not recognize Lenshina.

John Hudson (1999:63) observed that in the early stage of the split, the two groups had quarreled over the use of the name 'New Jerusalem Church' which both claimed for official registration purposes. In the 'Jerusalem in Christ Church' some members felt that Lenshina's daughter Jennifer Kanyata Ngandu Bubile should take over from her mother as a way of recognizing Lenshina (Mulenga 1998:154), however this proposal was rejected by some members who argued that as Lenshina was a prophetess her leadership should not be hereditary, but someone else should lead the church as the Spirit of God would direct. Unfortunately, when it came to the registration of the church with the Registrar of Societies, just like 'New Jerusalem Church', the 'Jerusalem in Christ Church' was also not recognized by the government and no reasons were given. Due to persistent power struggle some members broke away from 'Jerusalem in Christ Church' to form their own churches and Mulenga notes the churches formed as 'The Holy City Church', 'Sloam Church' and 'Salem Church' (1998:154-155) while others simply decided to retain the original name of 'Lumpa Church'.

As time went on, Jerusalem in Christ and New Jerusalem merged to form Jerusalem Church (1998:159). Unfortunately, due to the same power squabbles, Jerusalem Church saw another split; a church called Uluse kamutola was formed (1998:162). However, at the beginning of the Third Republic, with Frederick Chiluba as president,

University of Cape Town

Jerusalem Church was gazetted (Hinfelaar, 2004:190) and this is the church with majority of the original Lumpa Church members, "the Church is now regarded as harmless and respectable; most of its members argue that they never wanted to be anything else, but were driven to the violence of 1964 by intolerable interference and intimidation" (Hudson 1999:63).

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 5
REFLECTION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter reflects on the role of AICs in politics and how their response to political pressure has been. The chapter also reflects on historical factors of colonialism and Christianity which created difficulties for a proper appreciation of Christianity in Africa. The areas of liturgy and culture have been isolated for a deeper reflection. The extent to which Colonialism and Christianity at the hands of missionaries uprooted Africans from their cultural milieu and transplanted them into the soil of western culture has been demonstrated. Consequently, the impression is that the spread of AICs is justifiable.

5.2 Political challenges

African Independent Churches have generally played a more reserved role in the political arena (Daneel, 1983:64). Their sympathies with the cause of their people for political independence seldom led to outright participation in militant political activities they simply refused to be oppressed for political propaganda (Ibid.). They did this by openly opposing any form of unjust action by the rulers (Ibid.). One typical example is that during the years prior the bush war in Zimbabwe, leaders of Zionist type churches openly opposed the militant forms of confrontation adopted by the then banned Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and Zimbabwe African Nationalist Union (ZANU). The message which was conveyed in several Zionist and Apostolic congregations was critical of both the unjust action of European rulers and the aggressive rebellion of the banned African parties which resulted into much suffering amongst the people (Ibid.).

On one hand, van Binsbergen (1981: 57.) commented that Schoffeleers spoke about the fact that these churches were politically acquiescent. Their brand of freedom included not only freedom in the religious field and independence in relation to the mission Churches, but also the maintenance of a unique identity in the face of political

University of Cape Town

pressures (Daneel, 1983:64). The classic example in Africa of the refusal to be manipulated is the one concerning the tragic killing of members of Lumpa Church in Zambia after the influential prophetess had refused to comply with the directives of the powerful UNIP that her entire church should obtain membership of the ruling party (Ibid.).

In finding ways of co-existence, Hackett (2001:188) pointed out that postcolonial Southern Africa must now look to the management of religious pluralism as part of their plans of national integration lest they explode into conflict as was the case with the Lumpa Church in Zambia. Sometimes political authorities do not seem to have any regard for life, just like in the case of the Lumpa Church where hundreds of people where murdered. Illustrating this, Hackett (2001:189) demonstrated by means of selected examples, some of the emergent patterns of conflict between the AICs and the state. She pointed to the death, predominantly murder, of nearly eight hundred members of a Ugandan (post) Catholic apocalyptic movement, and the movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God, in March 2000 (Ibid.). Occasionally the state would use various legislations to outlaw or silence some AICs. This was the case with the Lumpa Church in Zambia when it was deregistered in order to proscribe it completely. This is certainly not a good way of controlling the activities of African Independent Churches (Mulenga, 1998:153).

In this regard, the observation that registration and deregistration is a powerful tool used by governments not only to exercise power but also to manipulate public views about non-mainstream movements is very accurate. However, it is true that a more subtle but quite successful technique of restraining the activities of less privileged religious groups is to create bureaucratic obstacles for their legal recognition. These obstacles include the disappearance of files, invention of problems, and demanding extra payments or bribes by officials. The Lumpa Church was faced with such encounters (Mulenga, 1998:153-154).

5.3 Liturgy

David Barrett (1968:156-158) demonstrated that there was a widespread dissatisfaction among African Christians with the brands of Christianity that were

University of Cape Town

introduced to Africa through the missionary enterprise. He noted that the breaking away of African Independent Churches from mission churches was an attempt to renew, reform and participate fully in a more relevant and meaningful expression of their Christian faith (Ibid.). Mugambi (1992:147) echoed the same sentiments when he commented that the rise of African Independent Churches in postcolonial Southern Africa was an attempt not only to make a more relevant and meaningful expression of the Christian faith, but also to give religious meaning to the history of the people. He further noted that the established churches by opposing the AICs while at the same time tolerating imported denominations, betrayed themselves as supporters of the colonial powers (Ibid.). This among many other reasons was a major contributing factor to clashes between AICs and mission churches. These clashes have continued to occur today and the "bases of accusations are mainly theological or social in nature" (Hackett, 2001:199). However, to a larger extent it can be noted that the interests' center on boundary maintenance, this is so because loss of members to another organization entails loss of revenue and loss of prestige (Ibid.).

African Independent Churches continue to grow. In some places they even out number the mission churches in as far as membership is concerned. For example, the Zion Christian Church in South Africa, as the largest of the independent churches in South Africa with between three to six million members, has exceeded the membership of the Anglican and Dutch Reformed Churches (Hackett, 2001:202). What is needed at this point is for mission churches to rethink their mission praxis in order to meet the peoples' needs to their many problems, "it is the urge to have their problems solved which drives people to the doors of the African Independent Churches" (Ndiokwere, 1981:279).

5.4 Cultural

The recognition of the value of African culture as a vehicle for the transportation of the gospel has played a big role in the phenomenal growth and popularity of the AICs. Barrett (1968:7) justifiably characterized the AICs "as movements of renewal attempting to create a genuinely indigenous Christianity on African soil". Much of what can be observed in the independent churches concerns a genuinely contextualized and originally African response to the gospel (Daneel, 1983:58). These

University of Cape Town

Churches are thus a dynamic movement to be reckoned with and which can no longer be over looked by the historical churches (Maboea, 2002:10).

Unfortunately, mission churches disregarded African cultural aspects. Missionaries in their eagerness to spread the Gospel did not see anything good in African culture. In fact;

> African was always defined in terms not of what he was or what he had, but in terms of what he was not, according to western values. His destiny was therefore, directed by someone other than himself- the outsider; and in many cases missionaries were the African' spokesman. Kendall (1978:88)

For Africans, "conversion to Christianity involved a fundamental reorientation of African religious beliefs and practices" (Spear, 1999:6). In other words, becoming Christians meant that they abandon their African religio-cultural heritage and their Africanness. Hayward (1963:8) pointed out that "early converts came out of their villages and were separated from the rest of their people". Meaning that, Africans were uprooted and alienated from family and clan in order to belong to the community of those who are sanctified (cleansed in the blood) and justified (set free by faith alone) by and through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, "their faith in Christ was such that they also turned back and looked upon their fellow people as heathen" (Ibid.). This was very unfortunate because "conversion and rebirth resulted for converts in a change of social and cultural identity, which included the assumption of new names and clothes" (Villa-Vicencio, 1994:115). Instead of presenting Christianity as a new vital force permeating the whole life of society, missionaries preached it as a set of abstract truths and a complex of strange rites administered to the individual (Baur, 1994:94). Africans had to become European before they became Christians. A new cultural orientation had to be adopted, including a new way to dress.

The process of Christianization meant that Africans had to be denuded of everything that reminded them of their African past. Their customs and other practices were undermined and deemed superstitious (Baur, 1994:94) or heathen (Hayward, 1963:8). An African personhood was systematically stripped of its surplus value to make it individualistic. Kendall noted that;

> The Church made it plain that everything African was heathen and superstitious barbarism. Conversion to Christianity meant rejecting traditional forms of dress,

University of Cape Town

> authority, social organization, culture, marriage, medicine, etc. The black people were made to believe not that salvation is in Christ alone, but that salvation is in accepting the new white ways of living. The effect of this was to internalize in the black people a sense of the inferiority which inhered in them as Africans (1978:54).

This somehow meant being African also meant being sinful and evil. This kind of evangelization was demeaning to the African's own sense of worth and dignity. Of the many serious mistakes made by western Christianity was the fact that mission churches considered Africans as people who had not known anything. Church historian John Baur (1994:96) observed that the most fatal mistake of the missionaries was the adoption of the principle of *tabula rasa*. Missionaries thought that Africans had no proper religion; their hearts were blank pages. Elaborating on this point, Baur quoted Fr. Gonsalo Silveria a missionary who worked in the Mwene Motapa Empire the most famous empire among the kingdoms of East Africa. According to Baur, Fr Gonsalo Silveria wrote that he hoped to be successful; "because the inhabitants of Mwene Motapa were like a *tabula rasa*, they held no pagan rites and their souls were easy to teach and impress with whatever doctrine (Baur, 1994:94). Clearly, Fr. Silveria was wrong as "no human groups can exist without some explicit or implicit system of values and norms of good and right" (Villa-Vicencio, 1994:126) and just to be human "is to be moral" (Charles L. Kammer in Villa-Vicencio, 1994:126). Chidester (1996:89) observed that missionaries working among the Xhosa speaking people in South Africa asserted that the Xhosa despite their belief in a Supreme Being were a people "without a clear belief in God". He further observed that missionaries spoke of the Xhosa as a people without a religion and their life and living was dependant on superstitious beliefs and customs. In fact, at one point, missionaries suggested that the Xhosa speaking people "had once had a religion" but they had later lost it. For sure, the level of ignorance could be seen in their findings, "instead of progressing from an original ignorance, missionaries traced a trajectory of degradation" (1996:90).

Archbishop Ngada (2001:1) in his critique of missionaries said, "What missionaries brought was hardly the gospel of Jesus Christ, it was Western culture, Western civilization, Western customs and dress and Western values". Thus, "the Christianity which the black person encountered at the hands of Europeans could hardly provide a basis for establishing his sense of the dignity of human nature since it was not

University of Cape Town

Christianity in its essence, but the European racial characteristics of domination and control" (Bediako, 1995:9). The historical factors of Christianity and colonialism created difficulties for a proper appreciation of Christianity in Africa. Africans started to wonder as to what type of Christianity it was that failed to reflect on their experiences Lamin Sanneh, (1983:168) commented that;

> There are times when it is more helpful that a people should be called upon to take up their responsibilities, struggle with and conquer their difficulty than that they should be in the position of vessels taken in tow.

Time had come for Africans to react to the shortcomings of colonial Christianity, and so "reaction against colonial conquest provided self respect as a necessary condition for the search for a new, liberating identity" (Daneel, 1999:102). Africans explored the question of their own identity (Isichei, 1995:180). Isichei further commented that "they bitterly resented white racism and felt a deep need to prove African abilities to a hostile world" (Ibid.). In addition to that, Spear noted that "as Africans confronted the fundamental contradiction between the word and the vessels in which it came, they developed particular intellectual responses to these practices. These responses were revealed in a variety of contexts and many gave rise to various forms of independency movements" (Spear, 1999:26). Africans in Christian Churches demonstrated clearly that they were prepared to accept the gospel message, but not in western garb, at the same time resisting the colonial powers which contradicted the gospel message. To such, "African men and women developed their own discourse about Christianity within the language of the Churches" (Spear, 1999:26). One of the most significant products of this quest and search for authenticity was the rise of the African Independent Churches way back in the 19th century.

African Independent Churches sought to find similarities between Christianity and traditional African religious and social values. In fact, "these Churches are important African initiatives aimed at defining what it means to be human in a dehumanizing environment" (Masondo, 2005:101). There has been an increase in AICs since the end of colonial rule and the accompanying of weakening of the missionary presence (Fashole, 1978:44). These Churches have proved that they are up to reflecting a true African Christianity that is aimed at retaining an African ethos that was lost at the hands of the colonial masters. They sought to revive the communal life systems. AICs

University of Cape Town

have continued to gain strength and wining souls to themselves each day; one would pose and wonder just as Allan Anderson (1995) reflects that;

> If African Independent Churches are gaining in strength each day, then what are the implications of this for the mission of the older churches in Africa generally, and in postcolonial Southern Africa in particular? Important questions will be raised about the relevance of the faith and life of the mission churches in postcolonial Southern Africa. If the teachings and practices of mission churches are perceived by African people as powerless to meet their everyday needs, then the older churches are therefore challenged with the need to seriously rethink their mission strategy in Africa. Church leaders may pontificate about the need to engage in ecumenical comity arrangements and to desist from 'sheep-stealing'; but if the sheep are not receiving satisfying food, they will seek greener pastures. Therefore, if these older mission churches are to return to the cutting edge of missions in Africa they will have to address and remedy these shortcomings or else continue to minister to an ever decreasing membership who are content to practise their Christianity within their Africanness.

However, the quest for wholeness and Africanizing Christianity is not only for African Independent Churches. Theologians and church leaders from denominations that have historic ties with churches in the West have also started encouraging African Christian expressions that are free of Western acculturation, are faithful to the gospel and draw upon traditional African ethos. It was "in the 1960s that the process of enculturation started, its most visible elements were the Africanization of Church leadership and the liturgical renewal with the singing of hymns in local languages and to African tune" (Baur, 1994:429). The main objective was as Tutu said "a departure from falsehood" (Parratt, 1987:49). Consequently, as Church leaders in mission churches, it would be wise of them to take out a leaf from AICs to come up with a theology, which speaks in the language and tones of an African. Desmond Tutu supports this view when he said;

> Christianity to be truly African must be incarnated in Africa; it must speak in the tones that strike a responsive chord in the African breast and must convict the African of his peculiar African sinfulness. It must not provide him with answers to questions he has never asked. It must speak out of and his own context (Parratt, 1987:52).

In other words, it is right to say that African church leaders must have "a relevant theology which takes seriously the reality of the different African contexts in which people live (Villa-Vicencio, 1994:138). It is within these different social contexts that the past, the present and even the future are to be found" (Ibid.). In fact, in solidarity with this, some Christians from the western community have also seen it necessary and have since asserted that it is important to "probe deeply into the experiences of African Christians themselves as they explored the new faith in all its complexity,

University of Cape Town

interpreted it in their own cultural and historical contexts, and appropriated it as their own, forging in the process African Churches distinctive from the European Christianity of the missionaries" (Spear, 1999:4).

In fact, in as far as, the appropriation of Christianity is concerned; the biggest challenge of the Independent churches is their humble form of contextualization. They deal not only with the theological issues raised by white oppressive structures but also and perhaps more importantly with the issues of Africanness, past, present, and future (Mosala, 1986:71). Through their leaders, they have attempted to make a creative synthesis of traditional and Christian beliefs, creatively formulating a truly African Christianity, which gives Africans an African identity. They represent radical indigenization and Africanization of Christianity (1986:80).

African Independent Churches should be seen as part of the universal Church, and must be free to communicate their understanding of the meaning of human life and of society (Schoffeleers, 1999:345). This is part of the mission of the church. This is also very well understood by Alick Banda (2003:84) who noted that in the Zambian context, "the mission of the church is to preach the gospel, to proclaim love and to denounce instances of injustice when the fundamental rights of man and his very salvation are infringed". The duty of AICs and others in the mainline stream is therefore to defend and promote the dignity and fundamental rights of the human person (Ibid.). It is for this reason that whenever African Independent Churches have seemed to be a challenge to political authorities, it has always been for a good cause, that of defending the interests of a human person. Therefore, in this case, political authorities and religious authorities while remaining separate and independent of one another should live on friendly terms (Ibid). This is so because the common good of human person is the principle object of co-operation between religious authorities and political authorities. Banda tries to clarify this by stating that;

> In their proper spheres, the political community and the church are mutually independent and self-governing, yet by a different title; each serves the personal and social vacation of the same human beings. This service can be more effectively rendered for the good of all, if each works better for wholesome mutual co-operation, depending on the circumstances of time and place (2003:51).

African Independent Churches in postcolonial Southern Africa; just like mission Churches, should be seen as acting within and with the political authorities on issues

University of Cape Town

of common interest Therefore, the basis of co-operation among African Independent Churches, religious authorities and political authorities is for no other reason than the welfare of all humankind, who are at the centre of all parties. It should be understood that the human person is simultaneously a citizen as well as a believer (Ibid.). What is surprising is that political authorities tend to prefer having the church singing them praises; they become uncomfortable when the church criticizes them. It should be known that it is the church's prophetic task to call the state to order.

It must be noted that when African leaders initiated the break away from the mission Church to form African Independent Churches, their cause could be justified. They simply withdrew from the mission Church so that they might realize self-government of the African Church under African leaders (Sundkler, 1961:39). They were exercising the cause for justice and so it is "only the disclosure of the truth and the search for justice that can create the moral climate in which reconciliation and peace can flourish" (Dick, 2006:13) and thereby embracing a Christianity which finds meaning within people's contexts.

In fact, Africans were justified to look somewhere else for satisfaction and justice as the mission churches treated African church workers unfairly. This is elaborated by Michael Battle (1997:24) as no cowardly surrender of one's own strivings, rights and claims. This is precisely what leaders, who initiated a break away from mission churches exercised, they were obedient to the call of Justice, to live according to the rule or law of the creator and to act according to the law of their own life thus expressing their own pure character and identity (Ibid.). People must be allowed to search freely for the truth, to voice their opinions and be heard to engage in creative service of the community in all liberty within the associations of their own choice. Nobody should suffer reprisals for honestly expressing and living up to their convictions; intellectual, religious or political (Schoffeleers, 1999:351). Consequently, there should be no suspicion in what people are doing for the just cause of humanity. Suspicion creates an atmosphere of resentment among the citizens. It breeds a climate of mistrust and fear. This fear of harassment and mutual suspicion generates a society in which talents of individual people lie unused and in which there is little room for initiative (Ibid.)

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION: A WAY FORWARD

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study has been to look at the reasons for the emergence of African Independent Churches and the challenges they posed to both religious and political authorities in postcolonial Southern Africa. The Lumpa Church was used as a case study. Nathaniel Ndiokwere (1981:279) suggested that in any critical approach to challenges as those posed by the AICs to political and religious authorities in postcolonial Southern Africa, a solution or recommendation for action is a necessity. It is for this reason that this chapter suggests a way forward. The study highlights issues that are crucial in creating an atmosphere in which African Independent Churches, religious authorities and the political authorities co-exist and co-operate. Three focus areas have been identified. First, ecumenical initiatives and reconciliation, where AICs and mission churches co-operate on issues of common interest. Second, unification of the prophetic voice. The church must begin critique the excesses of the state as one voice. Third, clearing of the misconceptions and the need to understand each other's roles. The suggestion is for the separation of church and state. The state must carry out its mandate to render services to people and set policies. The church, on the other hand, must be the conscience of the state. These may help form a basis for the relationships in AICs, political authorities and religious authorities in the years to come (WCC, 1978:87).

University of Cape Town

6.2 Ecumenical initiatives and reconciliation

It is important that a strong ecumenical foundation among mission churches and AICs is created in order to have an atmosphere of collaboration, mutual respect and tolerance (Hinfelaar, 2004:304). The greatest obstacle to ecumenical initiatives could be that posed by those who are still very skeptical and critical of the motives of the AICs (Ndiokwere, 1981:280). However, for those who are still skeptical, it may be necessary to reflect upon what the participants in the dialogue between the Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC) of Kenya and the World Alliance

of Reformed Churches (WARC) held on 9th to 14th February 2002 in Mbagathi, Kenya. During the meeting, delegates affirmed that;

> We recognize that some of the AICs separated historically from member churches of the WARC, in a process of polarization in which the positions of the two sides became deeply entrenched. We acknowledge that ill-feelings and bitterness continue to exist between some of our members until the present day. We recommend that in the countries where this is the case leaders of the churches concerned meet to discuss the reconciliation of memories, and to consider how best to come together again in mutual repentance, in order to strengthen our common witness to the one Christ. In other situations, although bitter historical memories may not be present, prejudice and the lack of a spirit of common fellowship in the ministry may be present. Sometimes this prejudice is characterized by attitudes of rejection of the other based on false conceptions such as, 'lacking education', 'backward', and 'lacking the Holy Spirit ', 'colonial churches' We commit ourselves to working much more strongly for mutual understanding and ecumenism, and we urge the leaders of the churches in our respective communities to work and act together to remove the misconceptions and prejudice, to build trust and share fully in joint Christian witness. In the crises that affect our continent, for the survival of our own people, we cannot afford disunity. (WARC 2002)

The above affirmation should be encouraged for the sake of peace and unity. It is delightful to note that this is now taking place in Zambia. Chuba (2005:116) observed that in the ecumenical initiatives in Zambia today, more significant is the membership of one Independent church to the Christian Council of Zambia. This is 'The Church of Jesus Christ on Earth by the Prophet Simon Kimbangu' (Kimanguist Church) (Ibid.). Moreover, the Lumpa Church under the new name 'Jerusalem Church' has also become a member of the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (UCZ constitution) and "is now regarded as harmless and respectable" (Hudson 1999:63). In other words, many church leaders are realizing the ecumenical importance of the African Independent Churches and at the same time willing to listen to what their leaders have to say. The leaders of African Independent Churches are also realizing that self-isolation is not in their interest and are applying for membership in ecumenical organizations (Mugambi, 1992:147).

Archbishop Ngada asserted that;

> Our main concern and wish is that the African Indigenous Churches and the mainline missionary churches might one day come to their senses, give up pointing fingers at one another, stop undermining each other and begin to work towards true reconciliation and unity (2001:56).

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Surely, the growth of AICs on one hand and the indigenization process on the other hand must be seen as the result of a positive indigenized proclamation of the gospel rather than as a negative reaction to western mission Churches. Pauw, (1995) advanced a theory that African Independent Churches are a positive response to the Gospel. Instead of all the negative characterization that has happened throughout the 20th century, they must be viewed as Christian organizations that have positively responded to the message of the Gospel. They must not be ostracized or marginalized.

Commenting on this, Maluleke (1994:62) was of the view that there has been cross-fertilization between AICs and those in the mainline and that the two have grown closer to one another in both theological content and practice.

Maluleke further pointed out that the false difference being perpetuated by a number of AIC scholars is the cause of unnecessary theological jargons (1996:41). Of course, it is no secrete that in the polarized Southern African situation, it would be impracticable not to have theological contentions (Ibid.). Somehow, it is even healthy for theologies to have critical relations, but such relations should not be based on the assumption of false differences (Ibid.). Religious authorities must come to the realization that today; the truth is that increasing sections (e.g. worship) of mission churches are becoming AIC and Pentecostal in both theology and praxis (Ibid.). Consequently, in today's postcolonial Southern Africa, "it therefore does not make sense to be too rigid in separating mission churches and African Independent Churches" (Ibid.).

University of Cape Town

What is needed now is the working together of mission churches and the African Independent Churches. When this is done, the churches will learn from one another and support one another and thereby creating a common struggle for a true relationship with political authorities (WCC, 1978:8). This should be part of the ecumenical initiative of the churches and as such, this ecumenical initiative should not just be a movement to unite churches (1978:82). It should work for the unity of humanity as a whole. That is to say, uniting humanity in all spheres of life creating a world where there would be more mature interdependence in political, social, economic and religious life (Ibid.). This is so because all have common memories of the past and thus should strive to have common hopes for the future and by so doing

they will be erasing the colonial memory from the minds of the people in order to create new and just societies (WCC, 1978:84) and it should be understood that such interdependence has a clear biblical basis; I am my brother's brother and therefore his keeper (1978:83). If positive results have to be achieved, the approach to the issue of interdependence must be more pragmatic than idealistic. The situation demands that the bodies concerned work together for what can be called a just, participatory and sustainable society (1978:86). This interdependence will obviously strengthen the ecumenical movement and as such, ecumenical bodies will have an important role in enabling the voice of the church to be heard by political authorities (Mugambi, 1992:54). In this case, African Independent Churches and those in the mainline will be able to "speak as one body in relation to political authorities" (Hinfelaar, 2004:354).

6.3 The prophetic voice of the Church

This is a response to a moral dilemma calling for a decision. It is recognizing an injustice and choosing to voice that recognition. Nathaniel Ndiokwere (1981:282) remarked, "in every historical epoch, prophets have arisen". It is therefore important to allow the African Independent Churches and those in the mainline stream to exercise their prophetic roles freely. Religious leaders, either from African Independent Churches or mainline, should be expected to condemn evil in whatever quarter it is found. They should play the role of social reformers, aim at constructing a human society worthy of God's people; and to further this, they must become forceful defenders of fundamental human rights and promote equality and fraternity (Ibid.). Unfortunately, during the early years of the Lumpa Church in Zambia, Catholics and Presbyterians did not like the Lumpa Church. Mulenga (1998:24) pointed out that these churches worked hand in hand with the government to destroy the Lumpa Church. Consequently, a unified prophetic voice could not be heard.

However, in the post 1991 Zambia, the church is able to air her views regarding the well being of humanity. For example, Kenneth Kaunda the first president of Zambia who commanded support from the mainline churches and Fredrick Chiluba second president who had support from the AIC and Pentecostal side as well. During their term of office, both leaders wanted to ensure political loyalty on the part of churches

University of Cape Town

(Banda, 2003:96). They called upon churches to support and promote state programs and policies (2003:97). In response, the Church made her explicit commitment to this, however, noting that she needed to reflect seriously on the teachings of the Gospel so that she could be able to contribute to building a society in which the goods given by God for the use of all are justly shared, basic needs are met, the dignity of man is respected and freedom reigns (Banda, 2003:98). Thus, the three Church bodies namely Episcopal Conference of Zambia (ECZ), Christian Council of Zambia (CCZ) and Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) issued a joint pastoral statement. They;

> Drew attention to the need to support the poor; emphasized the importance of agriculture in Zambia; called for the promotion of justice, peace and community development; deplored public apathy; and urged that political life be guided by Gospel values of respect for human dignity, human rights, common good and social justice, solidarity, integral development, special concern for the poor and non-violence in resolving conflict (Gifford, 1998:208).

This is to say that the prevalence of churches in Zambia and the potential recalcitrance of some African Independent Churches in particular have convinced political rulers in Zambia that political socialization had to proceed along something other than purely secular lines (Banda, 2003:96). This is to say, the state should not just seek political loyalty from churches. It should also draw insights from the church in the teaching of public morality (Ibid.).

In other words, the Church aims at societal transformation, working towards liberating people from unjust structures making sure that more just and friendly structures are created. By so doing, the Church helps to build up a new society where people would live to enjoy their human rights. Dr. Julius Nyerere, former president of Tanzania, acknowledged such a role for the church. He argued that "the Church has the obligation to fight for a society which will enable every man and woman to live with dignity and well being, and to work for eradication of exploitation and for the sharing of wealth" (Parratt, 1987:123). Therefore, when African Independent Churches and those in the mainline are seen to be exercising their prophetic roles, it should be appreciated that they are doing it for a just cause.

University of Cape Town

6.4 Understanding each other's role

It is important to appreciate that African Independent Churches, religious leaders in mission churches, and political leaders have their own roles to perform for the betterment of humanity. Thus political authorities must recognize that churches, African Independent Churches or mainline, have a divine right from God to posses and to use all the rights of correction and admonition invested in them without threat or interference from the political authorities. Churches should have the right to expect from the politicians a protection, a legal recognition of their character and freedom, which they derive from God. However, the church should not abuse their prophetic prerogative by undermining the authority of the state. The law of the land must be observed. The state must be firm to re-enforce the law.

In other words, religious authorities in AICs and mission churches should recognize that administration of public affairs belongs to the political arena (Mugambi, 1992:54). This is to say, religious authorities should teach their followers to respect earthly authorities. However, this is not to say the church should compromise with wrongs committed by the state. The church should be there to correct and to admonish. In other words, religious authorities and political authorities should be distinct at the same time complementary (Hinfelaar, 2004:355). Ninan Koshy (1994:48) called this the collaborative relationship of church and political authorities. He elaborated that they do not stand in opposition but overlap each other (Ibid.). Supporting this, Henry Okullu in Mugambi (1992:53-54) subscribes to the view that;

> It is important to note that the church and state are essentially different in origin. The church owes its origin to Christ. The state is a divine institution of God for human society all over the world. The church and state are created for different purposes. The state is created to keep law and order in society. Without outward civil order, no society can exist at all. The church on the other hand is instituted by God to bring the mind of God to bear upon total human life and to contribute to the building of value systems upon which a sound human society may be built. The church appeals to the hearts and conscience of people. It is given the right to correct, admonish or censure. Therefore, it is no interference in politics for the church to warn the state that unrighteousness on public matters will bring calamity to the people.

This is clear now as in the case of Zambia. For example, in a joint pastoral letter of the Episcopal Conference of Zambia, at the height of political crisis in Zambia in

University of Cape Town

1990, the Catholic Bishops further clarified the role of the church on political issues. They wrote;

> We speak as religious pastors and not as politicians, as preachers of the Gospel and not as proponents of political systems. It is not the role of the church to make decisions concerning the type of political system to be adopted by any nation. However, the church insists that she has the right to pass moral judgments, even on matters touching the political order, whenever basic personal rights make such judgments necessary (Banda, 2003:119).

Hallencreutz (1988:2) argued that relationship between African Independent Churches and other religious (authorities) groups generally, on one hand and political authorities on the other are not just matters of pragmatism or sheer political expediency.

The suggestion is that there must be constitutional guarantees for religious freedom. The emphasis should be on religious liberty. This liberty should be guaranteed to an adherent of any religious tradition to practice his or her religion according to his or her own preference. Political authorities must firmly protect and respect freedom of worship (WCC, 1978:83) in this regard. Somehow, the hindrance to this has been people's lack of adequate knowledge on human rights. This is the observation made by WCC when they wrote;

> One of the way in which African politicians succeed in manipulating the people is by keeping them ignorant of the inalienable human rights and liberties bestowed on them by their creator. As a result, these men and women are not aware that they are being denied their rights (WCC, 1978:87)

Finally, another, but important observation is noted by Maluleke, (1996:40) that in the beginning, studies on African Independent Churches were in essence heartless, more or less hostile. As a way forward, he suggested that present studies should take a considerate or advocacy view (Ibid). That is to say, "researchers must meaningfully identify specific shortcomings such as; language, fear, and racism, then go on to show and take practical steps to remedy these shortcomings" (1996:41). This will help give a true picture about AICs and their genuine to Christianity expressed in African thought forms. In other words, African Independent Churches will be freed from historical insignificance perceived of them by outsiders.

For sure African Independent Churches have been proliferating in Southern Africa for many years. Consequently, in this era, whatever people may choose to call the African

University of Cape Town

Independent Churches and whatever may have aided the emergence and proliferation of this phenomenon, it is essential that the challenges of the Independent African religious movements be recognized (Ndiokwere, 1981:281). A phenomenon, which has produced well over twenty million adherents, cannot just be dismissed as an insignificant matter. It calls for deep reflection (Ibid.).

University of Cape Town

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