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Old and New in Southern Shona Independent Churches

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Boston University
Old and New in Southern Shona Independent Churches

Volume 3: Leadership and Fission Dynamics
CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN AFRICA
Old and New in Southern Shona Independent Churches

Volume 3: Leadership and Fission Dynamics
To Rachel:

After brief encounter -
inspiring interlude -

"I greet you; not quite as
the world sends greetings, but with
profound esteem and with the prayer
that for you the day breaks, and the
shadows flee away" (Giovanni, 1513).
After a break of thirteen years, Dr Daneel again picks up the publication of his series *Old and New in Southern Shona Independent Churches*. The first two volumes dealt with the historical background to the rise of Shona Independent Churches, and with the causative factors and recruitment techniques used in the growth of these churches. The present volume deals with the subjects of leadership and fission dynamics in the Shona Independent Churches.

In his approach to the important phenomenon of African Independent Christianity, Dr Daneel adopts (as he did in the previous two volumes) what he himself calls an open-ended theological position. This method "involves the challenge of giving full recognition to the processes of change within the Independent Churches, reserving theological judgment in the face of a field too vast to be fully comprehended, yet not shirking the responsibility of exposing those strengths and weaknesses within these movements which can be observed and described with a reasonable degree of certainty". It seems to me to be the correct method to adopt when describing these churches at the present time. As Dr Daneel himself has demonstrated to us, there is much more that is positively Christian in these churches than they are given credit for. At the same time, it is only participant observation of the kind he practises which can lead to a true understanding of their Christian roots.

In his discussion of leadership in the Shona Independent Churches, I find his re-evaluation of so-called Messianic leadership to be particularly interesting and helpful. Dr Daneel deals extensively with the previously held views on Messianism by most commentators on Independent Churches. He goes on to show that the term *Messianic* is misleading, and that we should rather speak of *iconic* leadership based on a presupposed Christology - "a translation and interpretation of the work of Christ in a concrete manner which would render it intelligible within their own indigenous context". It will be interesting to determine whether this view also holds true of other Independent Churches. Surely this introduces an
original and most fruitful dimension to the debate on African Independent leadership.

In dealing with the subject of fission in the Shona Independent Churches, Dr Daneel uncovers the roots of this phenomenon in the custom of kraal-splitting in traditional Shona society. This represents a new way of understanding the fissiparous tendency in Independent Churches, but also provides new hope for ecumenism in these churches, because "within the process of fragmentation of Church groups - as with the hiving-off of villages - the new dunhu (i.e. the "family of Christian churches" founded in God) remains a constant and stabilizing factor". In these terms, Dr Daneel finds "seeds of ecumenism" in the very process of fission - and points to the fruition of some of these seeds in the life and work of Fambidzano.

On the whole, therefore, the present volume fulfils the expectations aroused by the previous two volumes. It presents us with fascinating insights into the Shona Independent Churches and opens up many new perspectives which can fruitfully occupy those engaged in the debate about the immensely important subjects of African Independent Churches. It is with a continued sense of expectation therefore that one awaits the volumes still to be published.

Prof Willem Saayman
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Pretoria.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As I have made substantial use in this study of the research results of fieldwork conducted amongst the Shona Independents during the sixties, I wish to acknowledge the financial assistance received at the time from the following Dutch sponsors:

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* The *Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research* (WOTRO) which covered the major costs of the field project; and
* the *Afrika Studiesentrum, Leiden*, under whose auspices I worked and which contributed towards field expenses and assisted with data-processing.

Without the generous grants of these institutions I would not have been able to engage in the extensive research programme which gave rise to the publication of the first two volumes in the series, *Old and New in Southern Shona Independent Churches*.

The present study, the third volume in this series, is based both on the earlier Dutch-sponsored research project and on a recent follow-up which comprised several months a year of fieldwork in Zimbabwe over a three-year period (1984-1986). As regards the latter project I wish to thank:

* the *Human Sciences Research Council* in South Africa for financial support which enabled me to devote time to the preparation of this book in addition to doing intermittent spells of fieldwork in Zimbabwe, and
* the *University of South Africa*, Pretoria, for granting me the paid leave required for extensive research among the Shona Independents.
Acknowledgements

I am especially indebted to Dr Bok Marais and Mrs S.L. Heath, respectively Vice President and senior representative of the HSRC, for their pleasant and efficient handling of funding issues. Prof Frans van den Bogaerde, Vice Principal of UNISA, as well as Prof David Bosch, former dean of the theological faculty of UNISA, have generously supported my requests for funds and time in various university committees, thus enabling me to immerse myself once more in Independent Church life as a participant observer. Their trust and interest in my work have been a source of inspiration, for which I am grateful. A special word of appreciation is due to my missiologist colleagues: David Bosch, for coping with the complications caused in our department (Missiology and Science of Religions) by my protracted spells of absence; Prof Willem Saayman, for close friendship, great interest shown in my research work and his willingness to write the foreword to this study; and the Rev. Klippies Kritzinger for generously shouldering additional duties on my behalf. Without their loyal support and altruistic consideration of my work I would not have been able to meet the formidable demands of a near nomadic existence, which amongst other things involved travelling over 30 000 kilometres annually by truck in order to "commute" between Pretoria and Masvingo, and to reach remote rural areas in Zimbabwe from the Masvingo base.

In the field the Governor of Masvingo Province, Cde Mavhaire, and members of the CIO, e.g. Cde Janji, were most helpful in facilitating my entry into all the districts where I had to conduct research. To them and the District Administrators, the chairmen of district councils, villages and co-operatives, as well as tribal dignitaries, my sincere thanks. The kindness and accessibility of high-ranking government officials - such as the State President, the honourable Cde Canaan Banana, and cabinet ministers, Cdes Zvobgo and Mutumbuka - on the few occasions when interviews were required, were greatly appreciated.

Without the generosity and goodwill of large numbers of Shona Independent leaders and followers alike - with many of whom I have had close bonds of friendship over many years - a study of this nature would have been impossible. I wish to mention in particular the bishops and their wives in whose houses I was always welcomed with great hospitality: Bishops Nehemiah and Ruben Mutendi, the Revv Gierson and Champion of the ZCC; Bishops David Masuka, Andreas Shoko, Moses Makamba, Timithia Hore, Matthew Forridge, Raimon Kuudzerema, Krinos Kuudzerema,
Gideon, Zacheo, Ndamba, and several others of the Ndaza Zionist Churches; High Priest Abero of the African Apostolic Church of Johane Maranke; the Rev. Zvobgo of the African Reformed Church (Shonganiso), the Rev. Muongani and Marima of the Chibarirwe and African Congregational Church respectively; Bishop Ishmael (Nheya), Gavure Jr of the First Ethiopian Church; the Rev Nemapare of the African Methodist Church and the Rev Peter Makamba, my successor as top executive of the Shona IC ecumenical movement, together with the TEE and development staff members of Fambidzano. We have all worked together in theological training and rural development programmes, as joint members of an ecumenical brotherhood of Independent Churches, since the inception of Fambidzano (AICC - African Independent Church Conference) in 1972. For an adventure shared and for a lasting investment in relationships of mutual trust, I can but express my deepest gratitude.

Throughout the research period I could count on a team of loyal field assistants. Operating from our base, a rented house in Masvingo, they diligently and with great consistency probed the rural areas for the information required. Their identification with my research objective, unflagging team spirit, and sense of achievement whenever the quest for greater understanding led to breakthroughs and tangible signs of progress, gave meaning to the entire operation. It gave all of us a sense of belonging, and it added continuity to the research programme during my inevitable spells of absence. I wish therefore to extend my admiration, respect and gratitude to:

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Many years have elapsed since the publication of my first two volumes on Independentism. The demands of involvement in founding and building a Conference of Independent Churches, of mental adjustment to the destructive realities of a protracted liberation struggle in Zimbabwe and the move to UNISA in 1981 caused a continual reshuffling of priorities which prevented the realization of the original publication programme for the series on the Shona Churches. Fortunately, the lasting influence of outstanding scholars, particularly the late Prof. J.H. Bavinck, and the sustained encouragement of Prof J.F Holleman (well-known authority on Shona customary Law) has enabled me to overcome academic inertia with the resolve once more to face the challenge of
Acknowlegements

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It is with deep gratitude that I mention the warm and unswerving support of my family: an aged father who has become both friend and spiritual mentor; my late mother and sister, Nyasa, both of whom have left a rich legacy of dedicated missionary service in Malawi and Zimbabwe; my ex-wife, Beulah, for her faithful support of my work over many years; and my children of love - Alec, Lydia, Talita and Inus - who despite my long spells of absence, keep filling my life with affection and laughter

"The Matchbox"
MASVINGO, ZIMBABWE
June, 1987
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A major key to the understanding of the African Independent Churches is their leadership. One of the great appeals of the Shona Independent Churches, as of most other IC movements in Africa, is the existence of structures which offer authority and prestige, in other words, fulfilment of leadership ambitions. Elaborate leadership hierarchies, with numerous well differentiated offices, allow the majority of adult men and also large numbers of women to carry some ecclesiastical responsibility in their congregations. The importance of leadership is illustrated by the dignity and pride with which principal leaders and senior and junior office-bearers set about their tasks, the respect shown to their superiors by lay church members and the frequency with which leadership (ukuru) features in the discussions of the Independents themselves.

When members of the Shona Churches discuss their reasons for joining a group (see Vol. 2, table 37) they rarely mention leadership as a prime consideration, yet the principal leaders are all aware of the importance of leadership ambition as a powerful underlying motive for people joining their Churches. Some of them exploit the need for status and recognition by appointing new members to official positions without any serious training or trial period of membership; alternatively, promotion in the leadership hierarchy is accelerated. Other principal leaders are more cautious and first try to cultivate loyalty and ability to perform certain Church duties effectively before appointing new members to office.

Whatever the policy, the urge for leadership and the traditional background of kraalsplitting and subdivision of tribal territory to resolve tribal leadership conflicts (e.g. the creation of new wards [matunhu] in a chiefdom) mean that every Independent Church is faced with the possibility of schism at some stage of its development. Whenever a junior office-bearer defects with a number of hard-won congregations the principal leader invariably complains: "This man sows uncertainty and confusion in the Church simply
because he wants the leadership [ukuru]." Hence the very strength of IC leadership, adapted as it is to traditional patterns of authority, is also its weakness. The old notions of inherited leadership or forming a new tribal unit in the vent of congestion or conflict are not always sufficiently reconciled with the biblical conditions for holding office in the new and differently constructed body of believers. Invariably the inherent clash of old and new in leadership conflicts and the ensuing schisms are not sufficiently analysed or understood by the Independents themselves for them to deal effectively with besetting fissiparous trends. It is therefore important to unravel, as far as possible, the forces at work in IC leadership if one is to understand the inner dynamics of these groups, how they grow, consolidate, split up and stimulate new growth.

This volume cannot provide an exhaustive account of IC leadership. Much has already been said or implied about this subject in the first two volumes. Volume 4, again, will focus amongst other things on women's organizations and will therefore give greater prominence to female leadership than this study. It will also depict the socio-political involvement of IC leaders, which should include an analysis of the role of prophetic leaders in the Zimbabwean liberation struggle. In other words virtually the entire "story" of Independentism concerns one or other facet of its leadership. Nevertheless it remains important to isolate and analyse essential features if one is to discern the delicate balance in intricate systems of authority, a balance so easily upset by apparently built-in cross-currents of human factors. Hence my attempt in this study first of all to deal with the major characteristics of IC leadership, and then to analyse the impact on it of the multi-faceted processes of fission.

Having indicated two distinct areas for consideration, the first three chapters give a descriptive account of typical leadership patterns. Chapter I deals with the different types of leaders and empirically tests Sundkler's distinction between the chief-type and prophet-type leaders. In a discussion of the IC conception of the ministry, the fact emerges that the mystique of the ministry in these Churches is not really to be found in the authority to initiate worship and celebrate the sacraments, but in the leader's representation of the presence of God, so that people can be helped realistically with their day-to-day problems through healing, divine protection, revelation and interpretation. Significant distinctions between the royal, priestly and prophetic offices, which the Independents make on an intuitive rather than a theologically rationalized basis, lead to authentic insights. To mention one example: however strong the
preoccupation of the Spirit-type Churches with "prophecies" inspired by the Holy Spirit in the prophetic office, it is generally realized that such "prophecies" require a degree of control and cannot be allowed to interfere with or oppose the kerygmatic task of the clergy or lay believers. Implicit in this understanding of the prophetic office is the inseparable link between Word of God and the professed work of the Holy Spirit.

With kinship factors playing an obvious role in leadership hierarchies, there is some justification for the designation "family Churches" Nevertheless, the emergent patterns of authority in congregations not only duplicate traditional kinship codes, but also transform these into distinctly new networks of obligations. Implied, therefore, are both the perpetuation and transformation of traditional authority in the new order of Independentism.

Chapter 2 addresses issues such as the overriding concern with a divine call to the ministry through visions and dreams, as well as leadership training and succession. As regards leadership qualifications, it is pointed out that natural leadership traits, such as a man of good conduct, evidence of a friendly heart, disciplined behaviour in accordance with Church laws, etc., often outweigh spiritual and educational qualifications, which shows that traditional leadership ideals are still focal. Without the necessary access to theological seminaries, the Independents have developed their own systems of in-service training, based mainly on sustained contact between principal leaders or senior office-bearers and subordinate trainees, who learn through observation and participation.

In an appraisal of the practice of inherited Church leadership, as it applies after the death not only of senior leaders but of virtually all office-bearers, the whole issue of dual succession is discussed. This subject, significant as it is for understanding the ongoing process of fission in Independent Churches, has not been probed in any depth in the literature on Independentism. Thus it is important to note that the real reason for the formation of a new Church or the breaking away of a congregation is often not the doctrinal dispute advanced as the cause for such a development, but the power struggle ensuing between the relative of a deceased leader who inherits his office, and the subordinate office-bearer in the leadership hierarchy who feels equally justified to move into the deceased senior's position.

Chapter 3 pays special attention to the interrelations between leaders and followers, the kind of mystical power attributed to principal leaders and the control exerted over followers through
Leadership and Fission Dynamics

such power. An analysis of the duties and working programmes of office-bearers provides some insight into the often stringent demands of a predominantly non-salaried ministry, as well as the influence of such office-bearers on the principal leader. In this chapter the vitally important subject of so-called "Messianic leadership" is dealt with in great detail. Its importance derives from the fact that in the past some observers have been inclined to judge and criticize the large movements of leaders like Shembe, Lekhanyane and Kimbangu rather severely, on the grounds that the mediatory function of Christ is usurped by the "Black Messiah". On the basis of empirical data aimed specifically at an evaluation of the supposed substitution of the work and person of Christ in the thought processes and beliefs of the followers of such leaders amongst the Southern Shona - Bishop Mutendi of the ZCC and Johane Maranke of the vaPostori - I arrive at a much more positive assessment of this type of leadership. Instead of a corruption of Christianity we are confronted here rather with inspired, imaginative, if still admittedly imperfect, attempts at contextualizing the Christian message. Through the "Messianic" leader Christ enters the existential world of the Shona in a vividly incarnate manner, at least in terms of an understandable, protective salvation here and now. It is not a complete biblical Christology, in the Western theological sense of the word, yet Christ is decidedly not superseded or obscured!

In Part 2 the objective is not to give an exhaustive treatise of the schismatic process and its impact in IC leadership. Instead of theorizing and presenting models which could clarify the entire, often complex and widely divergent processes, I have opted for a few case-studies which yield some remarkable insights. These are based on the experiences of defecting office-bearers who join other Churches or start new movements. Having been in the fortunate position to observe and associate with such office-bearers throughout the periods of their defection, as well as the formation, expansion and consolidation of their new groups, it seemed more important to highlight some characteristic features of fission, through a narration of what I had actually seen and experienced than to attempt a comprehensive overview. Chapter 4 therefore only touches briefly on the theological and non-theological causes of schism, as well as Sundkler's three-tiered model for the dynamics of fission in South Africa, as a background to the secessionist activities of Elison Mutingwende and Sauro Garanuako - the two main figures in the case-studies presented in chapter 5. One of the most
remarkable aspects of the formation of a new group by Sauro Garanuako, who had defected from the Maranke Apostles, was that his recruitment activities did not have an inverted, in-group directed character, as one would expect under such circumstances. On the contrary, in an ecumenically relatively open situation, a wide range of Spirit-type Churches were allowed not only to demonstrate their solidarity, but to assist with the emergence and moulding of a new congregation. Instead of reacting negatively, the vaPostori, from whose ranks Sauro had defected, attended the official opening ceremony in a spirit of identification with Sauro’s new Zionist congregation. As a result the new group had its send-off not in the comfortable privacy of the secluded in-group, but in a multi-denominational setting with a large degree of exposure to similar and rival groups.

Chapter 6 comprises a description of leadership destabilization in inter-Church relations. It traces the patterns of direct and indirect interference of Bishop Mutendi (ZCC) and Bishop David Masuka Jr (Zion Apostolic Church) in each other’s Churches over a lengthy period. An analysis of Bishop Mutendi’s conduct at the Ndaza bishop’s Church opening ceremony way back in 1967 illustrates the ambivalent kind of strategy which one leader can adopt to undermine the authority of another and create a climate of uncertainty between him and his followers which could lead to Church fragmentation. Bishop Masuka in turn, at a much later date, ordained Ruben as successor to the deceased Mutendi, in opposition to Nehemiah, a younger brother, who had been elected by popular vote in the ZCC. Thereby Masuka became instrumental in sanctioning, consolidating and expanding one of the greatest schisms ever in the ZCC. Some fascinating features of the moves and countermoves in the destabilizing interaction between the ZCC and Ndaza leaders are revealed in this chapter.

Whereas Church fragmentation amongst the Shona Independents occurs mainly through the defection of office-bearers, resulting in the emergence and growth or decline of new Church groups, classic schisms usually occur after the death of the founder or principal leader. In chapter 7 an account is given of two such schisms in the ZCC and the Chibarirwe. These reveal distinct parallels with the type of schism which occurred in the AACJM after the death of its founder, Johane Maranke— a schism which underscores both the central role of the founder leader in the maintenance of cohesion amongst his followers and the crisis of disintegration and regrouping that takes place during the period of ecclesial vulnerability—
the "hour of the wolf" - after his death. The events which took place in the First Ethiopian Church after the death of Bishop Nheyagavure illustrate, however, that it is possible for Independent Churches to pass through the precarious phase of schismatic threats without any major secessions. In the Topia consolation ceremony and in the ordination of the late Bishop Gavure's successor, Ishmael Gavure, we have a case-study of the ecumenical nature of Church ceremonies currently being developed by the ICs affiliated to Fambidzano (an ecumenical movement founded by and for the Shona Independent Churches in 1972). The evidence of this case-study suggests that ecumenical impulses are starting to counteract effectively the forces of fission within the Independent Churches.

Chapter 7 gives much more than an analysis of the dynamics of schisms. In a sense it updates the history of some of the Churches which are focal throughout my study of Shona Independentism. I have taken the liberty of including more characters and events than are strictly necessary for an understanding of schisms, as I am responding not only to academic requirements but also to the expectations of an Independent Church readership. To the latter a complete narration of events so intimately affecting the heart-throb of their religious life is of the utmost importance. Considerable detail about dream life, which plays a central role in the justification of leadership claims and the consolidation of newly formed Church groups, affords a perspective on the mystical idiom of leadership controversies not normally found in the literature on IC schisms.

It should be mentioned that a certain unevenness marks the presentation of data in this volume. One of the reasons for this is that the first five chapters are based mainly on the findings of research conducted in the 1960s, while chapters 6 and 7 adopt a broader historical perspective derived from a scrutiny of events in the 1970s and 1980s. These latter chapters therefore reflect a survey stretching over a period of twenty years, the argument picking up at any point between 1965 and 1985. Although no chronological historical order was planned in the presentation of relevant data, the advantage of sustained observation over the years and follow-up research lies in a richness of insight into leadership and the dynamics of fission which could not have been obtained in any other way.

The statistical data presented in the ten tables in this study are based entirely on the survey samples used during the 1965-1967 research period. A detailed description of the research design and
the various stages of fieldwork is presented in the Introduction to Volume I of this series. Suffice it to say at this point that the tables appearing under the abbreviated designation RSS refer to a random sample survey, which consisted of a 20 percent sample of the total number of villages (21 out of 110) in the Chingombe chiefdom. This survey was conducted to augment casual sampling in and around IC headquarters, and to create a general frame of reference for assessing research results on Independentism in relation to the overall structure of a rural community CSR, again, refers to a casual sample in what was at that time called "reserves" but which today could be more appropriately called "rural areas" This sample yielded in-depth information on adult members in both Spirit-type and Ethiopian-type Churches in the Chingombe chiefdom, as well as in the central and south-eastern Shona districts of Zimbabwe (comprising mainly the Masvingo Province).

As will be noted, the data on both samples are integrated for an overall assessment whenever the widest possible cross-section of views among Church members is required for comparative purposes. This contrasts with the method used when determining the ratio of church leaders to followers, for which purpose information obtained from random sampling is more appropriate.

This volume remains incomplete without its third part, which was originally planned to deal with the theme of leadership and ecumenism. It should give a survey of the founding, growth, organization and theological impact of the Shona IC ecumenical movement, popularly referred to as Fambidzano. As the survey spans a vast field of recent developments in the Churches concerned, and includes the introduction of a distinctly Western theological dimension - whose impact on IC leadership I merely refer to in passing towards the end of this study - it was decided to turn it into a separate publication. When completed, the "Fambidzano story" should actually be read as a sequel to this volume, for it portrays IC leadership in its current state of transition and modern theological development. As such it complements the indigenized or contextualized leadership traits which remain focal in this study.

More than a decade has elapsed since the publication of Volume 2 of this series. It is a privilege and a relief for me to pick up the threads once more and to proceed with the daunting task of recording and interpreting the epic of the Shona Independents. The epilogue clarifies to some extent why I call it a daunting task. The very wealth of information at my disposal and the richness of an ongoing close involvement with these Churches make the possibility...
of a conclusive assessment of their pluriform features more remote than ever. The celebration of dancing feet and the mystique of assuming and maintaining IC leadership invite participation and identification but elude the sober finality of Western academic categories.
PART I: CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF INDEPENDENT CHURCH LEADERSHIP
TYPES OF LEADERS AND LEADERSHIP HIERARCHIES

Observers frequently refer to the parallels between traditional and Independent Church leadership. Sundkler remarked on the imprint of the Zulu monarchy on many Independent Churches in South Africa: "The leader whether 'Bishop', 'Overseer', or 'President' is a king, inkosi, and the Church is his bride."¹ Wishlade pointed out the similarities between Independent Church leaders and village headmen.² Actually it is quite understandable that in rural communities the traditional authority structure would provide Independent Church leaders with a model in their attempt at establishing an indigenously acceptable form of leadership.

This chapter provides a description of the types of leaders, their conception of the ministry and the nature of their hierarchies of authority in an attempt to discern and discuss the patterns of adaptation to traditional structures. As already indicated in the Introduction a dual process is at work whereby IC leadership emerges as both a perpetuation and - through Christian influence - a transformation of traditional leadership.

1. CHIEF-TYPE AND PROPHET-TYPE LEADERS

For purposes of classification Sundkler distinguished between the chief-type and prophet-type leaders of the "Ethiopian" and Zionist Churches respectively. The ideal chief-type leader would be an able executive official, bold in the struggle against the Whites; the prophet - whose leadership shows parallels to the traditional diviner or doctor (isangoma, nganga) - must establish a direct link with the supernatural through his visions and dreams. Sundkler even distinguished the respective physical attributes of the two types of Church leaders: the solidly built, taciturn and dignified "chief" of

¹ Sundkler, 1961, p. 102.
the Church, and the thin nervous, highly strung prophet.³

Within the prophetic movement as such Sundkler makes a further distinction between the Zionist prophets, who accept Jesus Christ as Saviour, and the Bantu Messiah who has usurped the position of Christ. The basis for this distinction is the question: "Who stands at the gate of heaven? Is it Jesus Christ or the Bantu Messiah?"⁴ Amongst others John Masowe, Edward Lekhanyane and Isaiah Shembe are identified as Messiahs who have taken over Christ's position as mediator at the gates of heaven. The development of a prophet into a Messiah, in Sundkler's view, is marked by the following phases: (i) the prophet's call as a leader; (ii) his "death" and "resurrection"; (iii) revelations through dreams; and (iv) growing expectations among the group, marked by dream experiences as a result of which the leader is increasingly recognized as the "custodian" of the heavenly gates through which he will eventually conduct his followers.⁵

Sundkler's classification of leadership (chief - prophet - Messiah) radically influenced subsequent literature. Missiological observers such as Oosthuizen, Martin and Beyerhaus apply similar distinctions in respect of what they term Messianic leadership and go even further than Sundkler, claiming that there is a total usurpation of Christ, a Black Christ, a deification of the Black Messiah and a Black Saviour.⁶ Thus Oosthuizen in his book Post-Christianity in Africa differs from Sundkler in that he distinguishes between Churches, sects and nativistic movements. In the latter group he places both the prophetic and Messianic movements. Yet he, too, defines Messianic leadership as the development of the prophet into a Messiah whereby the latter replaces Jesus Christ and becomes the Black Christ. As Messiah, the leader is the sum and substance of the movement, the person in whose hands its future lies.⁷ In relation to Shembe, Oosthuizen speaks of the leader who has become Saviour, the leader who is deified. This deification, he says, "is not merely a reaction to the so-called pale white Christ of the white man but it is an effort to have through him powerful contact with the world they fear they may lose." The preaching of the Black Christ

³ Sundkler, 1961, p. 109f.
⁴ Ibid., p. 323.
⁵ Ibid., p. 323f.
⁶ Supra, p. 95f.
"emphasizes subjection to the old supernatural forces, as well as to the new explained in the light of the old." 8

It is questionable, however, whether the evidence provided by Sundkler, Oosthuizen and others mentioned above, justifies the use of terms such as "Black Christ", "Black Saviour" and "deification of the Church leader". In chapter 3 I shall indicate, on the basis of empirical data, why it is misleading to use such theologically condemnable terms, at least in the case of the Shona Independent Churches. 9 Sundkler has in recent years revised his views on Messianism. 10 Nevertheless, considering the wide influence of his trailblazing Bantu Prophets, it remains important to spell out why his initial focus on the gate-keeping function of the Church leader is too narrow a basis for distinguishing between Christ-accepting prophet and Christ-obscuring Messiah. 11

Sundkler's distinction between chief-type and prophet-type leaders is not easy to apply. Among the Shona Independent Churches there are so many prophetic leaders who fit the description of the "Ethiopian" category - i.e. a chief-type leader who is courageous in his dealing with the Whites, the embodiment of the law and a good executive in Church affairs - that this classification ceases to be applicable. Bishop Samuel Mutendi of the ZCC, for instance, offered greater resistance to the White administration than any of the Ethiopian-type leaders, so that among the Shona it would be more true to say that prophetic leadership is characterized by a courageous struggle against the Whites than to attribute this quality to "Ethiopian" leadership. By contrast, an Ethiopian-type leader like the Rev. Sengwayo of the Chibarirwe was noted for close cooperation with the administrative authorities in his own district, Chipinge. Sengwayo at one stage was actually acting as chief and he could be described as a chief-type leader in so far as he was "heavily built and of a quiet disposition". But prophetic leaders also from time to time hold tribal political positions of authority. Mutendi himself was recognized as a ward-headman (sadunhu) after his move to Gokwe. 12 Therefore the notions of tribal authority, the appearance of a principal leader as chief and the conception of the Church as a kind of "new tribe" can be just as strong in the one

8 Ibid., p. 78.
9 Supra, p. 110f.
10 Sundkler, 1976, pp. 190f, 305f.
11 Supra, p. 95.
12 Daneel, 1983, p. 64. Mutendi's involvement in tribal politics will be discussed in detail in Vol. 4 of this series.
type of movement as in the other. There are, moreover, too many Ethiopian-type leaders (e.g. Bishop Gavure of the First Ethiopian Church and the Rev Zvobgo of the African Reformed Church [Shonganiso]) who can be described as thin, nervous and highly strung (attributes of the prophet) for Sundkler's classification into somatic types to hold water (plates 8 & 9). The only distinction that can be consistently applied is that which refers to the prophetic leader's claims to direct contact with the supernatural by means of dreams, visions, speaking in tongues and the like, as opposed to the Ethiopian-type leader who makes no such claims.

In a sense both prophetic and Ethiopian-type leadership resembles that of a chief. Like the Shona chief the Independent Church leader is at the head of a trichotomous legal system. The council of each individual congregation corresponds to the village court; the circuit or regional court of the Church reminds one of the ward court (court of the *dunhu*); and the supreme Church council at headquarters is similar to the chief's court which has jurisdiction over the entire tribal territory. In this latter context in particular the authority of the Church leader or senior "judge" is determined by traditional patterns. Like the chief, the Church leader is assisted by two kinds of officials. High-ranking clergy and overseers of circuits, like ward headmen, are fully fledged councillors (*makota*). Then there are the junior officials, many of whom are close relatives of the leader living at Church headquarters. They act as messengers, spokesmen, intermediaries and assessors in the Church court. Their responsibility is to initiate a case, lay down the procedure and conduct the cross-examination. The court sessions and juridical system in Zion City were particularly reminiscent of those of tribal courts. Mutendi's clergy (*vafundisi*) were venerable councillors who listened while Muntendi's sons and sons-in-law conducted the proceedings. Like a chief, Mutendi said very little during court sessions until he eventually delivered his verdict, which usually reflected the general feeling of the court. Even though the ethical code on which Mutendi's jurisdiction was based differed from that of the chief, the approach to the accused and the conclusion of the case with a fatherly rebuke was strikingly similar to those in a traditional court case. As in the case of a tribal chief, Mutendi's judicial authority was final. It was accepted without dispute as the foundation for the welfare and order of the "new tribe".
Mutendi's leadership in some respects went beyond that of a Shona chief. His absolute authority over his subjects and widespread influence among Shona chiefs resembled the power wielded by the Rozvi kings. Zion City as it was developed in Bikita resembled the old Rozvi headquarters at Zimbabwe in that it was primarily a religious centre with its sacred areas surrounded by administrative, "royal" and other buildings.\(^{14}\) As the old High-God cult ceremonies at Zimbabwe were conducted on behalf of the entire Rozvi empire, so the annual Zionist festivities were intended to benefit the Zionist domain in its widest connotation, which included the tribal affairs in the chiefdoms of affiliated chiefs. During these festivities Mutendi clad and carried himself like a king. He counselled the chiefs who had come from far and wide to discuss their problems with him, and during services he listened with quiet dignity to the frequent praises sung to him by these tribal leaders. During his own sermons he did not as a rule dwell on the past glories of the Rozvi empire, but his accounts of the growth of his Church hinted at the prominence of his position. Additional factors such as the possession of several vehicles, walls surrounding his living quarters, regular guards at the main entrance to his house and leopard skins draped over armchairs in his lounge, all served to enhance the image of Mutendi as "king" (Mambo) of his people.

Naturally leadership in the Independent Churches is never wholly static but is subject to change. Thus in the early days of the ZCC Mutendi personally acted as prophet and healer, but as Zion City grew and a central administration became necessary, clear trends of "chieftainship" and even, as mentioned above, (Rozvi) "monarchy" emerged. Even though by and large Mutendi continued to act as a prophetic leader, he delegated specific prophetic tasks such as speaking in tongues, prophecy and faith-healing to subordinate officials. His personal responsibility became increasingly confined to counselling high-ranking Church officials and traditional authorities, administration and lawsuits. Hence it is partly a case of integrating administrative and prophetic functions in the leadership of the principal figure in the movement, and partly of adapting a Church's leadership hierarchy to permit differentiation and effectiveness. (For Bishop S. Mutendi, see plates 1 and 3.)

By contrast the leadership of Johane Maranke changed far less than that of Mutendi. Johane remained the itinerant preacher and faith-healer; his cousin Simon was the senior prophet and his

Types of leaders and leadership hierarchies

brother Anrod the organizer of the home congregation. Only after Johane's death did his sons and successors, Abero and Makebo, emerge more specifically as leaders of the "chief-type" (see plates 6 & 7). They seldom preach but protect the interest of their father's Church by counselling and controlling its administration through discussions in the supreme "courts" of the various Church districts.

In the First Ethiopian Church, on the other hand, the leadership developed from the non-prophetic variety to one that includes faith-healing and exorcism. Bishop Gavure assimilated some of the more popular Zionist and Apostle practices into his Church so as to broaden his sphere of influence and offer a more comprehensive spiritual service to his followers. Thus changing patterns of leadership depend on changing needs within Churches and the innovative insights of the leaders.

According to Sundkler the Church "chief" or "king" has the primary duty of establishing "his own Church tribe on its own land". He is a liberator who brings his people to their promised land. His movement is in effect a land-protest movement. This raises the question whether one can qualify IC leadership as being politically revolutionary in nature. Is the IC leader generally aiming at dramatic changes in the existing socio-political order in order to bring about better conditions for the underprivileged? It was mentioned that the motive to provide land for their followers was much less strong amongst Shona IC leaders - at least at the inception of the larger movements - than was the case with their South African counterparts. The attraction of the more prominent Church colonies was not primarily the ability of Church leaders to provide land for their followers. Few of the Zionists who settled at Zion City, for instance, did so because of an inability to sustain themselves on the land available to them. A drastic alteration of the land situation was therefore not an essential objective in the working programme of the Shona IC leader.

The situation of course changed drastically during the liberation war in Zimbabwe. Information based on research currently in progress points to a much closer identification between Independents and bush fighters, as well as a greater intensity of involvement of especially prophetic leaders in the universal quest for control over the land, than was noticeable at the time. Participation of the Independent Churches in the liberation struggle will thus be a subject of

15 Sundkler, 1961, pp. 33, 331.
16 Daneel, 1974, p. 47f.
discussion in Volume 4. Prior to the liberation war of the 'seventies, however, IC leaders tended to be politically conservative rather than revolutionary. On the whole they supported the chiefs and the tribal political system in which many of them played active roles. This involvement at times led to clashes with the then White-controlled government, as was mentioned in connection with a chiefdom boundary dispute in the Bikita district. On this occasion Bishop Mutendi, who was prepared to contest a government decision in the high court, where he challenged a District Commissioner, Provincial Commissioner and Minister of Internal Affairs, emerged as a prominent figure of the resistance. Nevertheless, such sporadic acts of resistance at the time - however expressive they may have been of a mood, an undercurrent of rebellion - did not represent a significant drive which could be termed characteristic of IC leadership to overthrow and change the existing political order according to a clearly defined policy. The inclination among officials in the Administration from an early date to characterize the IC movement as a "political danger in embryo" derived from their fears of possible disturbances like the Chilembwe rising in Nyasaland or those caused by Watchtower followers, rather than from concrete evidence of seditious preaching in the Zionist and other IC circles. During the pre-Independence period, the expression of anti-White sentiments in some groups was no doubt indicative of the possibility that in a time of political upheaval these Churches could well become the vehicles of revolutionary activity. Nevertheless it cannot be discounted that for many years IC leaders had encouraged their followers to participate in rather than oppose government-sponsored schemes, particularly in the educational and agricultural sectors. Prophetic leaders, moreover, have often publicly condemned the radical expressions of African nationalism.

In the specifically religious field the activities of prophetic leaders can, however, appropriately be described as revolutionary, for they were launching a frontal attack against traditional religion, supplementing old institutions with new ones. Thus their interpretation of the prophetic and healing office (discussed below), for all its obvious relatedness to the divinatory healing practices of the tra-

19 Ibid., p. 415.
21 Supra, p. 25f.
ditional diviner, shows a profoundly contextualized attempt at introducing a revolutionary new Power - that of Christ and the Holy Spirit - in the very midst of and in direct confrontation with the traditional spirit powers, e.g. the ancestors, alien shavi spirits, the vengeful ngozi and destructive wizardry (uroyi) spirits. In addition, they were attempting a drastic reinterpretation of Mission-oriented Christianity, resulting in the introduction of new doctrines and liturgic forms.

It is also helpful to examine IC leadership, both prophetic and non-prophetic, in terms of a struggle for power. Generally it was not a quest for power as an end in itself. But in the face of the breakdown of old institutions and the introduction of a foreign culture there was a need to control the process of acculturation, to interpret the meaning of new situations and relations and to introduce acceptable codes of behaviour. This need was aggravated by the far-reaching influence of Missions in religious and educational institutions, with the result that much of the power struggle of IC leaders consisted of an effort to gain greater influence in the organization of religious life and the education of their children.

In the Spirit-type movement it was the Ndaza Zionist leaders who, in the early 1930s, tried to obstruct school attendance, and Mutendi who clashed with the authorities for allegedly opening schools on his own. When Mutendi eventually obtained permission to erect his own school at Zion City, supervision by the Dutch Reformed Church was a precondition. Nevertheless, the Zionists derived great satisfaction from building their own school and teachers' quarters, electing their own school committee and introducing Zionist religious instruction. To them this appeared to be a significant breakthrough in view of the dominance of Mission Churches in the educational field.

Among the non-prophetic leaders the Rev Zvobgo of the African Reformed Church managed, over a period of many years, to erect and organize his own school at Shonganiso Mission. An experienced and qualified teacher, Zvobgo was in a position to influence the pattern of activities at his school more directly than Mutendi had been in the Bikita district during the 'sixties. In the pre-Independence period Zvobgo was already acting as self-appointed school manager, principal and religious instructor.

23 Daneel, 1971, p. 418f.
24 Ibid., p. 365f.
force of personality he controlled the entire school community, including the teachers. The then still incomplete secondary facilities at Shonganiso, and the on-going struggle to obtain the colonial government’s permission for advanced education, reflected the indomitable spirit of a man who believed that he had amply demonstrated the African’s ability to run his own affairs.

After Independence the situation changed considerably. With greater financial support the Rev Zvobgo has succeeded in providing facilities for more than 1000 primary and secondary scholars at Shonganiso. Inspired by the spirit of unity in the African Independent Churches Conference, he has come to regard Church-controlled schools as "vehicles of ecumenicity". Other IC leaders are also increasingly becoming engaged in the educational field. In addition to their school in Gokwe, the ZCC followers of Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi (plate 2) have recently erected schools for more than 1000 primary and secondary scholars at the newly established Zion City at Mbungo, while the bishop's brother Ruben (plate 5), who controls a schismatic group of their deceased fathers' Church, is also attempting to establish a secondary school. In the new socio-political situation in Zimbabwe, the struggle for power among IC leaders has shifted. With an ecumenical mouthpiece in Fambidzano, efforts are now being made to vie with the established Churches for greater prominence in the Zimbabwean Christian Council, to maintain regular contact with the government and, most significantly, to play a leading role in rural communities through the initiation of development programmes in the agro-economic field.

Valuable as an interpretation of IC leadership in terms of a power struggle may be, it should not lead to a one-sided theory that the Independent Churches are essentially reactionary movements, struggling in the pre-Independence phase against White Missions and against colonial rule. This theory would obscure the fact that some IC leaders for many years sought the recognition of and cooperation with Mission Churches; that most of them were prepared to co-operate extensively with the colonial government; and that they had developed their own unique response to the Gospel which inspired them with the urge to evangelize and widen their influence as prompted directly by God, irrespective of circumstancial factors.

25 Zvobgo's views are discussed in detail in my forthcoming publication, Fambidsano: Ecumenical movement of the Shona Independent Churches in Zimbabwe.
26 Daneel, 1974, pp. 67-69.
Martin West is doubtful about the validity of an analogy between the traditional tribal system and Independent Church leadership in urban areas. In the absence of tribal structures in these areas, Church leadership has to be assessed on its own merits. West maintains that Sundklør's dichotomy between chief-type and prophet-type leaders is not applicable in Soweto. West may be underestimating the aftermath of traditionally determined leadership concepts in urban areas. In an urban situation like that at Masvingo, where admittedly the urban IC congregations come into being as extensions of rural congregations and where, as a result, the links with rural tradition are still strong, one can demonstrate a correlation between the exercise of authority in traditional rural courts and in the Church councils of urban congregations. More significant is West's distinction between the exercise of charismatic and judicial authority. He quotes Max Weber in this connection:

"...charismatic authority... shall refer to rule over men, whether predominantly external or predominantly internal, to which the governed submit because of their belief in the extraordinary quality of the specific person... Legal authority is based on an impersonal bond to the generally defined and functional duty of office." 28

West believes that in some instances one can make a distinction between the charismatic authority of the Zionist leaders and the judicial authority of Ethiopian-type leaders in Soweto. More often, however, the pattern is a combination of the two. West says this is because most Independent Church leaders in urban areas have difficulty in keeping their members on the basis of purely judicial authority. When the two types of authority are not combined in the position of the paramount leader, they are still maintained in the various offices of the leadership hierarchy. Thus in most Zionist Churches one finds that judicial authority is vested in the bishop and charismatic authority in the prophet. Of course, this applies not only to urban prophetic Churches but also to rural ones as soon as the informal phase of Church development is followed by the institutionalization of leadership.

27 West, 1975, p. 49.
28 Ibid., p. 49.
2. APPROACH TO THE MINISTRY

What Turner says of the Church of the Lord Aladura, is true of most Shona Independent Churches: "The mystique of the ministry is not attached to authority to celebrate the sacraments or to theological education, but is present in the anointed man of God who can perform the rituals of the Church and lead its worship, help his people in their everyday troubles through his gifts of healing or revelation or interpretation, and discipline them in their attempts to follow the pattern of Christian life laid down by the Church."29

One of the most striking features of the IC ministry is the sustained presence of the minister or senior office-bearer - whether he is known as warden, overseer, bishop, or evangelist - in his congregation. Pastoral contact with fellow Church members is therefore frequent and direct. Usually without the security of a regular stipend, he shares the standard of living of his flock and is as dependent as they are on a subsistence economy. This is conducive to solidarity between leader and followers at the existential level. Because of the small size of most IC congregations the senior office-bearer regularly sees all the Church members under his care. He is readily available to those who have problems or, if he is called away to Church headquarters, as often happens with Mutendi's ministers, he appoints a representative to take his place during his absence. "His callers are not likely to find him away at a committee meeting, absorbed with administration at a desk, or deep in study."30 Therefore the absence of a complex Church structure and administration means that, in comparison with most Mission Church congregations, the average IC congregation is much less plagued by the remoteness of its clergy - a remoteness which often seriously hampers sustained pastoral care.

Since contact between clergy and laity is reciprocal, most Independent Church clergy have no systematic programme of parish visiting. Since most of the members live within walking distance of the minister's homestead, regular contact is maintained through joint activities such as building houses or Churches and working in the fields, and such routine visits are often not required. Counselling and pastoral care are an integral part of the constant contact between leader and follower, whatever the context of such contact. Some ministers reserve visits to their members for special occasions,

30 Ibid., p. 34.
such as illness or the birth of a child. Pastoral work during such visits varies considerably in the different Independent Churches, ranging from casual discussions to prayer ceremonies and exhortations with reference to Bible texts, or explanations of dreams and visions.

In cases of real need, however, the more common practice is for members to visit the senior office-bearer at his home. This reflects the traditional approach, namely that office-bearers, like village headmen and tribal chiefs, have facilities to receive people with problems at their homes. It does not imply unwillingness on the part of the minister to serve in the true Christian sense of the word. Yet he is accustomed to having people come to his house, as the commoner would go to a traditional authority, and to having a special place like the chief’s court where he spends hours in the company of those who come to him with their problems. During such sessions he is sometimes assisted by a junior office-bearer, especially if official treatment of the matters discussed is required.

In addition to such factors as the IC minister’s availability in the rural context, his having time to tend to his members and his close identification with them, one finds a mutuality and Christian sense of belonging which contributes towards effective pastoral care. This is based on an intuitive understanding of fellowship in Christ — especially in the case of office-bearers with only a rudimentary understanding of the Scriptures — rather than systematic theological reflection.

Along with its strong emphasis on pastoral care, the IC ministry is characterized by an awareness of the requirements of the threefold office of the general priesthood of believers — that of prophet, priest and king.

(a) The royal office

The royal office is expressive of the Christian’s sanctified life and struggle against evil powers. He is anointed with Christ so that, according to the Heidelberg Catechism, he "may with free conscience fight against sin and the devil in this life, and thereafter, in eternity, reign with him over all creatures." 31 The royal dignity of the believer embraces a passive element of acceptance and of sanctification through the work of the Holy Spirit and religious

31 Kotze, 1951, p. 225.
peace in Christ the King, as well as an active response in the form of a conscious struggle against the powers of darkness.

On the whole the clergy of the Independent Churches are aware of their royal office. In Spirit-type Churches particularly the ministry is marked by a struggle against the destructive forces that imperil man's spiritual and material welfare. The prophets' ceremonies of faith-healing, exorcism and countering sorcery create a constant awareness of involvement in the Church militant. This is closely linked with traditional concepts of power and authority, with the result that some prophets and their followers tend to confuse the Christian's royal dignity and spiritual power with magical powers and the respect which, in the kinship structure, is vested in the principle of seniority. In cases of such confusion one usually also finds an imperfect perception of the kingship of Christ. The prophet may be inclined to monopolize and manipulate the divine power in his relations with his followers, with the result that they come to rely so much on his function as their representative that their own participation in the royal office is forgotten. This is the case when a patient prolongs his stay at a prophetic faith-healer's colony after he has been exorcised in the belief that only this particular prophet can vouchsafe him against future onslaughts from the forces of evil. Here the grasp of Christ's kingship is imperfect and individual responsibility as an active agency of God's sovereignty over evil is superseded by the overriding activities of the prophet. Instead of receiving spiritual deliverance the patient becomes enslaved to the person of the healer.

The lives of some prophetic leaders reveal an imbalance between inner sanctification and militant opposition against evil powers. The prophetic services of such men are motivated by a sense of duty or a need for recognition and prestige rather than by genuine divine inspiration and a full understanding of the Christian's royal office. Others again interpret Christ's kingship in terms of their own Church only, so that the royal office to them becomes an exclusively Zionist or Apostolic prerogative. These inconsistencies and misinterpretations are, however, often corrected through sustained contact with God's Word and the control exerted by fellow office-bearers.

In a Church such as the Chibarirwe where there is a strong over-tone of reaction against Mission Church policy in respect of traditional religious customs, the royal office is less clearly manifested in the ministry. One rarely hears confrontation-type preaching against ancient beliefs which might impair a proper grasp of Christ's
kingship. The prevailing spiritual approach is rather a compromise and a relativization of the exclusive character of Christian discipleship than a radical resistance to the powers that undermine true discipleship. The Revd Zvobgo’s African Reformed Church, a reform movement that broke away from the Chibarirwe, manifests a far more resolute and positive response to the kingship of Christ over the whole of human life.

(b) The priestly office

The coming of Christ replaced the Old Testament priesthood - which implies human mediation between God and man through the bringing of sacrifices - with the perfect priesthood of Christ. Hence the New Testament reference to the Christian’s "royal priesthood" implies a totally new concept. Firstly, it implies priestly dignity, which gives all those who believe in Christ free access to God; secondly, it involves spiritual offerings of prayer, praise and the living sacrifice of the regenerate self which replaces all mediatory offerings on an altar in response to the sin-offering of the high priest Jesus Christ; and thirdly, it implies a service of sacrifice expressed in a daily life of love and service as a manifestation of inward crucifixion and commitment.  

The Independent Churches rarely apply the title of "priest" to any of its leadership positions. Probably this indicates universal acknowledgment of the unique priesthood of Christ. True, the vaPostori referred to Johane as "high priest" (mupristi mukuru) but this was in recognition of his exceptional leadership rather than of a specific priestly function. Nonetheless the traditional concept of mediatiorship does cause some confusion which prevents a proper grasp of the aforementioned priestly status of the individual Christian. This applies particularly to the Spirit-type Churches. Some members regard the prophetic leader as being "closer to God" than they are. After all, he takes the place of the spirit medium (svikiro) who calls up the tribal spirits, the ritual priest who represents the kinship group in addressing the ancestral spirits, the cultic priest who beseeches the traditional Supreme Being for rain at Matonjeni, or the nganga who represents a link with the supernatural. Against this background it is quite understandable that to some followers the prophetic leader would become a sort of "mediator", whose representative function

32 Kotze, 1951, p. 222.
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goes far beyond the biblical concept of intercession and who interferes with the individual’s free access to the presence of God.

Mutendi’s ministry exemplified this. The fact that some of his followers considered it spiritually sufficient to bring their problems to the "man of God" in Zion City for a solution, or that they brought gifts so that the leader could ask God for rain on their behalf, indicated a limited conception of the priestly status of the individual believer. Thus one ZCC member told me that he himself only took "trivial matters" to God, since "important issues" are "raised to heaven" by Mutendi. Such an attitude reflects the traditional concept of mediatorship. Only the officially sanctioned ritual mediator communicates directly with the supernatural. A ministry that places such emphasis on the mediation of the Church leader could easily lead to neglect of individual prayer. We should add that in his ministry Mutendi did not consciously reserve the priestly office for himself alone. He saw his mediation on his followers’ behalf as intercession, which had to supplement and not replace the individual’s direct communication with God.

The priestly attributes of spiritual sacrifice and self-sacrificing service are manifested in the lives of many Independent Church clergy. Through regular periods of seclusion, fasting, meditation and prayer the prophetic leaders set an example, while Ethiopian-type leaders encourage perseverance in prayer and good works. In fact, the ministry of the Independent Churches consistently focuses on sacrificial service on an organized basis, so that the priestly office culminates in a goal-directed and lively diaconate. Examples include the pastoral service that prophetic leaders render along with their faith-healing activities; educational service through the establishment of schools; the Ruwadzano women’s organizations which are particularly active in assisting people in times of illness or bereavement. In this latter regard the Topia (First Ethiopian Church) has gained some renown as "helper of the needy" through its widespread assistance to those in want. There is also Bishop Timithia Hore of the Zion Sabbath Church who, on his own initiative and at his own expense, erected a centre for the blind and physically handicapped at his headquarters.

Hence the diaconate of the Independent Churches reveals a comprehensive approach. Christian and specifically priestly service implies more than just spiritual care. It includes agricultural, educational and "medical" facets.

Within the IC ministry and consequently in the ranks of IC members generally, the priestly office thus consists of both a draw-


ing nigh unto God and a rendering of sacrificial service to fellow men across the entire spectrum of their needs.

(c) The prophetic office

In Old Testament times the offices of prophet, priest and king were held by different persons, but Christ combines these offices in His Person - hence the threefold office of all Christian believers. The prophetic office is that of witnessing, of proclaiming the Word of God. It is the ministry of the Word, for which both the ordained ministry and all believers in the Church are held responsible, as was borne out in the primitive Church through the official preaching of the apostles and the personal witnessing of the members. Before true preaching and witnessing can take place the Christian must know God. He must be able to listen to the voice of God, must experience God's presence and be enlightened by the Holy Spirit. As Kotze puts it: "To speak in His name, one must first have received His Word; before teaching others, one must first be taught oneself."

In the Shona Spirit-type Churches the prophetic office finds expression both in the Reformed sense of the Word of God being preached (kuparidza) and in the Old Testament sense of revelations and divine communications being transmitted (kuprofita: to prophesy) to the wider body of believers by individuals with special prophetic gifts. Both the Apostles and Zionists generally distinguish in their ordained ministry between the preachers, evangelists and ministers who are responsible for the official sermons during services, and the prophets who convey special messages of the Holy Spirit to the congregation and who are often specifically involved in faith-healing activities. This differentiation rarely interferes with the kerygmatic obligations of both prophets and ordinary members. For it is generally appreciated that preaching and witnessing are the task of all believers and not the exclusive preserve of the preachers. Numerous prophets officially hold the double position of prophet and preacher. Even those who seldom preach during services, witness through the divine messages passed on to others.

Prophesying is considered by most Zionists and Apostles to be an essential aspect of the ministry. It is the accepted way in which the Holy Spirit reveals His will for a specific situation. Prophecies are rarely attributed canonical value. They are not considered sacrosanct

33 Kotze, 1951, p. 211.
supplements to the biblical message, but rather divinely inspired interpretations with a direct relation to the Scriptures. If prophetic revelations are considered to be contrary to essential Christian truths, they are rejected as false. Prophets are therefore expected to have a sound knowledge of the Bible and to live "close to God". As mentioned above, in order to "know God", prophets often isolate themselves, study their Bibles and spend hours praying. The life-histories of these men invariably include accounts of many days spent on mountains fasting and praying so that the Holy Spirit can speak clearly to them. As in Old Testament times, mountain tops seem to be the location for unique and direct encounters with God.

The prophetic task, in the Old Testament sense of passing on divine messages and revelations, is directly related to pastoral care. Prophecies, and by implication the Holy Spirit, deal with a wide variety of problems in everyday life such as the search for a job, a spouse, meaningful living, greater influence or the detection of wizardry. General pastoral advice rendered by a prophesying prophet can be very effective in the lives of those he serves, because it is conveyed in such a manner as to lend it divine authority and thereby bring home the message forcibly. Even though the messages of a prophet are sometimes ignored, reinterpreted or criticized, it is generally accepted in the Spirit-type Churches that prophesying is an ongoing activity in the God-man encounter and a means by which God deals directly with the problems of His people. (See "prophesying" prophet: plate 12.)

Kuprofita (to prophesy) in the Shona Churches has the meaning of revealing God's will for a particular situation of often pressing need, rather than predicting the distant future. Through the prophesying prophet the Holy Spirit reveals the causes of a patient's illness, the hidden sins of Church members, the reasons for drought and bad crops, the perpetration of witchcraft, etc. In other words, the hidden factors of a given situation here and now are revealed so that they can be dealt with in a satisfactory manner. Thus the afflicting spirits causing illness are cast out, the would-be or practising witch is disciplined, and the rebellious, secretive or anti-social Church member is encouraged to publicly confess his or her sins so that God's people can worship Him in a purified state. As a means of probing for and exposing evil and destructive forces, the prophetic task becomes a powerful control factor in the Spirit-type Church. Prophecy practised by a genuine prophet helps to ease strain in the lives of individuals and enhances harmony in con-
gregational activities. Abused by a charlatan, it causes confusion and conflict which in some cases may lead to schism or apostasy.

On the whole the Zionist and Apostolic prophets experience their calling as similar to that of the Old Testament prophets. Their prophecies may not have the same futuristic dimension as those of the Old Testament men of God. But they, too, confront the evils of their times, as manifested amongst the chosen people of God or in the world at large, with fervour and dedication. Prophesying to them is an ongoing task and not the prerogative of a few chosen men in bygone times: It is a valid means of expressing the presence of the Holy Spirit, as described in the New Testament. No justification is required for the fact that special revelations of the Spirit to chosen people takes place. It is taken for granted that this form of communication between God and man belongs to the essence of Christianity. Reproof and opposition only arise when the revelations of a particular prophet are considered to be selfish or deviating from the essence of the Christian message.

This brings us to the control of prophecies. Turner says of the Aladura Church that "it is widely recognized that revelations may come from the devil and his evil spirits, as well as from the Holy Spirit and the angels, so that one must 'discern the spirits'... Under the influence of evil spirits some utter false dreams, visions and prophecies deliberately; this 'lying against the Holy Spirit' is a very great sin, and anyone so discovered must be excommunicated!"\(^{34}\)

With reference to the fact that "the history of Christian divination is the history of the subjection of divination to the control of authority", \(^{35}\) Turner goes on to say that "this is exactly what is under way in the Church of the Lord, as the ministry comes to control the frequency of message-giving, the extent of possession in worship, and the interpretation of members' own dreams and visions." \(^{36}\)

The Shona prophetic movements may not be as far advanced as the Church of the Lord in controlling prophecies. It seldom happens that a person is excommunicated for "lying against the Holy Spirit". In some Ndaza Zionist groups, where the prophet is in fact the dominant authority, prophecies are not necessarily scrutinized in the light of scriptural truth. Prophecies may well be accepted as authentic by the sheer power of persuasion of a charismatic leader.

\(^{34}\) Turner, 1967(b), p. 133.
\(^{35}\) Ibid., p. 134.
\(^{36}\) Ibid., p. 134.
Nevertheless, an urge to "discern the spirits" is noticeable in most Zionist groups as well as in the Apostolic movement. A junior prophet’s prophecies are subjected to criticism by his superiors; a revelation with direct implications for a congregation is critically discussed and accepted or rejected during a Church service or council-meeting; prophecies concerning witchcraft are cross-checked by various prophets in conjunction with the Church council investigating a case of uroyi; and prophets disrupting the order of worship with spells of possession are silenced or removed.

This latter phenomenon is of great significance because it indicates that, despite the importance attached to the prophetic office in the Old Testament sense, prophesying is not generally allowed to override the kerygmatic task of office-bearer or individual believer. Even in those Spirit-type Churches with a strong emphasis on prophetic faith-healing, the predominant focus during sessions of worship is on preaching the Word of God. Although prophets are at times allowed to speak about revelations during Church services and ordinary members given a chance to witness about their experiences involving prophecies and revelations, office-bearers (bishops, ministers or evangelists) reserve most of the time spent in worship for preaching (kuparidza). In some Ndaza Zionist Churches, prophets are allowed to counsel people with problems during Church services, but then at a distance from the proceedings so as not to distract the preacher and his audience. This prophetic service rendered in the course of a Church gathering, though integrally related to the proceedings, is of secondary importance and done in such a way that members seeking prophetic aid do not miss more than one or two of the six or more sermons preached in the course of an afternoon. One can therefore speak of a certain balance between the divinatory and kerygmatic function within the prophetic office as it becomes manifest in the Spirit-type Churches. There is also an awareness of the dependence of the revelatory on the kerygmatic function, despite the lack of a clear theological definition of this issue.

Officially the Ethiopian-type Churches do not recognize prophesying (kuprofita) as a valid activity within their own ranks. It is said that this task was reserved for the biblical prophets. In actual practice, however, members of these Churches consult Zionist and Apostolic prophets. Some will do so despite a certain scepticism about the activities of prophets, while others readily admit that this may be a channel through which the Holy Spirit still works in present times.
There are distinct parallels between divinations as practised by the traditional diviner or "doctor" (nganga), and Spirit-type prophecies. The problems and questions brought to the prophets are very similar to those dealt with by the nganga. Moreover, the need for revelation and the beliefs in the powers causing individual and societal problems are essentially the same. Prophet and nganga share the same world-view when dealing with people. Can it therefore be said that IC prophecies merely represent a slightly altered version of traditional divination, that the Spirit-type prophet is merely a nganga in disguise?

To answer this question and discover its implications for the development of a relevant and contextualized Christology in the Church of Africa, we should first of all consider briefly the position of the nganga in African society and his/her significance for African Christianity.

As the nganga is a "kingpin" in African society, his/her activities have no limit and embrace just about everything affecting an individual or his family. Gelfand correctly points out that "European society has no one quite like the nganga, an individual to whom people can turn in every kind of difficulty. He is a doctor in sickness, a priest in religious matters, a lawyer in legal issues, a policeman in the detection and prevention of crime, a possessor of magical preparations which can increase crops and instil special skills and talents into his clients. He fills a great need in African society, his presence gives assurance to the whole community." 37

Considering this central position of the nganga in African society, there is little doubt that he has provided the primary paradigm for an indigenous Christology since the earliest days of Christendom in Africa. Buana Kibongi gives the following description of the nganga's relationship to the Christian Church in Zaire:

"For good or ill, Christianity has not always escaped the heritage of nganga. The Christian missionary drew part of his authority, without knowing it, from the psychological state which nganga had created. The missionary was called nganga Nzambi [God's priest], as distinct from nganga nunkisi [the fetish priest]. It goes without saying that the missionary benefitted from the respect which was formerly due to the nganga vankisi.... The Congolese priest or minister is also called nganga Nzambi. He profits from the situation created by nganga and the missionary. Nganga has not only assured to

some extent the social status of Church workers; he has also left them the legacy of religious and conceptual moral tools: It is undoubtedly nganga who created words such as Nzambi [God], munuka [to defile oneself; hence masumu, sin] ... Nganga's work partly enabled the Bible to be translated into Congolese languages. The Christian preacher consciously or unconsciously uses part of the vocabulary left by nganga. This is where Congolese priesthood confronts Biblical revelation."38

Kibongi also shows that the Congolese nganga was never a mediator between Muntu (man) and Nzambi (God) but only between man and the departed spirits. The nganga's activities brought forth the concepts of liberation and redemption. "Nganga is certainly the saviour or the liberator of Muntu."39 Against this background it should be clear that Buana Kibongi regards the nganga as the predecessor of the priest and the minister - not only as a healer but especially as a religious leader. It was, after all, the nganga who established the elementary "theological" concept on which the missionaries could build. Even more important, the nganga is Christ's predecessor in Africa: he, as the new nganga, is the fulfilment of the traditional age. "Ngangas willed to save man, but did not succeed in doing so; Christ did so fully once for all. Christ has therefore accomplished the work of Nganga."40

The prophetic Independent Churches brought the paradigm of Christ as the "healing nganga" into sharper relief than any other Church in Africa. In this respect the Independent Churches are decidedly making a contribution to an African Christology to which African theologians would be well advised to pay attention. As can be seen in the Shona prophetic movements, the prophetic healers who have their own unique interpretation of the prophetic office, naturally see their faith-healing activities as a replacement of and in opposition to the traditional nganga practices.41

Nonetheless, their diagnostic and therapeutic work - the focal point of these movements and certainly the most dynamic recruiting technique - are very largely based on the insights and techniques of the nganga. The chief similarity is that the prophet, like the nganga, ascribes the causes of disease, misfortune or lack of success

38 Kibongi, 1969, pp. 52-53.
39 Ibid., p. 54.
40 Ibid., p. 55.
41 Daneel, 1974, p. 186f.
to spirits, evil powers, magic, etc. However, the prophet explicitly states that his extra-perception comes from the Holy Spirit and not from the divinatory resources of the nganga; that the spirits in question have no legitimate claim to the embattled patient; and that therapy therefore does not consist in traditional sacrificial rites or the use of medicine but in the exorcism of threatening spirits and a variety of symbolic actions representing the healing power of the Christian God. In the prophet's dealings with his patients it is mainly the action of the Holy Spirit that is emphasized. This does not mean that there is no room for a Christology but rather that it is presupposed as the basis of all healing practices. In fact, the prophet himself personifies the liberating and healing ministry of Christ. In him the nganga tradition is continued on the one hand, but radically Christianized on the other.

Like the nganga, the Zionist and Apostolic prophet also directs his activities against magic practices. The fight against magic is built into Church customs, as in the prophetic discerning of wizards or witches before Church services and more particularly before receiving the sacraments. Guilty persons are required to make a public confession and to hand over the magic paraphernalia to the prophet to be burnt. In this way destructive forces are combated in a symbolically comprehensible way. A major difference from the traditional approach is that in the prophetic Church the muroyi (witch or wizard) is usually not cast out of the community as the nganga would have recommended. The prophet's disapproval is expressed by debarring the guilty person from receiving the sacraments, but at the same time the prophet acts as conciliator by keeping the muroyi in the Church community. This offers hope of a solution and of acceptance by the community to maladjusted, sometimes anti-social individuals. The prophets are in any case convinced that witches or wizards (varoyi) can be healed by continual prayer and ritual activities. The community generally believes that, even if complete healing is not achieved, prophetic control drastically reduces uroyi activities. In so far as the prophet introduces both the divine judgement on evil and the atonement of Christ into one of the most sensitive interpersonal areas in Africa, there is every reason for African theologians to pay serious attention to the prophetic movements for the development of a relevant incarnated Christology and for a reinterpretation of the prophetic office in the ministry of the African Church.

42 Ibid., p. 261f; 338f.
(a) System of offices and ranks

In both the Ethiopian-type and Spirit-type Churches, Church government is structured hierarchically with a great variety of offices, often subdivided into various ranks. In addition to the position of the paramount leader, usually designated bishop, archbishop or just "great bishop" (mubishopi mukuru), the most common offices are those of warden (muongamiri), minister (mufundisi), evangelist (muvangeri), deacon (mudeakoni), preacher (mushumairi), and overseer (mutariri) - often ranked in this order. In Zionist Churches any office below that of mufundisi may be held by a prophet, or a person who is purely a prophet may have a status equal to that of any of these offices, depending on his seniority in the group. A common development, already pointed out in the case of Mutendi, is that the paramount leader starts off as a prophet, but then largely delegates his charismatic authority to subordinate officials while he as bishop concentrates on administrative functions and judicial control. Such a division of authority has a built-in potential for conflict since the charismatic influence of a prophet over the group can become so strong as to endanger the bishop's position.

Every group of congregational hierarchies in a circuit or Church district falls under the jurisdiction of the local authoritative official. In practice the spectrum of the leadership hierarchy is often incomplete within an individual congregation. Mutendi's refusal to allow more than one minister per district meant that in most ZCC congregations direct authority is vested in the offices of one or more evangelists, with several preachers and deacons to help them. Instead of promoting evangelists to the office of minister when there are several evangelists in a congregation, they are ranked in order of seniority as first, second and third evangelist. If a congregation should have too many clergy it may request Zion City to divide the congregation into two, a custom reminiscent of the traditional secession of kraals. Just as internal strife and leadership problems in rural village communities are resolved by establishing a new village headmanship, so leadership ambitions in an overcrowded congregation are defused by subdivision into two congregations, each with its own place of assembly. In congregations where there are too few clergy, office-bearers often temporarily employ their children's services; for instance, a deacon could easily
allow one or two of his sons to act as deacons. If the congregation supports such a step the posts are eventually officially confirmed at headquarters.

Congregations are to be found where only a few elderly men, assisted by the young (e.g. sons, sons-in-law, younger brothers, etc.), represent the entire leadership hierarchy of a congregation. The ZCC congregation of Nyagamwa in Chingombe is a case in point. Here the minister - who is also in charge of the four neighbouring congregations - is followed by four prophets, the first three of whom also respectively hold the offices of evangelist, deacon and secretary. Then follows two deacons, a catechist and five preachers. With such a large number of young preachers and therefore potential evangelists, the chances are that this congregation may be further subdivided, as originally happened when the congregations of Muzondo and Chaminuka grew out of the first ZCC congregation in Chingombe (Leadership hierarchies No. 1).

By contrast with the ZCC, other Zionist bishops - for instance Bishop Andreas Shoko (see plate 4) of the Zion Apostolic Faith Mission - insist on each congregation having its own pastor. Consequently the jurisdiction of a Ndaza Zionist minister is usually well below that of a ZCC minister (who normally has control over a whole circuit comprising several congregations). In Bishop David Masuka's Zion Apostolic Church virtually every congregation leader is designated bishop, a distinction being made between "minor" and "major" bishops. No matter how impressive and psychologically significant these titles may be, the effective power associated with them is often equal to that attached to much lower offices in other Churches. Hence there is no homogeneous pattern of titles applicable to all Independent Churches. The individual preference and standardization of each group decide the issue.

Johane Maranke's vaPostori have the most extensive leadership hierarchy of any Shona Independent Church. The four principal offices are those of baptist, evangelist, prophet and healer, in that order of importance. However, among the vaPostori there is some difference of opinion on this score. Some clergy regard these principal offices as equally important, whereas others place the office of prophet or evangelist at the top of the hierarchy. Much depends on the local situation. If the "owner of the members" (mwene wevatezvo) in a district happens to be a prophet or an evangelist, his office inevitably carries greater authority than that of the baptist (mubapatidzi) or healer (murapi), and the hierarchy of that district is interpreted accordingly. In addition to these four offices there are
the secretary (munyori) and the judge (mutongi), with the choristers and lay members below them. Senior tribesmen with experience of the proceedings of tribal courts are usually appointed judges. In addition to them there are usually a number of younger evangelists and/or baptists serving as judges, which eliminates the risk of domination by an older, traditionally oriented lobby in the Church courts. The choristers (mahakirosi) are younger, predominantly female members of the congregation. In the context of the local congregation this office has little significance, for the mahakirosi seldom play a leading role in congregational singing. Yet during the annual Pendi festivities at district and Church headquarter level, they have to provide continual background singing in relay teams day and night - an important factor in creating a special religio-hypnotic atmosphere as a prelude to the climacteric celebration of the sacrament of holy communion.

The four principal offices are respectively subdivided into five ranks (see diagram, p. 47a), each with its own insignia appearing as a monogram on the official vestments. The baptist's symbol is a star - at the lowest rank an incomplete star with only three points. In the same way the symbols for the other offices (APE for an Apostolic Evangelist; a three-pointed crown for a prophet; MRP [murapi, i.e. healer] and MTO or MTN [mutongi i.e. judge] are all incomplete for the lowest rank. The three senior ranks of each office have the additional qualification of LIEBUMAH, also written LIEBAUMAH and commonly pronounced rabaumah. As the most distinguished office-bearers the rabaumah baptizers, evangelists, prophets and healers are further graded into three ranks. Their order of seniority from top to bottom is indicated by the full or abbreviated word LIEBUMAH, the abbreviations being L.U. or L., embroidered on the white or blue square background of the symbol, attached to their garments. As indicated on the diagram, the offices of judge and secretary are not subdivided in the same way as the principal offices, but are broadly classified into senior (mukuru) and junior (muduku) grades. Compared to the other offices, only a few males per Church circuit hold these offices. Some Apostles claim that their staves also indicate their office and rank, but I have been unable to detect any consistent pattern in this respect, apart from baptizers frequently carrying staves with the characteristic six-pointed star carved at the top end. The entire Apostolic leadership structure is the result of gradual development, coinciding with the expansion of the movement, rather than of a fully detailed plan conceived by the principal leader at the outset. I arrived at this
1. ZCC Bishop Samuel Mutendi relaxing after a day’s work at Zion City (Mutarara), with his school in the background (1965).


3. Bishop Samuel Mutendi the man of God preaching to his followers at Zion City (Mutarara, 1965).
4. Ndaza Zionist Bishop Andreas Shoko, founder of the ZAFM in Zimbabwe, listening to a sermon at an open-air service.

5. ZCC Bishop Ruben Mutendi (left) and Ndaza Bishop David Masuka (wearing crown), about to proceed to ecumenical inter-Zionist service.
6. High-priest Johane Maranke (left), founder of the AACJM, and his cousin, Simon Mushati, who eventually became a secessionist leader.

7. High-priest Abero Maranke (Johane's successor) attending holy communion celebration.
8. Bishop Nheya Gavure of the First Ethiopian Church (Topia).
10. Senior leaders of the ACC (Cibarirwe) attending open-air service in the Gutu district (1966). From left to right: President M.Z. Sengwayo, the Revv. Moses Ruwana, Pahla and Nadyauta.
conclusion from accounts of the initial Church development by the senior office-bearers at the Maranke Church headquarters. Concerning the derivation of the system and the word "Liebumah", Apostles in Maranke claim that Johane saw all the leadership monograms (as they exist today) in one of his visions. They admit that they do not know the exact meaning of this word Johane "saw" Yet it is clear that LIEBUMAH has become a central concept with all the connotations of "important", "great" or "sanctified" leadership in the only "true Church of God" The element of religious mystery which this word conveys has its own appeal to the individual, especially when it is linked with some cherished ideal of future leadership.43 (For example of leadership monogram, see plate 11.)

In the Apostolic hierarchy an official usually progresses up the ranks of the office to which he was first appointed, although there are cases of persons changing from one office to the other.44 According to Murphree "the Vapostori say that each kireke [congregation] is governed by a group of four men, the senior representatives of each of the four major offices..."45, but this view does not accord with the facts. In the Chingombe chiefdom there are several Apostle congregations with a number of the clergy belonging to one category, whereas another category may be altogether unrepresented. In 1966 the sabbata (literally, sabbath day, i.e. congregation) of Masasira (see: leadership hierarchy, no.3) in Chingombe south had a rabaumah evangelist, a junior baptist (fourth rank) and three junior evangelists (fourth and fifth ranks); in Chingombe north the Chanaurgwi sabbata had one senior baptist, two junior evangelists and a junior secretary. In the event of a congregation not having its own prophet, the Apostles usually summoned a prophet from a neighbouring congregation when problems arose. Note that the entire hierarchy of each district is never complete either at a congregational level or at the monthly assembly of a few congregations, but only at the annual gathering of the entire district (called a Pendi, from Pentecost) where all the associated units of the Church foregather. In districts where the vaPostori are

44 In some instances an evangelist, baptizer or prophet may also hold the office of judge. Depending on his preference, talents and experience such an office-bearer may as he grows older opt to function solely as judge. A young prophet who in the course of time proves his ability to evangelize and preach may eventually switch to the office of evangelist.
45 Murphree, 1964, p. 95.
very numerous the *Pendi* gatherings usually swarm with representatives of virtually every rank of each office. However, the numbers pose no problem since each member knows exactly on what date he joined the movement and when he was first appointed to an office. Consequently the positions of authority in each rank are easily determined.

Apropos of the above description of the Apostolic Church structure, I quote a passage from Sr Mary Aquina’s article on the Maranke Apostles:

"Local groups are linked to him [Johane Maranke] through Bishops who are distinguished by wearing a star on their white tunics. Below each Bishop stand the Evangelists, men marked with the letter ‘APE’ on their tunics, signifying ‘Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist’, for they have held each of these offices as they moved up in the hierarchy... Whereas ‘Apostles’ and Prophets prophesy and preach, as their titles indicate, Doctors [*varapi*] do not ‘heal’; they merely join in the common prayers for the sick. Doctors are usually the new-comers to the Church.”

This description clearly distorts the organizational structure of the Apostles. In the first place, the Apostles have no Bishops, and if they do use the term - which will be an exception rather than the rule - it will be by way of analogy, to indicate the status of the "owner of a local *Pendi*" in relation to the surrounding *Ndaza* Zionist groups with their Bishops. In the second place, an evangelist does not usually hold a number of different offices as he moves up the leadership hierarchy, as is the case with he Zionist Churches. He moves up in the rank system of his own office. Few evangelists have held the office of prophet, as Sr Aquina seems to imply. In the third place, it is wrong to suggest that the *murapi* office is held by newcomers in the Church and that they are not directly concerned with healing. Some of the most senior office-bearers in the entire Church - especially in the Maranke tribal area - are *varapi*, and they are actively concerned with healing activities. The young *murapi*, as a newcomer, starts at the lowest rank of this office, like a newcomer to any of the other offices would do. There are *rabaumah* baptizers who have formerly held the offices of both healer and prophet, and who were not directly concerned with heal-

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ing during the initial period of leadership, but these again are exceptional, for in Chingombe, and elsewhere, I have come across only one such case.

Sr Aquina's study is mainly concerned with the Karanga and the question might rise if widely divergent variations of the original organizational pattern are not applied in the outlying districts. Observations in the Chingombe chiefdom (which is also Karanga territory), the Masvingo and Bikita districts, in addition to a study in Maranke, have revealed slight variations in organization, yet not of the kind Sr Aquina describes. It seems rather as if, on the first two points, she indiscriminately applied some of the Ndaza Zionist structural principles to the Apostolic organization.

In contrast to the Ndaza Zionist and Apostolic congregations, the hierarchic offices within each congregation of the Ethiopian-type Churches seem to be more consistently represented. The average Topia congregation has at least one muongamiri (warden), one or two ministers, and one or several members in each of the lower offices (e.g. the congregation of Chikuvire: see leadership hierarchies No. 4). Both the Chibarirwe and the ARC congregations - with a smaller leadership hierarchy and generally fewer persons per office - have a lower ratio of office-bearers to ordinary members than the Topia. With only two evangelists in charge of the seven Chibarirwe congregations in Chingombe, most of the congregations have only one preacher, an overseer and one or two deacons (e.g. the congregation of Mudyanadzo: see leadership hierarchy No. 5). Another difference between the Topia and the two other Ethiopian-type Churches is that the upgrading of office-bearers in the former group is less dependent on evangelistic or clerical qualifications than in the two latter groups. In other words, it is possible for a Topia steward (goza) to progress through all the higher offices to the highest position of warden (muongamiri), while the overseer (mutariri) or deacon in the two other Churches may progress to the office of preacher but seldom advances beyond that level, since the evangelists and ministers above him are mostly men who have received some evangelistic or advanced theological training in one of the Mission Churches. In this respect, as in some others, the Chibarirwe and ARC organization follows the Protestant Mission Church pattern more closely than the Topia which, with its numerous office-bearers and unqualified wardens and vafundisi, stands midway between Mission and Spirit-type Churches.

Table I reflects the ratio of IC office-bearers to ordinary Church members. Of the IC adult males in the villages surveyed, 51% held
Leadership and Fission Dynamics

Mutendi's ZCC corresponds with the *Chibarirwe* in that a substantial majority (approximately 70%) of the adult males were not office-bearers. The reasons for this trend differ. Whereas the *Chibarirwe* adheres more closely to the Reformed Mission Church's pattern of a theologically trained top leadership, the ZCC has an effectively centralized leadership with such great powers of control vested in the movement's leading figure, that the appointment of large numbers of people to responsible positions - which could lead to competition, secession or an undermining of the central position of Zion City in Church life - is automatically inhibited. In sharp contrast to these two Churches, a majority of 60 to 80% of the adult males belonging to the *Ndaza Zionist, Apostolic and Topia* Churches held positions of varying degrees of recognized authority. Although the figures in Table I are representative not of complete IC congregations but of the village population in Chingombe, they reflect fairly accurately the leadership configuration in most congregations of the aforementioned Churches. Thus, with their small congregations in which most men can assert themselves in one way or another and in which they are accorded some status, the *vaZioni, vaPostori* and *vaTopia* provide an important outlet for leadership ambition.

Factors which contributed to this high ratio of office-bearers to ordinary Church members and such an obvious preoccupation with status are the following:

(i) A reaction to the colonial and Mission Church situation, which in many respects excluded the African from responsible positions of authority and status to which he aspired. Thus the need for recognition, prestige and honour was intensified, as manifested in the dream life of some individuals. During a period of frustrating job-hunting and being sacked by European employers in an urban area, Josaya Chikwama, a Zionist minister, frequently dreamt of the important role he was to play in the spiritual realm. He eventually returned to his rural area where he became an influential Church official. Sensitive to the frustrations and needs of their people, IC leaders created a compensatory outlet in the form of numerous offices.

(ii) There was some reaction against the traditional tribal political structure which is based on lineage rather than ability and

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47 Daneel, 1974, p. 143.
Types of leaders and leadership hierarchies

therefore offers no satisfactory solution for leadership ambitions.

(iii) An excessive number of schisms and large-scale group fragmentation resulted in the arbitrary appointment of office-bearers in an attempt to enhance the outward image of the new groups and make them more attractive to outsiders.

(iv) Roles of responsibility were allocated as in the kinship structure, in which every adult is either the superior or the subordinate of every other adult. Because of a limited ecclesiology and a concomitant tendency to regard the Church as a kind of extended family, the proliferation of offices became a natural expression of meaningful group involvement.

(v) The profusion of offices is partly in response to the New Testament injunction that all members of the ecclesia should be involved in the activity of God's kingdom. Thus the appointment of individuals to even the humblest of tasks is aimed at inducing and activating them to become involved in the business of the congregation.

As for women occupying official positions it is remarkable that (according to the random sample survey in Chingombe - table I) only some 15% of female members, as opposed to 50 to 60% of adult males in the villages surveyed, held office. Of these, the majority were Ruwandzana leaders and therefore held positions of influence in their respective Women's Associations, in other words, in the realm reserved for women. The others, in the context of the overall Church hierarchy, virtually all held junior offices, such as those of deaconess, stewardess or "police" (an office concerned with the maintenance of order during meetings). The First Ethiopian Church with its Ruwandzana organized into small but effective units at the local congregational level, proved to be an exception with some 30% female office-bearers. Despite the impact of outstanding personalities, mainly prophetesses and healers, one gets the impression that as far as authority, status and control are concerned, the Shona Independent Churches, originally and prior to recent trends of female emancipation, offered scope primarily for male leadership.
(b) Kinship and tribal factors

The importance of kinship is manifested in the phenomenon that most of the Independent Churches can be qualified as "family Churches". It is not uncommon to find a small Ndaza Zionist Church, consisting of only a few congregations each of which is led by a younger blood-brother, son or muzukuru (sister's son) of the bishop. In the case of Bishop Forridge's ZCC - an offshoot of Mutendi's movement - virtually all the congregations are led by close relatives of the bishop and in the central congregation the evangelist and prophet are both sons of the bishop, with his daughters and wives acting as choir members, drumbeaters and dancers during services.

Even in the larger movements this pattern perpetuates itself. At Mutendi's Zion City, the leader's sons held key positions in the central and surrounding congregations. The senior officials of outlying circuits were not necessarily related to Mutendi, but in their own circuits these officials in turn appointed relatives - usually their subordinates in the kinship structure - to key positions. Thus the natural and traditional pattern of authority tends to re-assert itself in the context of the Independent Church. Church matters are family affairs! In the event of a district official showing too much initiative and acting independently of Church headquarters, Mutendi would appoint a son of his as "overseer" in that area to protect the interest of Zion City. Or, in the case of the vaPostori, the restriction of the privilege to conduct holy communion services to the two leading sons of the deceased Johane, was an added control to prevent the initiative from slipping out of the hands of the leading family group.

The predominance of the kinship factor should be seen in the light of the importance attached to mass conversion or at least the baptism of family units in IC expansion. The decision of the family head is more or less binding on family members, many of whom will be baptized at his orders regardless of the degree of their individual spiritual conviction. In the process roles are created for family members, which they may or may not be spiritually equipped for at the time, but for which they may perhaps gradually acquire the ability. In so far as the kinship factor obscures spiritual maturity as a condition for Church leadership it retards a clear perception of biblical norms for such leadership. I have witnessed young people striving vainly to live up to the expectations of their fathers or other seniors. For years the son of the above-mentioned
Bishop Forridge, for instance, tried to become a prophet in compliance with group expectations. He spoke in tongues, but confessed to me that the Holy Spirit was not revealing any prophetic messages to him.

Each and every leadership hierarchy of the IC congregations surveyed in Chingombe has a closely knit network of relations between its representatives. This is clearly seen in the graphic illustrations of leadership hierarchies. A close scrutiny of the ZCC congregation of Nyagamwa (leadership hierarchies No. I) reveals that the minister has only three "foreigner" (vatorwa) or nonrelated office-bearers in his team of subordinates. These are the first prophet, a deacon and a preacher. The other three prophets are two younger brothers and the minister's wife. Then follows a sister's husband (mukuwasha) as deacon, a brother-in-law (mukarabga) as catechist and a younger brother, a son, a son-in-law and a maternal uncle (sekuru) as preachers.

There are no hard and fast rules as regards the ranks occupied by the main office-bearer's agnatic kin. In the case of Nyagamwa, the ZCC minister's younger brothers and son hold both senior and junior offices. Together they constitute a dominant power in the congregation's decision making. It was also evident that the preacher son of the minister, as potential successor to his father, had considerable influence despite his relatively low rank in the hierarchy. He was more likely to move up rapidly to senior posts than his mukuwasha, who at that stage was also holding a junior preacher's office.

The relationship of sekuru (maternal uncle) muzukuru (sister's son) features prominently in most leadership hierarchies. This is the "playing relationship", characterized by equality and the absence of strife and competition. Senior IC officials often have their vazukuru appointed to influential positions (e.g. leadership hierarchies 3 & 4) and allow them to play leading roles in Church court procedure. Since the chief's muzukuru, as councillor of the chief's court, is in a position to have far-reaching influence on tribal affairs, the local IC leader's muzukuru, because of the cordiality between him and his sekuru, is well placed to bring his views to bear on Church affairs.

A correlation of kinship ties and seniority in the leadership of 28 IC congregations in Chingombe (table 2) yielded the following results: In the case of only 31 (19%) out of 166 office-bearers was
there no agnatic or affinal relationship with one or more of the other senior or junior officials in the same leadership hierarchy. In the 19 father-son-relationships, the 44 blood-brother, 25 maternal uncle-sister’s son (sekuru - muzukuru) and 16 paternal uncle-nephew (babamukuru/ munini - mwana) relationships, the pattern generally was that seniority and subordination in the ranks of Church leadership coincided with the relation in the kinship system. In each category of relationships there was, significantly enough, also a reversal of the traditional seniority principle, so that son held higher office than father; younger brother could direct older brother, etc. But the most notable reversal of roles concerned the in-law relations. Invariably the mukuwasha (son-in-law or sister’s husband) and members of the wife-receiving lineage held Church posts senior to those of their vatezvara and vakarabga (fathers and brothers-in-law). The main trend appeared to be for a mukuwasha, holding a senior post, such as bishop or minister in the Church, to appoint his father-in-law and/or brother-in-law to relatively junior posts in the Church hierarchy. Thus the ZCC minister of Nyagamwa had his brother-in-law (mukarabga) appointed catechist (leadership hierarchies No 1) and the senior Apostolic evangelist of Masasira made his father-in-law (tezvara) a junior evangelist of the lowest rank (leadership hierarchies No. 3). An honorary post frequently reserved by the mukuwasha for his tezvara is that of judge (mutongi). In the Apostolic movement considerable prestige is vested in this office, without its being in the direct line of ascent to top leadership. In other words, a bishop or minister can show respect to his wife-providing in-laws - for whom he is traditionally supposed to "work" by appointing them to honorary positions without endangering his own position of influence and authority in the Church group. In reversed father-son relations, such as when Johane Maranke appointed his father as mutongi in his own movement, a similar procedure is adopted. In the Church court Johane’s father had far-reaching advisory but little executive power.

In so far as the traditional kinship organization manifests itself in the IC leadership hierarchies, one can say that customary patterns of behaviour are perpetuated in the "new order". It is not a matter of straightforward adaptation, because in the context of the IC congregation the obligations of the subordinated to the superordinated acquire new meaning in terms of the Christian objectives of the Church group. I have noticed in some instances how the common

49 Daneel, 1971(a), p. 49.
purpose of expanding and nurturing a congregation as well as the elevated Church status of junior members of some families, have contributed towards expressions of flexibility, mutuality and respect in father–son, older brother/younger brother relations, quite unlike the traditional structuring of relations. Others again misuse their natural seniority to junior relatives holding office, and thereby manipulate congregational proceedings. Thus the process of adaptation can involve the reinterpretation of leadership roles in terms of Christian responsibility, or it can lead towards a predominance of kinship over spiritual considerations. The most salient aspect to be noted, however, is the reversal of customary roles of superordination and subordination, for this clearly illustrates that IC leadership not only adapts itself to the old order but also transforms it in the creation of new patterns of authority.

If the average IC congregation is compared with the identifiable kinship groups in Shona society, the entire group resembles a mhuri ("family" or kindred) in that it includes virtually any combination of relative "fused on grounds of near kinship and residence; a group that shares the experience of birth, marriage, illness etc. of each of its members". Its leadership is frequently vested in a particular imba ("house") or a chizvarwa, which is a lineage segment, comprising first, second and third generation agnatic descendants of one man.

Given this obvious correlation between basic Church group and traditional kinship organization, does it follow that Independent Churches are essentially tribalistic? For them to be so, one would expect the chizvarwa of a Church's principal leader not only to feature prominently in one congregation but to form the skeleton of this Church's organization in its wider conception, just as the members of the politically dominant patrilineage in the Shona chiefdom, residing in the various wards, provide the basis for tribal unity. One would also expect that at the Church's circuit level, the members of one or a number of related "houses" would hold key positions in the local congregations. The leadership configuration in the IC congregations of Chingombe indicates, however, that lineage ties often do not extend significantly from one congregation to the other. In the case of the three ZCC congregations, Mufundisi Bracho's Shangaan relatives, who play such an important role in the Nyagamwa group, are not related at all to the leadership nuclei of

50 Ibid., p. 46.
51 Ibid., p. 38.
the other two congregations. Similarly, the houses playing a leading role in the four Apostolic congregations all belong to different lineages. These are respectively of Mbire, Rufura, Hera and Gwai extraction. The cohesive factor among the four congregations is therefore not kinship or tribal connections. Only in the leadership of the seven *Chibarirwe* congregations was there a noticeable predominance of one particular lineage. The first, second and third generation descendants of Mudyanadzo, the ancestor of one of the politically dominant Rufura "houses" in Chingombe, not only held key positions in most of the local congregations but also in the Church's main executive council. Mudyanadzo was therefore in a position to dominate proceedings during the *Chibarirwe* 's circuit meetings. Considering this parallel to the Shona chiefdom's tribal organisation and the additional fact that numerous Chingombe kraalheads, representing other Rufura houses, also belonged to the *Chibarirwe*, one could conclude that this Church, in Chingombe at least, has distinct tribalistic leanings.

In the overall leadership of Independent Churches, both tribal and pan-tribal tendencies can sometimes be distinguished. At Mutendi's ZCC headquarters in the 1960s, for instance, the predominance of Rozvi kinsmen in the leadership of the immediately surrounding congregations and the overriding influence of the bishop's own "house" (*imba*) pointed in the direction of a "tribal" (Rozvi) Church. But the expansion of the ZCC over a wide spectrum of tribal areas and the alignment of non-related kin-groups wielding influence in the adjacent congregations of a particular circuit, seemed to provide sufficient ground for distinguishing "pan-tribal" as well as "non-tribal" elements. It is only if the term "tribe" is used in its widest connotation - to refer to the Shona-speaking people as distinct from the Ndebele - that it acquires any, if only general designatory, relevance for the Churches under survey. The descriptive qualification "family Church" is much more accurate and less misleading, especially in view of the consistency with which kinship ties feature in the leadership of IC congregations.

In conclusion it should be reiterated that the Shona Independent Churches have a *thoroughly contextualized leadership* which blends with the traditional norms for leadership and patterns of authority on the one hand, and constitutes new patterns with different demands, on the other. Because of the significance of kinship in the leadership nucleus of most congregations, these groups to some extent emerge as family or extended family concerns - in other words, as recognizable and well adjusted entities in rural com-
munities. Add to this the fact that in the context of Church courts, the judicial roles of IC leaders of both the Ethiopian and Spirit-type are modelled on those of kraalheads, ward-heads and chiefs, and the effective control system as well as the mobilizing power within IC congregations become evident. Of singular significance is the IC interpretation of the prophetic office, for it is at this point that real confrontation with the traditional nganga, in the sense of dialogue with the traditional world-view as it still exists in the lives of both traditionalists and Church people, takes place. In the prophet we find the "new nganga", the substitute of the traditional nganga, who deals with so many ills of society that he stands at the centre, uniquely placed to enact the message of Christ's incarnation.
Table 1  RSS  Ratio of IC officials in relation to ordinary members; types of offices held in the surveyed villages in Chingombe

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<th>Position in Church</th>
<th>ADULT MALES</th>
<th>Church Affiliation</th>
<th>ADULT FEMALES</th>
<th>Ordinary Church member</th>
<th>Ruwadzanu leader</th>
<th>Healer/prophetess</th>
<th>Deaconess</th>
<th>Stewardess (goza)</th>
<th>Leader of young girls</th>
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<td>Office-bearer</td>
<td>8</td>
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</table>
Table 2  Leadership hierarchies in (28) IC congregations in Chingombe  A correlation of Kinship ties and Seniority In Church leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kinship tie and position In leadership hierarchy</th>
<th>ZCC n</th>
<th>ZCC %</th>
<th>Ndaza n</th>
<th>Ndaza %</th>
<th>AACJM n</th>
<th>AACJM %</th>
<th>FEC n</th>
<th>FEC %</th>
<th>ACC n</th>
<th>ACC %</th>
<th>Total n</th>
<th>Total %</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Senior</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>father (baba) son</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>son (mwanakomana) father</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>elder brother younger brother (mununguna)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>younger brother elder brother</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>grandparent (sekuru) grandchild (muzukuru)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>nephew paternal uncle (sekuru)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>brother-in-law (mukarabga)</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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APOSTOLIC LEADERSHIP HIERARCHY

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<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Baptizer</th>
<th>Evangelist</th>
<th>Prophet</th>
<th>Healer</th>
<th>Judge</th>
<th>Secretary</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Top Rank</td>
<td>APE</td>
<td>LIEB-UMAH</td>
<td>LIEB-UMAH</td>
<td>LIEB-UMAH</td>
<td>LIEB-UMAH</td>
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<td>APE</td>
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<td>L.U.</td>
<td>MRP</td>
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<td>MTN or MTO</td>
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<td>L.</td>
<td>MRP</td>
<td>MRP</td>
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<td>APE</td>
<td>MRP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Leaders</td>
<td>Lower (st) Grade</td>
<td>AP</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>MR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Junior Judge</td>
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</table>

'HAHIROS' - SINGERS
ORDINARY MEMBERS

HIGH-PRIEST
and top-ranking relatives.
Leadership Hierarchies of Independent Church congregations in Chingombe, graphically illustrated in terms of offices, kinship and tribal factors.

1. ZCC Congregation (Nyagamwa)

a. Offices

- 1st prophet (+ evangelist)
- 2nd prophet (+ deacon)
- 3rd prophet (+ secretary)
- 4th prophet (ess)
- minister
- deacon
- catechist
- preacher

b. Kinship

- older brother
- younger brother
- 'foreigner' (mutorwa)
- 'foreigner'
- sister's husband (mukuwasha)
- brother-in-law (mukurarbe)
- father
- son
- mukurarbe
- mukuwasha
- sister's son (muzukuru)
- maternal uncle (sekuru)
- brother-in-law (mukurarbe)
- sister's husband (mukuwasha)

C. Tribe

- Mbire
- Shangaan
- Shangaan
- Shangaan
- Chagonda
- Rozvi
- Shangaan
- Shangaan
- Gumbo
- Chagonda
- Gumbo (Rufura)
- Nhenga
- Hera
Leadership and Fission Dynamics

Leadership Hierarchies in Chingombe

2. Ndaza Zionist Congregation (Zion Sabbath Church)

a. Offices

- Bishop
- 1st minister
- 2nd minister
- evangelist
- keeper (herder)
- deacon
- deacon
- deacon

b. Kinship

- father-in-law (tavara)
- son-in-law (mukuwasha)
- sister's husband (mukuwasha)
- brother-in-law (mukarebga)
- older brother
- younger brother
- "foreigner" (mutorwa)
- father
- son
- older brother
- younger brother
- 'foreigner'

- "foreigner"

- Duma
- Gumbo (Rufura)
- Hungwe
- Duma
- Gumbo (Rufura)
- Rozvi
- Gumbo (Rufura)
- Gumbo (Rufura)
Leadership Hierarchies in Chingombe

3. AACJM (mu Postori) Congregation (Masasire)
   - 5 office-bearers
   - 12 adults
   - 29 children

a. Offices:
   - Senior evangelist APE (LU)
   - Junior baptist (+ prophet)
   - APE
   - APE
   - AP

b. Kinship:
   - Maternal uncle (sekuru)
   - Sister's son (muzukuru)
   - Son-in-law (mukuwasha)
   - Father-in-law (tazvant)
   - 'Foreigner' (mutorwa)

   - Paternal uncle (babamunini)
   - Nephew (mwana)


c. Tribe:
   - Gumbo (Rufura)
   - Ndau
   - Gumbo (Rufura)
   - Rozvi
   - Gargwe
Leadership Hierarches in Chingombe

4. FEC (Topia) Congregation (Chikuwire)

a. Offices:

- Warden (muungamiri)
- Minister (mufundisi)
- Deacon (mudekoni)
- Preacher (muparidzi)
- Steward (goza)

9 office bearers
26 adults
50 children

b. Kinship:

- Father-in-law
- Son-in-law
- Nephew (mwana)
- Paternal uncle (babamunini)
- Brother-in-law (mukarabga)
- Sister's husband (mukuwashya)
- Older brother
- Younger brother
- Maternal uncle (sekuru)
- Sister's son (muzukuru)
- Brother-in-law
- Sister's husband
- Brother-in-law (mukarabga)
- Father-in-law (tezvara)
- Son-in-law (mukuwashya)
- Younger brother
- Older brother
- Son

C. Tribe:

- Gumbo (Rufura)
- Rozvi
- Mbire
- Hungwe
- Gumbo (Rufura)
- Gumbo (Rufura)
- Gumbo (Rufura)
Leadership Hierarchies in Chingombe

5. ACC (Chibairwe) Congregation (Mudyanaedzo)

6 office bearers
62 adults
no children

a. Offices:

- evangelist
- preacher
- overseer
- overseer
- deacon
- deacon

b. Kinship:

- older brother
- younger brother
- cousin (munungune i.e. younger brother)
- cousin (mukoma i.e. older brother)
- maternal uncle (sekuru)
- sister's son (muzukuru)
- 'foreigner'
- 'foreigner'

(c. Tribe:

- Gumbo (Rufura)
- Gumbo (Rufura)
- Mbire
- Hera
- Gumbo (Rufura)
- Duma
THE APPOINTMENT, TRAINING AND SUCCESSION OF OFFICE-BEARERS

Volume 2 of this series contained a discussion of the significance of dreams as a potent factor in the growth of Independent Churches. The characteristic difference between Mission and Independent Churches, as I pointed out, was not so much the total neglect of dreams and visions by the missionaries, but their tendency to underrate the importance of these phenomena as channels of divine revelation in the lives of Africans. The missionaries simply did not regard dreams as prerequisite for conversion; they also did not pay enough attention to them as validating experiences for Africans to join the full-time ministry of the Church. As a result dreams and visions were not sufficiently exploited by the Mission Churches as a consolidating force. Against a background of the traditional religion's full recognition of dreams as a means of communication between the living and the dead, the Independent Churches without undue reserve simply allowed dreams to retain the central position they have always held in religious life. Numerous Independents were either drawn into this movement on account of call-dreams, or they could narrate dream experiences which, in retrospect, could be interpreted as divine confirmation of their having joined a particular Church.¹ Equally important in the Independent Churches are call-dreams summoning members to the ministry and dreams which confirm the appointment of office-bearers. Such dreams invariably serve as divine sanction for the leadership ambitions of individual Church members. The narration of such dreams serves to convince the Church group not only of the presence of God in the lives of those aspiring to hold office, but also of their proper attitude towards those they intend to serve. Often it is a matter of prospective office-bearers "dreaming" in accordance with the stereotyped dream expectations of the group concerned. In this chapter brief mention will be made of such dreams and visions as manifestations of a divine call to the ministry. Note that this is by no means an

¹ Daneel, 1974, p. 139f.
The appointment, training and succession of office-bearers

exhaustive treatise on the subject, for it is so rich in variety and in its implications for the IC ministry that it should really form the focus of a separate, fully researched study.

Attention is also paid to the prominence assigned to natural leadership traits, as opposed to educational and spiritual qualifications, in the appointment of IC office-bearers. What in fact are the educational qualifications of IC leaders and what are the spiritual values instilled in them in the ingenious in-service training programmes which the Independents developed as a substitute for Western-type theological training? The answers to these questions could cause misgivings in those who consider extensive theological training to be an absolute condition for Church leadership. Yet the effectiveness of rudimentary in-service training for the development of a ministry which meets the requirements of rural communities is beyond doubt. In addition the dynamics of fission in the Independent Churches is clarified by a discussion of inherited leadership and how it brings about dual succession to leadership, not only in the case of a principal Church leader's death, but after the death of virtually any office-bearer, whatever his rank in the leadership hierarchy.

1. CALL TO THE MINISTRY

In the prophetic movements the first step to the ministry in most cases is the experience of a divine call, be it through a vision, dream, prophetic revelation, or even the physical transportation of the leader to heaven. Most prophetic leaders can recount experiences of a series of dreams and/or visions entailing direct encounters with God Himself or with His messengers. They themselves appear in official attire, performing some duty normally associated with the ministry. Thus a future leader will dream of himself beating a drum on a hilltop, thereby calling his flock together, of healing people or of "going into the wilderness to preach to people." What really constitutes a call is that these dream experiences are directly sanctioned by God, who commands or, through an angel, orders the dreamer or visionary to respond to such experiences in daily life. Sometimes call-dreams are less direct and are only interpreted as such by other prophetic officials.

The divine call is usually accompanied by other manifestations of the closeness of God. Very often narratives of a call to the ministry

2 Ibid., p. 144.
include references to spells of Spirit possession, to a period of "praying powerfully" (the inference being that such intensity was brought about by the Holy Spirit), to fasting, Bible study and seclusion in the mountains. Especially in the event of the formation of a new movement, it is important for the principal leader to convince his followers that his initiatives derive directly from God. Therefore the first phase of campaigning includes repeated references to his calling in order to demonstrate a direct link with the supernatural.

In the Spirit-type Churches one can discern stereotyped patterns of call-visions and dreams, reflecting parallels to the experiences of biblical personalities. The Joseph theme and the Moses theme, in which the leader's authority over a given group of people is sanctioned by God, are particularly prominent. Both Mutendi and Johane claimed to have had dreams in which their sheaves, like Joseph's, proved to be superior to those of other people. In the case of Johane's Joseph-dream, God himself, in the guise of a judge, is supposed to have stated that the size of Johane's sheaf was a sign of his future leadership. Johane also dreamt of himself as a Moses figure leading his followers through fire (fire-walking is still practised by some of the vaPostori) and hostile countries with the aid of his holy staff. Having virtually canonized these dreams and visions in their Church books, Mutendi and Johane set a standard that is still observed by their subordinates aspiring to leadership. An endless variety of standardized themes recurs in the dream life of prospective Zionist and Apostle office-bearers.

The following account of call-dreams is typical of the dream experiences of most IC office-bearers. Senior Evangelist-Judge Amos Chakaza, Johane Maranke's son-in-law, and influential muPostori leader in the Bocha area, said:

"At first I belonged to the Methodist Church. I knew I would never be considered as a minister [mufundisi] because I had a wife without a marriage certificate. In our Church it was a condition for a mufundisi that he should be properly married. Nevertheless, I had dreams concerning my leadership [ukuru] whenever I lay down to sleep. I saw myself going out into the wilderness and preaching to many people. On such occasions I was clad in white garments and carried the Book with me. In 1947, when I returned from Bulawayo, I got to know this

3 Daneel, 1971(a), pp. 289, 316.
4 Ibid., p. 317.
Apostolic Church of Johane Maranke. At first I did not think it was the one I had dreamt of. Then in 1951 when Conorio, Johane’s brother, fell ill I started thinking of being baptized in Jordan. When I joined the Church and was promoted to the position of *mufundisi* [in the general sense of the word, indicating the teaching and preaching function of his Apostolic office as senior Evangelist] I realized that my dreams had come true. I told Anrod [Johane’s other brother and a prominent Church official] about it and they agreed that the dreams were true ‘prophecies’ of what would happen.5

The following salient points emerge from Chakaza’s narrative:

1 His call-dreams to the ministry occurred at a time when he was going *through a crisis.* As an ambitious man with a disqualifying marital situation as far as the Methodist Church was concerned, he had little prospect of realizing his leadership ideals in this Mission Church. The intensification of call-dreams at a time when he was likely to have sought justification for a break with the Mission Church is probably indicative of a loyalty crisis, aggravated by the need for recognition of his leadership abilities. The link between call-dreams and individual crises is too obvious to be ignored. Very often such dreams occur in a situation of anxiety or alienation caused by a migratory labour situation. Some of the best remembered dreams of the Zimbabwean fore-runners of Zionism, for instance, occurred when they were migrant workers in South Africa in less than ideal circumstances.6 In other instances the dream-call to an Independent Church and/or the ministry take place in an urban situation when the person’s economic well-being is threatened by job insecurity, illness or the loss of a job. The prospect of death through illness, wizardry attacks or other threats to life also creates a climate in which call-dreams take place. Or, in the event of a father’s death, when the ecclesiastic responsibility of the deceased falls on the son’s shoulders, if the latter had not been attending Church or had deliberately neglected Church duties already entrusted to him, he may pass through a spiritual renewal crisis with confirmatory dreams supporting his new status.

5 Daneel, 1974, pp. 144–145.
The Shona, like most Africans, consider the crises of life to have a deep, if sometimes unfathomable, meaning. They reveal human dependence on God and call forth man's response. Depending on the nature of the crisis, this response is usually an offer of lifelong service in the ministry. The narration of dreams during or immediately after periods of crisis signals recognition of God's involvement, man's dependence on divine involvement and his willingness to respond meaningfully to God's demands. Whatever lies in the subconscious of individuals behind the manifest dream content of their experience - in terms of needs, fears, belief in supernatural powers and the like - the fact remains that dreams and visions, whether provoked by crises or not, remain the acknowledged channels whereby the mysteries of life, the inspiration for change and the authority for drastic decisions are more or less "wrenched" from the realm of the unknown and given legitimacy in the known.

2. The repetitious nature of call-dreams emerges from Chakaza's assertion that he had dreams about his leadership (ukuru) whenever he lay down to sleep. Such repetition is a common feature of call-dreams. For although Church leaders are inclined to narrate the unusual or selected dreams which appear to have had a direct impact on their lives, they usually admit to having had quite a number of dreams. The interpretation of such repetition varies. In Chakaza's case the frequency of call-dreams was taken to indicate a degree of urgency as regards both the significance of the evangelistic task he had to perform for others, as well as his own need to find a solution for a pressing problem. In addition, repetition served to underscore the divine sanction of such dreams so as to establish authenticity. On the other hand, in some cases, when the response of the dreamer is one of procrastination or negation, repetition is considered to be a means of divine persuasion. Dream accounts at times span periods of many years, and these nearly always include an admission that disobedience and a refusal to respond to God's call had been the cause of a long drawn-out interaction between a calling God and a rebellious individual.

3. The manifest content of call-dreams has a close bearing on the service required of the person called. Chakaza dreamt of himself going out into the wilderness and preaching to many people. The concept of the wilderness ties in with biblical themes, such as the situation in which John the Baptist operated. It also reflects the campaigning ministry developed by Johane Maranke, the
Chakaza’s dreams therefore appeared to spell out his identification with Johane’s most demanding ministry, and placed the focus on preaching, the talent he had been seeking to develop. Likewise, prospective office-bearers frequently dream about the service they feel competent to render, or are drawn to through natural inclination. Most prophetic healers at some early stage, prior to or at the beginning of their healing ministry, dream of themselves as laying hands on people, praying over water, etc., while prophets find themselves climbing mountains to fast and pray, or announcing prophecies from mountain tops. In call-dreams of this nature there can be little doubt about the close link between manifest dream content and ambition, inner need for a meaningful religious life and a growing commitment to service. It is even likely that leadership aspirations are deliberately projected into dream-life by some individuals, in which case the "correct" dreams are remembered and narrated in the Church group with the purpose of acquiring divine sanction for the office envisaged.

Dream content can, however, be much less direct than the stereotypes mentioned above. God’s judgement, for instance, is symbolized by fire. Any dream which implies an escape from being burnt - for instance through an Apostolic-type fire-walk without injury, falling into fire without burning or climbing through a chimney out of the reach of flames - can be interpreted as victory over evil, pardon from judgement and, by implication, identification with the Church’s ministry. Even a simple dream of seeing water or crossing a river can be interpreted as a call-dream. Water remains the symbol of fertility and of successful evasion of the heated, destructive anger or resentment of an adversary. Water implies deliverance from drought; it also implies deliverance from evil, which is literally "cooled off". Hence the crossing of a river could signify either going across to a particular Church, gaining victory over a burdensome temptation, or an active identification with the Church’s ministry which aims at reconciliation: the "cooling off" of destructive sin.

4. Chakaza’s mention of his preaching in white garments with the Bible in his hands highlights the occurrence of stereotyped symbols in call-dreams. Fluorescent, resplendent or radiant white is the dominant colour of most symbols or persons in call-dreams. It symbolizes purity, sanctity, goodness in the general sense of
the word, or the presence of God. A leader with a divine commission appears in dreams with glowing white features, clad in white attire, or finds himself in a house illuminated by white light due to God's presence. White and shining stars falling from heaven symbolize God's bestowal of a special charisma or task on the dreamer Johane Maranke, for instance, saw visions of stars falling at his feet when he received his holy commission; Simon Mushati, a key figure in the Apostolic movement, saw a star-like object descending on him when he was called as senior prophet to assist Johane; and Champion, the top mufundisi of the ZCC, was running after the white manna from heaven when a star fell into his hand. The willingness of the dreamer to accept the special task or gift of sanctity is demonstrated by his close contact with the dream symbol. In Mushati's case the white object "streamed down his face like water", while Champion dreamt of himself as actually eating both star and manna. This notion of literally absorbing the symbol of heavenly commission parallels biblical themes, such as the prophet Isaiah's "eating" of the scrolls when he was ordered to convey God's message to Israel.

Although white remains the predominant symbolic colour in dreams, it is not the only one. The Ndaza Zionists with their multicoloured robes in particular dream about the colours of their robes and of the holy cords (ndaza) they are supposed to wear. It seems, however, as if acceptance of a dream-prescribed colour in such cases is a manifestation of willingness to heed the command of the Holy Spirit, rather than of a specific value attached to the particular colour. A notable exception is the colour red in the dream-life of Apostolic women. Traditionally red is associated with blood and therefore features in the call-dreams of witches who find themselves drinking the blood of their victims. Should an Apostolic woman, however, dream of herself as clad in red garments, this is interpreted as a call to the prophetic office, for in this Church red symbolizes God's judgement. The Apostolic prophetess, clad in red, spells the "danger" of God's detection and judgement of sin to those who have to pass the "heavenly gates" for public confession of sin preparatory to participation in Holy Communion. In contrast to the destructive threat of the witch, the red-robed prophetess represents to

7 Ibid., p. 316.
8 Ibid., p. 322.
9 Daneel, 1974, p. 158.
her fellow Church members the "threat" of eternal judgement, as well as the often embarrassing public exposure of hidden sins, due to the relentless and revealing probing of the Holy Spirit.

It should be noted, finally, that the prominence of white dream symbols applies not only to Independent but also to main-line Churches throughout Africa. In his survey of "dreams as channels of God's call" in African Churches generally, Sundkler also makes mention of this stereotype in vocational dreams. He says:

"Some [African pastors] describe their dream apparitions as 'visions of light' – specified by one theological student in Ubangui-Chari in the words 'as light as Aida' [Aida being the name of a popular pressure lamp]; others have seen someone dressed in white approaching and saying: 'Feed my sheep'; the Lord in a long white robe, or an angel in white beckoning and telling the dreamer: 'This place is too small; my Church must grow; you are called.' Or the dreamer has seen himself in a white surplice standing in a Church; or again, the dreamer has seen a deceased person, such as a missionary or the deceased's father, in a shining heavenly robe."10

5. Call-dreams require proper interpretation and approbation by senior members of the Church group if they are to have real significance for the dreamer and the Church concerned. As often happens, Chakaza only mentioned his call-dreams to the top leaders of his Church after he was promoted to senior office. He had never doubted the validity of his own interpretation of his dream experiences, and this served as a source of inspiration for the evangelistic work he was doing over the years. Nevertheless he ultimately required the official confirmation of the group, the recognition of others that his dream experiences had been true "prophecies" of coming events, before the cycle of "dreams - appointment - full realization of leadership potential" could be complete. In the final analysis, therefore, call-dreams are not the private affairs of individuals, for they have to be shared and integrated into the group consciousness. In this way the witness of the group in its relatedness and response to God's commands is strengthened, the office concerned receives an extra dimension

10 Sundkler, 1962, pp. 24-25.
of divine confirmation, the office-bearer commits himself in a manner which enhances the predictability of his role-fulfilment in the group, and by implication contributes to group stability.

Owing to the arbitrary nature of dream interpretation, individuals develop their own techniques for distinguishing between prophetic and spontaneous dreams. As I have pointed out elsewhere,\(^{11}\) three Ndaza Zionist leaders each worked out his own system of interpretation. To the one not coughing in the morning was an assurance that his dream was the result of divine inspiration. The second preferred to wait and see whether his dreams tallied with actual experience, while the third professed to make it a matter of prayer, so that God could give him a "good explanation of important dreams". As a result of the manifestly subjective factor in the individual interpretation of dreams, the entire system of dream communication in God-man encounter is wide open to abuse. Hence it is not uncommon for individuals involved in a power struggle to appeal to their dreams as divine justification of their often unwarranted and selfish claims. Ambitious leaders at times subtly exploit dream narration to widen their scope of influence or to assert their authority over subordinates. Much depends, of course, on group control and the sensitivity of senior officials to dream abuse. False claims are often exposed and eliminated through intuitive group awareness of justice and truth according to scriptural norms.

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Despite the emphasis on a divine call through dreams or visions, not all office-bearers in the prophetic movements had this experience prior to their appointment to the ministry. As often happens during a period of rapid Church expansion, numerous new converts are appointed to various offices to serve newly founded congregations. The leaders in charge of such sweeping campaigns may cite revelations of the Holy Spirit as justification for such appointments. Yet often the overriding consideration is the future stability of new, sometimes remote congregations. The relatively inexperienced new office-bearers in actual fact qualify on the basis of their status in their communities, kinship, natural leadership talents and other, not strictly religious factors. It frequently happens, of course, that office-bearers appointed in this way at a later stage have visions

\(^{11}\) Daneel, 1974, pp. 166-167
and dreams which are interpreted as divine confirmation for the prior decisions and events. These dreams and visions not only justify leadership, but also enhance the chances of promotion to higher ranks.

Only a few of the minor prophets in the groups I have studied claim to have "died" and to have returned to the living as "God's messengers", as was the case with Alice Lenshina\(^{12}\) of the Lumpa Church in Zambia, John Masowe\(^{13}\) of the Umtali region and some other outstanding leaders. Jaka Mukurumbera, a senior baptist-prophet of the AACJM (vaPostori) in Chingombe, for instance, claimed that while he was in a state of "death" a voice came to him saying that he had received salvation. He was also told by robed people to return from heaven to earth, with the implication that he should do God's work. This experience was the turning-point in Jaka's life. He subsequently spent some time in isolation from fellow villagers, received visions and had encounters with the Holy Spirit of increasing intensity, until he returned to village life in his new role of a prophetic leader\(^{14}\). "Death" and "resurrection", however, do not seem to be absolute conditions for encounters with God in heaven. Chakaza, the above-mentioned Apostolic Evangelist-Judge, stressed that during his life Johane Maranke was considered a "messenger from heaven" because he actually went there and returned to earth. It was not that Johane was dreaming of heaven. Said Chakaza, "He really went there and was shown all things. In heaven he met [waionana] and discussed with Jesus." To the vaPostori this sojourn of Johane's in heaven constituted a divine and unassailable mandate for their Church. That Mutendi did not recount a similar experience in heaven does not detract from the fact that his followers considered his relationship with the divine to be as close, if not closer, than those of any of the other prominent Shona IC leaders - hence his popular title "the man of God" (munhu waMwari).

Sundkler says that "as a general observation it is fair to say that while Ethiopian Churches regard 'good character' and general leadership abilities as a sufficient substitute for theological training, the Zionists claim inspiration by what they call the 'Holy Spirit', as the all overriding requirement"\(^{15}\) This could be interpreted as

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13 Sundkler, 1961, p. 324.
14 Daneel, 1974, pp. 262-263.
implying that Ethiopian-type Church leaders have less use than the prophets for a divinely inspired call to the ministry. It should be emphasized, however, that most Ethiopian-type leaders also claim to have been uniquely called by God. Quite a number of them refer to visions and dreams as the means whereby God revealed His will to them. It is rather that the Ethiopian-type Churches focus much less on dramatic encounters with the supernatural than do Spirit-type Churches. Sengwayo, leader of the ACC (Chibarirwe) witnessed about an "inner voice" and the "voice of God" which guided him when he formed his Church. He claimed divine inspiration for sound leadership and Church growth. Characteristically, however, there was a marked absence in the Chibarirwe of the ecstatic manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

Whatever problems and advantages the Independent Churches derive from the centrality of dreams and visions, one cannot but agree with Sundkler's statement:

"Dreams and visions are like dew on gossamer shining in the early morning in a clearing in the African bush. They are made of the most fine and delicate stuff, and they reveal the hidden hunger for beauty and holiness and sacred rhythm of life. The drab and formal Western-style worship in the rough and ready chapel is not always an ideal home for the soul that has caught a glimpse of this wonderful world of vision. Those who attempt to help build the Church in Africa should not be afraid of making it, as far as possible, and in terms of the Scripture, a 'court of heaven'."

It is conceivable that the Independents who are still uninhibitedly living by their visions and dreams, thereby creating their own "sacred rhythm of life", are in fact making just such a contribution in Africa.

2. LEADERSHIP QUALIFICATIONS

(a) Traits of character and spiritual gifts

Considering the emphasis on divine inspiration as a prerequisite for entry into the Christian ministry, one would have expected the main

17 Sundkler, 1962, p. 80.
qualifications for leadership to be spiritual, as Turner states in his study of the Church of the Lord (Aladura). Yet no matter how important dreams, visions and the accompanying spiritual gifts of speaking in tongues, prophecy and faith-healing may be, the crucial qualifications for appointing an office-bearer are not necessarily his remarkable spiritual powers. When asked about the requirements they set, Church leaders do not always mention commitment to God's work, spiritual ardour and strong faith. Among the exceptions were Bishop Andreas Shoko of the Zion Apostolic Faith Mission, who responded: "Educational standards are unimportant. We want the heart! Every office-bearer must have a friendly heart and be intent on serving God with his whole being." The Revd Zvobgo of the ARC (Shonganiso) maintained that a candidate for leadership should be a man of strong faith who knows his Bible well and observes the laws of the Church.

The views of most IC officials on this subject showed a noticeable lack of references to spiritual depth, spiritual maturity, knowledge of God's Word, holiness, zeal for saving souls, persistent prayer, effective preaching or a talent for pastoral work. Their initial reaction when asked what they considered to be the most important qualities for Church leadership invariably reflected a preference for someone with one or more of the following character traits or talents:

* tsika dzakanaka (good manners): in other words, someone leading an exemplary life;
* moyo munyoro (a kind heart): that is, a sympathetic person who is not easily roused to anger;
* kubata vanhu ("to control people"): that is, the ability to influence others, to lead or to assert authority; and
* kupa murairo (to give the law): that is, someone who can lay down the Church's law and induce people to live by it.

In addition to these qualifications, many office-bearers stressed the importance of a lengthy period of Church membership. This suggests that the prospective candidate should have had sufficient time to demonstrate group loyalty and to familiarize himself with the practices of the Church. Only a few made mention of the ability to read, courage in relations with Europeans or a zeal for Church work.

The following comment made by Bishop Forridge, leader of an offshoot of Mutendi's ZCC,\textsuperscript{19} represents the attitude of numerous IC leaders:

"I choose new office-bearers myself. First of all I consider a person's way of life. If he is of good repute and leads an exemplary life [\textit{kuva netsika dzakanaka}], I appoint him as a preacher, then as deacon, then as evangelist and finally as a minister. I am not concerned about such a person being clever. I want a reliable man who can influence and lead others. He must have a good character and not be quarrelsome. I expect him to keep discipline in the Church."

This comment underscores the characteristic tendency to play down educational standards or book learning in favour of natural authority and leadership talents. Forridge's lack of interest in a "clever person" reflects a certain sensitivity and is a reaction to the knowledge that the educational standard in the prophetic movement is generally low, with theological training in the Western sense of the word virtually non-existent. His insistence on \textit{tsika dzakanaka}, reliability and a good character to some extent presupposes rather than obscures spiritual qualities. For despite the explicit preoccupation with natural leadership talents - as was also mentioned above - spiritual maturity, spiritual depth and spiritual talent are often the accepted source of the desired character traits. The distinctly spiritual qualifications in fact feature more strongly and are developed more deliberately once a candidate for a particular office enters a period of official probation.

Interestingly, the above-mentioned Bishop Forridge was the first Zionist bishop to complete a two-year theological course after \textit{Fambidzano} had established a theological training programme for Shona Independents in 1972.\textsuperscript{20} More than any other IC bishop he fought for the continuation of TEE programmes amongst the Shona Churches when the war situation of the 'seventies threatened to cripple \textit{Fambidzano}'s work. Conscious of the advantages of theological study, he now stresses biblical knowledge, effective preaching and general insight into the essential features of Christianity as important qualifications for leadership.

\textsuperscript{19} Daneel, 1971(a), p. 313.
\textsuperscript{20} To be discussed in my forthcoming publication, \textit{Fambidzano: Ecumenical movement of Shona Independent Churches in Zimbabwe}. 
Despite this the continuing emphasis in the Independent Churches on natural rather than spiritual leadership indicates that traditional leadership ideals are still primary. Consequently some IC leaders evaluate candidates in terms of "good conduct", "balanced behaviour" or "good character" according to traditional law and social norms rather than scriptural criteria. In the second place it faithfully reflects the basis on which many office-bearers in these Churches were and still are appointed. One example will suffice. When Moses Ruwana campaigned on behalf of the ACC (Chibarirwe) in the Chingombe chiefdom during the early 1950s, he appointed Mujeyi as senior evangelist of a number of flourishing congregations. Mujeyi, who is said to have been a catechist of the DRC in earlier years, was a complete layman as regards Church affairs at this stage. He was a well-known member of one of the politically dominant Rufura houses in the chiefdom but was not noted for outstanding spiritual talents. As an evangelist he proved to have a flair for organizational matters. Yet when I was in touch with him in 1966, he appeared to be a heavy beer drinker with a very limited knowledge of biblical truths and hardly any spiritual depth in his sermons. So it happened that a man of some status and influence in a particular tribal political structure was appointed to an office for which he was insufficiently equipped. His influence in society undoubtedly stimulated growth in the numbers of the Chibarirwe in Chingombe, yet he lacked the drive and ability to feed his flock spiritually. Quite a number of Mujeyi's fellow Church members were aware of his leadership limitations and the need for spiritual reform and progress.

Fambidzano's theological training programmes have had a considerable impact on the member Churches' approach to leadership qualifications. This will be discussed in greater detail in another publication. At this point it could be mentioned that, in addition to Bishop Forridge, Bishop Gavure of the First Ethiopian Church also underwent a noticeable change as a result of a two-year course at one of the Fambidzano extension centres. It caused him to change the conditions for appointment of office-bearers in his Church. Prospective candidates for the ministry are now called upon to deliver "test" sermons to large conferences. The contents of these sermons are then discussed in Church council sessions and provide important clues to the spiritual capabilities of candidates. In this way a proper grasp of biblical truth is becoming an increasingly

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important criterion for Church leadership. Says Musasikwa, an influential warden (muongamiri) of the FEC: "Nowadays we only want to appoint office-bearers who have been enlightened [kuvenekerwa] at one of the Fambidzano training centres." This is no plea for rational knowledge as an end in itself, but an indication of genuine appreciation for the introduction of new knowledge and an existentially spiritual dimension to Church leadership - a dimension bound to disciplined training which many IC leaders have felt to be lacking in the past.

(b) Age groups

In some of the Mission Churches there was a tendency in earlier years for candidates to enter the ministry at an advanced age. With the shift in focus from seniority and experience - the standards for leadership in traditional African society - to higher educational and theological qualifications a more youthful ministry came into being. A similar development, albeit less conspicuous, may be observed in the Shona Independent Churches during the 50 to 60 years of their existence in Zimbabwe. Whereas the traditional seniority principle, which gives preference to elderly people in key ritual roles, has continued to play an important role, partly through the absence of IC training facilities, some Churches have in addition, made use of youthful office-bearers right from the start. Others have been inclined to consistently appoint mainly middle-aged or elderly people.

An analysis of the figures in tables 3 and 4 clearly shows that of the Spirit-type Churches the ZCC, and of the Ethiopian-type Churches the Chibarirwe, tend to appoint only elderly people to offices of responsibility. Only 12% of the ZCC and 5% of the Chibarirwe officials included in the survey were under 39 years of age. The few office-bearers in this category moreover only held junior positions. In the Chibarirwe in particular, senior positions were occupied exclusively by people over the age of 50 years. This is to be expected in a movement qualified as "a Church for the old people". A deliberate effort to incorporate "the customs of our fathers" into the Church would of necessity lead to the vesting of power in those who are sufficiently senior to command respect in the traditional sense. Mutendi's Zionist Church differs from the Chibarirwe in that there is no marked lack of young people. The young people are in fact very active in this Church. It seems, however, as if the preservation of the main leader's dominant position and the fact that
regional authority in the various Church circuits vested in people who, over a period of many years, have demonstrated loyalty to the Bishop, imply that offices of real consequence are withheld from the youth.

By contrast, the Ndaza Zionists, vaPostori and the First Ethiopian Church have a more youthful ministry. Twenty-nine percent of the Ndaza Zionist, 49% of the vaPostori and 42% of the Topia leadership surveyed, are below 39 years of age. Those in the 19 to 29 age group mainly hold junior positions. They are the deacons, the prophets, the preachers and the evangelists on whom devolved much of the responsibility for the expansion of their Churches. As indicated above, these office-bearers invariably are the sons, nephews and cousins of higher ranking leaders. It should be noted, however, that even in these Churches the proportion of really youthful office-bearers (19 to 29 years) is quite low. The vaPostori, with their ramified leadership hierarchy, appear to have been more ready to appoint people in this age group than any of the other Churches.

It is possible that in the course of time the Fambidzano training programme will have a far-reaching impact on the participant Independent Churches. It is noticeable that a considerable number of young people, even below 20 years of age, are encouraged by their elders to attend extension classes. Although the acquisition of a two-year certificate does not necessarily imply a youngster's immediate appointment to a high-ranking position, there are indications of a swing in this direction. Ishmael Gavure, the youthful son of the late President of the First Ethiopian Church, for instance, was appointed Vice-President in his Church on account of his performance as a student in the Fambidzano training programme. Had it not been for his theological studies, however rudimentary they may have been, Ishmael would probably not have attained a high status in his father's Church until much later in his life. Soon after Bishop Gavure's death in 1984, Ishmael was officially installed as the successor to his deceased father.

(c) Education

Sundkler says that "the standard of education is undoubtedly one of the factors which help in the rise to leadership in the Ethiopian Church. But it is not a primary requirement, even if it adds somewhat to the prestige of the leader. It is more of an embellishment of
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That education has been even less of a primary requirement for leadership in the Shona Churches - both the Ethiopian and the Spirit-type - is illustrated in tables 5 and 6. In Mutendzi's Church some 24% of the leadership core has received no secular education whatsoever. The same holds true for 17% of the Spirit-type and 14% of the Ethiopian-type leadership. The vast majority of IC leaders have received between one and five years of primary school education, that is, Sub A to Standard 3. Only 13% of the Zionist and vaPostori leaders have progressed beyond Standard 3. With 22% above Standard 3, the Ethiopian-type leaders appear to have advanced to a slightly higher level of education, at least a few having reached Standard 6. It follows that there is hardly any correlation between the attainment of high educational standards and becoming a bishop, priest, warden or minister in the IC context. The exceptions are the few principal leaders of Churches, such as the Rev Sengwayo of the ACC and the Rev Zvobgo of the ARC (Shonganiso), who in earlier years received, in addition to a primary school education, some form of training as catechists, evangelists or even teachers. It was on the limited theological background of men like these that the Independent Churches had to rely for doctrinal and spiritual directives.

Some IC preachers solve the problem of illiteracy by memorizing biblical passages with the aid of others and by making use of assistants who read out the required verses to the congregation before they preach. Others teach themselves to read and write. Bishop Gavure of the FEC, who had no formal education, received regular instruction from a relative until he could read fluently from the Bible. He used to look back with a great deal of satisfaction upon the time when he went about in the villages "with a book in my hands, so that I could keep memorizing new words" Had it not been for his eagerness to learn, Bishop Gavure may not have obtained the insight required for influential leadership and he may well not have become the first president of the African Independent Churches Conference which, amongst other things, led to his participation in the International Congress on Evangelism in Lausanne in 1974.23

Some IC leaders actually exploit their lack of education to emphasize their independence from Mission Churches. Sundkler describes how Isaiah Shembe gloried in his total lack of schooling.

23 Forthcoming publication on Fambidsano.
Shembe himself stated in a sermon that this fact deprived the missionaries of the chance of boasting about him. Thus God could reveal His wisdom through an uncluttered channel. 24 Johane Maranke, too, tended to play down his earlier contacts with the Methodist Mission. He did this by emphasizing that the two books containing a message on eternal life which he received during visionary spells could only be interpreted through extra-perception inspired by the Holy Spirit and not through the education he had acquired at a Mission station. 25

The above-mentioned remarks of Bishops Shoko and Forridge, who considered reliability, dedication and other positive character traits more important requirements for Church leadership than education, 26 represent a fairly widespread attitude in the Independent Churches. This attitude is also manifested in sermons. It is not uncommon to hear Zionists or vaPostori preaching that school certificates or BA and MA degrees will not safeguard one's passage to heaven. The seemingly negative attitude to education obviously derives from a need to justify the application of what are felt to be more appropriate leadership criteria. It also reflects, in some cases, feelings of inferiority and envy towards highly qualified clergy and the frustration caused by the lack of opportunity for proper training.

An ambivalent attitude to secular and theological education is apparent from the fact that overt repudiation of the significance of education for spiritual work is often combined with a somewhat obscure but real desire to acquire greater efficiency and knowledge through advanced training. It was therefore to be expected that an effort to provide theological training facilities for the Independent Churches, such as that made by Fambidzano, would meet with a positive response from IC leaders and that some of the former critics - for instance Bishop Forridge - would be the first to make use of such facilities. The motivation for participation varies. Prestige undoubtedly plays an important role, for despite the rejection of education as a condition for leadership, it is true that supposed or actual education usually enhances a person's status in most Independent Churches. Progress beyond Standard 3 is enough for some IC leaders to be admired and honoured as "learned and wise" by their followers. To many the main motive for theological training is the

26 Infra, p. 69.
hope that it will earn them the respect and recognition of the clergy in the historical Churches.

3. LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Before *Fambidzano* launched the first extension training programmes, theological instruction - in the Western sense of the word - was virtually non-existent in the Shona Independent Churches. Various forms of in-service training were developed at an early stage in most Churches, but the main feature of the first phase of spontaneous expansion in the budding new movements during the 1920s and 1930s was the random appointment of totally untrained office-bearers. Newly appointed officials simply had to tend to their growing flocks drawing on whatever advice they were given by their seniors. Through a process of trial and error, as well as sporadic contact with representatives from Church headquarters, these people gained in experience. Some, of course, could draw on experience gained in Mission Churches in earlier years. Yet even a prominent leader like Bishop Mutendi was sent out as little more than an untrained emissary of Zion when he first returned to the then Rhodesia to propagate his new faith. As is commonly accepted in the Spirit-type Churches, the main criterion was a powerful manifestation of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This was the overriding requirement which replaced or at least preceded theological or practical training. Thus it happened, for instance, that after the first mass baptism of Johane Maranke's followers on 20 July 1932 numerous office-bearers were appointed under the professed guidance of the Holy Spirit. 27 Apart from a few days of preparatory discussion, these men, who together with Johane formed the leadership nucleus of the new movement, had received no training for the offices they were to hold.

A pattern which soon established itself in the Apostolic Church, and which still is a common feature in most of the Independent Churches, was the following: the new leader's popularity would draw people from far afield; in the process of undergoing faith-healing treatment or simply of associating with those at Church headquarters, a new convert becomes familiarized with the new faith; he is then sent back either as a junior office-bearer or as a potential leader to propagate the new faith in his home district; once a large enough number of converts have been recruited, the

The appointment, training and succession of office-bearers are called upon to conduct a baptismal ceremony, to officially establish the existence of a new congregation and to confirm the prior or initial appointment of the local leader. Usually circumstances are such that the actual training of the appointee, especially if he operates in a remote area, is negligible or superficial. Nevertheless, the incentive to recruit new members is usually strong because the leader-to-be is fully aware of the fact that his zeal and performance during his probationary period of founding a new congregation will eventually determine his installation, status and promotion in the Church's leadership hierarchy.

Once the local leader of one or more new congregations is officially recognized, he becomes responsible for the training of those who are likely to become his subordinate office-bearers. It amounts to a number of relatives or close associates being chosen for the performance of congregational duties, which eventually leads to their appointment as preachers, evangelists, prophets, and so on. The in-service training consists of joint religious activities such as fasting, prayer meetings, house visits, recruiting campaigns and sessions of council or informal discussions under the guidance of the local leader. A conscientious leader sometimes arranges Bible study sessions, during which he expounds the Church's doctrines on various subjects. Biblical and doctrinal instruction is often restricted to a minimum, however, so that "training" for many office-bearers actually means little more than serving the congregation under the supervision of the local leader and following his example as closely as possible.

Shortcomings in the local "training programme" are usually compensated for during the annual Paschal celebrations at Church headquarters. Then the main leader is in a position to teach his subordinates on a variety of subjects, woven into private discussions, council meetings or sermons. Or, as happens with the vaPostori during their Pendi celebrations, the people holding a particular office group together for daily "prayer meetings" which include spells of detailed instruction by seniors on the finer points of each office.

Bishop Mutendi insisted on having contact with all his ministers according to a scheduled programme. By always having a few visiting ministers in his company at Moriah, he could instruct them continually in biblical, organizational, tribal political or whatever subjects seemed to be relevant. Whenever Church members approached the Bishop with their problems, he made use of a min-
ister who would act as an interpreter or go-between. In the ensuing
discussion it was not only the troubled Church member who was
being counselled but also the minister who, while assisting his supe-
rior, was being instructed in the Zionist approach to various issues.
To any active minister involvement in the affairs of "Zion City"
therefore implied in-service training

For an example of how Bishop Mutendi "trained" his ministers at
the Church Council, we quote from one of his "tutorial" addresses.
It was delivered on an occasion when the supreme court (dare) of
the Church was discussing a case of the disloyalty of a ZCC official
who had refused to do duty at Zion City, whereupon he was sum-
moned thither by the "man of God" Mutendi then addressed
the ministers and other officials who were present at the "court" site as
follows:

"Read us Micah 4! I chose this passage to concur with our deci-
sion. The minister we have dismissed will be trapped in a
snare. He spurned the law of Zion [Mi 4:2] and then rebelled
when it was used to call him to account. And yet all of us have
decided to accept that law ... He will now try to lead others
astray also because he has been relieved of his post. It will be
like King Saul who let himself be consoled with a harp when
his crown was taken from him ... We do not want a rebel who
refuses to have his case heard by the Church council. We are
removing him because we do not want ZAPU people in our
Church. We did not decide to join that movement. Why then
should he have done so? Remember that King George's soldiers
did not open fire until commanded to do so...

"When I was in South Africa I with Lekhanyane meticulously
observed the laws of the Church. Some of my followers have
broken away to try and build up a following of their own, but
they were caught in a snare. It is my gift that many people
follow me. Such a gift cannot be taken away. I, on the other
hand, am unable to sing. That is why I sit and listen when
others sing. You must know the law of Zion. Read Micah 4! We
want people who will be true to their promises, whose yea will
be yea and whose nay, nay

"In Micah 4:1 there is the prophecy that the people of the latter
days will know peace. The prophet was referring to us, for we
are the people of the end-time. The saying that the house of
the Lord will be situated on the highest of the mountains means that Zion will be exalted above other Churches. The cooking stones [other Churches] are underneath the pot [Zion]
All people will come to Zion. As they increase Zion will be exalted. The people form part of and build Zion ... as Headman Ndanga did yesterday when he gave us money to build Jerusale-
lem. It was an amount of $48 and will be used to build Zion higher than any Church or nation...

"Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem [Mi 4:2]. Once in Johannesburg Zvenyika and others broke away from us, accusing us of error But I said: 'That is impossible, for this law reached Zion first. When God comes he will certainly enter the house of the first wife.' When the Nyasa started to argue with us I quoted Zechariah 12 to them where it says that when God comes, he will come to Zion for it is the 'supreme court' All nations will come to Zion for that is where God will be ...

"You yourselves, have laid down the law that if a minister or high-ranking official were to commit adultery or err gravely he shall lose his position ... I uphold the law in Zion. If you are condemned under this tomorrow, do not complain, saying "Mutendi is wicked" and then go off to join Makamba, Joram or one of the other Zionist leaders. They are backsliders and weak in their faith. This place where we are is Jerusalem! There is no other home. Here we want faithful workers. We grieve when office-bearers break away and take people with them. If you labour and obtain God's forgiveness there will also be plenteous rains."

This is Zionist in-service training par excellence! No classroom is needed, for the principal leader employs any Church occasion to teach his subordinate office-bearers. In this case the dismissal of a disloyal office-bearer led to a "lecture" on loyalty, the dangers of separatism and a statement on politics. Church dogma is not expounded systematically, but the essence of Zionist dogma emerges in the identification of the Old Testament Zion with Mutendi's Zion City The的独特性 of the Zionist Church among other Churches is illustrated not only by means of a somewhat egocentric "exegesis" of biblical texts, but also by referring to the historical background of the ZCC - that is, Mutendi's own experiences. Inter-
pretation of biblical texts and the history of their Church are used to enhance group solidarity and reaffirm Mutendi's leadership. Hence training and consolidation of the leader's position go hand in hand. Loyal service to Zion and a proper attitude towards God are directly related to rain. It is another way of telling people who rely on an agrarian subsistence economy that prosperity and success are associated with willingness to render service according to the established norms.

Zionist leaders are at variance when it comes to the training of prophets. Pianos Mushoworwa - during the 'sixties the most senior prophet of the ZCC in Gutu - emphasized the guidance received from the Holy Spirit to such an extent that actual training in the Church context was of little significance. Of his own experience he said:

"In 1942 I just found myself speaking in tongues. It was unlike shavi-possession which befalls you like drunkenness. The Spirit used to come to me while sitting or walking. I started to explain things [kududzira] shown to me by the Spirit. Other prophets did not teach me to prophesy. Bishop Mutendi merely warned us not to prophesy to people outside the Church."

In a discussion with Zionist Bishop Forridge and his son, Boas, it appeared that they were much more inclined to assign Church officials a helping role in the making and training of a prophet. Boas apparently spoke in tongues but still lacked the gift of prophetic explication. He complained about an obstruction, a black shadow, which prevented the Holy Spirit from coming through properly. "If the congregation prays strongly for me," he said, "I shall see clearly. I must also keep praying and not have many thoughts besides. The other prophets are teaching me and they will tell my father what I can do, because right now, the Spirit is still 'half' and prevented from coming out completely." Bishop Forridge added: "I and the Church ministers will observe his [Boas's] work. If he tells lies about what is wrong with sick people we will know that he has not yet got the true Spirit of prophecy. It can take even more than two years to become a true prophet, from the time one starts speaking in tongues. During this time we will help him and strengthen him by sprinkling holy water on him, because his spirit will come with demons. When the Holy Spirit comes the demons will also come so that the Holy Spirit cannot reveal His message. The other prophets help chasing the demons away. Eventually the Holy Spirit comes
The appointment, training and succession of office-bearers

alone. Then we lay hands on him, for him to become a true prophet. After this the demons will never come again. It is also important that Boas should fast and pray, asking God to give him the power of prophesying." According to these views the making of a prophet involves an act of God, the ongoing response of the prophet-to-be, intercession by the congregation and guiding assistance or instruction by Church officials.

An awareness of the danger that prophets, if not properly instructed, may lean too far in the direction of nganga practices, is reflected in Forridge's comment: "A prophet can start giving directives with the aid of a shavi spirit. As soon as we notice it we tell him that he does not have the real Spirit. We do not want a prophet who will say: 'Go and worship your mudzimu and then come back to the Church later on!' or 'Go to the nganga and return to the Church when you are healed!' We want a prophet who says: 'Keep praying because only God will heal you!' That is a true prophet of God!"

Some Spirit-type Churches have fairly rigorous "tests" which prophets-in-training are supposed to undergo before they are accepted as regulars. Prophet Potai commented on one of the most common of these practices in Zionist circles:

"Catching out the witches at the 'gates' [i.e. the pairs of prophets who act as 'sin-detectors' before ordinary or Holy Communion services] is the test for a prophet. There are those witches who are caught out regularly because it is generally known that they practise witchcraft. But there is also the ability of prophets, who pray strongly, to detect witches without having any prior knowledge about them. If we [experienced prophets] want to know whether a new prophet is really doing the work of the Spirit, we allow a muroyi of our own area, whom we know, to pass us and then we watch the new prophet to see if he can detect it"

It is doubtful whether this test is consistently applied in the case of all novices. Senior prophets usually accept and appoint those "trainees" with a strong sense of vocation, a willingness to serve and a positive response to the directives of their seniors. In practice the "gate test" seems rather to be a means of exposing the odd impostor or disciplining unruly prophets.

APPOINTMENT CEREMONIES

Not all Independent Churches reserve the official appointment of office-bearers for court sessions during conferences at headquarters. When a Ndaza Zionist bishop is appointed the principal leader usually journeys to that district to conduct an official ordination ceremony. The VaPostori nominate and appoint new office-bearers at the local congregational level. They discuss alterations in the leadership structure at their district conferences (Pendi), and have new appointments confirmed during the July "Easter festival" at the Church centre in Maranke. Much like the Ndaza Zionists, Bishop Gavure of the Topia Church travelled to outlying circuits for the appointment ceremonies of new office-bearers. In the ZCC, Chibarirwe and the ARC (Shonganiso) such appointments are the prerogative of the Church's supreme "court" (dare) at conference level.

At Zion City the "court" (or Church council) sits at least once during each of the three great annual conferences to deal with the nomination and investiture of office-bearers. All the representatives of congregations or Church districts where new office-bearers are required gather with the dare. The existing office-bearers of the congregation concerned appear before the councillors, standing up, while lay members sit down next to them. Mutendi himself used to remind his followers at this point of the importance of appointing people who can carry responsibility and who have already given proof of spiritual talents and abilities. The ensuing discussion is conducted by the office-bearers and members of the relevant congregation, with the councillors acting as a sort of jury. Several people may be nominated for junior posts, and proposals for promotion within the existing hierarchy may be made. From the discussion it is evident that seniority in the group, leadership potential (also in the spiritual sphere) and popularity are the deciding factors. The talents and weaknesses of office-bearers who are up for promotion are discussed quite frankly. At one such gathering in April 1965 the qualities of Ezekiah, who had been nominated for the senior post of minister, were being discussed. His exceptional fervour during evangelization campaigns was commended, but there was some doubt and the question was explicitly raised whether Ezekiah's restless nature would permit him to see to the needs of the Zaka congregations at home who would fall under his care.
After voting by such members of the congregation as are present, the elected parties remain standing for the final affirmation by Mutendi and his councillors. The dare as the supreme authority of the Church has the right to veto the choice of Church members, so that the appointment of every official is subject to both democratic election and hierarchical authority. The veto is rarely exercised but members are reminded of the overriding powers of the Church's supreme council. Each of the elected officials is given an opportunity to deliver a short speech. It is pre-eminently an occasion to express their loyalty to the "man of God" and the Church. It has binding force, for Zionist office-bearers fear the humiliation of being publicly charged before the dare with poor co-operation or disloyalty.

Finally, all the newly elected office-bearers are consecrated by laying-on of hands and prayer by Mutendi and his councillors (mainly ministers). This used to be a moving and impressive scene, with Mutendi and his vafundisi forming a close circle around the new functionaries in the glow of the court fire. The ceremony is greeted with jubilant cheering from the spectators and speaking in tongues to symbolize the sanction of the Holy Spirit.

According to the Chibarirwe constitution the Executive Committee determines the ordination of a new minister after consultation with all the Church's ministers. All the "ordained" ministers are ipso facto members of the Executive Committee so that this body has the final say about the installation of a new minister. In practice the Executive Committee approves of and - after preliminary deliberations during its November meetings - recommends the appointment of new office-bearers to the dare held at conferences. Much like the practice at Zion City, members of the congregations concerned are present at the dare when the local leadership of their own circuit is being discussed. They can make comments, which usually amount to recommending such individuals as were singled out at the congregational and district dare levels. Thus one has an interplay of differentiated opinion - of ordinary Church members, conference, dare and Executive Committee - determining the appointment of members to the important offices of muvangeri and mufundisi. Usually the final vote is cast by the dare during the "Men's Conference" in September, and the ordination takes place during the major Holy Communion service on the last Sunday. Soon after the service has started one of the ministers calls upon the elected members to come and stand in front of the congregation. No specified liturgic message is read out, but the minister addresses his new colleagues.
Leadership and Fission Dynamics

directly as he deems fit, before the official laying-on of hands (for new ministers) or hand-shaking ceremony (evangelists) takes place. During the September Conference of 1965 in the Gutu district (Munyikwa chiefdom) Mufundisi Muongani - at that time minister-in-charge of the Gutu circuits - addressed the newly chosen evangelists for the Chibi, Zaka and Buhera districts as follows:

"Now my brothers, be steadfast in the task entrusted to you. This is the office bestowed on you as St Paul did to Timothy. As has been prophesied [in biblical times] this task implies that you are sent forth with blessings. A leader should be a person without blame. My brothers, this world will judge your behaviour [mafambire]. We want you to go out into a frightening world, courageously and without fear. If I rely on my own strength I am troubled, but you men: ask it of God! He has promised to strengthen you under all circumstances.

Prayer Our Lord Jesus, we expect your blood to redeem us. Be with us in our ways for ever and ever. Amen."

The Rev. Sibambo of the ARC (Shonganiso) has drawn up an elaborate list of questions with appropriate answers so that a new minister can prepare himself for the ordination ceremony Ordination (kugadza ufundisi) takes place at the annual session of the General Assembly. Some of the prescribed questions and responses for this ceremony are as follows:

Q: Do you wish to become a minister?
R: I am not able to do this work, but if God calls me, so be it.
Q: What are the conditions for ministry?
R: I must be called by God.
Q: How many wives are you permitted to have?
R: Only one.
Q: What is your commission?
R: To record the important events in my congregation; to teach people; to preach God's Word; to baptize; and to celebrate communion.
Q: What do you teach others?
R: Firstly that they must be rid of their sins, and secondly that they must obey the injunction in Mark 16:15 and go out to proclaim the Word to others.
Q: What will you eat?
R: Paul says: "The owner of cattle uses milk." Christ says: "Leave your blankets and purse at home when you set forth on your way."
Q: How will you promote God's work?
R: I will encourage people to contribute generously
Q: What do you teach with regard to divination, prophecies and murderers?
R: Church members are not permitted to take note of such things. Those who are involved in such things may not take communion.
Q: With which denominations do we refuse to co-operate?
R: Roman Catholics, Zionists and Apostles.

Important points to note are that the questions and responses during the ordination ceremony revolve around the basic doctrines of the Church (only one wife!) which distinguish it from other Ethiopian-type Churches; the classic missionary injunction as an essential point of teaching, placing the emphasis on Church expansion; and a direct correlation between the advancement of God's work and financial contributions. Because the Church's attitude towards traditional practices and towards other denominations (which clearly reflects the Protestant tradition) is explicitly stated one could say that the ordination ceremony in itself constitutes instruction for members of the General Assembly and reaffirms their group identity.

In the appointment ceremony individual initiative and collective control blend. It is of vital importance to the newly instated office-bearer; for his own identity - which was to some extent threatened when he was initially required to serve on the basis of kinship ties, clan affiliation and collective interest - is now fully recognized. In his official acceptance of group control his individuality is not obscured but confirmed in terms of its own unique value to the group. He is now free to remember and recount those call-dreams he may have had many years ago and which he never mentioned for fear of being accused of selfish ambition. Now that the call of the group has actually confirmed the divine call which hitherto has been latently present, and by implication the individual's own choice of the ministry, he is set free to develop his own initiative...
according to the talents at his disposal. In doing so he is also free to dream and recount those dreams that confirm both his appointment and his loyalty to the group. Hence in the appointment ceremony enough of the traditional emphasis on communality is retained to strengthen group coherence, while at the same time enough divinely sanctioned responsibility is built into individual offices to afford a large measure of self-determination. For all its adaptation to kinship norms and tribal political structures the Shona Independent Church therefore also affords some scope for individual freedom and religious fulfilment.

5. SUCCESSION IN THE LEADERSHIP HIERARCHY

Sundkler maintains: "The Independent Bantu Church tends to have its leadership passing from father to son, this being one of the characteristic ways in which the Independent Church adapts itself to the African heritage." 29

This is true also of the Shona Independent Churches, particularly the prophetic ones. Succession to leadership on hereditary lines indicates the strong influences that traditional customs continue to exercise. The traditional custom of linking the succession to the headmanship of the leading house or houses of the politically dominant kinship group is paralleled by the tendency among founder-leaders in the Independent Churches to reserve the future leadership for their immediate relations, preferably their sons. Church headquarters and the nucleus of each outlying congregation show similarities to the extended family, which accepts and affirms hereditary leadership. Just as the eldest son of a deceased head of a family in the traditional context inherits both property and religious authority by means of the kugadzira 30 rite, so the son of a bishop inherits his property and position of authority in the Church at the ceremonies that follow his death. In both the traditional context and in the Independent Churches such inherited responsibility - whether for the family or the Church - is seen as a lifelong commitment.

A major factor in inherited leadership is the intimate tie that grows between a founder-leader and his followers. In a communal attempt to achieve continuity in the face of a constant threat of schism the leader is elevated by his followers to the "lifelong presidency" of the Church. Leader and Church are identified in the

29 Sundkler, 1961, p. 118.
minds of members to such an extent that one could expect his name and even his influence to continue after his death. On his demise the close tie is perpetuated through the deceased’s appearance to his followers in dreams and his continuing presence in the person of his successor-son(s). The interaction between a deceased leader and his Church unmistakably reflects the aftermath of traditional views on the relationship between the living and the "living" dead. Just as an ancestral spirit protects his living descendants, so the deceased Church leader - even if he is considered to be "with Christ" or "standing at the gates of heaven" - continues to be actively involved in his Church. The Church responds by honouring his name and meticulously obeying instructions given in dreams.

Even the ceremony of succession to the leadership manifests some features of the traditional kugova nhaka (division of the estate) rite.\textsuperscript{31} When Johane Maranke died his cousin Simon Mushati, chief prophet of the movement, tried to keep Church affairs and family property separate, but Johane’s brother Anrod applied certain aspects of the traditional kugadzira ritual, thus incorporating Johane’s entire "property", which included the Church, in the distribution of his estate. As in the traditional ceremony of transferring a name, Johane’s eldest sons Makebo and Abero had to sit on the customary mat (rupasa) to inherit their late father’s name and his sacred staves. The staves symbolized Johane’s charismatic and judicial authority, so that this ceremony was quite unmistakably a transfer of Church leadership.

A striking feature of discussions on the succession to leadership is the heavy accent on the son and successor’s right to inherit his father’s clerical vestments, staves and other symbolic emblems. This could be a relic of the fetishist mentality whereby ownership of such heirlooms would in itself guarantee some measure of success in Church leadership. I was frequently struck by the fact that in the Independent Churches office-bearers tend to prefer discussing biblical grounds for hereditary leadership rather than evince an interest in the spiritual powers, organizational experience and leadership potential of the son(s) succeeding the father. Office-bearers in the prophetic Churches felt that the Holy Spirit, who had instituted this kind of succession (kutevera ropa, literally "the blood of the late leader succeeds"), will enable the successor-son and new leader to act competently. This left little scope for any hypothetical measures that could be followed should the eldest son prove to be wholly

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., p. 109.
unfit as a successor. However, Torera, a senior healer in the Apostle movement, claimed that "if my eldest son who must succeed me is a fool people will desert him. He will not follow God's will and in that case God will choose someone else ... It does not matter if my son is ignorant to begin with. He will be permitted to wear my official dress and other healers will instruct him. Only if he should prove a total failure will someone else be chosen in his place."

In the prophetic movements hereditary leadership is often justified on the grounds of the Jewish monarchy and/or the transfer of Aaron's function to his son Eliezer. Such references rarely make a distinction between the royal and the priestly leadership in the Old Testament, or between the religious leadership of the Jewish temple and the New Testament ecclesia. It is more a matter of Bible texts being selected to justify a traditionally oriented and hence acceptable notion of leadership.

Two prominent vaPostori officials had the following to say in this connection:

Healer Torera: "If the Church appointed anybody other than Abero as Johane's successor, it would simply have been a matter of going astray. Who else but my senior son should inherit my possessions [including Church leadership]? ... We compare the succession to Johane's leadership with the truth of the Bible. When Aaron died, God instructed Moses to put his garments on his son [Eliezer]. His children therefore had to continue with his work. The son of Aaron was of Aaron's blood."

Torera added that because of the close connection between Johane and Jesus, the two of them together had to arrange the leadership issue. Johane's indication, before he died, that Abero should succeed him was therefore a sign that Mwari had elected Abero. Evangelist Amos Haire argued along different lines:

"According to the Bible there are many thousands of angels. And yet God sent His Son to teach the people of this world. So the Bible really teaches inheritance. If a minister dies, his son must succeed him. In Luke 2:44 it says: 'Let me do my Father's work at all times!' So the child must take up the ministry of his father..."
The fact that inherited leadership is the Achilles heel of the Independent Churches is borne out by the major crisis that almost invariably follows the death of a founder-leader. It was shortly after Johane's death that the largest schism in the AACJM occurred. Simon Mushati, the movement's senior prophet and Johane's maternal cousin, openly disputed the right of Johane's sons to succeed their father. During the installation ceremony he stated that "the inheritance of the Word of God is not to be inherited by children." But, like the biblically based arguments for inherited leadership, those against it were based on a convenient selection of verses rather than on any profound theological insights. Thus Prophet Phillip Munyuwechando, a staunch supporter of Mushati, claimed that the grounds for the argument that a Church is not inherited (kereke haigarwi nhaka), are to be found in Joshua 1.1. This "biblical" argument was augmented with the interpretation of various visions. A vision which Johane had before his death of a small group of people climbing to the top of a mountain (Mt Nyengwe, where he had received his call) was interpreted as referring to Mushati's group "because we now worship on this mountain." A vision by Mushati, in which he saw many people covered with earth, seemed to imply that those who no longer worshipped on Mt Nyengwe - that is, the followers of Johane's sons - were rejected as inauthentic.

It is of course standard procedure in the event of a schism in the Spirit-type Churches for claims and counterclaims by both groups to be based on selected Bible verses, frequently taken out of context, and supported by the "correct" interpretation of visions. The opponents of Simon Mushati, again, claimed that Johane had had several visions in connection with the schism following his death. Subsequent to these visions, Johane is said to have publicly prophesied about the coming disunity. According to Healer Torera, Johane even tried, shortly before his death, to avert the schism by making Simon Mushati repeat three times in public: "Should I, Simon, in the future form my own Church, you [members of Johane's Church] must not follow me!" As a result of the repetition of such narratives of real or supposed historical facts, Bible texts and visions appropriately interpreted, the members of the opposing Church groups usually accept without question the validity of the grounds for schism presented by their leaders.

32 Ibid., p. 334.
Through dream revelations to his followers the deceased founder leader is actually considered to assist his successor-son in the latter's quest for power and prestige. Mention was made in Volume 2 of what I called "control dreams". The deceased Johane, several vaPostori claimed, regularly appeared in their dreams to inspire them to persevere in faith, remain loyal to the Church and avoid certain temptations. In this way he was perpetuating his influence in the Church and strengthening his son Abero's position. Abero himself was convinced that posthumously his father was still genuinely involved in the guidance of his flock. "It [the dreams] is indeed a way in which he [Johane] sends them messages and gives them guidance as to what they should do," he said. Overemphasis of directives received in dreams can, however, easily lead to excesses. Sundkler provides an interesting narrative of how a Zionist woman obtained a prominent position in her Church through dreams. When the leader died this woman came to be regarded as the deceased's medium. Through her prophetic revelations of the deceased's wishes, she eventually threatened and for several years superseded the authority of the successor-son. I have not come across a similar pattern of events in any of the Shona Churches, but it is bound to happen when, as Sundkler says, "the sanction of fundamental authority has been usurped by heathen dreamlife".

What usually happens during a succession crisis, as is clearly demonstrated in the case of Bishop David Masuka's Zion Apostolic Church, is that tensions which may have been brooding for a long time are brought into the open. Some senior leaders of outlying Church circuits, who may have been largely responsible for the expansion of the Church in their home districts and who have all along felt a certain "ownership" of the members they have converted, feel less bound by loyalty to the son than they did to the founder leader himself. If local support for such a regional leader is strong enough, he may well break away with the majority of congregations in his area and form his own Church. Such schismatic leaders usually oppose the principle of inherited leadership, in which case they request the appointment of a successor through voting in the Church Council, or else they challenge the procedure adopted during the successor's installation ceremony. It was under

33 Daneel, 1974, p. 154f.
34 Ibid, p. 156.
35 Sundkler, 1961, pp. 121-122.
36 Ibid., p. 121.
such circumstances that Bishop Makamba and Willi Sharara seceded soon after Peresu succeeded his deceased father, David Masuka, thereby literally causing Masuka's Church to fall apart.37 Ironically, such schismatic leaders, once they have consolidated their own positions in their own group of followers, will expect the same principle of inherited leadership that they had disputed to be applied after their death. Once they have established their own autonomy some schismatic leaders maintain a loose affiliation with the Church from which they have seceded. It is not uncommon for their followers to still claim a certain allegiance to the founder leader and for the founder-leader's inheriting son to refer to them as "his children" in spite of the fact that he has no effective control over them.38 Of course, the tact and wisdom of an inheriting successor to a very large extent determines his success in preventing schisms or winning the support of those who have actually broken away.

According to Sundkler the trend towards inherited leadership is an indication that in the long run the chief-type of Church leader is more lasting than the prophet-type, because the function of chiefs was inherited but not that of diviners.39 In the Shona Independent Churches the situation is different in so far as inherited leadership, at least as far as the founder-leader is concerned, plays a more important role in the Spirit-type than the Ethiopian-type Churches. It is important to note that inherited Church leadership is based not only or primarily on chieftain succession patterns – despite the obvious similarities mentioned above – but on the much more general principles of inherited religious authority, applicable to all traditional family units. Thus the Churches that accept inherited leadership do so, regardless of whether the specific office shows parallels to chiefly, divinatory or other traditional religious functions.

Significantly, none of the Ethiopian-type Churches under survey have such a clear-cut policy on inherited leadership as the Spirit-type Churches. A successor of the deceased principal leader is supposed to be appointed by the Church Council. Bishop Gavure, for instance, was appointed in this way after the death of Bishop Chidembo, founder leader of the First Ethiopian Church. He was the deceased's sister's son (muzukuru) and was chosen because of the key role he had played in promoting the growth of the FEC. When

37 Daneel, 1971(a), p. 304,305.
38 Ibid., p. 308.
Sengwayo, the founder-president of the *Chibarirwe*, died in 1972, it was not his oldest son Pauro who succeeded him but Makaya, a former MP living in the Bikita district. Sengwayo requested this before he died, probably with a view to obtaining some prominence for his Church. Opposition to Makaya’s leadership did not come from within Sengwayo’s kin group but from the Rev Muongani, the senior ACC minister in the Gutu district. To him and many other office-bearers it was completely unacceptable that an outsider, who had not previously held office in the *Chibarirwe* nor played a role in its expansion, should suddenly gain control of the Church they had served for many years. The ensuing leadership struggle between Makaya and Muongani, which lasted for years and virtually split the Church in two, divorced the succession issue entirely from the direct descendants of its founder leader.

One should not conclude from the examples mentioned that inherited leadership is consistently replaced in the Ethiopian-type Churches by more democratic elective principles. The fact that Chidembo’s eldest son - who initially had taken no interest in his father’s Church - could, after many years of absence, challenge Gavure’s leadership of the FEC with a certain degree of success, is evidence of the continuing influence of deeply entrenched traditional values.

Before his death Bishop Gavure made known his wish that Ishmael, his eldest son, should succeed him as president of the FEC. That the central Church council appointed Ishmael soon after the bishop’s death is yet another manifestation of filial succession and inheritance. It should be noted, however, that Ishmael Gavure not only qualified on the basis of blood ties. His obvious leadership potential, experience in the Church and theological qualifications as Fambidzano tutor made him, in comparison with other contenders, the only eligible candidate. It is likely that in the Rev Zvobgo’s African Reformed Church, where the drive for high educational standards and advanced theological training has been more prominent over the years than in the FEC, inherited leadership will fade into the background sooner.

Hereditary succession affects not only the highest positions in the Independent Churches. Especially among the prophetic groups *the entire leadership hierarchy is swayed by an intermingling of traditional and biblical norms*. It is fairly commonly accepted that when any office-bearer who is head of a family passes away, his

son inherits not only his possessions but also his Church vestments and religious responsibilities, even if these pertain to a comparatively humble position in the hierarchy. If the son who is to inherit is too young and inexperienced, his religious task is reserved until a later date. However, instead of a paternal uncle acting on his behalf, as would have been customary in the traditional kinship pattern, the deceased’s subordinate fellow office-bearer is promoted in the hierarchy to fill the vacancy. In effect, therefore, there is a dual succession. Lazoro Mahere, an Apostle evangelist, had this to say in this regard:

"Joshua and I worked together as evangelists. He was my senior and therefore in charge of evangelization campaigns. When he died his firstborn son Elia received his name by sitting on a mat and being addressed as Joshua. In this way Joshua’s son inherited his vestments with the monogram APE on it. This son sits among us wearing his father’s vestments when we gather in the wind shields [misasa]. We honour him greatly, as we honoured his father. He attends the evangelists’ meetings because he must still be instructed. I myself succeeded his father. When he grows up he and I will work together, just as his father and I had done. But I will be the senior even after he has grown up."

Such a dual succession to the deceased’s office could culminate in cooperation, but essentially it contains the seeds of separatism. When the son of the deceased grows up and plays an increasingly important part in the Church a power struggle often results – even schism, when he and the office-bearer who had been moved up the hierarchy both lay claim to the same position. This is a clear case of old and new norms of leadership which continue to play a part, unintegrated and in disharmony. Traditionally a son who has inherited his father’s possessions also expects to benefit by the father’s position in the community. The same now applies in the Church. Indeed, the way in which he is admitted to the ranks of the office-bearers leads to expectations of eventual succession to the office his father had once held. But there is also the junior office-bearer who is promoted on merit to the office of the deceased. Ultimately both have "legitimate" claims and a power struggle ensues. It happens quite often that conflicts of this nature are resolved by the principal leader permitting the secession of new congregations.
Table 3  Overall assessment (RSS and CSR) Leadership and Age-rates in the Spirit-type Churches

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<th>Age rates (years)</th>
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Table 5  Overall assessment (RSS and CSR) Leadership and Education in the Spirit-type Churches

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<th>Educational Standard</th>
<th>ZCC n %</th>
<th>Ndaza n %</th>
<th>AACJM n %</th>
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<td>34 102</td>
<td>71 99</td>
<td>78 102</td>
<td>183 100</td>
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LEADER AND FOLLOWERS

Some indication of the relations between leaders and their followers has already emerged in the course of this study. For a closer examination of the various patterns of authority, distribution of power, and group control, one has to study the interplay between the principal leader, his subordinate office-bearers and followers (i.e. lay Church members holding no office). Of course, much depends on the image of the principal leader and the spiritual or mystical powers attributed to him by his followers. The kind of control he exerts is closely linked to his natural authority and/or divinely inspired powers. It is at this point that the important question of his relationship to the Christian God and his mediation between God and his followers should be raised. Is his mediation of such a nature that one can rightly speak of Black Messianic leadership? Does he in fact usurp the position of a White Christ?

On the basis of a response to these questions, entire movements have been judged and written off as unchristian or post-Christian. The literature on so-called "Black Messianism" abounds in examples of categorical pronouncements and summary denunciations, grounded on impressionistic rather than convincing and adequate empirical data. Instead of adopting a descriptive method, focusing mainly on the Shona Churches, as I have done in the previous two chapters, my treatment of Messianism in this chapter follows an essentially different approach. I shall critically examine the manner in which influential missiologists have judged "Black Messianism", particularly as it occurs in South Africa. What yardsticks were employed and on the basis of what data were the groups in question judged? What are the implications of the theological reflection so far? Consideration of these questions places the Shona Churches squarely in the wider context of Independentism in Africa. My criticism of the conspicuously negative and sometimes biased approach to this phenomenon is based chiefly on facts and insights gleaned from those Shona Church communities which, if judged by the
criteria applied by the missiologists concerned, would also be classified as "Messianic". It will be apparent that I am not so much questioning the scriptural norms according to which this "Messianism" is to be gauged as insisting on a correct and fair interpretation of the empirical phenomenon as such.

With the aid of several perspectives from the Shona context I hope in this chapter to advance a convincing argument for the reinterpretation of the now traditional viewpoints, leading to a far more positive approach to the putative "Black Messiah" and his followers.

1. IMAGE AND MYSTICAL POWER OF THE PRINCIPAL LEADER

A survey of the views of IC members on the special powers of their main leaders clearly reveals a strong tendency in the prophetic movements to attribute to the founder or senior official some form of extraordinary or supernatural - what I generally refer to as mystical - power. In table 7 it appears that more than 80% of the ZCC members, 51% of the Ndaza Zionists and 76% of the vaPostori interviewed considered their leaders to be endowed with such power. In contrast to the Mutendi Zionists and the vaPostori, the Ndaza Zionists mostly confined their qualifications to the healing and exorcist activities of their leaders. Many of them (49%) did not even mention any special powers, but preferred to speak of their leader's ordinary leadership authority instead. This concurs with the relatively low profile of some Ndaza Zionist leaders, who do not claim to be miracle-workers and who have delegated the specific "prophetic task" of healing, exorcism and prophecy to subordinate officials. It also concurs with the fact that few Ndaza Zionist leaders feature prominently as manipulators of supernatural powers in the sermons of their followers.

Mutendi and Johane are in a class of their own. Not only did a larger percentage of their followers mention their mystical powers, but these powers appeared to be more spectacular than those cited by Ndaza Zionists. References to Mutendi's healing powers invariably included the belief that he could grant fertility. He was also generally considered to be a successful "rainmaker" and a few spoke of his ability to revive the dead. On the whole the vaPostori were inclined to claim that in addition to healing and exorcism, Johane could walk on fire, which has become a distinguishing feature of this movement. Some even likened Johane's powers directly
to that of Jesus, with the added qualification that they exceeded the special authority and spiritual gifts of the biblical Apostles.

That beliefs concerning the mystical powers of a particular IC leader are not confined to his own Church is illustrated in table 8. No less than 42% of the Dutch Reformed (RCZ) and 40% of the Roman Catholic Church members interviewed considered Bishop Mutendi either capable of causing rain to fall or of enabling women to have chibereko (i.e. children), or both. Of the Ethiopian-type Churches, the vaTopia (52%) more readily accepted Mutendi’s mystical powers than the others, while the ARC (Shonganiso) members appeared to be the most sceptical. The high percentage of vaPostori (40%) who reject Mutendi’s mystical powers probably derives from a certain degree of competition and antagonism between Mutendi’s and Johane’s movements.

Recognition in Mission Church circles of Mutendi’s ability to perform miracles was based on the numerous testimonies of his followers and outsiders who claimed to have witnessed or experienced the effect of these extraordinary acts. This recognition does not accord with the more critical views held by the Mission Church clergy. In the RCZ, for instance, most African ministers consider Mutendi’s activities as another form of nganga practice which misleads the people. Wide acceptance of Mutendi’s powers and the popular image of him as a miracle-worker, however, prompted a fairly steady flow of troubled or needy Mission Church members to his headquarters.

In the Ethiopian-type Churches the leader is not credited with extraordinary mystical powers. According to the figures in table 7, some 60% of the vaTopia interviewed indeed considered their leader, Bishop Gavure, to have "great power" (simba guru). This power was usually linked to the faith-healing activities in the FEC, which sets more store by such activities than any of the other Ethiopian-type Churches. In this respect the FEC resembles the Spirit-type Churches. Yet the healing power of Bishop Gavure is seen rather as an extension of ordinary prayer and spiritual depth than as a special quality resulting from the overriding presence of the numinous. As a result Gavure's presence did not inspire in his followers any great expectation of extraordinary events, nor did he have the image of a man of miracles. The relatively few Chibarirwe members (39%) who considered their leader, Sengwayo, to have simba guru, were inclined to interpret this concept as the power of persuasion of an influential personality, which enabled their presi-
dent to draw people into his fold and to give them spiritual guidance.

A prophetic leader considered to be gifted with mystical powers has a distinct advantage over other Church leaders, especially when it comes to Church expansion and group control. If we briefly consider Bishop Mutendi’s leadership, the exploitation of his image as a man of miracles to the advantage of his Church is immediately evident. It was Mutendi’s ability to heal the sick, exorcise the most powerful of evil spirits and even raise the dead which caused the people to flock to his Church. Mutendi himself attributed his success in this field to the power and glory of God, which earned him the popular title of "man of God." He justified his preoccupation with faith-healing miracles by pointing out that Jesus Christ’s healing ministry was a legitimate means of convincing the people of His divine mission. It was usually only after he had supposedly called down the rains from heaven in a drought-stricken area that he was able to persuade a tribal chief to become a Church member. The chiefs, moreover, remained loyal to him because his mystical powers somehow seemed to safeguard, if not extend, their terms of office. In a sense Mutendi was, for his own followers, "a man of all seasons." His powers not only secured their physical and material well-being, but also satisfied their need for a rallying point in dealing with the white administration. Was Mutendi not the man who persevered undaunted when the authorities tried to curb his campaigning activities? Was he not the one who outwitted the police by making his holy staff invisible so that they could not rob him of the symbol of his power?

Once established in the minds of his followers, Mutendi’s image as "man of God" became increasingly entrenched through constant preaching about his miracles. Leading Ruwadzano women would devote much time at their meetings to testimonies concerning Mutendi’s ability to grant fertility. Such was their confidence in him that they could conclude their sermons, as did Mai Lydia on occasion, with the following words: "Do we lack anything? Moyo [Mutendi’s clan-name] grants us everything. Peace unto you! If there is no rain, ask it of Moyo, and it will rain; if we have no children in our houses, the God of Moyo will assuredly grant us

1 Daneel, 1971(a), p. 296; Daneel, 1974, chapter 3.
3 Daneel, 1974, p. 110.
fertility Peace in Zion.⁵ Even in Zionist prayers the introductory address to God would invariably include the words: "God of Enginasi and Moyo ..."⁶ Add to this the central role played by Mutendi in each Paschal celebration: his climactic sermon and dancing at each service, his personal distribution of the sacraments, his blessing of the seeds (mbeu)⁷ of his followers, and his laying of hands on people who lined up in long queues. From all this one forms a picture of Mutendi at the centre of a movement virtually built around his person.

The direct and intimate contact between Mutendi and his followers, which ties in with his elevated powers and the centrality of his person in Church life, enabled the "man of God" to keep a much tighter rein on his people than any of the other IC leaders. His ministers, who represented him in outlying Church circuits, both admired and feared him. They believed him capable of detecting their errors even if they were miles away, of punishing them by inflicting illness and of giving them directives in dreams. Eventually the ministers even turned their regular narratives of encountering Mutendi's mystical sanctions and responding positively to them into demonstrations of loyalty to him. Mufundisi Jakobo Matevure, for instance, recounted how he left a ZCC conference without Mutendi's permission, how he fell ill, saw Mutendi approaching him in a dream in order to admonish and heal him and how he eventually returned to Moriah to confess his guilt to the "man of God" Mufundisi Jostos Makore interpreted a dream in which he saw Mutendi as a warning against his intended deviation from the Church programme which was laid down at Church headquarters. There appeared to have been no doubt in the minds of these two men that had they not obeyed their leader could have dealt most severely with them. Concerning Mutendi's ability to punish his followers and the close link between him and God as a precondition for such intervention, Preacher Ndongwe had the following to say: "The power of God was given to him [Mutendi] before he was born. If you do wrong, Mutendi's thoughts go to heaven and God punishes you; perhaps through the barrenness of your wife. But if you then speak to Mutendi and confess he will sunungura [lit. 'unfasten', i.e. pardon] you so that your wife will

⁵ Daneel, 1974, p. 258.
⁶ "Enginasi" is the popular name for Ignatius Lekhanyane, who, together with Mutendi, founded the ZCC.
⁷ Daneel, 1974, p. 105.
bear children again."

The exacting control of a prophetic leader of Mutendi's stature inevitably resulted in successful Church administration and group cohesion. It is not mere coincidence that the ZCC is popularly considered to be the "richest" amongst the Shona Independent Churches. Sundkler correctly suggested that "the best angle from which to approach it [Church finance] is as an element in the relation of the leader to the led. The stronger and the more intimate the leader's influence, the better will he be able to secure financial assistance and induce his people to make economic sacrifices which a weaker leader would be incapable of doing." 8 The ZCC bishop's followers were not necessarily more prosperous than their counterparts in the other Independent Churches, but such was their attachment to their leader that they were prepared to contribute more generously and more consistently than was the case in the other movements. Such was the attachment of individual Church members to Mutendi, too, that secessionist office-bearers who broke away from the ZCC prior to the bishop's death virtually always failed to rally the support of significant numbers of Zionists in their districts. Secessionists like Manhiwa, Johannes Shiri, Ruka Mageza and others found to their detriment that despite occasional reaction by Church members against the strict discipline imposed by Mutendi, they themselves could not match the mystically entrenched image of the most influential Zionist leader in Zimbabwe and therefore had to be satisfied with only a few followers. 9

In the case of Johane Maranke we have an example, as was mentioned above, 10 of a leader endowed with mystical power perpetuating his influence posthumously through dreams. MuPostori Evangelist Enias Muchimwe stated that through dreams the deceased Johane urged him to persevere in faith and judge others fairly. Baptizer Willias Chipanya claimed that Johane caused him to fall ill and then visited him in a dream to warn him not to leave the Church as he had planned to do. 11 Mutendi, who died in 1976, is bound to be credited with a similar role by his followers. I have not been in a position, however, to assess fully the extent to which he is currently believed to exercise posthumous control over his followers. That his mystical powers extended beyond the grave is

8 Sundkler, 1961, p. 157
10 Infra, p. 80.
11 Daneel, 1974, p. 156.
firmly believed by his followers. On his death-bed he is said to have told his people that three days after his death he would give them a sign of his going to heaven. On the evening of the third night a bright light appeared and hovered over the newly dug grave while the Zionists at Moriah clapped and ululated in response to the sign from the "man of God" Interestingly enough, the bright light which appeared in the skies that evening was seen by many Zimbabweans all over the country and led to speculation in the newspapers that another UFO had come and gone.

2. "MESSIANIC" LEADERSHIP?

Following Sundkler’s typology, several missiologists (G.C Oosthuizen, M.-L. Martin and P Beyerhaus) distinguished a third category of Independent Church, namely Messianic movements. In some respect these researchers judged these movements far more harshly than Sundkler had done, thus creating the impression that so-called "Messianism" was a radical distortion of prophetically oriented Christianity, as a result of which the Christ of the Bible was superseded. According to Oosthuizen these movements are post-Christian phenomena which, because of their ethnocentricity, have forfeited any claim to being Churches of Christ.12 In her dissertation on Messianism in South Africa, Martin arrives at the theological conclusion that the chief point at issue here is a faulty eschatology, as well as a false Christology, pneumatology and ecclesiology.13 In this climate the question of legitimate contextualization is no longer asked, since the true Church of Christ has vanished, the Holy Spirit has been misunderstood and the message of salvation has been pared down one-sidedly to meet the needs of this existence. It follows that any discussion of this topic must to a great extent hinge on Christology, pneumatology and eschatology. It is to these three themes that we direct our attention. The importance of this whole subject is plain if one considers that the outstanding examples of supposed "Messianism" cited are in fact the most prolific movements in Africa, namely Kimbanguism in Central Africa, Lekhanyane's Zion Christian Church and Shembe's Nazarene Baptist Church in South Africa. According to the set criteria the two largest movements in Zimbabwe - those of Mutendi and Maranke - would also fall in this category.

(a) Biblical Christ or Black Messiah?

(i) Christology

According to Sundkler - as mentioned in chapter I\textsuperscript{14} - the distinction between Zionist and "Messianic" groups is based on the key question: "Who stands at the gates of heaven? Is it the Jesus of Scripture or a Bantu Messiah in the person of Shembe, Lekhanyane, Khambule or Masowe?"\textsuperscript{15} While the Zionists choose Jesus Christ as Redeemer, Black Messianic movements opt for a Black Christ. The clear implication is that particularly as far as life after death is concerned, the \textit{mediatory function} of Christ is entirely taken over by a black Messianic figure. Sundkler describes Shembe as the mediator, the one who disposes over the keys to heaven.\textsuperscript{16} This function of the Black Christ is \textit{exclusive} in character. Among other things it is related to the Zulu reaction against colour discrimination, with the result that Shembe turns whites away from the portals of heaven and admits only his own followers. Whites, it is felt, received their good things in this life.\textsuperscript{17}

Martin also refers to the role of the Black Messiah as "custodian of the keys" of the heavenly gates, which means that his own followers alone gain access to heaven.\textsuperscript{18} As the "Black Christ of Africa" moves increasingly into the foreground and supplants the "white Christ of the Europeans" he becomes the mediator of salvation who dispenses the gifts of redemption and power. Martin draws attention to the connection between the old kingship of the Zulu and the ideology of Black Messianism. In the same way that the Zulu king traditionally served as \textit{mediator} between his people and God, the Black Christ now becomes the mediator who accomplishes the salvation of his people.\textsuperscript{19} The powerful desire of the black person for a tangible divine revelation \textit{here} and \textit{now}, a visible God who is yours, is a major cause of this development.\textsuperscript{20} The result is that leaders such as Shembe and Lekhanyane are elevated to "kings" in their colonies, becoming "mediators" in their own new Jerusalem.

\textsuperscript{14} Infra, p. 11.
\textsuperscript{15} Sundkler, 1961, p. 323.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., p. 290f.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., p. 291.
\textsuperscript{18} Martin, 1964, p. 127.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., p. 122.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., p. 125-7.
while Jesus Christ disappears as head of the Church. In the same vein Oosthuizen describes the charismatic black prophet who acts as mediator between God and man and, as a Moses-like figure, performs an historical task for his people in a time of crisis.

Other facets of Christology besides mediatorship are at risk. According to Oosthuizen the authority and kingship of Jesus are also denied in these "nativistic" movements because the accent falls one-sidedly on that which elevates man himself to power. Man gains control of God and God comes to be regarded as the personification of human desires. The traditional emphasis on the use of magic to obtain and enhance vital force is very much in evidence. This in turn makes it possible to control and monopolize Christ’s authority. As a result Christ is actually manipulated. In Oosthuizen’s opinion, such a pragmatic religion orientated towards magic allows no scope for individual self-abnega­tion for the sake of Christ. In the final analysis it amounts to a self-indulgent morality in which vital force is sought for oneself and one's own community.

Martin in particular heavily underlined the way in which the cross of Christ is superseded in Messianism. She traces this tendency to the traditional magical approach to life in which attention is so fixed on the realization of God’s kingdom here and now, on the successful wonders performed by the Black Messiah, and on liberation from those powers which menace the life force, that everything revolves around faith-healing and the gratification of material needs rather than the biblical concept of salvation. The Messianic leader, in accordance with the expectations of his followers, desires a theologia gloriae in the place of a theologia crucis. The Black Messiah is a Messiah without a cross, a false Christ incapable of effecting atonement for man’s rebellion against God and the curse which it entailed. As evidence of the Messiah’s avoidance of the cross the following declaration by a Zulu clergyman is cited: "These sects are South Africa’s attempt to dodge

21 Ibid., p. 165–6.
22 Oosthuizen, 1968, p. 93.
23 Ibid., p. 101.
25 Ibid., p. 89.
26 Ibid., p. 103.
27 Martin, 1964, p. 158.
28 Ibid., p. 160.
the cross." The report of a missionary concerning the absence of any reference to Christ’s suffering in Zionist Easter preaching, as well as a remark by a ZCC member that Lekhanyane rejects the cross because the Son of God died on it are also advanced as evidence in this regard.

Beyerhaus, like Martin, points out that the cross is rejected not simply because of the alien character of Western preaching of the Gospel, but because of a negative reaction to the proclamation of the Christian message of salvation. Messianic movements circumvent the challenge of the cross because it is the divine No to the old self and its cravings. Beyerhaus asserts: "Man is too proud to accept humiliation, man is too much of a coward to accept the cross." In his inaugural lecture at Tuebingen, Beyerhaus addresses some penetrating questions to Messianism: Has the cross of Christ become a stumbling-block because of the self-glorification and self-deification of the Messiah figure? Do we not here encounter the grievance of natural religion when confronted with the theologia crucis? If Oosthuizen’s assertion that the gospel call is misinterpreted as a form of access to the force vitale is correct, then Beyerhaus’s questions cannot but receive an affirmative answer, and we would have to concede Oosthuizen’s point that a true Theology of the Cross is entirely wanting.

Among the observers we are presently discussing there is ultimately no doubt about the total supplanting of the Christ of the Gospels by the Black Messiah. Sundkler quotes a number of selections from Shembe’s hymn book to illustrate the absence of "Jesu Kristu". Hymn no 154 reads as follows:

I believe in the Father,
And in the Holy Spirit,
And in the communion of the saints
of the Nazarenes.

From this Sundkler concludes that no place remains for Jesus Christ in the doctrine and lives of Shembe and his disciples. Just as Jesus once effected the salvation of the Jews, so Shembe does for

29 Ibid., p. 160.
31 Beyerhaus, 1969, p. 78.
32 Ibid., p. 78.
34 Oosthuizen, 1968, p. 89.
the Zulu today. Beyerhaus's rejection is more sweeping. In neither the Zionist nor the Messianic movements can he detect much that has anything to do with so-called authentic Christianity. Christ is a mere pseudonym for the Messianic leader "This complete substitution," he alleges, "is especially notorious in the Messianic movements." The entire Christian concept of God is nowhere to be recognized. Christ is superseded; the Holy Spirit makes way for a traditional spirit manifestation, and God the Father is equated with the traditional divinity. Oosthuizen is equally radical in his repudiation of Shembe because as far as the leader's relationship with Christ is concerned, the distinction between representation and identification is not maintained with sufficient clarity. As regards the ZCC, he asserts that activities revolve chiefly around Lekhanyane and not around Christ. In all instances the Black Messiah is the hub around which everything turns.

Two parallel developments occur along with the supplanting of Christ. These are the deification of the Black Messiah and the replacing of Scripture with other norms. With reference to the first of these tendencies, Sundkler points out Shembe's omnipresence, the fact that his mediation is decisive for eternal life, his work with God the Father in creation, and his identification with umvelingqangi, the traditional Zulu divinity. Certain disciples also refer definitively to their leader as God himself. That such a development is neither obvious nor inevitable is clear from Martin's reference to Edward Lekhanyane's conscious and explicit denial of any claim to Messiahship or divinization. She nevertheless is of the opinion that some of his disciples regard him as "God and Saviour." It is worth noting, however, that she cites no utterances of ZCC members in this respect, her sources being confined to the opinions of members of other Churches. Beyerhaus is less cautious and flatly affirms that the Black Messiah is pretentious in inciting his disciples to glorify and divinize him, thereby creating a possibility of misleading Christians of the traditional Churches. This Messianic corruption, in the opinion of Beyerhaus, results in the God of the Bible
being no more than the "unknown God" to the people of these movements.\textsuperscript{43} Oosthuizen for his part claims that the deification of the prophetic leader is not exclusively a reaction against the so-called white Christ of the white man, but also an attempt at maintaining direct contact with the supernatural world as this was traditionally conceptualized. Hence the Black Messiah's preaching "includes a subjugation to the old supernatural powers."\textsuperscript{44} Here we pick up the basic tone of Oosthuizen's approach, namely that the Zionist and Messianic movements of Africa are radical, syncretistic deflections of Christianity into the traditional religions, in which the ancient powers and ancestral spirits are the supreme values.

There is evidently just as little doubt concerning the elimination of the Word of God. With almost monotonous regularity Oosthuizen writes "The Bible has [in the ZCC]) lost its value..."\textsuperscript{45} "In the 'nativistic' groups it is not Scripture, but the traditional religion, which constitutes the basis."\textsuperscript{46} The Bible as well as Jesus Christ are pushed into the background."\textsuperscript{47} The prophet's or "Messiah's" word replaces the Bible because this satisfies the black person's craving for a concrete revelation. The prophet's only authority is his own inspiration.\textsuperscript{48} Martin and Beyerhaus, echoing the same theme, refer to the Bible as a "shelved"\textsuperscript{49} and a closed book\textsuperscript{50} for Black Messianism. Martin claims that the need for indigenization leads to the deformation of the gospel message and the figure of Christ after the patterns of the pre-Christian world-view. In this way the traditional culture becomes normative for the interpretation of the Bible.\textsuperscript{51} Beyerhaus generalizes energetically about Zionism, and by implication about Messianism, as he unravels a syncretism which still acknowledges Christian terminology but purges it of all biblical concepts which underlie the terms, substituting pagan ones.\textsuperscript{52} If all these propositions are valid - that is to say, if the only thing that can be affirmed about the groups attached to Shembe, Lekhanyane, Kimbangu and similar Zionist leaders is that they offer a distorted

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., p. 79.
\textsuperscript{44} Oosthuizen, 1968, p. 78.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., p. 37.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., p. 73.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., p. 91.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., p. 126-7.
\textsuperscript{49} Martin, 1964, p. 158.
\textsuperscript{50} Beyerhaus, 1969, p. 79.
\textsuperscript{51} Martin, 1964, pp. 35, 158.
\textsuperscript{52} Beyerhaus, 1969, p.75.
or corrupt Christology, a denial of the cross, a divinized Black Messiah and a gospel so radically modified that in some instances it disappears entirely - we would have to agree with Oosthuizen and Beyerhaus that all that was under discussion was a "post-Christian" phenomenon.

(ii) Pneumatology

It is the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the actions ascribed to His influence by the so-called Zionist and Messianic movements which, after their distorted Christology, are most questioned. Oosthuizen devotes an entire chapter to the "misunderstanding of the Holy Spirit" in Independent Churches. His major objection is that the Holy Spirit is confused with the forefathers. This, in his opinion, is one of the greatest theological problems in Africa, and it is directly connected with the belief that the departed prophet or Messianic leader returns to influence his followers just as ancestral spirits remain involved in the ups and downs of their living descendants. With the supplanting of Christ and the central accent on umoya (the Spirit) the "Black Messiah" leads his disciples back to the ancestors, to the "blood and soil" of the tribe.

Here Oosthuizen relies mainly on the findings of Pauw and Sundkler for support. Pauw claims that in Zulu Zionist Churches belief in the Holy Spirit has not entirely supplanted belief in the ancestors and that in certain Churches it is even employed to reinforce and legitimize ancestor veneration. Sundkler points out that there is a lack of clarity about the concepts umoya and Angel. The former is often regarded as a "general state of divine Spirit-filling", while the latter serves umoya as the channel of revelation. While the Spirit is the latent state of being Spirit-filled, the Angel is the active version which becomes manifest above all in prayer or in dreams. It is the Angel who explains to the prophet what is wrong with his patients and how they should be healed. Sundkler offers examples of infertility in women which the prophets, guided by the Angel, ascribe to the interference of ancestral spirits. The prescription given by the prophet in such cases involves reconciliation with

53 Oosthuizen, 1968, pp. 119-142.
54 Ibid., p. 120.
55 Ibid., p. 120.
56 Ibid., p. 122.
57 Sundkler, 1961, p. 249.
the spirits by means of sacrifice. In these instances the Holy Spirit becomes the authority which confirms the ancestor cult. Sundkler puts it as follows: "The Angel's main reproach in Churches of Zionist type is that the ancestral spirits have been neglected."\(^5^8\)

Because the prophet prescribes ancestor veneration as a precondition for healing, the identification of the Spirit with spirits becomes complete. Sundkler concludes as follows: "The Angel not only brings a message from the ancestral Spirit: the Angel is the spirit, the ancestral spirit."\(^5^9\)

Many additional qualifications are made by the observers we are discussing, all based on this central theme of the confusion or identification of the Holy Spirit with the ancestral spirits. Beyerhaus, for example, without hesitation proclaims that the so-called "Messianic movements" use of Christian symbols has little to do with Christianity because the manner of receiving the Holy Spirit is a direct continuation of the old idlozi possession and because the true fruits of the Holy Spirit are lacking and not even desired.\(^6^0\)

Sharp criticism is therefore levelled against Messianism on the point of pneumatology; a judgement which even presumes to generalize and reduce the divergent conceptions of a vast group of people to a few categoric statements. Martin portrays a process of indigenization in Messianism in which the perception of the gospel is strongly conditioned by pre-Christian expectations and viewpoints. The result is syncretism characterized by, among other things, a "blending" of the Holy Spirit with the ancestral spirits.\(^6^1\) Because this process precludes an essential conversion, the new message is fitted into the "natural" or traditional experience of religion, with the necessary consequence that the "Holy Spirit" and the ancestral spirits are equated.\(^6^2\)

Oosthuizen's work illustrates how conceptual confusion can occur not only in the so-called Messianic movements but also in the judgements of the observers. For example, he quotes Sundkler with approval on the connection between the Spirit, the Angel and the ancestors and their direct involvement in the discipline of erring Church members. In the same paragraph, however, he proceeds to make an entirely arbitrary and contradictory proposition that "the

\(^{58}\) Ibid., p. 250.

\(^{59}\) Ibid., p. 250.

\(^{60}\) Beyerhaus, 1969, pp. 74-5.

\(^{61}\) Martin, 1964, p. 158.

\(^{62}\) Ibid., p. 162.
Spirit's activity is not related to moral guidance but rather to vital force."63 We are left with the impression that the consistency of what he is attempting to demonstrate has become obscured by a sometimes uncritical piling up of facts gleaned from the literature. Oosthuizen is more convincing when he attempts to explain the centrality of the Holy Spirit in indigenous movements from the perspective of the Black person's concept of authority. The hierarchical pattern of the traditional spirit world in which authority is transmitted structurally in the family or tribe is reflected in an understanding of the Holy Spirit who acts either as the supreme authority over or in collaboration with the ancestral spirits. The consequence is that God, whether understood as Father or Son, remains in the background.64

A description such as this accords with the proposition that in post-Christian religion the "Spirit" assumes the position of Christ. With both God the Father and Christ relegated to the background, the doctrine of the "Spirit" becomes the breach through which the traditional orientation to the forefathers gains entrance. The result, in Oosthuizen's opinion, is "a resurgence of the old in a new form", "a world ruled through and through by the ancestors" and "calling upon the ancestors" 65 Because this return to ancestor veneration is so prominent and the functions of the ancestors are transferred to the Holy Spirit (or merely the "Spirit"), the connection between Scripture and the Holy Spirit is entirely eliminated.66

Apart from this confusion of the Holy Spirit with the ancestral spirits these observers also mention another form of conceptual degeneration in prophetic movements, namely the syncretistic warping of the personhood of the Spirit of God into an impersonal power which can be manipulated. Beyerhaus alleges that man's primal urge towards syncretism - that is to say, the equation and identification of all supernatural powers and revelations - leads to the depersonalization of God and the transformation of the Spirit into a non-personal, "thing-like" power which falls under human control.67 In her description of a false pneumatology Martin states: "In prophetic and messianic movements the prophets and messiahs 'possess' the 'Spirit' like an impersonal power, they get hold of it in

64 Ibid., p. 123.
65 Ibid., pp. 102–3, 123.
66 Ibid., pp. 126, 129, 132.
67 Beyerhaus, 1969, p. 75.
their own way, and the 'Spirit' must give utterance in a visible and audible way (glossolaly, trembling, leaps), and not in the hidden manner of the new life in Christ which is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22f)."68 Oosthuizen concurs with this idea when he states that as far as the Ngunza-Khaki "Church" is concerned the Spirit is the monopoly of the chief leader.69 In an extension of traditional magic and fetishism, it is the task of the prophetic leader to "give" the "Spirit" to his followers.70 It is inevitable that where the Holy Spirit is deformed into a power which people can manipulate in their personal or group interests the biblical doctrine of the Holy Spirit will become unrecognizable. A development of this type would be a further indication that Messianism stresses a theologia gloriae at the expense of a theologia crucis.

(iii) Eschatology

There are various reasons for the one-sided "realized eschatology" which the above-mentioned observers ascribe to the Messianic movements. Martin notes the deep desire for an understandable revelation here and now, a yearning for deliverance from evil and for a new community in which peace and joy reign.71 These longings can be seen in perspective only against the background of the black person's traditional view of time which, as expounded by Mbiti, focuses chiefly on the present and the past (Sasa and Zamani in Swahili).72 The future as conceived of in Western linear thinking was almost entirely missing. In this thought world the Western missionary preaching arrived with a salvation-history message and an apocalyptic accent which in fact projected salvation into what was, for the black person, a missing dimension of time. To the extent that salvation was not seen and experienced in the present it was meaningless. The disappointment of unfulfilled future promises, as for instance the delayed second coming, and the apparent absence of salvation in the acculturative and political dilemmas which beset the black person only intensify his yearnings. Attachment to the so-called Messianic movements therefore represents,

70 Ibid., p. 133.
71 Martin, 1964, p. 135.
even if sometimes unconsciously, the urge to experience the realisation of unfulfilled eschatological expectations in the present.

With this background in mind we can more readily appreciate why the Black Messiah, responding to the needs of his people, establishes a colony known as "City of Zion", "Moriah" of "Jerusalem", which implies the realization of liberation and salvation in this present existence. In the midst of the disintegration of tribal customs, in times of social change which entail frustrations and uncertainties, the great leader stands in the new community as prophet, king, Messiah - even as God. This finds expression in the preaching of John Galilee Shembe, the successor to Isaiah Shembe: "You, my people, were once told of a God who has neither arms nor legs, who cannot see, who has neither love nor pity. But Isaiah Shembe showed you a God who walks on feet and who heals with his hands and who can be known by men, a God who loves and who has compassion." Sundkler claims that the "God" referred to here is the Messiah, Isaiah Shembe himself According to Martin, Edward Lekhanyane of the ZCC is venerated in a similar manner. He is invoked in prayer as "Our God, Lekhanyane" He is also a Moses-figure, supreme judge and healing Nazarene. His disciples do on occasion mention Jesus Christ and His second coming, but "this teaching seems for many to be of little importance, because they believe that in E. Lekhanyane their messiah is present. For them eschatology is realized".

Among the characteristics of what Martin typifies as a "faulty eschatology" is either a materialistic or a secularistic distortion of eschatology. Oosthuizen finds that the eschatology of all "nativistic" religious movements is secularized because it is interpreted in terms of the black person's existential situation. In these movements, he states, there is the explicit proposition that all opponents will be conquered so that the black person will live a life of plenty in the new world which will arise out of the old. The accent falls on material wellbeing - an africanized utopia - in which Christ plays no role and the Black Messiah effects health, fertility and material progress for his disciples. Beyerhaus poses the pertinent question whether what has happenend in the Messianic movements is not an

73 Martin, 1964, p. 131.
74 Sundkler, 1961, p. 278f.
75 Martin, 1964, pp. 131-2.
77 Ibid., p. 96.
instance of the coincidence of a dawning awareness of the attainable advantages flowing from Western civilization with the gospel message of the coming God's kingdom of peace. This leads to an excessive eschatological tension between the "already" and the "not yet" of that kingdom, resulting in a "secularistic short-circuit".

In a realized kingdom, which is not only in the world, but also of it, Christian salvation and redemption are whittled down to healing, success, security and prosperity in the present existence. Because of the profoundly felt need for liberation from bodily and social suffering and tension, the message of a future salvation becomes a stumbling block. Full salvation must be available now. Consequently the quest is for healing rather than redemption. As a consequence of this africanized salvation the eschatological tension between the already and the not yet lapses. The future kingdom is in fact to be taken by force - as Martin and Oosthuizen put it, there is a "seizing" and a "snatching" of the future. As a result the perspective of eternal life and the hope of Christ's second coming are lost. Oosthuizen suggests: "In all their visions this snatching of the future is apparent. There is no idea of the tension between the present and the not yet, the Christian hope plays no part, here is the old natural man, freed from the cyclic concept of his religion to which he was so inexorably bound; but he has not found his feet in the new freedom. He has no central point on which these expectations are built..." Martin underlines the loss of true hope which goes hand in hand with the grasping of the future when she states: "Whenever man takes it upon himself to stretch out his hand to seize the future [i.e. the kingdom] and to take it by force, he has no real hope. What he has seized upon is always a hope of his own making, a messiah who is a false Christ, and sooner or later disappointment follows!"

The impression created here is that the so-called Messianic eschatology eventually amounts to a complete elimination of biblical eschatology. This effects stagnation in the cyclic thought world which excludes any real future perspective and Christian hope.

79 Martin, 1964, p. 158.
80 Ibid., p. 158; see also Oosthuizen, 1968, p. 97
81 Martin, 1964, p. 158.
82 Ibid., p. 160; Oosthuizen, 1968, p. 97.
83 Oosthuizen, 1968, p. 97
84 Martin, 1964, p. 160.
One of the reasons for this is an inadequate ecclesiology. Bosch indicates how an adaptation to the present leads to a "de-historicizing" of salvation history. In this way the Church is not viewed as the "holy apostolic Church" of all ages but merely as a realizable phenomenon in the present, concrete, religious community. In such a context the Bible is wrenched out of its salvation history setting and favourite texts are applied literally at the whim of any given group. One logical consequence of this is the revamping of the missionary's apocalyptic eschatology into a "realized eschatology." According to Martin the defective ecclesiology is to be blamed partly on the denominationalism which missionaries imported, and partly on a deliberate attempt at indigenization. As a result the Church is taken to be a new tribal community and Church discipline equated with tribal sanctions. Particularly in the Messianic groups of Shembe and Lekhanyane the Church becomes a new tribe and a new kingdom. As paramount chief or king the main leader represents the vitality of the new tribe. All blessings which come his way reflect the power and life of the tribe. Oosthuizen also refers to the widespread tendency in Africa to interpret the Church as a new community which is expected to function like a traditional kinship group. Since the forefathers are incorporated into it, the Church community is ethnically determined. This leads Oosthuizen to the radical conclusion that "the whole tribe is the Church without any idea of personal decision. Its basis is purely ethnic, i.e. based on blood relationship." If a pronouncement such as that has general validity there can be no question of a Christian eschatology or ecclesiology in Zionism or Messianism, both of which would then have degenerated into a modern version of tribal religion.

(b) Radical criticism and a changing approach

The initial evaluation of Messianic leadership by all the observers is radical and largely condemnatory. Sundkler speaks of a return of pagandom. "The syncretistic sect," he writes, "becomes the bridge over which Africans are brought back to heathenism - a viewpoint

85 Bosch, 1973, p. 79.
86 Martin, 1964, p. 166.
87 Oosthuizen, 1968, p. 82.
88 Ibid., p. 84.
which stresses the seriousness of the whole situation." Martin maintains that there was no genuine conversion in the Messianic movements. In a syncretistic degeneration one is dealing with "African Christianity" and not with Christ. "This African Christianity and African christ are utterly opposed to the revelation of the unique Messiah, Jesus of David's house who is the Saviour of all races and nations..."

Oosthuizen and Beyerhaus in particular pursue a consistently negative line which ultimately amounts to the verdict that there can be no return to true Christianity from Messianism. The absence of the Church of Christ is described with utter conviction: "Christian sects have often developed into Churches, but where nativism is basic this will not happen because contact has been lost with the Word and with Christ's work on the Cross."

Beyerhaus mentions an explicit, existential contradiction (Widerspruch) of the gospel message in Messianism, and a concomitant self-deception whereby the Zionists fail to realize that their concept of God bears no relation to the holy, mighty God.

When one examines the method of these theologians one gets the impression that they operate in terms of Western categories and that the ideal of a logically consistent line of thought and the construction of a coherent system in describing "Messianism" had stood in the way of balanced reflection on a multifaceted phenomenon. Certain trends which the researcher either observed personally or which are mentioned by other observers are constantly isolated and then generalized or even absolutized in a practical application without logical, convincing proof that these trends in fact apply to the religious group as a whole.

When Martin quotes statements by black leaders from Mission Churches to substantiate her view that the Independent Churches evade the cross or that Lekhanyane is invoked as God himself in prayer, one at once wonders whether she has ever really studied the Independent Church movement. Anyone who is familiar with the relations between the "historic" and the Independent Churches is aware of conflicts and jealousies bred by their polarized group loyalties. One cannot expect an objective view if it is based on

89 Sundkler, 1961, p. 297.
90 Martin, 1964, p. 162.
91 Ibid., p. 159.
92 Oosthuizen, 1968, p. 142.
94 Beyerhaus, 1969, p. 75.
statements made by antagonistic members of rival groups. Anyone who knows the ZCC at all well will know that Lekhanyane is not addressed as God himself, but that the introduction to most ZCC prayers usually addresses "the God of Lekhanyane"

Oosthuizen's approach creates the impression that data from the literature were selected in such a way as to overaccentuate negative aspects at the expense of positive ones, resulting in a caricature so as to substantiate a preconceived characterization of prophetic and Messianic movements as "post-Christian". Any Western Christian who keeps in close touch with the Independent Churches and observes and experiences their weaknesses as well as their truly Christian attributes should appreciate that one cannot speak of a total degeneration.

My implicit objection to the work of these researchers is therefore that the empirical basis in no way justifies their harshly condemnatory criticism. Beyerhaus's emphasis on Christology is important, but he does not provide sufficient evidence for his categorical rejection of Zionist customs as un-Christian and a mere return to traditional religion. One's impression of his method is that what is being theologically evaluated is a caricature rather than the empirical facts.

The theological importance of empirical studies is borne out inter alia by the changed approaches of Sundkler and Martin after many years of continued contact and involvement with the initially much criticized "Messianic" groups. Practical experience led both these researchers to alter their views quite markedly Sundkler probably realized that his categories in his first study, Bantu Prophets, had helped to induce radical and one-sided views among certain authors. At all events, he gives a very different appraisal of "Messianism" in his subsequent study, Zulu Zion and some Swazi Zionists, published in 1976. Here he objects to the way in which Oosthuizen categorically defines Shembe as a Messiah on the basis of his hymns. Despite these, Shembe's followers maintained a fundamental distinction between God and his Zulu servant Isaiah Shembe. He acknowledges that it was misleading to regard "nativistic Zionism" as a bridge leading the Black man back to his traditional religion. Zion was far rather a bridge to the future. "To those in the movement, Zion meant newness of life, health and wholeness, a new identity

95 Sundkler, 1976, p. 190f.
96 Ibid., p. 196.
If it was a bridge, it appeared to them a bridge to the future."

Now it is Sundkler's turn to warn against the misconceptions to which the term "Messiah" can give rise. He admits that his initial deductions from the information about Shembe were too Western and dogmatic, and suggests that the term iconic leadership might be more appropriate than "Messianism". The biblical conception of Christ as (EIKOV TOU THEOU) (image of God) suggests reflection: to his followers the iconic leader is a reflection and concretization of Christ without necessarily usurping Christ's place.

One observes a totally changed state of mind when Sundkler comes to the following conclusion about Shembe and Khambule, both of whom he previously classified as Messiah figures: "There is no conscious attempt to minimize the revelation of Jesus. Sermons and testimonies underline that Jesus is the Ultimate Authority and Final Judge."

Martin's change of approach is even more dramatic. Whereas in her dissertation she was negative and rejected Kimbanguism, as we have shown, her field study and personal participation in the movement led her to totally new insights. She admits the limitations of her original approach which was based mainly on a study of the sources, and in an enthusiastic first article she claims that the Kimbanguist movement is a truly Christian Church representing the complete Christian life as portrayed in the Gospel according to Luke. Now she rejects the charge that Kimbangu as "Messiah" replaced the biblical Christ and asserts that through this leader Jesus Christ has for the first time acquired existential reality for the Congolese. Kimbangu is held up as an outstanding example of Christian discipleship, rejecting ancestor worship and leading people to Christ. "Simon leads them to Christ (he is the instrument of Christ and is not a new Messiah, not the Saviour, but the chosen servant through whom Christ has revealed himself to the Africans."

97 Ibid., p. 305.
98 Ibid., p. 309.
99 Ibid., pp. 193, 310.
100 Ibid., p. 310.
101 Martin, 1964, p. 163.
102 Martin, 1975, pp. VII-XI.
104 Ibid., p. 10.
105 Martin, 1975, p. 146.
These shifts in emphasis in the work of Sundkler and Martin introduce a theological evaluation of what was originally branded "Black Messianism" - one which portrays these movements as a legitimate contextually effective, christianizing process, and does not merely for the umpteenth time point out their syncretism or unchristian degeneracy.

(c) Reinterpretation of the "mediatorship" of the "Black Messiah"

In an attempt to gain an impression of the image of principal leaders among their followers in the Shona Independent Churches, particularly as regards the leader's possible usurpation of the position and work of Christ, pointed questions about mediation were asked. Table 9 shows the responses of Independents to the questions, "Does your principal leader mediate between man and God? If so, how?"

The figures here presented confirm the prominent roles played by such prophetic leaders as Mutendi and Johane. More than in any of the other Churches, these two leaders are considered to have a mediating function. Virtually all the ZCC respondents answered in the affirmative, with quite a few (26%), however, qualifying Mutendi's mediation as being subordinate to that of Jesus Christ. Of the vaPostori 12% spoke of Johane's subordinate role to Christ and 21% definitely rejected any form of mediation by the main leader. It appears therefore that a critical attitude and a certain awareness of the possibility of the principal leader usurping the vital function of the Christian Saviour do exist in the ranks of Mutendi and Johane followers. Such a critical attitude is stronger amongst the Ndaza Zionists, among whom more than 50% of the respondents either indicated reservations by mentioning subordination of the main leader to Christ, or rejected his mediation altogether.

Significantly, a categoric rejection of any comparison between Christ's and the senior leader's mediation linked to an affirmation that only Christ acts as a real mediator, was most frequently heard from Ethiopian-type Church members. On the other hand it is equally significant to note that just over 20% of both the Topia and Chibarirwe respondents gave answers which still point to an incomplete understanding of the biblical affirmation of the unique and exclusive mediation of Christ. Although it was mainly ZCC members who thought that forgiveness of sins could only be obtained through the Church leader, quite a few Ethiopian-type Church members made one or more of the following comments:
"The leader is a real mediator (mumiriri)."
"He is nearer to God than us and therefore he brings our need to Him."
"He leads us to heaven (vanotitungamirira kudenga)."
"He places us with God (vanotisvitsa kuna Mwari)."

To my mind, these comments reflect the traditional notions of mediation, which assign the ritual officiant a representative function between man and God. This obscures the biblical concept or the priestly dignity and free access of the individual believer to the presence of God. Limitations of this nature in the Ethiopian-type Churches indicate shortcomings of theological perception and not a trend towards Messianic leadership.

We turn now to a more detailed analysis of the leadership of Mutendi of the ZCC and Johane Maranke of the vaPostori - the two Shona leaders who, according to the early form of classification accepted by Sundkler and several other researchers, could be called "Black Messiahs". As prophetic leaders both men had in common that they were exceptionally charismatic personalities, that they both founded communities in which subordinate prophets and other officials were occupied with the organization of the Church, faith-healing, agricultural activities and so forth - in other words, a sort of holy city expressive of an africanized, present Christian salvation; and both leaders occupied a powerful central position among their followers apart from the exceptional spiritual power and miracles with which they were credited. Like Shembe and Lekhanyane, Mutendi and Maranke had a mediatory function at the heavenly gates ascribed to them, and this at once raises a Christological question. If to this one adds the central role played by both leaders in the thought world and preaching of their followers, the casual observer would find enough evidence to signal "Messianism" and "syncretistic degeneration", with Christ supplanted and pneumatological confusion as the consequence. But what actually goes on in the thought world and field of experience of the Shona Zionists and Apostles? I will mention only a few of the most important characteristics:

(i) Christology

That the mediatorship of Christ is sometimes incorrectly understood, or that it functions to only a limited extent in the religious experience of individuals, is not to be doubted. The pervasive influence
of Mutendi during his lifetime contributed to the fact that some of his followers had an unclear picture of the exclusive nature of Christ's redemptive work. For some Mutendi was a "mediator" of sorts because of his mystical gifts through which he controlled all faith-healing activities in his Church. He was the "man of God" in Zion City who listened to the problems of his disciples and who was expected to present all these matters to the God of heaven. His control over subordinate officials was at times so effective that they interpreted their dreams about him as part of his system of control through which he made known his approval or disapproval of their conduct. A clear misunderstanding of the accessibility of God without the mediation of the leader Mutendi is reflected in a comment by deacon Ammon Norumedzo: "Mutendi is the one who addresses Mwari directly. We do not speak directly to Mwari Wokudenga [God in heaven], but to the God of Enginasi [Lekhanyane] and Moyo [Mutendi]. The small problems are solved by our officials and not referred to God. The big problems we bring here to Moriah and these are presented to God by our leader. We cannot ourselves lift up matters to heaven. [Hatigoni kukwidza chinhu kudenga.]"

In an attempt to describe Mutendi's mediation Norumedzo goes so far as to distinguish between the accessible God of the Zionists (the One of Lekhanyane and Mutendi) who is always mentioned in Zionist prayers, and the more remote God of the heavens. Here the traditional thought of a Supreme Being who deals only indirectly with the individual clearly emerges. For Norumedzo, Mutendi in a certain sense plays the role of a paramount chief who would in any case act after death as an important ancestral spirit and mediator between God and living descendants.

This example is, however, not representative of all ZCC members and in no way proves an absolute exclusion of Christ's mediatorship. For many Mutendi is "one sent by God, or His messenger" who teaches and leads them and who acts as an intercessor on behalf of his people.

Then what of Mutendi's function at the gates of heaven? The Rev Matevure's statement represents the general view which prevailed in the ZCC during Mutendi's lifetime: "When the judgement takes place Mutendi will stand at the gates of heaven and point out to God those people who were his followers here on earth. This will occur before the final judgement."

Numerous interviews with ZCC officials and ordinary members on this topic revealed that this is in no sense an exclusive function...
of Mutendi, as if only ZCC members would be granted admission to heaven or as if this would replace the mediatorship of Christ. Only isolated persons were of the opinion that Mutendi would in fact pronounce judgement with Christ on the day of judgement. There was general clarity about the distinction between Mutendi and Jesus Christ and no mention was made of a Black Messiah or Black Christ.

The stereotyped answers to questions concerning the relationship between Mutendi and Christ were mainly on the lines of the following examples:

"Mutendi is like Jesus but cannot take His place."
"Mutendi is our 'foreman' but Jesus is above him."
"Mutendi is for us like the Pope for Catholics and the Rev Louw [the pioneer missionary of Mashonaland] is for the NG Kerk. He is subordinate to Jesus but in him we see the image of Jesus."
"We honour Mutendi because he is like Jesus, but he himself warns us not to compare him with Christ."

From a strictly theological angle we can indeed speak of misconceptions in Zionist ranks. There are no biblical grounds for the leader's function at the gates of heaven, which implies a measure of mediation. There is nevertheless sufficient proof that the Bible continues to stand and to function as a powerful corrective. Mutendi himself persistently warned against any divinization and he never questioned the Trinitarian nature of God, which he proclaimed. For the sake of Church expansion and stringent control over his disciples he no doubt exploited his fame as a "thaumaturge", but neither he nor his followers interpreted his leadership as a form of "Black Messianism". The function at heaven's gates must therefore not be viewed as an attempt to replace Christ. It is much rather a projection of a general social custom into the unknown field of the hereafter this custom decrees that no ordinary person ever approaches a highly placed person without the good offices of an officially recognized go-between. In other words, an attempt is made, in the context of a representation of the world fixed by tradition, to render understandable a confessed but unknown reality. Mutendi was sent by God. Therefore it was self-evident that, in terms of a thought world not profoundly steeped in Western theology, Mutendi would be the one who ultimately would introduce his followers to the "Great One" in heaven. Mutendi's role at the gates
of heaven is thus mainly an introductory one which obstructs neither the exclusiveness of Christ's mediatorialship nor the judgement of God. The important distinction here is that Mutendi's role as go-between at heaven's gates does not guarantee admission to heaven for his followers. Zionists unanimously affirm that the verdict of acceptance or rejection finally rests with God and that the deciding factor is not Church membership but the individual's life of faith issuing in a direct relationship with God.

Viewed in this light the charismatic leader's "gatekeeper" function is far too slender a basis for Sundkler's initial distinction of Black Messianism. At the very most one could note a Messianic tendency. The concept "iconic leadership" is much more apt. The foregoing quotations indicate that in Mutendi's case the leader is regarded as the image or reflection of Christ.

It is also important to remember that the "gatekeeper function" is much more widespread in the Shona Independent Churches than one might expect. In the case of many far less prominent Zionist leaders there is quite a general expectation that the leader will be waiting for his disciples at the gates of heaven. Thus Bishop Forridge, who ministered to a few small congregations, was convinced that every Church leader, whoever he may be, had the responsibility after his death to appear at the gates of heaven and await his disciples. He put it as follows: "At dawn when the sun rises we will stand at the gates. As our people arrive we will show them where to stay... At sunset we will go to our appointed places..." This representation of what would one day happen in heaven in no way interfered with Forridge's preaching, which was strongly Christocentric and which insisted on personal faith in the biblical Christ as prerequisite for conversion and baptism. It therefore appears that Sundkler's key question - "Who stands at the gates of heaven?" - cannot be the criterion for a Messianic classification of the Shona Churches. At the same time the interpretation of the gatekeeper function is of such a character that one can speak only of theological inconsistency and not of radical degeneration.

Even in some Ethiopian-type Churches the main leader's gatekeeping function in heaven, though much less prominent, is not entirely lacking. The tendency to project some of the leader's duties into the afterlife is borne out by senior Topia Warden Nyorovai Takura's observation. He said: "All the races were converted by ordinary human beings. It follows that a bishop awaits his followers [those converted by him] in heaven!" Topia Minister Sauro Musimi thought that his bishop would represent him at the gates of heaven.
Leadership and Fission Dynamics

(unotireverera pamagede okudenga), while Christ mediates (kumirira) in heaven in His capacity as "owner of it all" (muridzi wazvo). Although both the terms kureverera and kumirira connote mediation, Musimi used the former to indicate the introductory responsibility which the Church leader, as spokesman of his followers, somehow retains in the afterlife; the second term refers to the unique mediation of Christ.

On the whole, however, both vaTopia and Chibarirwe members tended to reject the idea of a gate-keeping function. Some did so with reference to the fallibility of the Church leader, who can also be sent to the "pit of fire" if God should find him wanting. The Rev Sibambo, leader of the African Reformed Church (Shonganiso), emphasized the essential difference in approach to leadership by insisting that "our leaders are not honoured like Mai Chaza, Mutendi or Johane Maranke. If I die I am judged like any other human being. I will not stand at the gates of heaven. It is far from me to suggest anything to that effect."

There is a danger that outstanding prophetic leaders might well undergo a measure of deification in the period following their death. Contrary to Beyerhaus's allegation that the so-called "Black Messiahs" encourage self-deification, both Mutendi end Maranke regularly warned against this. There was, nonetheless, some indication that among certain vaPostori an additional dimension was attached to Johane's leadership after his death. They regarded him as omniscient, at least as far as events in his Church were concerned, and he was held to continue to exercise control over his Church through dreams.

In the most extreme instance an Apostle, Amos Haire, claimed: "On judgement day Johane will place me in heaven. You people of the Reformed Church and the Catholic Church will be judged by Moses. These individuals who have been taught by John and Jesus will be placed in heaven by John. But we black people are represented by Johane."

Here Johane's mediatorship exceeds a merely introductory function. Christ's redemptive work is distorted if not entirely supplanted by the role of Johane. For the black man the leader is equal and not subordinate to Christ. This line of thought is, however, not representative of the vaPostori. It also does not represent an interpretation of an existing Church doctrine. What it in fact reflects is a climate of thought which is more obviously nationalistic, militant and anti-white than that of the Zionist groups. The vaPostori regularly proclaim that for whites the time of grace is past because they
killed Jesus and suppressed the biblical message of the Holy Spirit. Now the time has come for Africa to be blessed. The house of Ham, long trampled underfoot, is now summoned to carry on the task of Jesus Christ. The banner which the descendants of Shem and Japheth have trampled has been picked up by Johane who marches triumphantly at the head of the once oppressed race, the house of Ham.

That is why a muPostori preacher jubilantly preaches:

"Peace to us Africans! The true witnesses of God were buried by the Europeans. Then God gave the task of witnessing to us, the Apostles of Africa. They [the Europeans] killed Jesus and the early Apostles, because they wanted to eliminate the Church of the Holy Spirit. So God decided to send the Church of the Holy Spirit to our race in Africa. We are blessed because Isaiah's prophecy, "I will send them a leader of their own race", has come true. Peace to Africans."

In such an instance we may speak of nationalistically inspired partial deification, but the more representative trend emerges in the statements of Apostle officials such as Onias Muchinge and Muteiwa. The former affirms: "Johane is not the Christ of the black man, but a messenger who taught the black man a great deal about God's Word." Muteiwa was of the opinion that Johane did not have the power to incorporate his followers into heaven. "Johane hands his people over to Jesus and in that sense he is a mediator, but he himself is judged by God according to his sins" is how he put it. Thus the characteristic view of the relationship between prophetic leader and Jesus Christ is a reasonably balanced one. By this we naturally do not claim that the doctrinal patterns in respect of the biblical Christ have stabilized in these prophetic Churches. Dynamic processes resulting from political pressure or group conflicts keep open the possibility of change in the direction of either deterioration or spiritual deepening. This indicates a need for cautious and continuing theological evaluation.

How does the leadership of a Mutendi and a Maranke impinge on the authority and kingship of Christ? Is it really true that the authority, kingship and cross of Christ are repudiated on the basis of a so-called "egoistic morality"? Once again we must acknowledge that there is no question of a fully worked out Christology. It is nonetheless noteworthy that especially Mutendi frequently preached about the authority of the healing Christ and about His redeeming
power over evil spirits. Furthermore it was Mutendi who three
times a year, after the so-called "Easter feasts" in Zion City, mobi-
lized his Church in a country-wide mission action flowing directly
from an acknowledgment of the kingship of Christ. This acknowl-
edgment found expression in his preaching on the classical
mission command of Christ as it stands in Mt 28:19.\textsuperscript{106} It is on this
that he based his vision of repentance and Church expansion. That
there would be misinterpretations in ZCC ranks is certain. The
extension of God's kingdom has been indiscriminately identified
with the expansion of a black Zion by many a Zionist. Across the
entire sweep of Church history, however, we find numerous exam-
pies of a similarly attenuated interpretation of God's kingdom, as if
its boundaries coincided at all points with some specific Church
group. However, who would judge that the missionary activist
Zionist spending a considerable number of months every year in
strange villages, at work converting people and engaged in pastoral
ministrations, was motivated by purely pragmatic and egoistic con-
siderations?

I personally travelled around with these Zionist preachers on
their campaigns in order to study their methods and preaching. In
the case of the Rev Ezekiah the centrality of Mutendi was striking,
but Mutendi was never described as a Black Messiah with exclusive
mediating or redeeming power on behalf of his disciples. On the
contrary, he was regularly commended as an exceptional example
of Christian discipleship.\textsuperscript{107} Ezekiah's central themes in preaching were
Mutendi as the "messenger of God", the working of the Holy
Spirit as manifested in prophecy and faith-healing, the kingdom of God,
a coming judgement, and the necessity of conversion.\textsuperscript{108} In all these
themes regular reference was made to the life and work of Christ.

As far as the Trinity is concerned, Ezekiah's preaching revealed
a tendency which is common in the prophetic Independent Chur-
ches, which is to speak more often about God the Father than about
His Son. Mwari, the Father, is readily understood as Judge, Pro-
tector and Lawgiver. Jesus the Son, following the traditional kinship
structure, occupies a subordinate position. After God the Father the
focus tends towards the working of the Holy Spirit. This does not
mean a complete exclusion of Christ's work. On the contrary, the
working of the Holy Spirit presupposes at all times a recognition of

\textsuperscript{106} Daneel, 1980, p. 110.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., p. 111.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., p. 110-116.
the work of Christ as Mediator and Redeemer. In my opinion we ought here to speak of either an incomplete or low-key Christology as one possible description, or simply acknowledge that it is a presupposed Christology, with no intention to deny Christ or His cross. This notion of a presupposed Christology links up with Sundkler's proposed concept of "iconic leadership". The ministry of Mutendi, as well as that of Johane and other prophetic leaders, was aimed at a translation and interpretation of the work of Christ in a concrete manner which would render it intelligible within their own indigenous context. Concepts such as a "presupposed Christology" or even a "contextualized Christology" in no way imply completeness or absolute correctness, but certainly do better justice to the empirical reality than the categorical pronouncements we mentioned earlier. These are more like one-sided theological projections - which do make an immense phenomenon theologically manageable and manipulable - than an attempt to treat the subject in a fair-minded way.

(ii) Pneumatology

The activities of the Shona prophets in Zionist and Apostile circles are actually characterised by confrontation and change rather than, as is alleged, by confusion between the Spirit and the ancestral spirits, traceable to domination by the departed, since the Spirit and the Angel supposedly prescribe ancestor veneration. Nowhere is this more manifest than in prophetic faith-healing activities in which the prophet, guided by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, diagnoses the ailments and problems of his patients and prescribes or applies therapy. I have attended literally hundreds of these prophetic sessions both in private situations and during or after Church services, and have arrived at the following conclusions:

The diagnosis by the prophet exhibits distinct parallels with that of the traditional doctor (nganga) inasmuch as the cause of the patient's problems is still attributed to ancestral, hostile or vengeful spirits or sorcery. This alignment with the traditional world-view would certainly create the impression that the motive of the prophet is to conserve the old pattern of thought. This, however, is in no way the case, since whatever spirit is involved, be it forefather or hostile spirit, it is invariably branded a demon which must be exorcized. The chief motive of the prophet is to respect the existential

reality of the patient’s thought world and confront it with the Christian message. In this respect we are here dealing with a far more realistic approach than that of the Western missionary who frequently dismisses the traditional spirit world and consequently can never penetrate to the core of the problem as the black patient experiences it. In the prophet’s therapy among the Zionists or Apostles a firm distinction is maintained between the Holy Spirit and other spirits. The demands made on the patient by the troublesome spirit, which frequently include ancestor veneration, are repudiated and the spirit is exorcized in the name of the Christian Trinity. Here the Holy Spirit and the spirit of the forefather stand diametrically opposed to each other and what takes place is a confrontation rather than an identification.

In exceptional cases a compromise solution is prescribed by the prophets, but then not primarily in an attempt to satisfy the demands of the troublesome spirit, but in order to reduce conflict with non-Christians bound to the patient by ties of kinship. In such cases the patient may be permitted to supply the necessary sacrificial animal for his non-Christian kinsmen, but he himself is expressly forbidden by the prophet to participate in the traditional ceremony. There is thus no mention of an *umoya* of *Mweya* at this point, serving as a prolongation of traditional spirit possession, as Beyerhaus claims about Messianism. Neither is there a Spirit which, as suggested by Sundkler and Oosthuizen, sanctions or dictates the demands of ancestral spirits. The Spirit’s activities are rather an extension of Scripture which, although not always correctly interpreted, nevertheless remain the consistent yardstick. Consequently prophets who prescribe traditional religious rites are placed under discipline by senior officials. In extreme cases they may even be relieved of their posts. The fact that the Shona traditionalists, and the *nganga* in particular, react far more sharply against the prophetic activities of Zionists and Apostles than to medical and evangelistic work by Mission Churches is in my opinion an indication that we have here a Spirit-inspired confrontation which is in fact far more radical and profound in its penetration of the traditional thought world than the Mission Church with its theological moulding and doctrinal impeccability could accomplish.

The proposition that the Holy Spirit is regarded as an impersonal power at the disposal of the Messianic figure to be "given" to his followers at his whim is inapplicable to the prophetic Shona Chur-

110 Daneel, 1974, pp. 347f.
Interviews with prophetic office-bearers indicate quite clearly that inspiration or revelation by the Holy Spirit is ascribed to God's initiative and not to man. Prophets often explain that it is only after fasting, prayer and isolation that they receive guidance from the Holy Spirit. What is more, they regularly acknowledge that these religious exercises are not causative but that the initiative always rests with God. The ceremonial laying on of hands indeed means that spiritual blessing is conveyed to the persons concerned, but not that the Spirit in His fullness is "given" by a prophet to a subordinate member. The considerations here are the act of faith, the condition of the novice and the choice of the Spirit, which latter is decisive for extraordinary gifts such as speaking in tongues or faith-healing. Many Zionists and Apostles who testify to Spirit-bestowed gifts of growth in their spiritual lives or in successful Church leadership lay no claim to gifts of prophecy or speaking in tongues. Other prophets again speak in tongues but acknowledge that they do not have the gift of interpretation or a prophetic vision of the future. This they usually explain by saying that the Holy Spirit wishes to use them only in a limited sense, or that a complete Spirit-filling has simply never happened. In attitudes such as these the presupposition is that the initiative rests with God who is beyond human control.

Neither Mutendi nor Johane pretended to give the Spirit to their disciples as they saw fit. In Zionist and Apostle congregations those individuals whose lives reveal a spiritual depth and fellowship with God are accepted as reliable channels through whom the Holy Spirit might transmit authentic messages to His people. Thus a person is only confirmed in the prophetic office at Church headquarters after his own congregation has observed evidence of a Spirit-inspired way of life in the service of the Church.

It is noteworthy, therefore, that in the official appointment of prophets and other office-bearers the decisive criteria are the biblical norms of God's fruits, readiness to serve and love, and not some whimsical decision by a Messiah figure. Here we find an expression of the intimate connection between the working of the Holy Spirit and "moral accompaniment", which Oosthuizen says is lacking in nativistic movements. If in addition we note the intensity of the Zionist or Apostle prophets' concern about the moral standards of the group, the confession of sin by Church members before receiving the sacraments, and the exercise of Church discipline - all part of a prophetic ministry supposed to derive exclusively from the
inspiration of the Holy Spirit - then the allegation that there is no moral involvement with the Spirit is a theological fiction.

It cannot be denied that the manifold use of symbolic objects with divine healing power in both Mutendi's and Johane's Churches gives rise to misconceptions. Among some members there is certainly a magical interpretation of holy water, strips of linen or holy staves which were blessed by, for example, Mutendi's hands. Instead of the intended symbolism, the power of God is so identified with the object that it becomes an impersonal force capable of being manipulated. In this regard we must frankly admit that the same problem occurs in the Shona Mission Churches, where some members interpret the reception of the sacraments in a magical way. The important point, however, is that in the Shona Churches the influence of a world-view orientated towards magic does not inevitably result in a misinterpretation of the Holy Spirit as an impersonal force. In the prophetic movements there is every indication that the Holy Spirit is experienced primarily as a personal divine being and not as an impersonal force which can be manipulated.

(iii) Eschatology

The judgement of Martin and Oosthuizen concerning a "realized eschatology" in so-called "Messianism" is to some extent also applicable to the Churches of Mutendi and Maranke. The realization of salvation and redemption in this existence is extremely important. It finds expression in all prophetic activities which protect Church members against sickness or any destructive powers, as well as in the chief leader's struggle with the white administration. Mutendi's founding of a "Zion City", for example, was a partial infringement of government policy on village structure. His detention and subsequent release confirmed for his followers the impotence of the authorities to dominate in any absolute sense. His founding of a school of his own symbolized for his followers the breaking of the whites' monopoly of education. Further, the successful attempt at modern agricultural techniques was a sign of God's blessing on Zion. On the one hand, therefore, Mutendi was a reminder of the departed glory of the Rozvi kings of the Mwenemutapa dynasty. On the other hand he acted as a type of liberating Moses figure in dealings with the administration.

It would, however, be erroneous to judge that because of this heavy emphasis on God's kingdom here and now, the future per-
spective is entirely lost, and that no hope of a coming salvation and the return of Christ remain, implying a complete distortion of eschatology into a materialist-secularist dimension. Neither in Shona Zionism nor in the Apostle Church is there any "snatching of the future" as the aforementioned observers suggest. The eschatological tension between the "already" and the "not yet" of the kingdom of God is not a missing dimension but is clearly visible in preaching and Church practice.

An analysis of a whole series of sermons by the Rev. Ezekiah of the ZCC reveals, among other items, an aspect of witness which repeatedly depicts Mutendi as "man of God" and presents a foreshadowing of the blessings of Zionist Jerusalem, but alongside this is proclaimed the central theme of the yet-to-come judgement of God. New Testament texts are regularly cited to emphasize the necessity of conversion in the light of the coming judgement of God. The Old Testament prophets are frequently cited to stress the urgency of the need for change in the life of the individual. To clarify the destructive power of God's judgement, reference is made to the deluge, disobedience to Noah's instructions, the sword of Ezekiel 33 or the pit of fire (gomba romwoto). The only escape from this judgement is to seek shelter in God's kingdom. Zionist mission campaigns are explained as the gathering of people into God's "granary" (dura raMwari) where they will be safe. Ezekiah's concept of a "granary" represented the incomplete and provisional character of God's kingdom in the present dispensation. By seeking shelter in the granary of "Zion City" one would find protection against racial discrimination, sickness, sorcery and uncertainty. On the other hand, repeated reference was made to suffering - for example, the persecution of Zionism - which constitutes part of this existence, as shown in Hebrews 13:14: "For here we have no permanent home, but we are seekers after the city which is to come." Ezekiah's constant references to this particular text gave a strongly futuristic character to God's kingdom. His preaching was permeated by a sense of the future with the "not yet" of the kingdom of God preponderating, thus effecting an important balance in the Zionist interpretation of the already realized salvation.111

the forefathers still dominated, as the writers we have discussed have claimed, it would be obvious that Sasa and Zamani (the past and present) ruled life. The most arresting characteristic of the adapted Church rites is, however, nothing less than a transformation of the old rites with the incorporation of a strongly futuristic element. This is especially apparent in the Runyaradzo (consoling) ceremonies introduced by Zionists and Apostles as a substitute for the traditional kugadzira (settling of the spirit) which used to be the key rite in all ancestor veneration. The attention directed to the departed person in the consolation ceremony does include something of the past, inasmuch as examples from his or her life are quoted in order to fortify the congregation in its work for the faith. Instead of incorporating the departed into the hierarchy of forefathers - as would be done in the kugadzira - he or she is related to heaven, in the belief that the living dead is with Christ or with God. The new community in heaven is already there and also holds a promise for the near and the remote future. This futuristic element is precisely why the forefathers from the remote past are no longer mentioned. On the contrary, preaching during the runyaradzo ceremonies often includes warnings against traditional rites. Some of the prophetic leaders are of the opinion that if non-Christian relatives of the departed were to perform their rites for the deceased it would be a hindrance to that person's passage to heaven. It is of the very greatest importance to establish the fact that in the midst of the adaptive process of contextualization in respect of the "living dead" there is a christianizing process or remoulding. The process is not complete or perfect in all respects, but an honest evaluator cannot afford to ignore such a positive breakthrough.

Camps, a Dutch missiologist, has suggested that the black person's cyclical notion of time - in other words his preoccupation with the past and his persistent involvement with his forefathers - is what obstructs progress in the Western sense. "What Africans need," he says, "is a new theology of time and of the ancestors so that they can wholeheartedly and from within accept progress."112 The Shona Zionists and Apostles make a positive contribution in this field. By ritually acknowledging the link between the living and the deceased they meet the needs of the black person to "live with the ancestors" and at the same time place the "living dead" in a new light, namely that of sharing in the afterlife in heaven in the future. This has the effect of implanting new concepts of time and

112 Camps, 1971, p. 7
progress in the very heart of religion. This does not get rid of all traditional notions without further ado, but the process of possessio (taking possession of) in Christ’s name is advanced, causing new and positive Christian perspectives to develop out of the traditional way of thinking.

* * * *

To sum up, we can affirm that as far as the Shona prophetic Churches are concerned, empirical reality makes the classification "Black Messianism" undesirable. The leadership of Mutendi and Johane can at the very most be said to have had Messianic tendencies. The change of attitude to be observed in Sundkler and Martin suggests that a similar verdict might be appropriate in the cases of Shembe, Lekhanyane and Kimbangu. A cavalier theological judgement which presents this phenomenon in the light of syncretistic degeneration, drawing a facile line of repudiation from a non-existent Christology a fault pneumatology and a one-sided eschatology through to the domain of demons, simply takes no account of the variegated richness, the profound and amazing subtleties of the Churches involved. There are enough positive factors to indicate the inspiration and working of God’s Spirit. Both Mutendi and Johane carried the Good News into the indigenous setting and there contextualized it in a legitimate manner. The process of confrontation which this initiated has worked intuitively rather than in the systematic-theological style of the West. It has nevertheless permeated as Good News, in which regard we should speak of a presupposed Christology, a prominent pneumatology and a realized-futuristic eschatology. The adoption of this position in no way implies that the groups concerned are in all respects to be typified as true and pure Churches. We are indeed dealing with Christian Churches with defects due to human imperfection, as is the case with any Church in the present dispensation. Even if some of these groups are perhaps on the periphery of Christianity - incomplete and full of contradictions - they, as Churches of Christ, are moving in a positive direction. Contrary to Beyerhaus’s allegation that there are no grounds for a theological up-building from within, the established Churches ought in humility to extend a hand to the Independents so that together they may move from the periphery to the centre: Jesus Christ.
3. GROUP CONTROL: LEADER AND OFFICE-BEARERS

(a) Control of Subordinates

As in any expanding organization, the problem of control in the Independent Churches becomes acute when Church development leads to the adherence of large numbers of members scattered over a wide geographical area. The leader is no longer capable of exerting such direct control over his followers as when he initially moved about campaigning with a manageable group of close associates. As distant congregations are founded and flourish, the leader's influence is increasingly conveyed to the wider body of followers through the Church's leadership hierarchy, i.e. the body of office-bearers who represent their Church locally.

This hierarchical system in most Independent Churches is essentially autocratic in so far as it is used by the main leader to control his Church. It is he who delegates powers to subleaders and he who maintains ultimate control over the appointment of office-bearers in distant congregations. The autocratic principle is most noticeable in Churches like those of Mutendi and Johane, where the main leader's supposed mystical powers provide an added dimension of authority and directness of control. The figures in Table 10 illustrate that proportionately more ZCC members and vaPostori than members of any other Independent Church were inclined to emphasize the complete subordination of office-bearers to their main leader. To 93% of the ZCC members interviewed Mutendi's authority was absolute. The "man of God" had to be respected and obeyed completely. He was the "law-giver" who could not be overruled, the one whom many office-bearers actually feared. The vaPostori were less inclined to stress the overriding authority of Johane Maranke. Only 53% of those interviewed made mention of Johane's absolute authority and then mostly in the sense of delegating divine powers to his subordinate office-bearers. This difference in approach to the leadership of the two most outstanding, mystically powerful prophetic leaders, is attributable to the fact that Johane in his lifetime failed to develop as strongly centralized a power base for the organization of his Church as did Mutendi. He was the roving prophet and preacher, more concerned perhaps with continual expansion than with organizational control of his Church. Moreover, he had been dead for a number of years when the initial survey in this study was conducted in the sixties, whereas Mutendi at the
time was at the height of his career and very much in charge of his followers.

What benefits most prophetic leaders is the directness of their contact with their followers through faith-healing and exorcist activities. This renders them less dependent on a leadership hierarchy as a means of transmitting directives to their followers. This is particularly true of the smaller prophetic movements where the healer is in daily contact with his patients. But once a prophetic Church achieves the proportions of a mass movement the leader is forced to make use of various forms of both direct and remote control. Bishop Mutendi, for instance, had to rely to a certain extent on his senior ministers to control distant circuits. He kept these men in line through their regular presence at Zion City and he exploited their belief in his mystical power to control their activities even when they were in their home districts. In addition he retained direct control over the mass of his followers by restricting the sacrament of Holy Communion to the Paschal celebrations at his headquarters, and thus by implication to his person; by having all serious patients from outlying districts sent to Zion City; and by appointing sons or relatives as his special deputies in circuits where he anticipated secessionist problems. In this way he maintained a prominent role amongst his followers, allowing him to supplement, supersede or by-pass the intermediate forms of control built into the hierarchical leadership structure. By creating strong and lasting bonds between himself and the vast body of his followers through something akin to a personality cult, Mutendi in a sense relativized the authority vested in the body of ZCC office-bearers.

In the Ethiopian-type Churches the autocratic pattern of leadership is much less obvious. Here, too, the Church leader exercises control through a hierarchical system of office-bearers, but he does not have the same direct control nor the same regular contact with the mass of his followers as the prophetic leader has. As a result he is much more dependent on his sub-leaders for the transmission of his directives and influence to the wide body of believers. Group control in these Churches is therefore based to a large extent on a delicately balanced interplay of relations between senior and subordinate leaders. The views of Ethiopian-type Church members on the relation between principal leader and subordinate officials substantiate this point. Seventy-eight percent of the FEC members, 83% of the Chibarirwe and 62% of the ARC (Shonganiso) members interviewed made no mention of the absolute authority of the main leader but emphasized instead a relationship of brotherly
co-operation, of mutuality in faith (Table 10). That 79% of the Ndaza Zionists had similar views indicates that the main leader plays a less dominant role in the smaller Zionist Churches. The Ndaza Zionist bishop certainly has a much more direct and intense relationship with his followers than the average Ethiopian-type leader. But he resembles the Ethiopian-type leader in that the authority delegated to his subordinate officials leaves sufficient scope for relatively uninhibited exercise of initiative at the local congregational level. This freedom of the local Church circuit in some instances leads to the introduction of democratic principles as when the provisional appointment of junior officials by the local circuit leader is determined by the preference of the group concerned rather than dictated from above.

One of the urgent problems which most IC leaders face is the ambition of junior officials to obtain more power. Sundkler says that the South African Separatist leader is confronted with the perpetual dilemma that "any local preacher is a prospective superintendent." Unless the power achieved by the newly appointed office-bearing is allowed to expand the chances of frustration and secession are very real, and it is virtually impossible for any principal leader to accommodate the ambition of all his office-bearers. In the first place, the appointment of large numbers of officials, which is characteristic of most Independent Churches, creates the problem of overstaffing. In the second place, the tendency to appoint people "for life" inhibits the promotion of junior officials. Thus for a junior to move up to a senior position in an overstaffed leadership hierarchy, he (or she) has to wait for the death, secession or excommunication of the senior above him, for transfer to another congregation, or for the splitting of the congregation or circuit which creates the required vacancies in a number of senior posts. To the main leader, however, the option of splitting up congregations as a solution to the frustrations generated by blocked leadership ambitions implies an added risk of promoting individuals to seniority who have not yet or not sufficiently demonstrated their loyalty to him. He may therefore decide to prevent congregational proliferation and to promote cohesion in the existing congregations at the cost of losing a number of his subordinate officials. With these often irreconcilable forces at work in the leadership hierarchy there is a constant anticipation of schism which threatens the leader's authority and therefore causes him to spend much of his time developing his control strategy.
Of singular importance in the main leader's quest for control is his relationship with the regional or circuit leaders. Regular contact has to be maintained at all costs, whether it is brought about by the periodic presence of circuit leaders at Church headquarters (as is the case in the ZCC) or through regular visits by the main leader to outlying congregations (as happens in the Ndaza Zionist and Topia Churches). This contact serves as a reminder to the regional leader and those under his care that their powers, authority and responsibility derive from the "big one" at Church headquarters and it enables the regional leader to demonstrate loyalty to the principal leader. Visits by the principal leader do not necessarily imply rigid regimentation or the imposition of Church laws from above. As long as the regional leader (whether he is called bishop, muongamiri or mufundisi) publicly honours and recognizes his senior, he is allowed sufficient freedom to exercise his own initiative, to improvise in such activities as the collection of funds, dancing and preaching - provided these remain within the framework characteristic of the particular Church - and to wield wide executive powers. In this respect one agrees with Sundkler when he observes that "it is characteristic of the African outlook and of the emerging African Church that it does not identify strict unity of command with slavish uniformity of expression".

Ndaza Zionist Bishop Makamba, described the close link between himself and his regional leaders by qualifying his own position as that of "law-giver" and controller of the entire Church and that of his wardens (vaongamiri) as "those who sit down and take care (of the congregations) on behalf of the bishop" (ava vakagara vakaongamira pano ubishopi).

The "caretaking" function of each Zionist warden, though broadly defined, depends very much on his seniority in the overall leadership hierarchy, his performance in the past (i.e. his proven ability to lead) and particularly the nature of his relationship with the bishop.

More objectively defined and vested with more autonomous powers than in most other Independent Churches is the position of the district warden in the First Ethiopian Church. Bishop Gavure laid down the duties of his vaongamiri as follows: (1) the appointment and consecration of ministers and junior officials; (2) the blessing of holy water and garments; (3) acting as advisors to and protectors of the bishop; (4) dealing with tribal authorities in con-

connection with Church meetings; (5) baptism of new members; (6) control of Church funds; and (7) assistance to the bishop during Holy Communion services. Although the appointment and consecration of senior officials by the Topia muongamiri are subject to the approval of the central Church Council, it demonstrates the far-reaching powers that can be wielded by regional Church leaders. In Mutendi’s ZCC the appointment of ministers is strictly according to the decision of the Church’s highest tribunal and the directives of the "man of God". Like Mutendi, Bishop Gavure also faced the continual problem of control. But because he himself had been democratically chosen as the successor to Bishop Chidembo and because he was a much less dominating personality than Mutendi, the relations between Topia bishop and regional wardens were more open and relaxed, with greater freedom for the expression of individual opinion, than those between the Zionist "monarch" and his subjects. Without the added dimension of mystical coercion and attachment of the mass of followers to his person through the performance of miracles, the Topia bishop controlled his vaongamiri through a remarkable combination of sustained friendships, full recognition of the key roles these men played at the local level and a subtle display of authority which inspired confidence rather than antagonism.

To take the comparison between the ZCC and Topia leadership one step further, I would suggest that the difference in power distribution had a definite bearing on the nature of schisms. Mutendi’s overriding and rigid control provoked sharp reactions and antagonisms from a proportionally larger number of senior officials in his Church than was the case with Bishop Gavure. Proportionally more ZCC ministers than Topia vaongamiri broke away from the parent body during the past few decades. The secession of a ZCC minister, however, seldom implied a serious loss of Church members because of the continued attraction exerted by the principal leader and the close attachment of his followers. The prominence achieved by a Topia warden in his own circuit, on the other hand, meant that a seceding muongamiri presented a more serious threat of group disintegration. Having wider powers than his ZCC counterpart and greater freedom to foster close ties with local subordinates without interference from the top, he is more likely to carry several congregations with him when he breaks away than the Zionist minister.
(b) Duties and working programmes of Church officials

In most of the Independent Churches the duties of each office are officially set out in the constitution and/or on the certificates held by the various officials. The ZCC Constitution, for example, stipulates that a minister should preach, lay hands on and pray for the sick, consecrate children, baptize believers and bury the dead; the duties of a deacon are very similar but exclude baptism. Generally consensus on the duties of office-bearers is reached within each group on the basis of the stage of Church growth, the centralization and control achieved by the main leader and the availability of capable candidates in congregations. Such consensus is usually flexible and may deviate from the written code. Here, too, much depends on the relations between main and subordinate leaders. A man of Bishop Mutendi’s stature could easily introduce changes without opposition from his subordinates. The appointment of a converted tribal chief as deacon, for instance, warranted the inclusion of greater powers and privileges than those normally conferred on deacons. Thus it happened that Chief Mazuru became actively involved in baptizing converts in the ZCC in 1965, directly after his own baptism and appointment as deacon. The honouring of a chief was clearly felt to be more important in a given situation than strict adherence to a constitutional code of leadership duties. While the leadership of the Rev Sengwayo of the Chibarirwe was not sufficiently autocratic for him to introduce as drastic deviations from the standard code as did Mutendi, he also allowed for the adaptation of duties in certain offices for the sake of expedience. It was therefore possible for prominent evangelists like Makomo and Mujeyi to acquire the status and actually perform some of the duties of ministers in their Chingombe congregations owing to the infrequent visits of a hard-pressed circuit leader. Yet in the context of Church Conferences these men would revert to the roles of ordinary evangelists.

The principal leader’s control over the actual working programmes of his subordinate officials depends to a large extent on his ability to inspire religious fervour and to provide a consistently meaningful motivation for the building and expansion of God’s Church. With his call for a continuation of the work of the Apostles of old, Johane Maranke captured the imagination of his close associates in Maranke to the extent that they would spend most of their

time travelling, campaigning and enduring hardships far from home with little or no financial support. Long after the first phase of excitement and rapid growth had passed in the ZCC, Bishop Mutendi still succeeded in keeping his subleaders enthusiastic about the on-going process of building and improving "Zion City". He made them responsible for a concern of which they could be proud. As mentioned elsewhere, he also kept the urge for expansion alive by fostering the missionary spirit during Paschal ceremonies and then sending his ministers out to evangelize and "patrol".

To get an impression of what involvement in such a programme demanded of an individual minister, I surveyed Mufundisi Bracho's working programme in 1966. Apart from performing pastoral and other duties in the Chingombe congregations, he spent four to five months a year away from home. This time went on attending four major Church meetings at Moriah, each followed by participation in "patrol campaigns" and concluding with a personal report to Church headquarters. The "patrols" entailed hundreds of miles of travel, including a trip to Gwelo for advisory work in a new congregation and a campaign in Bulawayo where Bracho baptized eight people. Then followed Triangle in the Lowveld (three baptized), Buhera (four baptized), Enkeldoorn (six baptized) and the Mazungunye chiefdom in Bikita (three baptized). Apart from the assistance of local congregations in providing Bracho's meals and making contributions towards his travel costs, he received no salary for his work. This of course is true of virtually all Independent Church workers, regardless of the amount of time spent on Church work. Sometimes the lack of salaries causes discontent and schisms, but it nevertheless remains a remarkable fact that so much can be achieved despite the paucity of material rewards.

In an assessment of the efforts and sacrifices of an individual Church minister in relation to the control and inspiring influence of the principal leader, the connection between the directing impulse and the activity it generates is both obvious and important. Yet it should be mentioned that an office-bearer's motivation and actual contribution in the religious field hinge on much more than the directives of his leader. The urge to prove capability, to acquire prestige and to earn the recognition of the in-group may be a strong, if somewhat submerged, motivating force. Whatever the hold of a leader on his subordinate officials, there is usually a conviction that the basic inspirational impulse for service derives directly from.

115 Daneel, 1980, passim.
God Himself. Service and sacrifice are therefore experienced by many office-bearers as a genuine response on their side to God's command, and not merely or not exclusively as an expression of obedience to the main leader's guidance.

(c) The influence of office-bearers on the leader

Of course, the influence of office-bearers on the main leader also has a direct bearing on his policies and overall group control. In the prophetic Churches, in particular, the recognition of and emphasis on revelations received from the Holy Spirit place the leader in a position where he has to take seriously the claims of subordinate prophets when they announce what is generally believed by the group to be "divine directives". If such claims are entirely out of line with a group's standard procedure they may well be rejected. But if the leader knows that the visions or dreams represent consensus within the group, he is forced either to comply or face a loss of influence, which may eventually lead to schism. Invariably the pressure brought to bear on a prophetic leader in this manner is inversely proportionate to his stature and authority. ZCC prophets, for instance, rarely tried to drastically oppose Bishop Mutendi's activities because of the firm hold he had on his followers. On the other hand, it is precisely leaders like Mutendi who, at an advanced stage of their leadership, are susceptible to influence from the junior prophet ranks, for the moment such a leader becomes engrossed with administrative affairs, admits that the Holy Spirit no longer causes him to have visions as frequently as before and actually delegates the "prophetic task" (basa rokuprofita) to the "young" (vaduku), he knowingly or unwittingly invites the ambitious young visionaries in his Church to take more initiative than before.

An example of the influence of subordinate prophets on Bishop Mutendi was the latter's involvement in a boundary dispute between the Rozvi and Duma tribes - a conflict which will be discussed in detail in Volume 4. Bishop Mutendi, in this particular case, contested the ruling of the District Commissioner in Bikita which placed his headquarters under the jurisdiction of the Duma instead of the Rozvi chief, as it had been in the past. This dispute led to a trial in the supreme court - with the future of Zion City in the balance over a period of several months. During this phase of uncertainty and tension at Zion City the ZCC prophets prophesied each morning at the tabero prayer meeting. Their main aim was to provide divine confirmation of action already taken by the "man of God"
Yet their explicit support of Mutendi's actions, their regular call for Zionists to intercede on behalf of the Rozvi chief involved and their foretelling of problems which their bishop would face in the future had a directing influence on the entire community at Zion City. By giving a "divine touch" to the expectations of ZCC followers in the disputed area, the prophets were in fact putting up a stiffer resistance to government decisions and displaying deeper involvement in a tribal dispute than Mutendi himself may have thought wise at the time. Whereas the "man of God" at one stage could have compromised by accepting the Duma chief's authority in an effort to save his precious "Zion City", the prophets were instrumental in bringing about the kind of uncompromising action which eventually led to Mutendi's move to Gokwe.

It appears as if the inheriting son or sons of a deceased founder-leader are often subjected to considerable pressure by senior officials. Such pressure may derive from latent tensions which did not come to a head during the leader's life; it may merely be an initial phase of "testing" the leadership qualities of the successor; or it may reflect permanent changes in group control, as a result of which the regional elders more or less dictate to the deceased's heir. It was apparent in Johane Maranke's movement that of the three inheriting sons, the two juniors, Makebo and Judah, seldom dominated the proceedings at Church meetings in a decisive way. On occasion Makebo took his pregnant wife for "treatment" to the "maternity" of the well-known healer-prophetess, Mai Febi. When Makebo's wife failed to comply with the rules of the healer-prophetess, Makebo was admonished as if he himself was a novice in and not the leader of the Apostolic Church. This reversal of authority roles did not lead to a questioning of Mai Febi's loyalty, nor did it seriously affect Makebo's position, for it was accepted at the time that Makebo was still more or less a "leader in training". He was expected to assert greater authority only as he grew older and gained experience. On the other hand an inheriting leader like Bishop David Masuka Jr has over a period of many years failed to establish an assertive leadership that could unite the factions of his father's Church which had virtually fallen apart. In an effort to retain control over those followers still loyal to him, Masuka Jr invariably had to give way to pressures from senior office-bearers. In 1972, for example, when Masuka supported the idea of forming an African Independent Churches' Conference (Fambidzano) and
had already made known his intention of participating in the new venture, the suspicions of only a few office-bearers caused him to drop his involvement in spite of his personal convictions. Zionist Bishop Makamba had to contend with similar pressures over the same issue. Some of his regional leaders threatened to break away if he continued supporting the drive to achieve greater ecumenism in an inter-Church Conference. Being in a much more commanding position than Masuka Jr, he refused to compromise and eventually persuaded all his followers to accept the validity of a Conference of which he had meanwhile become a founder member.

In contrast to the Spirit-type Churches, where a central creed provides the means whereby subordinates can bring pressure to bear on the main leader, in the Ethiopian-type Churches the possibility of counteracting the control of the principal leader is built into the leadership structure. The position of the Topia warden, as mentioned above, and that of the Chibarirwe minister are vested with sufficient power for the top officials in these Churches to have a curbing influence on the activities of the principal leader. As an active and respected man who from the start could count on the loyalty of most followers in key positions, Bishop Gavure could afford to grant wide jurisdiction to his district wardens (vaongamiri). His natural authority and leadership potential enabled the Topia bishop to make full use of initiatives generated at district level. He could give way to pressures within the leadership hierarchy when these were justified, without losing his overriding authority, as when he had to compromise on the size of the Church building at his homestead and the duration of its construction.

The leadership of the Rev. Sengwayo, President of the Chibarirwe, was of a different nature altogether. Because he did not consistently take the initiative in evangelistic campaigns, the expanding Church virtually outgrew his authority. Without a centralized Church base from where he could issue regular directives, he became wholly dependent on his influential ministers who, during Church Conferences, constituted the decision-making power in the Church. Instead of giving a decisive lead on important policy and financial issues he increasingly assumed the role of a benevolent father figure who attended important meetings to take note of and condone what in reality was effective control by his subordinate ministers.

When it comes to the influence of the entire Church group on its leader, the prophet is more directly affected than the Ethiopian-type leader. In this connection Sundkler states: "The expectation of
his people that he [the prophet] will be able to perform miracles, makes ever higher demands on the leader and propels him further along the marshy path of Bantu syncretism, especially through belief in witchcraft and sorcery with its corollary, divining.\textsuperscript{117} Although it is true that the prophetic leader is sensitive to and tries to meet the requirements of his followers, with whom he is in regular contact, it does not of necessity follow that this process causes him to become increasingly syncretistic in his activities. The growing demands of actual and prospective followers can cause a prophet to resort, for example, to sleight-of-hand techniques\textsuperscript{118} to remove witchcraft medicines from afflicted people or from their homestead. But it can also lead to the introduction of faith-healing techniques which are aimed at a confrontation between the essence of Christianity and the traditional world-view, and not merely at a convenient adaptation to old practices.

(d) Group integration

In the relationship between the leader and his followers there are a number of integrating factors which bolster the Church against the ever present threat of schism. Of these I mention a few. It is important for the leader to provide the kind of institutional context in which his followers can \textit{feel at home}. This is achieved through imaginative adaptation of Church practices to traditional customs. In other words, the Church group must have a distinctive African mould which distinguishes it from the Mission Church or other Independent Churches. This fosters a sense of belonging to a group which is felt to be unique and of which one can be proud. Church practices must not only be attuned to the typical needs of people but should also have entertainment value in order to ease the tensions of a multiracial society and provide an attractive alternative to the often drab circumstances of rural life. Some leaders go out of their way to provide interesting weekend programmes, or to introduce new songs and dances to keep their followers satisfied.

It is also common practice for leaders to \textit{strengthen ingroup loyalties} by focusing on antagonisms of outgroups - be they other Churches or the European community in general. Anti-European sentiments are exploited in particular by senior \textit{vaPostori} preachers, who are fond of preaching about the discrimination by whites.

\textsuperscript{117} Sundkler, 1961, p. 156.
\textsuperscript{118} Daneel, 1974, p. 266.
against the now elevated house of Ham. The actual or supposed mistakes of white missionaries may become a rallying point when a leader consistently exaggerates these and contrasts them with the "constructive" alternatives he himself presents. A typical example is the Chibarirwe, where the reaction of Mission Church members disciplined for beer-drinking and sexual misconduct became the cornerstone of a new movement. But the outgroup can, of course, also consist of active participants in traditional religion. Here the strife of Bishop Mutendi with the messengers and priests of the High-God cult, as well as the general opposition of prophetic leaders to the traditional doctors (nganga) come to mind. In the towns some prophets keep their small groups together by preaching against the evils of beer halls and by forbidding close association with those who frequent such places.

Much depends on the leader's ability to present his followers with a forceful and simple message. Faced with a comprehensive, wide-ranging and seemingly complex Christian message, people understand and respond to the challenge of a few basic issues. Bishop Mutendi, for instance, moulded his Church around the apocalyptic message of an imminent judgement, "Jordan" baptism and the centrality of the work of the Holy Spirit. The technique was simple: that of convincing people of an imminent catastrophe and simultaneously providing the solution, i.e. joining his Church via "Jordan" Whereas the apocalyptic message and its solution have a direct bearing on the recruitment of new members and on cohesion during the first phase of Church expansion, the leader who wants to retain his following in the long run must be capable of providing long-term goals to keep inspiring and motivating his flock. An apocalyptic message not supplemented or superseded by concrete objectives for day-to-day life easily causes the kind of disappointment and frustration which sooner or later leads to defection. Mutendi's building of a faith-healing colony, his involvement in education, his building projects in his "Holy City", his "mutual aid" systems in the agricultural field and his encouragement of followers to engage in master-farming largely contributed to sustained group-integration. It appears to me that this is one of the most important reasons why the ZCC did not experience any serious, large-scale schisms during the lifetime of its founder leader The Ndaza Zionist bishops, like David Masuka and Andreas Shoko, whose initial message was similar to Mutendi's but who did not

follow it up with comprehensive working programmes for their followers, had to contend with schisms of a greater magnitude than did Mutendi.

The ability of a secessionist leader who breaks away from a Mission or an Independent Church to be decisive on the point of dispute determines his success in persuading others to follow suit. He must present potential dissenters with clear options, such as worshipping on the Sabbath instead of on Sundays, or accepting monogamy instead of polygamy, etc. Fellow secessionists must be persuaded that there is sufficient biblical justification for the move. Once the new group is formed a code of conduct, distinguishing the new "kereke" from the old, must be introduced. This may consist in the wearing of new badges or uniforms, or some Old Testament laws on what should or should not be eaten. Very often the code of the new group does not deviate significantly from that of the parent body. Many schismatic Churches actually have very similar codes. But as long as adherents are convinced – and they invariably are – of the uniqueness of their own code and they adhere to it properly, they tend to consolidate their ranks. The solidarity of course only lasts until another influential and ambitious prospective leader sets the whole proliferating process in motion once more.

* * * *

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that one can hardly consider group integration in Independent Churches without mentioning the binding power of group-consolidating dreams. These dreams are as important for the individual's demonstration of loyalty to the principal leader or group as are call-dreams for divine confirmation of an office-bearer's appointment. Depending on the senior leader's authority, prestige and mystical powers, as well as the expectations of his/her followers, dreams are dreamt and narrated according to stereotyped patterns. In Volume 2 I classified group consolidating dreams into control dreams and loyalty dreams. I shall briefly mention the main characteristics of each.

Control dreams are mostly recounted by senior officials in the semi-Messianic movements, who are in close touch with a principal leader like Mutendi or Maranke. Manipulative directives, advice or recriminations can be communicated by the main leader to these subordinate officials over a great distance. The validity of such

120 Daneel, 1974, pp. 154-162.
dream directives is reflected in the obedient response of the dreamer as well as his public narration thereof. The principal leader is usually considered capable of mystical retaliation if his appearance in a dream with a specific request or directive is ignored. In the two above-mentioned examples of the ZCC ministers Matevure and Makore, both men returned to Zion City after having transgressed ZCC laws and having experienced dreams in which they were more or less admonished by the bishop himself. Matevure was convinced that Mutendi's spirit had followed him to call him back to Zion City. This dream was considered important enough to be canonized in the ZCC Rungano as a warning to others. In Chapter 40:11 Matevure's dream experience is described as a miracle, a disciplinary measure (shamhu) imposed by God Himself for Matevure's act of "running away from the conference." Mutendi himself was careful to attribute such events to the power of God - a distinction not always made by his followers.

While Mutendi was alive control dreams were often narrated by office-bearers during sermons at Moriah during the annual festivals; they were also recounted during Church council sessions, and the "man of God" was then asked for forgiveness. This strengthened the belief in Mutendi's ability to detect mistakes over distance and to prevent a repetition of such errors through control (or warning and cautionary) dreams. Mutendi seldom commented in detail on such dreams, but was always prepared to pardon the "culprit" if he thought the gesture was sincere. The validity of such control dreams was never questioned. Mutendi realized only too well that they formed one of the pivots of his authority and influence.

Both Mutendi and Johane are believed to have continued influencing their followers posthumously through control dreams. Whether alive or dead, a direct link between leader and God is assumed. The difference is that the living leader's spirit is supposed to appear in dreams while he is physically at Church headquarters or elsewhere. Although the deceased leader may also be referred to as a spirit in dream appearances, he is believed to visit the dreamer in his entire being.

Baptist Chipanya had the following to say about his deceased Church leader:

"Johane is not really dead. He simply rests, and he knows what goes on in his Church because he visits us in dreams and gives

121 Ibid., p. 154f.
leaders and fission dynamics. He came to me in a dream and encouraged me to preach his message and convert the people. When I make mistakes he causes me to be ill. This once happened to me when I thought of leaving the Church. I fell seriously ill and Johane appeared in a dream with a warning that I shall not leave his Church...."

This kind of dream experience featuring a deceased leader clearly reflects the influence of traditional beliefs. Just as the ancestral spirit is endowed with mystical powers, so is the deceased semi-Messianic leader. Due to charismatic talents, a special relationship with God and a wide sphere of influence, the powers of a deceased Johane and Mutendi are more spiritually inspiring and much more far reaching than those of the average mudzimu. In the same way that the ancestral spirit imposes his will on his descendants through affliction and warning dreams, the deceased Church leader can cause illness and "follow it up with dreams" to reaffirm his authority and prevent his flock from straying.

Although control dreams of the kind described above are not uncommon in the Ndaza Zionist and Ethiopian-type Churches, they are less prominent. There are indications that some members of the Ethiopian-type Churches also expect dream directives from their deceased principal leaders. Nevertheless, such dreams are seldom narrated in public and therefore do not have the same group-consolidating impact as in the semi-Messianic movements.

The main theme in loyalty dreams is that the leader was "seen", that there was some sign of his divine calling which further convinced the dreamer of his superior's mission, or that through "seeing" the leader during a period of illness, the dreamer was assured of complete recovery. Common as these dreams are (once again in the semi-Messianic movements), the persons inclined to witness about them are ambitious young office-bearers whose promotion depends on a show of right-mindedness, or senior officials who have themselves acquired positions of wide influence and therefore constitute the "break-away" potential in the Church. Since these men are easily suspected of wanting to cause a rift in the Church through succession, they often resort to public accounts of what I call "loyalty dreams". Such narratives without fail assign the principal leader the main role, with the obvious implication of the dreamer's submission to his authority.

A typical example of a loyalty dream was noted in the case of Ezekiah Mudzova. He was promoted to the position of ZCC minis-
Leader and followers

Leader (mufundisi) in the sixties and at the time dreamt in accordance with his status in the Church. Prior to his promotion his dreams had consisted of observing angels singing Zionist songs. He also saw Mutendi standing on a rock. "His whole being," said Ezekiah, "was so radiantly white that I could hardly look at him. But he only looked at me without speaking." Shortly after his promotion Ezekiah again dreamt of Mutendi. This time he stood, together with a relative - also a minister - next to Mutendi on the same rock. "We discussed Church matters with Mutendi and prayed together. This dream was a sign of Mutendi's power and his being the leader of God's word." The latter dream, no doubt, was also a confirmation of Ezekiah's newly acquired status.

Loyalty dreams often enough also imply a repudiation of competing Church groups. The anti-Zionist theme, for instance, is a regular feature of the dreams narrated in Maranke Apostle circles. In this movement with its exclusivist claims to salvation, the expansion of Zionism is hardly appreciated and not likely to be admired. This intolerant attitude presumably derives from the realization in Apostolic circles that Zionist success is based on a campaigning strategy similar to their own. It virtually places individual vaPostori, who had formerly been Zionists, in the unenviable position of having to renounce Zionism or leave the Apostolic movement. Baptist Mudakunze, a former Zionist, who was tempted to return to the Zionist fold, recounted his dream experience as follows:

"I was a Zionist before I became an Apostle. Long ago this was the true Church because it started in this country before Johane's vaPostori. When I became ill I thought of going back to Zion, but I then had a dream which prevented me from going. I observed God judging the world. I saw Him leaving the Zionist Church in the pit of fire where all its members were burnt. The Zionist Church came from the East and made straight for the pit of fire. I was frightened and cried out. I was sad to learn that one could not get eternal life as a Zionist. Later a voice came to me in another dream asking me if I have known Christ to buy land. From that day I know that this [AACJM] was the proper Church, and I started recovering from my illness."

In the first dream God Himself facilitated Mudakunze's choice, and there appeared to be no way in which he could oppose divine authority. His sadness about the lack of salvation in Zion indicated
his acceptance of Apostolic doctrine, which is exclusive in "reserving" salvation for vaPostori. Mudakunze's second dream reveals his identification with one of the typical Apostolic group attitudes, namely the tendency to criticize the Zionists as "rich landowners", who are distracted from true religion because of their worldly pursuits. Formerly there tended to be more "master farmers" and owners of farms in the Purchase Areas among Zionists than in the Apostolic movement. Mudakunze's tacit reference to the land issue signalled not only his acceptance of the Apostolic condemnation of his former Church group, but also his progressive identification with the deepest sentiments of the vaPostori.

Domestic and ingroup conflicts are also expressed and dealt with through dreams. In Chingombe some of the Zionist and Apostolic preachers encouraged Church members not only to confess their sins during the opening phase of a Church service but also to recount recent dreams which they regarded as important. There were, however, no strict rules in this connection, with the result that dream accounts and the interpretation by prophets at times occurred spontaneously in between sermons or whenever some person felt inspired. In the Ndaza Zionist Churches it is actually a familiar sight to see prophets discussing and interpreting the dream accounts of individuals at a little distance from the congregation throughout an afternoon service.

A distinction should be made between control and loyalty dreams as more or less standardized stereotypes within the Spirit-type Churches, and the dreams dealing with subjective domestic or ingroup tensions. The former category of dreams reveals a correct attitude towards the Church; these are the dreams remembered by Church members as their own "testimonials of loyalty" and the dreams exploited by principal Church leaders to achieve group cohesion. The second category of dreams is more directly concerned with the constantly changing conditions and conflicts in the family or local congregational context. They are not standardized and are narrated with numerous variations. Nevertheless they serve the important purpose of bringing submerged frustrations to the surface, thus providing a psychologically wholesome release of group tensions. As such this latter type of dream is no less valuable as a group-integrating factor than the first category. Yet such dreams are conveniently forgotten as soon as they have served their purpose.

In the Independent Churches, where there are hardly any inhibitions about dreams as a recognized channel of communication
between God and the Church and between senior leader and followers, the imaginative, charismatic leader who succeeds in "harnessing" the dreamlife of his followers, the one who "canonizes" special control and loyalty dreams, is best able to achieve stability and cohesion amongst his followers through this medium. Through "canonized" dreams, repeatedly mentioned in sermons throughout the Church, the recognized dream stereotypes are etched into the thought processes and the collective subconscious of the leader's followers. As a result of such mind-conditioning Church members virtually dream according to expectation and type, whereby the seal of divine approval is placed on group cohesion.
Table 6  Overall assessment (RSS and CSR) Leadership and Education in the Ethiopian-type Churches

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<th>Educational Standard</th>
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Leadership and Fission Dynamics
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<th>Ndaza n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>AACJM n</th>
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<th>FEC n</th>
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<th>ARC n</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td>a) to heal and exorcise spirits</td>
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<td>b) to heal, exorcise spirits and cause rain to fall</td>
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<td>c) to heal, exorcise spirits and walk on fire</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) like Jesus which exceeds that of Biblical Apostles</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Has great power to heal and lead people spiritually</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Has ordinary Church authority to lead his flock (no mystical powers mentioned)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Views expressed by IC members on the special powers of their principal leaders.
Table 8  Overall Assessment (RSS and CSR)  The views of Mission Church and Independant Church members regarding Mutendi's mystical powers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mutendi's powers</th>
<th>Church Affiliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DRC n %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>7 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Positive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Mutendi can cause rain to fall and women to bear children (chibereko)</td>
<td>32 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Mutendi cannot 'make' rain but he can 'give' children (chibereko)</td>
<td>25 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Negative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Mutendi cannot 'make' rain nor can he 'give' chibereko</td>
<td>41 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Mutendi cannot make rain. He misleads the people</td>
<td>5 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Don't know</td>
<td>18 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>185 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powers attributed to leader</td>
<td>Church Affiliation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ZCC n %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Yes. Leader has definite mediating function between man and God</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Forgiveness of sins only through leader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) He is like Jesus to us messenger of God</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) He is like Jesus, but his mediation is subordinate to that of Christ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) He is a real mediator/is nearer to God than us/leads us to heaven/places us with God</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) In so far as he teaches us and intercedes for us in prayer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) No. Only Christ acts as real mediator and Church leader cannot be compared to Him</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42 99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10  CSR Views expressed by IC members on relationship between principal leader and subordinate officials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion Expressed</th>
<th>Church Affiliation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ZCC</td>
<td>Ndaza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Emphasis on complete subordination of junior official to main leader</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Office-bearers must respect and 'fear' main leader; obey him completely as law-giver</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Main leader has simba guru (mystical powers) absolute authority; he delegates divine powers to subordinates</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Emphasis on brotherly co-operation It is a relation of mutuality in faith (absolute powers or authority not mentioned)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART II: LEADERSHIP AND THE SCHISOMATIC PROCESS
THE CAUSES OF FISSION

As elsewhere in Africa, leaders of the Shona Independent Churches have been engaged in the constructive task of creating the kind of religious circumstance in which Africans can feel at home. At the same time they have been caught up in a process which continues to be a living testimony not only to the mistakes and inconsistencies of the Mission Churches but, in a more general sense, to man's inability to realize in this existence that elusive unity which the Church, as the one and undivided Body of Christ, is supposed to represent. The endless and seemingly casual proliferation of new Church groups, balanced out to some extent by the extinction of others, has baffled observers and led to numerous theories on the causes of fission. It should be stated at the outset that whereas the two chapters in this section are an attempt to analyse and define some of the main features of the on-going schismatic process - with special reference to the role of leading figures - no attempt will be made to deal exhaustively with existing theories on causation. Instead of dealing at length with the background influences which contributed to the so-called "classic schism" in which an identifiable group of believers breaks away from the parent body after a period of strife and tension - or interpreting schismatic trends predominantly as a "reaction to Missions" as quite a number of observers have done, I shall attempt an analysis from within the Independent Church context. This is based on my own gut-level response to unfolding schismatic situations in which I have observed the activities of defecting office-bearers over a period of time. Such a description is more illuminating than a purely historic analysis based on narratives of schismatic events in the distant past.

First of all I shall attempt a brief survey of the theological and non-theological factors determining the dynamics of fission. The schismatic process itself will then be discussed - with reference to some case studies - as well as its impact on Church and society.
Finally some suggestions are made as to how the continued fragmentation of Churches could be viewed and curbed.

The following discussion will slightly overlap the first chapter of Volume 2, which deals with the process of Church growth, more specifically the sub-section on the reaction to Missions. In addition a number of new perspectives are developed which shed light on the process of fragmentation in Independent Churches, quite apart from any presupposed or actual reaction to Missions.

Investigators have, on the whole, tried to reduce the complexity of causes of Independentism to a few background influences. Sundkler, Balandier and Andersson, for instance, lay great stress on the socio-political situation within which these movements arise. The fundamental causes are sought in social injustice arising from a policy of segregation, alienation of tribal land and racial tensions generally. According to Sundkler, Separatism in South Africa has been to a very large extent the result of the colour bar within the Christian Church.\(^1\) The tightening squeeze on Africans through land legislation is seen as a direct cause of the increasing numbers and membership of Independent Churches. Considering the massive concentration of Independent Churches in South Africa in contrast to other African countries, Sundkler’s observation appears to be valid. Yet it should be kept in mind that in some African countries the emergence and growth of Independent Churches have been more marked after political Independence was achieved and restrictive legislation abolished. This seems to indicate that adverse socio-political factors do not necessarily feature prominently in the formation of these Churches.

Andersson relates the Messianic movements in the Congo to the need for political expression,\(^2\) and Balandier reminds us that this phenomenon originated in a "colonial situation" where the colonized are subjected and discriminated against by the colonizers.\(^3\) Lucy Mair goes so far as to call the Independent Churches "a simple correlation between the appearance of the cults and the absence of political representation"\(^4\) Hence these Churches are characterized primarily as movements of political protest against a background of colonial paternalism and the rise of African nationalism.

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1 Sundkler, 1961, p. 37
2 Andersson, 1958, passim.
3 Balandier, 1953, pp. 41-66.
1. THEOLOGICAL FACTORS

The term "theological factors" is used in this field in a wide sense to indicate specifically Church issues, as opposed to the socio-political, ethnic and cultural factors which constitute the kind of environment in which the Church functions. Complete compartmentalization is obviously impossible because of the continual interaction between internal, institutional and external influences. Nevertheless, internal ecclesiastic features such as the strategy of Missions, concepts of the Church, doctrinal disputes, and so on should be isolated for descriptive purposes for the sake of clarifying the impulses generating Independency from within the Church.

(a) Reaction to Missions?

Quite a number of observers have related the emergence of Independent Churches directly to the mistakes and failures of Mission Churches. "At the heart of this whole movement," suggested Stephen Neill, "directly or indirectly, will be found the sin of the white man against the black. It is because of the failure of the white man to make the Church a home for a black man that the latter has been fain to have a Church of his own." The very title of Ogot's treatment of this subject - in a book called A place to feel at home - is indicative of a similar approach. In his broad study of this phenomenon across the entire continent of Africa, and in an effort to postulate a representative theory for the rise of religious independence, Barrett reduces the complexity of causative factors to the basic reaction of Africans to Missions. He defines the root cause of Independency as

"a failure in sensitivity, the failure of missions at one small point to demonstrate consistently the fullness of the biblical concept of love as sensitive understanding towards others as equals, the failure to study or understand African society, religion and psychology in any depth, together with a dawning African perception from the vernacular scriptures of the catastrophic nature of this failure and of the urgent necessity to remedy it in order that Christianity might survive on African

6 Welbourn and Ogot, 1966.
Barrett then elaborates on the threefold failure of Missions under the three themes of *philadelphia*, Africanism and biblicalism. In the first place there was a lack of love (the biblical concept of *philadelphia*) and a distinctly paternalistic attitude towards converts; the lack of sympathetic contact led to incomplete understanding of the whole traditional background (Africanism); and, thirdly, the missionaries generally failed to discern the many parallels between African society and biblical faith as the exceptional few, like Bruno Gutmann of Tanganyika, had done. Instead of christianizing traditional customs, these were deprecated or proscribed for converts.  

One does not want to detract from the relevance of this theory or its obvious bearing on the origins of Independentism. It should be placed in a proper perspective, however, for the sake of a balanced appraisal of the on-going schismatic process and growth of the movements concerned. An inherent weakness of the "reaction to Mission" theory lies in the apparent assumption that the phenomenon of Independentism originates from within the Mission Churches in Africa. The very title of Barrett's book, *Schism and Renewal*, and his emphasis on the failure of Missions, create the impression that we are dealing with groups of people, most of whom at some stage or another actually belonged to one or more of the numerous Mission Churches. Sundkler's use of the term "Separatism" and his description of schisms in South Africa leave one with a similar impression. The initial schism is mostly preceded by a period of expectation, followed by deliberate preparation for schism from within. This in turn leads to a brief or prolonged secession crisis during which the seceding leader and his or her followers leave the parent body. In cases where such classic schisms take place within a Mission Church context, it seems as if the schismatic leader indeed exploits the reactionary factor to acquire a following. Turner's findings in West Africa also point in this direction. He reports that the Church of the Lord (Aladura) drew approximately 75% of its members from the "older Churches" and only 14% from paganism or Islam.

7 Barrett, 1968, p. 156.
8 Ibid., p. 157.
Among the Shona tribes, however, the situation is different. The life histories of the principal prophetic and Ethiopian-type leaders do in fact reflect a certain element of reaction. As mentioned in Volume I, Bishop Mutendi of the *Zion Christian Church* resented the fact that his spells of spirit-possession were negatively appraised by missionaries as traditional *shavi* possession and not as a sign of inspiration by the Holy Spirit.\(^{11}\) Johane Maranke, leader of the largest prophetic movement in Zimbabwe, accused the white missionaries of withholding the essential gospel message of the Holy Spirit from Africans,\(^{12}\) while President Sengwayo of the *African Congregational Church (Chibarirwe)* reacted sharply against what he regarded as discriminatory measures by the missionaries in charge of the theological training centre where he was studying.\(^{13}\) In spite of these reactions the initial growth of the Shona Independent Churches did not involve any significant exodus from the Mission Churches. *Classic schisms, as described by Sundkler simply did not take place.* None of the first *Ndaza* (holy cord) Zionist leaders, nor Mutendi himself, actually prepared for schism from within a Mission Church and then broke away with a whole faction of Mission Church members during an identifiable secession crisis; neither did the Rev. Sengwayo of the *African Congregational Church* or Bishop Chidembo of the *First Ethiopian Church* Johane Maranke's Apostolic movement did in fact expand quite rapidly, but its growth followed the same pattern as that of most other Shona Independent Churches in that the leading figures had to travel far and wide on protracted campaigns, recruiting individuals and families from a wide variety of ecclesiastic backgrounds, particularly from strictly pagan circles, rather than drawing great numbers from any single denomination during a relatively short period.\(^{14}\) The important point at this juncture is that overemphasis of the reaction to Missions, *obscures the missionary outreach of the Shona Independents and minimizes the creative response of these Churches to the gospel.* It creates the impression that these movements exist and grow by virtue of a justifiable but negative reaction to Missions, as if they could only thrive in a parasitic, "sheep-stealing" manner. This is entirely misleading: as I have pointed out elsewhere some of

12 Ibid., p. 321.
13 Ibid., p. 355.
14 Ibid., See chapters 4 and 5 for an historical account of the rise of the Shona Independent Churches.
the Independent Churches have become missionary institutions in their own right\textsuperscript{15} and they attract numerous people through adapted religious practices\textsuperscript{16} which form part of an authentically African response to the gospel — a response largely free from the compulsive urge generated by reaction. A statistical analysis of a representative number of members of the major Shona movements bears out this point convincingly. \textit{Well over 60\% of all the Shona Independents} (interviewed in rural and urban areas and at Church headquarters) \textit{had never given full allegiance to any Mission Church}\textsuperscript{17} Although an element of reaction and separatism undeniably remains, this percentage provides sufficient grounds to qualify the Shona Independent Churches, at least, as primarily \textit{missionary movements} rather than "separatist" or "proselytizing" groups. It appears therefore that the "reaction to Missions" theory, valid as it is when it comes to the early origins of Independentism and obvious cases of secession from Mission Churches, is somewhat less significant when the continued growth of Independent Churches is considered. Moreover, this theory does not provide a viable interpretation of the fissiparous tendencies within these movements. It would in fact be pointless to trace all the weaknesses, inconsistencies, lack of co-operation and such negative factors as directly cause the hiving off of "new" groups within the existing movements to the mistakes of missionaries, as if they could be held responsible for a process in which they are not active participants.

(b) Western denominationalism and a limited ecclesiology

What confronted Africans right from the earliest introduction of Christianity was a confusing diversity of Churches. The example from the outset was that of a \textit{divided Church}. In addition, the impression was given that Churches belonged to nations. Africans concluded that if it was possible to have an "English", a "Dutch", a "German" or a "Swiss" Church, an all-African Church was fully justified. It was not so much that the diversity of Western denominations triggered schisms, but it certainly provided the type of ecclesiastical setting which in the eyes of Africans justified separatism and the development of their own Churches.

\textsuperscript{15} Daneel, 1980, passim.
\textsuperscript{16} Daneel, 1974, pp. 101,353.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., pp. 18,48.
Aggressive recruitment techniques and competition between mission agencies further aggravated matters. In areas where there was an obvious lack of co-operation and comity arrangements between Mission Churches, the image of the Church was most certainly distorted. Bearing in mind the high incidence of Independentism in South Africa and the fact that this country has one of the most over-denominationalized mission fields in the world, there appears to be some correlation between intensified interchurch competition and the rise of Independent Churches. In this respect one can agree with Martin's observation: "It is perhaps not accidental that African prophetism and messianism developed so strongly in countries where missionary endeavour became, for many Churches and societies, a matter of winning adherents for their particular denomination rather than calling Africans to become disciples of Christ." Martin also contends that the importation of a divided Church in Africa created the impression that everyone could interpret the Bible according to his own ideas, without reference to a specific creed or tradition. As a result people felt encouraged to establish their own "Churches" in the same way that one establishes clubs. Protestant theology, moreover, has not provided a sound theological basis for a doctrine of the Church as the undivided body of Christ on earth which transcends tribal, national and racial barriers. As a result there was insufficient backing from missionary practice and theological entrenchment to stave off the emergence and proliferation of African "family" and "tribal" Church groups.

Once again it should be emphasized that the Mission Churches cannot be held entirely responsible for the limited and invariably distorted ecclesiology (in the sense of concept or doctrine of the Church) which is to be found at the very core of Independentism. The vast majority of secessionist leaders heading the thousands of splinter groups in Africa have never been exposed to educational opportunities or the theological influence of Mission Churches to such an extent that one could expect a sound ecclesiology in its Western or Protestant configuration. Whatever the reasons for the incomplete understanding of the nature of the Church in the Independent Churches, its conditioning influence on the process of fission is fairly obvious.

To many Shona people, for instance, a kereke in the first place means an association of people "belonging" to one or other leader.

18 Martin, 1964, p. 165.
19 Ibid., p. 166.
Owing to insufficient perspective on the Church as the body of Christ, sometimes caused by a weakened Christology, the concern for unity and co-operation is often lacking or superseded by other considerations. The formation of a new kereke or the switch of allegiance from one group to another is therefore experienced not primarily as a retrogressive act damaging the body of Christ, but as progressive because it means the improvement of the previous group's rules and is, by implication, pleasing to God. Add to this the general lack of historical perspective on the development of Christianity through the ages and it becomes understandable that many Africans distinguish between Churches primarily as groups who either allow or prohibit beer-drinking, who worship with open or closed eyes, who "have" or "do not have" the Spirit, and so on. It is this preoccupation with the external features and rules of the Church that causes many people to consider the process of hiving off and forming a new Church merely as the legitimate introduction of yet another set of regulations by yet another leader.

However important the secessionists themselves may consider their own new codes to be, the fact is that few of the disputes triggering schisms touch upon theological issues of any great depth, such as the triune nature of God, the mediation of Christ, the nature of salvation and the like. It is not the subtleties of complex doctrinal statements and distinctions so common in Western Christendom which are really at stake in the widespread process of Independent Church proliferation. The criterion for success in a splinter Church is not a comprehensive doctrinal statement, systematically presented and convincingly argued. Nor is it in the first place the spiritual betterment of the participating dissidents. It lies in the ability of the schismatic leader to establish and consolidate his authority in the new group. If he can retain his following and inspire expansion of his kereke, God is considered to be blessing the newly founded movement.

(c) Disputes concerning Church doctrine and/or law

Many Shona secessionist leaders cite doctrinal disputes as the major cause of group disintegration and of their own formation of new Churches. In the Zionist movement the prohibition on beer-drinking and the question of worship on the sabbath or on Sunday have proved crucial issues in the debates preceding schisms. In the African Congregational Church (Chibarirwe) the acceptance of polygamy gave rise to serious objections from men like the Rev
Sibambo and the Rev Zvobgo, who eventually broke away to organize a "reformed" faith with stricter moral codes. 20

Bishop Peter Mutema gave the following account of the dispute which led to a breakaway from Bishop Masuka's Zion Apostolic Church and the formation of his Zion Sabbath Church:

"When I studied the Bible I found that the true day of rest was the one on which the Lord rested after He had created everything. I took my Bible to Bishop Masuka and discussed with him the difference between the sabbath and the Sunday. He explained that the sabbath day belonged to the Israelites and the Sunday to the Christians, because on that day the Lord Jesus had arisen from the dead. I told David that he was following the law of the Mission Churches! We counted the days from the Sunday and found the sabbath to be the seventh day. The Bible told me not to work on this day ... Bishop David and I parted in a friendly fashion. He said that if it [the formation of a new Church] was God's work it would grow, if not it would come to an end. The main differences between Masuka's and my Church is that he worships on Sundays and prohibits beer-drinking while we worship on the sabbath day and allow beer-drinking."

Peter Mutema's account reflects some typical features of the strife, defection and regrouping taking place in the Independent Churches. In the first place, there is a genuine desire to follow God's Word correctly. An objection to a given Church practice is considered to be biblically valid and sufficient justification for the founding of a new Church. This attitude is related to a somewhat legalistic approach to religion which tends to seek salvation in the strict observance of biblically defined codes, even if these are arbitrarily chosen and based on an incomplete understanding of the relationship between the Old and New Testaments. Although a number of other factors may also be at stake, the schismatic leader and his followers concentrate on the disputed doctrinal issue to such an extent that their own interpretation virtually becomes an absolute standard for proper Christian conduct. Such a preoccupation becomes a rallying point and a consolidating force in the new group, even in cases where it is deliberately introduced to obscure other, less honourable motivations for schism.

20 Daneel, 1971(a), pp. 197-365f.
Secondly, Mutema's accusation that Masuka was following a Mission Church law illustrates the tendency to capitalize on anti-European sentiments. The schismatic leader's success in winning a large following therefore hinges to some extent on the persuasion of potential followers that the new Church is going to be both "more biblical" and "more African" than the parent body.

Thirdly, Mutema's comments indicate that other motivations may also have been at work. His characterization of his own Church as "beer-drinking" versus Masuka's "non beer-drinking" group suggests that this issue may have been more significant than he was prepared to admit. As stated above, doctrinal differences are often the most disputed but least significant causes of schism. It is possible that Mutema, like many other office-bearers in beer-prohibiting churches, found his prospects of leadership promotion diminished as a result of his own use of beer. Consequently he deliberately introduced a doctrinal dispute as an excuse for the formation of a new movement with less stringent rules.

In the fourth place, it is clear from Mutema's comment that secession does not always lead to strained relations between the principal leader and the defector. It is known that Mutema remained on a good footing with Masuka and at times even made contributions to the latter's Church. Bishop Masuka's philosophic remark that Mutema's Church will grow if it is from God, indicates his recognition of the fact that his control over subordinate office-bearers has limitations. Mutema himself volunteered the information that Bishop Masuka actually consecrated him as bishop for his task in the Zion Sabbath Church.

(d) The process of individualization

Protestantism has always emphasized the importance of the individual's decision in accepting God and distinguishing between good and evil. Theologically correct as this emphasis was and still is in the God-man relationship, it became an aggravating factor in the undermining of religious authority once it was drawn into and misunderstood in the wider context of Western-African acculturation and the breakdown of tribal authority. For some at least the individual's right and duty to decide for himself on the basis of biblical evidence, became sufficient justification for questioning and drastically opposing the codes and sanctions of a particular group. On the one hand the prophetic or Ethiopian-type leader indeed replaced traditional values with Christian ones in the "new tribe"; on the
other hand the very essence of the new message he was propagating fostered a critical attitude in his followers which was likely to cause division if provoked. In the context of the "new tribe" the tendency to think and act individually certainly became much stronger than it had been in the old.

Closely linked to and stimulating the process of individualization was the availability of the Bible in the vernacular, an independent source which individuals could appeal to as a basis for both their group identity and their private convictions. Barrett actually indicated the direct correlation between an increased demand for spiritual independence in African communities and the publication of the Scriptures in the local language. At first the Mission had absolute control over the Scriptures and their interpretation was final. But unrestricted access to the Bible provided the African with an independent standard of reference, and one (especially the Old Testament) which seemed closer to his own society than that of the white man. A statistical analysis of 724 African tribes leads Barrett to the conclusion that "in tribes with portions [of Scripture] only, the probability of separatism being present is 56%, with New Testaments, it is 67%; and with complete Bibles it is 81%."\(^{21}\)

In any given schismatic situation it is difficult to determine the extent to which the above-mentioned theological factors influence the splintering process. It can be safely assumed, however, that behind the facade of a "doctrinal dispute" the more subtle influences of individualization, independent Bible interpretation and a limited understanding of ecclesiology create fertile soil for Independentism.

2. NON-THEOLOGICAL FACTORS

(a) Independent Church and African community

Important as theological factors are contributing to schism, they are often outweighed by non-theological influences. Mention has already been made of a partially conceptualized ecclesiology, caused by the physical presence of a large number of Western denominations and certain inherent weaknesses in the Mission Churches. An even greater force in determining a particular concept of the Church is the very nature of African society. The continual secession of Independent Churches reflects characteristics of the tradi-

\(^{21}\) Barrett, 1968, p. 131.
tional tribal structure, which indicates a strong tendency to graft traditional notions onto Church life. In the same way as a kin-group breaks away and attains independence after the death of the head of an extended family unit, a junior bishop breaks away with a number of followers after the death of his principal Church leader. Although such a move may be criticized and disputed by other members of the same movement, the sanction of customary law is subtly transferred to the ecclesiastic context and the creation of an autonomous or semi-autonomous Church group as yet another member of the extensive "family of Churches" is philosophically accepted. Because of the resemblance between the traditional extended family group and the Independent Church congregation— which invariably comprises a number of closely related individuals—the anticipation of the customary hiving-off process is common to both. Thus in many cases the traditional justification for secession tends to overshadow awareness of the Christian imperative of Church unity.

There are also distinct parallels between the average Shona village and Independent Church congregations. Shona villages are usually composed of a nuclear group of male family heads agnatically related to the kraalhead. The rest of the males are either his other cognatic kin, affines or "foreigners" (vatorwa). According to a survey of the villages in the Gutu district, only 21% of the homestead-heads were vatorwa—that is not related— to their kraalheads. With at least 45% of the homestead heads being agnatic kin (i.e. sons or younger brothers) of their kraalheads, the composition of the village community tends to support the kraalhead's authority. The non-related homestead heads sometimes form separate village sections, but they remain under the control of the headman. In the Independent Church congregation, as indicated above, the leader or senior officer-bearer also has a core of agnatic relatives in key positions. In so far as the Church's leadership hierarchy, its distribution and support of authority, run along similar lines as those of the village, it is not surprising that village segmentation will also leave an imprint on Independent Church life.

Village segmentation is a common feature in Shona society. It usually occurs after the death of a kraalhead, when some of the younger married sons prefer to start a new village of their own rather than live under the control of their eldest brother who succeeds to the position of the deceased father. Segmentation or kraal-splitting also takes place when a married male with an exceptionally large household, or with sufficient related and non-related fol-
Leadership and Fission Dynamics

lowers, wishes to establish a new village. Permission must be obtained from both the ward headman and the kraalhead. The ward headman allocates the new site, usually in close proximity to the parent village. It is to the ward headman (sadunhu, the "owner of the ward") in particular that loyalty is shown by the elder and new kraalheads. Thus friction and conflict in village communities can be solved through segmentation without impairing the cohesion of the wider ward community personified by the sadunhu. In this connection it should be remembered that to the Shona it is not the village that constitutes home but the ward (dunhu) with its large cluster of villages. The village was too often moved from one site to another to represent permanency. The chiefdom was not home because it was too wide and amorphous a concept for a man to grasp. But the dunhu was home:

"It was big enough for a man's children and his children's children to settle in; it was small enough to know everyone who lived in it. Within the dunhu boundaries a man could make use of the land for the purposes of his family unit .... Within the dunhu the people felt they belonged so closely together that they would help each other to cultivate their fields and build up their villages as a matter of course. They thought of themselves as one big, old family... The dunhu, the land and its people, and the invisible spiritual bonds with the ancestors who had lived and died there for generations, all this together made the intimacy of home." 22

Village segmentation, seen in the context of the ward, was therefore an effective device to bring in-group conflicts to a head and to virtually revise the distribution of authority in a constantly changing situation, thus maintaining the stability and cohesion of that sector of society which constituted home.

Situations of conflict or frustrated leadership, invariably caused by overstaffing in the leadership ranks of the Independent Churches and the subsequent blocking of promotion for junior office-bearers, are solved in similar fashion. As Bishop Gavure of the First Ethiopian Church stated: "If one of our congregations becomes too large and the office-bearers start bickering, we split it up into two congregations. It always helps! In this respect we resemble the kraalheads who cut up [gura-gura] their kraals." In other words, the

22 Holleman, unpublished Mangwende report.
Church bishop plays the role of a sadunhu by allowing segmentation in the sense of a redistribution of authority through a process of multiplying congregations within the wider framework of the entire Church. The latter, like the dunhu, constitutes the dimension of intimacy, a spiritual home, the stability of which requires continual protection. Such segmentation of congregations often inspires Church growth. A bishop may require a prospective leader of a new congregation to prove himself by recruiting sufficient followers to justify the existence of the envisaged Church group. The segmentation principle is also applied by some Independent Church leaders to district circuits. In the African Apostolic Church of Johane Maranke the division of circuits is a common practice, particularly when senior officials start pressing for new "Pentecost" centres in areas where large concentrations of congregations call for new regional meeting places. In such cases the incentive for expansion is also exploited by the principal leaders of the movement. During major conferences at Church headquarters those district officials who request greater autonomy at their respective district levels are challenged to "prove themselves" over a period of one or more years through expanded congregations and the ability to cater financially for mass meetings, as a condition for recognition of new district circuits.

Although in some cases this practice of "congregation" or "circuit splitting" proves to be a realistic solution, it is not always bound to the biblical concept of reconciliation. Animosity between officials often continues and may lead to a gradual severance of ties between the two remnants of a formerly united congregation, eventually culminating in the radical breakaway of the dissatisfied group from the parent body. When the village segmentation principle is insufficiently linked to biblical notions of Church unity and ecumenicity it easily leads to a climate in which a proliferation of congregations and, by implication, a multiplication of Churches are taken for granted.

In short, the traditional pattern of village segmentation has a twofold influence on Independent Churches. In a positive sense it provides the wise leader with a means of solving conflicts and stimulating Church growth, with group consolidation as a result. On the negative side this custom is perverted into a justification for the secessionist leader's severance of ties with the parent Church. Yet it is interesting to note that, even in the case of radical breakaways, the traditional notion of continued belonging to the wider family group - as the new village continues to belong to the ward (dunhu)
Leadership and Fission Dynamics

- still features in interchurch relations. Over the years the Zion Apostolic Church of Bishop Masuka, for instance, has suffered numerous schisms, which led to the founding of the above-mentioned Mutema's Zion Sabbath Church, Zachoe's Zion Protestant Church, Mtisi's Zion City, Kuudzerema's Zion Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ, Komboni's African Zion Church of Jesus and a host of others. All these groups are fully autonomous with their own headquarters and internal organizations. Nevertheless, there is still a general sense of belonging to the same spiritual home, originally founded by Bishop Masuka. Secessionist leaders still refer to this bishop as their "father", they send him contributions as signs of loyalty and attend the large Church festivals with some of their followers. During such joint meetings the casual observer would be entirely unaware of the wide representation of "Churches" and of the long background history of strife and fission. Such demonstrations of solidarity and brotherhood derive from both Christian impulses and the traditional sense of belonging to the dunhu which represents "home". In a sense one can say that traditional African society, with its urge to belong in an intimately known group - be it the extended family or a cluster of villages - contains the "seeds of ecumenism" which sporadically comes to light in the Independent Churches in spite of all the divisions and diversity.

(b) Leadership strife

Purely human considerations such as the urge to lead, to gain power, to acquire prestige and status and to widen one's influence, contribute to continual leadership strife, which is the root cause of schisms or individual defection. Virtually all principal Church leaders who have experienced a loss of membership through schisms complain about the inability of their vaduku ("young ones", i.e. subordinate office-bearers) to accept authority and their ambition to rise to ukuru (leadership). These leaders usually fail to concede that their own mistakes and failures aggravate the situations of tension and strife which often precede schisms. On the other hand, secessionist leaders tend to play down their deeper motives by citing a doctrinal dispute or the shortcomings of the principal leader as the main cause of their dissent. In reality, however, the prospective secessionist leader deliberately raises a doctrinal issue or searches for a weakness in the leader to justify his intended course of action.

The evidence of many of the Shona Zionist schisms shows that a struggle for power and a certain degree of dissociation by the secessionist faction from the main body was already under way by the time the doctrinal dispute or objection to the main leader's conduct was raised.

Both external and internal factors aggravate and perpetuate the Independent Church leadership struggle. Externally, there is the influence of Western culture, which stimulates leadership on the basis of competence and merit but, through its colonial-type setting, fails to provide sufficient opportunity for the fulfilment of leadership ambition. This kind of socio-political situation, as Sundkler and others have pointed out, stimulates Independentism. The tribal political system with its emphasis on inherited leadership and limited jurisdiction also fails to provide the scope required. With its numerous and widely differentiated leadership hierarchies, the Independent Church to some extent creates an outlet for those frustrated individuals who react against these circumstances. Over the years, for example, African school teachers, who were dismissed from the educational system because of their poor qualifications found their way into the Independent Churches. Yet not all of them fitted in well. Particularly those who felt themselves superior to their less educated and tradition-orientated superiors caused friction, which in some cases led to defection. This is a clear case of external circumstance leading to the inclusion in the Independent Church leadership hierarchies of people whose ambitions and expectations are not properly attuned to the full spectrum of religious activities or the conditions for promotion in these hierarchies, giving rise to leadership conflicts. Internally, a perpetual cause of strife is the combination of virtually irreconcilable leadership norms, both biblical and traditional, without accompanying clear-cut policies according to which conflicting leadership demands can be met. This is best illustrated in the appointment of office-bearers, the nature of leadership hierarchies and leadership succession.

(c) Office-bearers and leadership hierarchies

It has already been mentioned above\textsuperscript{24} that kinship plays such an important role in the appointment of office-bearers that at the congregational level at least, the Independent Churches can be called "family Churches". As a result the natural and traditional pat-

\textsuperscript{24} Infra, p. 40.
terns of authority tend to reassert themselves in this context. Church matters are family affairs and as such subject to the tensions generated in family circles. The predominance of kinship ties in the leadership hierarchies of congregations at times obscures the importance of spiritual growth and maturity as conditions for Church leadership.

Hence, a clear perception of biblical norms for such leadership is distorted. It therefore easily happens that a substantial number of officials in a given Church who hold positions of authority by virtue of kinship ties may have but scanty knowledge of biblical truth and the nature of Christ's Church. To them, no doubt, separatism and group division in the ecclesiastic sphere have the same connotation as village segmentation, and may be effected without much hesitation if considered necessary.

On the basis of studies of a number of IC leadership hierarchies in Chingombe it was argued that such leadership not only adapts itself to the old order but also transforms it in the creation of new patterns of authority. Nevertheless, the high incidence of kinship ties in leadership hierarchies, stimulates another tradition-oriented practice, namely the appointment of office-bearers for life. This in turn tends to block or retard leadership promotion on the basis of spiritual growth and experience in Church work.

Frustration is therefore generated by a leadership system which on the one hand keeps people in office on the basis of blood ties, and on the other seeks progress according to the biblical norms of exemplary moral conduct and spiritual maturity. As mentioned above, the solution to this problem is often sought in the splitting of congregations. Nonetheless individual office-bearers who find themselves hemmed in permanently by seniors and whose prospects for promotion virtually hinge on the death of a person holding higher office in the hierarchy concerned, often defect to form new groups or to join other Churches with better leadership prospects.

Another factor promoting secession is the emergence of charismatic and legal authority in the leadership hierarchy of some prophetic movements. At first the prophetic leader moves around a great deal, but as his following grows his attention is increasingly directed to organizational issues. As his Church becomes institutionalized he presents himself as a bishop and delegates his prophetic task to subordinate officials. These prophets have their own system of ranks, which seldom allows scope for promotion to

25 Infra, p. 43.
the office of bishop. Yet they represent the Church's charismatic authority and once they have attained positions of influence in the Church through faith-healing and other prophetic activities, they are in a position to bring pressure to bear on the bishop, ministers and preachers by citing the same source of inspiration - that is, the Holy Spirit - on which the bishop initially based his own prophetic activities. In this way prophets exercise considerable influence over the group's activities and at times challenge those officials vested with legal authority. Where such action places them on a collision course with their bishop, it gives rise to the kind of conflict which, if handled incorrectly, leads to expulsion or secession.

(d) Leadership succession

This subject was dealt with fairly extensively in chapter 2. It is therefore sufficient to mention briefly the main features of succession and its significance for fission.

Inherited leadership is one of the most characteristic ways in which the Independent Church adapts itself to African tradition. The customary ideal of chieftainship succession, which is bound to the leading house or houses of the politically dominant lineage, finds expression in the tendency of founder leaders of Independent Churches to reserve the future leadership of their followers for their close relatives, preferably their sons. Both at Church headquarters and in the nucleus of each congregation, the Independent Church resembles the lineage or family unit which accepts and confirms inherited religious authority. As the senior son of a deceased family head in the traditional context inherits both property and religious authority during the kugadzira ceremony - which elevates the deceased's spirit to ancestorhood - the Independent Church bishop's son inherits both his estate and the spiritual leadership of his father during post-burial ceremonies in honour of the latter. Just as the senior son is traditionally instated for life as ritual officiant on behalf of the family group, the succeeding son of a deceased bishop is expected to hold his inherited ecclesiastical office for life.

As was seen in the case of Johane Maranke, the IC leadership succession ceremonies actually resemble the traditional kugova nhaka (distribution of inheritance) and name-giving rituals. Here the

26 Infra, p. 76f.
integral relationship between Church and family was illustrated in the way Church property was treated as the deceased Johane's inheritable estate. The symbols of the deceased leader's authority, such as his staves and robes, were handed to his senior sons in a ceremony very similar to the traditional name-giving ritual. With the transfer of such symbols, it is as if the deceased's leadership qualities are conveyed to the succeeding son or sons, thus enabling the successor to proceed with the deceased's work. This explains to some extent the marked lack of concern about the qualifications, competence and experience of the inheriting leader(s). It is widely believed in the prophetic Churches, moreover, that the Holy Spirit - having directed this type of succession which literally "follows the blood" (kutevera ropa) of the first leader - will enable the new leader to act competently. The official sanction for such inherited leadership is usually found in the Jewish kingship and/or the succession of Eleazer to the position of his deceased father, Aaron. It seldom observes the Old Testament distinction between the royal and priestly leadership or the difference between religious leadership in the Old and New Testaments.

As mentioned above, whatever the justification for inherited leadership, this practice is the Achilles heel of the Independent Churches. In virtually all the major Churches a serious crisis arises soon after the principal leader's death. For example, after Bishop David Masuka's death the Zion Apostolic Church, the largest of the Ndaza movements in Zimbabwe, virtually fell apart. Bishop Mutendi's death was followed by the most serious succession crisis in the Zion Christian Church when the Rev Ruben Mutendi refused to accept his younger brother, Nehemiah, as successor to their deceased father. In many ways this schism, which will receive further attention in chapter 7, resembles the rupture of the Zion Christian Church in South Africa after the death of its founder leader, Enginasi Lekhanyane. It was also Johane's Maranke's death which triggered the first major schism in the African Apostolic Church, when Simon Mushati, senior prophet and Johane's maternal cousin, openly disputed the inherited leadership of Johane's sons.

As was evidenced in Masuka's Zion Apostolic Church, a succession crisis brings into the open tensions which may have existed for a long time. Senior leaders in outlying districts, who have developed a sense of "ownership" towards the members they converted, feel less bound by loyalty to the succeeding son than they did to the
founder leader himself. If local support for such a regional leader is strong, he may well break away with a number of congregations to form a new Church. Ironically, although such leaders usually dispute inherited leadership, once they have consolidated their own leadership positions they expect the previously disputed principle of succession to be applied after their own death. Having established their own autonomy they maintain a certain allegiance to the parent group which, as I have already mentioned, is reminiscent of a new village community establishing itself in the tribal ward.

As already pointed out, inherited leadership affects not only the top positions in Independent Churches, but the entire leadership hierarchy of particularly the Spirit-type movements. Upon the death of any office-bearer who is also a family-head, the oldest son is expected to inherit both the estate and the religious obligations of the deceased. However, instead of a paternal uncle acting on behalf of an inheriting son as would have been the case in the family unit, his deceased father’s junior in the leadership hierarchy is promoted to the vacant office. It has been argued that this practice, which virtually amounts to double succession, \(29\) carries the seeds of fission. Quite clearly, the fusion of old and new leadership norms, which entails leadership promotion according to divergent standards, implicitly incorporates conflict patterns into the Church’s leadership structure, creating a continual source of latent or manifest disharmony. As long as an inheriting son can muster the support of fellow believers on the basis of traditional sentiments when he claims religious authority in the Church as part of his inheritance (\(nhaka\)), and as long as this practice is not superseded by the consistent application of strictly Christian standards for leadership, the cohesion of Independent Church congregations will continue to be fragile and fission will remain an inherent disruptive force.

Here, then, we have one of the most potent sources of fission in the Independent Churches. Understandable as it is in terms of the African heritage, at its root one discerns human hubris, the need for prestige and recognition, something tangible to be perpetuated in the future generations of the family unit - even if this link between ecclesiastic performance and inheritance is forged at the expense of unity in Christ. Here, in an African guise, we have the attitude which Paul criticized in the Corinthians when he said: "Each of you says something different. One says, 'I follow Paul', another 'I follow Apollos'; another 'I follow Peter'; and another 'I

\(29\) Infra, p. 83.
follow Christ' Christ has been divided into groups..." (1 Cor. 1.12-13).

...
THE DEFECTION OF OFFICE-BEARERS

Sundkler analyses the dynamics of fission in the Independent Churches in three stages:

1. The initial secession, which involves the breaking away from a Mission, Ethiopian or Zionist Church;
2. the integration of the new Church, characterized by a process of centripetal rigidity and even social separation to consolidate the main group; and
3. new crisis and new secession.¹

By Sundkler’s own admission an analysis along these lines has limitations. It represents an oversimplification of the process actually taking place, because the various stages "are not necessarily distinguishable as complete phases. Neither is the third stage a terminus ad quem, but a transition point for development towards further possibilities."²

In the initial secession Sundkler distinguishes between non-deliberate and deliberate preparation for secession. The former concerns the conditioning of expectations by such factors as the African practice of kraal-splitting, the instability caused by the impact of Western civilization, the Protestant tradition of denominationalism and a misunderstanding of missionary policy with regard to self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating Churches. Deliberate preparation takes place when the schismatic leader, exploiting the climate created by the afore-mentioned factors, builds up a following within the parent Church and instructs his followers according to his own convictions.

The crisis of secession leads to the formation of a new organization around the segment that broke away from the parent Church. It

¹ Sundkler, 1961, p. 170.
² Ibid., p. 170.
also has after-effects on the parent Church, such as a negative reaction to some forms of interpretatio Africana (for example, the use of drums) which may resemble practices in the secessionist group, and increased rigidity caused by heightened expectations and apprehension of future crises.

For the new Church the period of integration and growth - Sundkler's second stage - entails modelling the secessionist group according to type. The main leader exercises increasingly rigid and radical control. Conforming followers respond by imitating the leader's characteristic actions and non-conforming individuals in turn break away to form new groups or return to the original parent Church. Sundkler rightly points out that time and convention act as conservative forces, modifying the leader's radicalisation after the initial period of consolidation. Moderation and a reappraisal of policies and ideologies are usually necessary if the leader is to retain his position after the novelty of forming a new Church has worn off.

In the new crisis and new secession of stage 3, the fundamental, non-deliberate factors at work are still the same. A new set of rationalizations for the intended schism is introduced by the leading figure, whether the demands are for greater radicalism or for a "return to the good old ways". Sundkler contends that to the majority of Independent Churches, "stage 3 is also the period of decline, atrophy and apathy".

Valuable as Sundkler's three-stage model of schisms is for an understanding of the classic type of breakaway (that is, where the splinter Church breaks away from the parent group), it has obvious limitations. As I have already pointed out, the original formation of most of the major movements in Zimbabwe, especially those of the prophetic type, did not follow this pattern. The three principal leaders of Zionism amongst the Shona, for instance, were not in a position to organize a schism from within a Mission or other Church. Bishop Masuka never belonged to a Mission Church prior to becoming a Zionist. Bishop Mutendi and Andreas Shoko were Dutch Reformed Church members, but they seceded (i) as migrant labourers, and therefore in a state of relative isolation from their parent Church; (ii) as individuals without taking significant numbers of fellow Church members with them to the new movement; and (iii) as people fascinated by Africanized forms of worship and therefore only indirectly reacting to their Mission Church. The sub-

3 Ibid., p. 177
sequent growth of the Zionist movement took the form of a gradual increase in numbers of individuals from a great diversity of religious backgrounds, in response to what I prefer to call "missionary endeavour". This pattern of secession in fact appears to be a predominant feature in the fission dynamics of Shona Independentism. It also repeats itself in the Independent Church context when individuals break away from a parent Church to establish new groups, which are composed of people drawn from numerous Churches or from the traditional religion rather than from one group only. Massive or classic schisms occasionally do take place, but then mainly as a result of the previously mentioned leadership strife following the death of a principal leader.

Against this background it is understandable that office-bearers should feel justified in defecting, so that the endless splintering process is one of the most common features of the Independent Churches, amongst the Shona at least. One could perhaps speak of a "fluidity of leadership". In their quest for greater influence, more effective service or more appealing forms of worship, some office-bearers keep changing from one Church group to another, or make one or several attempts to form a new Church. Bishop Hazael Mudyanadzo, who has played a leading role in at least six Churches during his adult life, is a case in point. He said:

"After leaving the Mission Church in 1932 I became a Zionist by joining Pirato’s Church. They said one should not drink beer. So I broke away and joined Makamba’s [Zionist Apostolic] Church, which allowed the use of sweet beer. After a short while I left and became a member of Kuudzerema’s [Zionist] Church. By this time I realized I was very fond of beer-drinking. So I moved on to Peter Mutema’s [Zion Sabbath] Church where one can drink openly without stealing [i.e. without being stigmatized]. Right now I am in Bishop Nehemiah Gotore’s [Zion Sabbath] Church."

Mudyanadzo’s account illustrates a limited concept of the nature of the Christian Church. It appears as if to him joining another Church amounted to a move to the next club or society, with the prohibition or acceptance of beer-drinking as a decisive criterion. Considering that on each occasion Mudyanadzo was followed to the new Church by at least a few of those he had led in the previous fold and that he most likely left others behind in a state of dissatisfaction or uncertainty, it is evident that this continual manoeuv-
ing and the resultant flux of office-bearers in the local congregations must create a certain degree of spiritual confusion and instability amongst ordinary Church members. This in turn can lead to leaderless congregations if the remaining office-bearers are incapable of reorganizing the remnants of the disintegrating unit. On the other hand these changes can also lead to a process of renewed spiritual fervour, a constructive regrouping of congregations which previously were in a state of disarray, and a positive evangelistic outreach to outsiders in an effort to promote Church growth. Much depends on the motives of the leader who joins another Church or sets out to form a new one.

The two case studies I shall now present concern the secessionist activities of two defecting office-bearers in the Gutu district. A brief review of the sequence of events in 1965 and 1966 should deepen our understanding of the nature of the schismatic process and its impact on Church life. The two figures concerned were Sauro Garanuako, a prominent baptizer in Maranke’s African Apostolic Church, and Elison Mutungwende, a prophetic healer in Johane Masowe’s Apostolic movement. These two men were friends and lived near each other in Kono’s village, near the Zimbizi school in Chingombe (see map). Their activities led Sauro to join another Church and Elison to form a new one.

1. THE PREPARATORY STAGE

The non-deliberate factors mentioned above were definitely, though not very obviously, at work. Both Sauro and Elison were familiar with the tradition of kraal-splitting and both of them had such scanty knowledge of the theologically defined nature of the Church that they were not unduly perturbed by the prospect of breaking away from their parent Churches. In other words, they regarded secession not in the first place as disrupting the unity of the Body of Christ – as expressed in the Church – but as a convenient and legitimate process of hiving off so as to form a new group, much like the establishment of a new village. If anything it was a sense of loyalty to their fellow office-bearers and the Church members they were serving which kept them from breaking away sooner. Besides, they had been exposed to the phenomenon of fission ever since they first joined their respective IC groups. One can therefore reasonably

4 He was a LIEBUMAH L.U. baptizer, one notch below the most senior office in this category of the local Apostolic leadership.
assume that from the start, if only latently, they had allowed for the possibility of a change of Church affiliation. In the case of Elison Mutingwende there was additional non-deliberate preparation caused by the geographical factor. For years Gandanzara - as Johane Masowe is popularly referred to in Gutu - did not visit his Gutu congregations. Relative isolation and the lack of clear directives in the Masowe congregations created a climate conducive to disintegration and change.

In both cases leadership ambition was a major factor which led to deliberate preparation for secession. Both men were frustrated: Elison, because his prophetic healings and activities for the removal of malignant medicines were not leading to promotion to higher office or a greater following; and Sauro, because overstaffing in the ranks of the vaPostori blocked his progress. Promotion for Sauro was virtually dependent on the death of one of his senior baptizers or the formation of a new Pendi centre, neither of which alternatives seemed likely in 1965. An additional problem for both these men was that they were failing to comply with the strict prohibition on beer-drinking in their respective Churches. As a result they were facing the possibility of stigmatization, which could further prejudice their prospects of promotion. Sauro’s authority amongst the vaPostori in 1965 was already jeopardized by the fact that he had by then been disciplined twice, once for committing adultery with the woman who was to become his third wife, and once for brewing ndari beer to raise school fees for one of his daughters.

Forming a new Church or joining another was not difficult for Elison. He held a relatively junior position in a declining movement. Change to him could only mean improvement. Sauro, by contrast, held a comparatively senior position. He therefore had to face the challenge of either staying on as a muPostori, stopping his beer-drinking and hoping for eventual promotion which would make him a top Rabaumah leader of real stature in the Gutu district, or joining a smaller, less prominent group on condition of virtual immediate appointment to its most senior ranks. The latter move would enable him to join a “beer-allowing” Church where he could improve his precarious financial situation through brewing and selling beer without adverse repercussions for his leadership status.

5 Infra, p. 169.
6 Infra, p. 164.
7 Infra, p. 161.
The deliberate preparation for breaking away actually started in 1965 when Sauro and Elison, after initial discussions between the two friends, began attending Zionist services near their village. Without completely severing ties with their parent Churches, they went around together over weekends making it known that they were considering a change in Church affiliation. To the people of the surrounding villages, who were aware of the beer-drinking habits of the two men, this move came as no surprise. Significantly, they were not organizing schisms within their parent Churches, but were "shopping around" to determine the leadership prospects in other groups. This move led to a chain reaction in the IC congregations in Chingombe and the surrounding chiefdoms. Invitations to attend services were now directed to the two men, who in turn invited Zionist bishops to come and conduct Church meetings in their village. The "wooing" of the two men consisted in joint services in which all interested parties were given a chance to preach, followed by negotiations about the conditions for joining a particular group (e.g. whether re-baptism would be required or not) and about the prospects of leadership. Thus it transpired that the mere anticipation of secession by two fairly prominent individuals led to extensive interaction among Independent Churches. To individual Church members it meant travelling long distances together with their bishops, and conducting services in new environments.

For a number of weeks Elison and Sauro regularly attended the services of Bishop Kuchekenya, whose dwindling following (an offshoot of Bishop David Masuka's Ndaza Zionist movement) badly needed the support and inspiration of some forceful characters. As Sauro's maternal uncle, Kuchekenya was particularly keen to procure the affiliation of his "child" (mwana). The kinship pattern of authority would tie in well with the subordinate yet high-ranking post in which Sauro could be instated. Sauro, however, proved reluctant to join a group so obviously lacking in mass appeal.

Elison, in turn, was visited by Bishop Lazaro Mubango of Peter Mutema's Zion Sabbath Church. In earlier years Bishop Mubango was an office-bearer in Johane Masowe's movement and had actually baptized Elison in this group before he himself moved on to Mutema's Church. Having heard of Elison's plans, he gathered some of his influential ministers near his headquarters at Munyikwa - adjacent to Chingombe - and set out to conduct a service at

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Elison's homestead. Thus, on 14 August 1965, in an all-out drive to persuade Elison to join his ranks, Bishop Mubango preached the following sermon:

"Our Zion honours the sabbath day, it allows many wives and it allows the drinking of beer. We find permission for beer-drinking in Jeremiah 31:5 and 6. As it is, people of this district, stand up and go to Mount Ephraim. Let us stand on its summit and shout to all our people in Gutu that we are with our God at Zion. Then the people will come, flowing like water, to see the good things of Zion. They will receive the new wine only in Zion. He who is in Zion will be given sadza [stiff porridge] and beer. This beer is not to be drunk by all the people but only by the Zionists. There will be no sorrow because there will be beer, sadza and sheep's meat.

The people will eat and drink abundantly and then they will play and dance together.

Be thankful that God has given you a righteous bishop - me, Lazaro Mubango. God will give you rain because of my presence. The first rains will come when I teach you, the second after I have commanded you to build your granaries. If you are satisfied with your bishop your granaries will be filled with maize. Your filters will get torn from filtering fat and beer.

When you drink beer you should not forget your homes, but afterwards go home to sleep there. Then your wives will give you water and oil with which to cleanse yourselves...

If you, Elison, should die, who will be your leader? Who will lead you to God if you do not follow me? Since Gandanzara [Masowe] is not coming here, nor Maranke, who will guide you to God? It will be wise of you to follow me as your leader because I was your leader in the past and you received the prophetic Spirit from my hands."

In his sermon Mufundisi Josefa, one of Mubango's ministers, said:

"The Bible allows no one to drink beer unless he is in Zion [reference to Jer.31:12]. This was written by God Himself. Jeremiah said that only those in Zion were given sheep, cattle and wine. For those in Zion there was going to be abundance and only trouble for those outside. Look at Proverbs 3:10. It
sits that your pots will be filled with beer. The fat mentioned means that we must clean ourselves with fat after we have been drinking.

Our Bishop is the leader who will lead us to God. Since he is the person who will have to answer for us, what will our position be if we do not drink?"

Towards the close of the service, Elison responded to the preceding sermons in an appreciative manner:

"It would be foolish for a child not to recognise his father and to say, 'I know everything by my own power.' It is a frightful thing for a child to do, because his father is the origin of things. This shows me that I have nothing in myself...

I am grateful that all these important people have come here to conduct their sabbath proceedings here. We must bear in mind that if we cause someone to repent we must consider which task to give him in our Church. The Bible says you cannot speak to Jesus or God Himself without the leader who has taught you the Word of God and who conducts Paseka...

If you do not follow what your leader says you will not enter heaven. Everyone should obey a leader such as Mubango. He is a great man, widely known among all people. He has become very important. It is he who 'gave' me the [Holy] Spirit I now have. He came here to see what my position is in the Church. He wants me to be his child [follower] as before. Even if a father becomes a fool, the son will still recognise him as his father. In the life of prayer this man [Mubango] is my father. I do not directly know Masowe, but this man I do know. He has come to call me. I know this day to be the sabbath day and I will not allow my family to work on this day."

What emerges quite clearly from the above sermons is a preoccupation, direct and indirect, with the possibility of Elison joining the Zion Sabbath Church. Great emphasis was placed on the Church’s acceptance of beer-drinking, which would solve the embarrassing problem Elison was facing in the Apostolic Church. Texts from Jeremiah 31 were interpreted to justify beer-drinking. The inference too, was that beer-drinking was only morally justifiable in the context of Zion. Coupled to the central position of the Church leader, beer-drinking - by Mufundisi Josefa’s standards - seemed integral to being led to God. Reference to the sabbath day
The defection of office-bearers was calculated to provide an added attraction to a man who was used to honouring this day as God's day of rest.

It was suggested that being a Zionist more or less ensures a state of well-being. The portrayal of this well-being as implying the acquisition of an abundance of beer, fat, *sadza* and sheep's meat, as well as timely rains and good harvests, could hardly be more appropriate in the African setting. This highlights the basic ideology of Zionism, namely that a major task of the Church is to secure a safe and good existence for its members in this world—in eschatological terms, the realization of a new heaven and new earth in this life, with the emphasis fully on both physical and spiritual well-being. Sometimes the former is emphasized at the expense of the latter.

Perhaps the most important aspect of these sermons is the preoccupation with the position of the Church leader. Mubango's suggestion that it is a serious matter to die without a leader who could guide one to God reflects the tendency to attribute some form, albeit vaguely defined, of mediatory function to the leader even after death. Aware of Elison's predicament, caused by the constant absence of John Masowe and Elison's consequent non-participation in proper communion services, Mubango emphasized this most sensitive issue, namely the vital role of the leader in the salvation of his followers, in order to persuade Elison to join his group. In his response Elison goes so far as to say that obedience to a Church leader is a condition for entry into heaven. He showed Mubango both appreciation and respect. He also confirmed that his convictions about the sabbath day were similar to Mubango's. Yet he remained non-committal on the main issue of joining the Zion Sabbath Church.

It is interesting to note that the anticipation of the secession of two prominent office-bearers not only set in motion a whole chain reaction of inter-Church activities, but also led to an adaptation of liturgical procedure to circumstance. As the above-mentioned excerpts of sermons illustrate, an entire Church service was moulded into a persuasive process to attract a particular person. The relevant features of the Church concerned were repeatedly referred to, the benefits of membership expounded and direct appeals made to the interested party. Under such circumstances preaching assumes the character of a "dialogue" between Church office-bearers and a potential novice. Worship is replaced by debate.

9 *Infra*, p. 114.
Towards the end of 1965 Elison and Sauro, having considered and rejected affiliation with quite a number of Churches, were engaged in serious negotiations with Bishop Nehemiah Gotore. They attended his Zion Sabbath services in the Munyikwa chiefdom on several successive Sabbath days. These sermons again dealt with such features of Zionism as were considered attractive to the prospective new members. The sermons were followed up by long discussions lasting deep into the night over a pot of beer in the bishop's wind-shield (musasa). In other words, the exposure of the two men to the new Church's influence in the course of one weekend was of a comprehensive and varied nature, both in a participating ritual context and at a personal, informal level. Sauro Garanuako in particular was impressed by the combination of a seemingly high moral code and the acceptance of beer-drinking in the Church. During the discussions he played for high stakes, insisting that as a member of another Spirit Church and therefore an acknowledged believer he should not be re-baptized in Zion and that he should be given a senior position upon attaining membership. He also sought to impress the Zionists with the prominence of his position as a muPostori by emphasizing the pressure brought to bear on him by his fellow vaPostori to stay on in the AACJM.

Once the negotiations had led to agreement about the acceptance of Sauro and Elison in the Zionist fold and the establishment of a new ZSC congregation in Chingombe, the preparatory phase came to an end. A date was set for the induction of the two men and their families into the new Church.

2. SECESSION AND THE FORMATION OF NEW GROUPS

In the cases of both Sauro and Elison there was no build-up of large-scale conflict leading to schism but only a gradual severance of ties with the parent bodies, culminating in the defection of a small number of people. As indicated above, the anticipated breakaway did cause, even if only temporarily, an intensification of inter-Church activity. The motives of such leaders as visited or invited the two men, were obviously either to expand existing influence (Kuchekenya) or to gain a foothold (Razaro Mubango and Gotore) with a view to future Church expansion in the Chingombe chiefdom. The immediate impact of the breakaway on the parent bodies was not spectacular.

Some of the office-bearers closely associated with Sauro and Elison tried to dissuade them from defecting, but philosophically
accepted the inevitable when the two of them pursued the course they had chosen. Some of the junior office-bearers may even have welcomed the departure of their seniors, because it enhanced their own chances of promotion. Here then we find two important features of what I referred to above as "fluidity of leadership". In the first place this phenomenon is more or less accepted as inevitable and, in traditional ( kraal-splitting) terms, justifiable. In the second place, the absence of an explosive secession crisis causes this type of defection to be highly deceptive as regards its long-term implications for the parent body. Whereas Sauro's fairly inconspicuous switch of Church affiliation at first caused hardly a ripple in the ranks of the Maranke Apostles, eventually it triggered quite a number of similar defections by prominent vaPostori - a phenomenon discussed below. The eventual loss of Apostolic membership was therefore more serious than was originally anticipated by the vaPostori.

The actual induction of the two new members into the ZSC took place during an ordinary Church service. It consisted of a laying on of hands ceremony which constituted both an official welcome into the ranks of Zion and a blessing on the spiritual tasks envisaged for the novices. This occasion in Munyikwa was followed by a special Church meeting in Chingombe at which the appointment of the two men to their respective offices was to take place. It was at this juncture that the overriding concern with status and authority once more manifested itself. Elison had hoped that he would be given a position similar to that of Sauro. As the time for the installation ceremony drew near it became increasingly clear, however, that, Sauro was to be made a bishop with extensive jurisdiction over ZSC followers in Chingombe. Elison was to hold a senior yet subordinate post. Thus, instead of preparing for the scheduled Zionist meeting, Elison opted out at the last moment and started arrangements for the formation of his own Church. Nobody seemed unduly perturbed with Elison's move, illustrating that people in the Independent Churches had become quite used to the practice of office-bearers joining and "shedding" Churches in their effort to find or create a context in which they could exert their own authority.

On 29 January 1966 Bishop Nehemiah Gotore and some of his ministers arrived at Sauro Garanuako's homestead for the installation ceremony. A few interested villagers, Kraalhead Kono himself and Zionists from surrounding congregations also attended the occa-
sion. Even Bishop Kuchekenya,\textsuperscript{10} who had previously tried to win over Sauro, was invited to participate in the proceedings. The climax of the service was reached when Bishop Gotore preached the ordination sermon. Here follow some extracts:

"Today I am most thankful that the grace of God has brought us to Chingombe. We have come here without encountering any stumbling block, having been led by the God we worship. We must remember the message we hear in I Peter 5:1, which says that each of us should persevere so that he will find his reward in heaven. We have to worship God not in the flesh but through the guidance of the Holy Spirit of God our Lord. We must be sentinels like the Israelites, sentinels who direct the people of God into the proper way. We must stand on both legs guarding the work of God. Joshua stood like a man because he was given the task of leading the Israelites to God. Likewise we have been given a task by God. If we do not take care of the groups of people entrusted to us we will be punished by God. Therefore we put this matter in your midst that if someone is given a task he should not play with [make light of] it but nurture the people of God with his whole heart and all his strength, being guided by God's Holy Spirit [my italics].

Now you, Sauro, if you have not stood on both your feet up to now, from today onwards stand on both your feet in real strength. Don't turn away to the left or to the right, but go straight ahead, unaveringingly!

Servants of God, what we have to know is that we are the witnesses of God amongst the people. Let our witness therefore be true and not deceitful. We have to witness that we know Jesus because we ate with Him and we drank with Him.

Everyone who believes will be saved. Everyone who does not believe will be judged and cast into the pit of fire. Today I am happy to be given someone who will be a sentinel together with me. What Bishop Kuchekenya has said pleases me, namely that he is satisfied and not displeased if Sauro is made a bishop. The old people said, 'Gonda chako chipadza chokukumbira hachina ndima' ["the responsibility is your own, a borrowed hoe has no area" - i.e. a borrowed article cannot be relied upon to complete the job in hand]. Likewise the Word of God wants each individual to believe in it, on his own [iye

\textsuperscript{10} Infra, p. 174.
pachake]; not as if exceptions are made when it comes to God's judgement. Hence I say to you this office involves a great task. It should not be played with, but should be executed with the utmost care.

Christ has selected from the elders people like Melchizedek who became the important priests. Since you have also been chosen as priests, you must do your duties like the priests of old. You must read in the Book about the work of the priests so that you can do likewise - just like the first priests - Jesus Christ and Melchizedek, because if you do this you will find peace for your spirit.

Some of you may say: how can a person born of man become a priest? See, priests who are appointed are people born of man, like Sauro Garanuako and myself. It is the Word of God which has come to free people from their sins [i.e. make them capable for a priestly task]. What we stand for is not to hold people's sins against them but to free people [kusunungura vanhu], to have sympathy with their weakness and to pray for them in Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. A person appointed to this priestly task must have a kind heart [moyo munyoro] so that he can forgive people their sins. He must also know his own sins so that he can forgive others theirs.

My brethren, no man can lead others unless God has called him as He called Paul and Moses. Today we too see someone here who was called by God Himself. As God gave Aaron as an assistant to Moses, so this man, Sauro, was chosen to assist God's work. The work of a bishop is not chosen by men but by God Himself. Christ, having received His task from God, did not praise Himself for He was honoured by God. He says to you, [Sauro]: 'Makorokoto [congratulations]! Don't be self-satisfied.' A person with such a task must really and truly humble himself. Those who appoint him are the ones to honour him.

Don't make rules which you yourself cannot keep before God. As a priest, don't be proud or jealous, don't commit adultery or steal. Hospitals don't help and are not allowed. Real healing comes only through prayer and faith! ... We do not know why there is only one man here today, because we were expecting two. The reasons for Elison's absence are unknown to us, but it does not matter. God will know what to do with his [Elison's] works...
In conclusion our message is that we ordain [gadza] Sauro Garanuako so that he can take care of our work in the chiefdom of Chingombe, so that he who accepts what is preached can be saved and he who rejects it can be judged. He will from now on be the ‘owner’ [mwene] of the work here... Although we have only a small congregation here we are joyful because Jesus said: ‘If two or three gather in my name, I shall be there.’ Now you, women of the ordained, we ask you to be obedient to the chosen one of God. He does not want to be disturbed. So you must live like people of the law. It is the same law which you adhered to as vaPastori. Proceed with it! Don’t go to hospitals or nganga. Sauro will heal you through prayer."

For the final benediction (plate 13) Sauro knelt before his new superior. With his hands on Sauro’s head Bishop Gotore prayed:

"God, this here is your chosen one. Let him overcome bad deeds. Give him forebearance and love for your people. As he will be the bishop of the people here, hold his hand and guide him as you have done with Moses and Aaron, with Paul and your disciples so that they could lead your people along good ways which were pleasing to You, whereby they also had their lives protected by You. God, help him in his works for ever Amen."

In conclusion the newly ordained bishop received advice and instructions from various quarters. Perhaps a bit worried about the high office of the newcomer, some of the prophets reminded Sauro about the importance of honouring and respecting his fellow office-bearers in the new Church. Bishop Gotore explained that in the overall Church hierarchy, Sauro would fall under the jurisdiction of a certain Bishop Mushati with whom he had to co-operate closely. Kraalhead Kono expressed the hope that Sauro would become a reliable leader who would not put his village to shame. He expressed disapproval of Elison’s actions. Sauro, in conclusion, requested the intercession of all those present with a view to his leading his prospective flock in Chingombe in truth.

At this stage the new bishop’s sphere of influence was limited to a few families scattered in the northern regions of Chingombe. His own newly formed "congregation" consisted virtually only of himself, his three wives and fifteen children. But with the moral sup-
The defection of office-bearers

port of several villagers, including Kraalhead Kono, and the challenge to prove himself as a senior office-bearer, Bishop Sauro was determined to recruit followers and build the Chingombe branch of the Zion Sabbath Church into a group to be reckoned with. There is little doubt that Bishop Gotore saw Sauro's ordination as part of his own expansionist strategy and that he was counting on new development to be initiated by the new bishop in Chingombe.

Whatever the subjective motives and leadership ambitions of the men involved, one should bear in mind that in setting the stage for Church expansion they had a genuine and pervading sense of dependence on God. This was particularly evident in Bishop Gotore's sermon. He placed his and Sauro's task on a par with that of the outstanding leaders in the Old and New Testament. The two of them should act in unison under God's guidance like a Moses and Aaron. Steadfast leadership, he emphasized, was entirely dependent on the guidance of the Holy Spirit and constant witness to their close communion with Jesus Christ. The priestly task could only be fulfilled after the example of Melchizedek and Christ in a true spirit of forgiveness. It included the ministry of intercession. Gotore's reference to the priestly task as that of "freeing people" (kusunungura vanhu) in all probability reflects the tendency, mentioned elsewhere, to attribute to the Church leader a mediatory function which actually encroaches on the mediation of Christ. Despite this possible misconception, the evidence points to a fairly comprehensive understanding of Christian leadership.

Gotore's encouragement of Sauro to stand on both his feet and Sauro's request for spiritual support are indicative of acute awareness of human imperfection. In my discussions with Sauro at the time he displayed a critical attitude towards his own failings. At times he even appeared to be depressed by what he considered to be the futility of his activities.

Nevertheless, both his and Gotore's efforts to promote the growth of the Zion Sabbath Church in Chingombe were based on the conviction that they were making a constructive contribution towards God's work in this world. Much more was at stake, therefore, than just a seemingly convenient switch of an office-bearer from a "beer-prohibiting" to a "beer-allowing" Church.

On 26 February 1966, about a month after Sauro's ordination, Elison Mutingwende and a few friends who had agreed to help form a new Church conducted the first official service of the

11 Infra, p. 111f.
Shinga Postora (Courageous Apostles) at Kraalhead Rutsate’s village. The details of this occasion appear in the chapter on "Prophetism and Wizardry" in Volume 2.12 It concerned the deaths of two children of Pome, Kraalhead Rutsate’s son, and the need to deal effectively with the forces of wizardry considered to have caused the tragedy. Part of the service consisted in dealing "courageously" (hence the term: "Courageous Apostles") with evil medicine, which was the cause of misfortune, by detecting and destroying it. In doing so, Elison set the pattern for the future activities of his Shinga Postora. The main focus was to be on serving the community through combating visibly in the name of the Christian God the threat of wizardry. Those who were convinced by the prophet’s performance were eventually led to "Jordan" to be baptized and initiated into the new movement (plates 14, 15 & 16).

As the initiator of a new prophetic Church, Elison was exploiting his image as the "opposer of evil forces" which he already had in Chingombe at that stage. Instead of fitting into an existing leadership hierarchy of another Church, he founded a group in which he himself could play the central role. Two of his closest associates, the Rev Samuel Dziro and Prophet Zingwangwa, were also former Masowe Apostles. They, too, were disillusioned with the long absence of Gandanzara, the lack of directives from the top and the subsequent decline of Masowe’s movement. Elison’s efforts, however, were not basically aimed at recruiting former Masowe Apostles or revitalizing the old movement. With a nucleus leadership consisting of trusted friends he was trying to build something new in every place where his prophetic services were required.

Thus by early 1966 the two defecting office-bearers had set the stage for Church expansion, the one through the development of a new congregation in an existing Church, the other through the establishment of a new movement.

3. EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION

Sundkler’s second phase in the dynamics of fission is the integration of the secessionist group. This is achieved through the radicalism of the leader whereby the seceding group is moulded according to type. In the case of defecting office-bearers the process is somewhat different, in that there is no numerically significant schismatic faction of followers from the parent Church on which

the main figure can concentrate. As a result the objectives of the leading figure after defection are twofold: recruiting a following, and consolidating his leadership in the expanding group. This is precisely what Sauro and Elison did once they were embarked on their new course, with the difference of course that the former was acting within the framework of an existing structure with established codes, while the latter could act with greater freedom in determining and moulding the identity of his newly formed group. In a situation where the leader is more concerned with attracting new members than with projecting an identity essentially different from that of the parent body, as frequently happens in classic schisms, the radicalism which contributed to defection in the first place is seldom as pronounced as in the context described by Sundkler. Both Sauro and Elison, for instance, allowed beer-drinking in their new groups without making it as prominent and radical an issue as it had been prior to their defection from their parent Churches.

(a) Elison Mutingwende's activities

It does not follow that the process of consolidation through what Sundkler calls "centripetal rigidity" was entirely lacking. Built into Elison's recruitment technique, for example, was the central issue of fighting witchcraft around which the budding movement revolved. What knitted people together was their concern with the elimination of and protection against evil magical practices. Of overriding importance was the belief that this man was endowed by God with special powers to detect and combat uroyi. This belief was fostered through testimony sermons during which staunch supporters and newly appointed office-bearers witnessed to the way in which Elison had liberated them from evil. Those who disputed Elison's special calling were not welcome because group loyalty was measured in terms of a person's ability to recount an experience or experiences of liberation from the evil of uroyi through this man. Thus "centripetal rigidity" resided in the group's non-acceptance of any critical attitude towards Elison's activities. Any doubt cast on the endless testimonies to Elison's divinely inspired feats simply could not be tolerated. Virtually all novices could recount something similar to Kraalhead Makuwise's statement about his joining the movement:
"I entered the Shinga Postora because Elison helped me when I was ill. He removed a horn and a crab-like object with human hair attached to it from my house. He revealed to me that this witchcraft medicine [chiposo] had been 'sent' by my relatives in Salisbury who wish me harm, because they owe me money... The most important thing in this Church is that everything is revealed to me through prophecy in the same way as [through] traditional divination."

What really mattered to Makuwise and his fellow Church members was the detection and elimination of the secret forces, threatening their well-being in an Africanized and therefore understandable manner.

The stereotyped pattern of activities leading to the expansion and consolidation of the Shinga Postora can be summarized as follows:

First of all, some misfortune or death would cause someone to call in the assistance of the Shinga Postora leader. Preparation for a full-scale ceremony at the complainant's village consists of preliminary discussions between Elison and the villagers concerned, which give the prophet a clear picture of the suspicions, existing interpretations of the misfortune in question and the nature of personal relations in the village. Through discussions and sermons the Shinga Postora group is familiarized with the issues at stake. In this manner the group is "mobilized" to fight a particular evil in a particular village. Its members are well prepared, single-minded and determined to succeed in their quest by the time they move to the village concerned. The continual setting of common short-term objectives, the placing of the group at the service of their fellow men and the anticipation of adding new members to the group provide purpose and cohesion in its ranks.

The possibility of the detection of witchcraft usually ensures a large audience at the complainant's village. Villagers attend because they fear exciting suspicion through their absence, or because the kraalhead demands the presence of all villagers. During the service there are -

(1) testimonies by Church members to liberation from uroyi threats to convince the audience of the group's integrity;
(2) prophecies hinting at or directly diagnosing the causes of the complainant's misfortune (sometimes aimed at eliciting confes-
sions about various related problems in the village) and a description by Elison of the *uroyi* medicine causing the trouble, giving its location as revealed to him by the Holy Spirit;\(^{14}\)

(3) calls for conversion, often described in terms of witchcraft eradication, such as the sermon Evangelist Jerry Kono preached at Rutsate's village: "Be converted! We were sent by God to revive the people of Rutsate. Some of those who are baptized continue the works of evil, for example, they 'eat so-and-so' [i.e. practise witchcraft]... Confess all your sins first because it is no good to be 'soaked in the pool' [baptized] while you still have human flesh in your house...\(^{15}\); and

(4) expositions of the Church's codes of conduct for the benefit of those wanting to join the *Shinga Postora*.\(^{16}\)

The climax of the service comes when all the people move towards the place where the malignant medicine is hidden. Amidst singing and hand-clapping the Holy Spirit's presence is powerfully manifested in the speaking in tongues and vigorous bodily movements of the prophets. In a trance-like state of possession, Elison enters the hut, maize-patch or wherever the evil force is supposed to be, removes the medicine - usually a horn (*gona*) - and, having briefly shown it around, destroys it by casting it into a fire. Both the evil potency of the *uroyi* medicine and the miraculous, saving power of the Christian God are symbolically enacted in Elison's careful handling of the object and its eventual destruction through fire.

To conclude the service a session of prophetic consultations takes place, during which Elison and his office-bearers give advice on safeguards against future evil forces. Implicit in these discussions is the suggestion that induction into the *Shinga Postora* movement provides future spiritual and physical security. Confessions by those who consider themselves to be witches of wizards lead to questions about the spirits who supposedly inspire such practices, about the techniques employed and how the temptation of active involvement in nocturnal activities can be overcome. At this juncture the prophets, apart from propagating Church membership, usually encourage the afflicted individual to persevere in prayer to the

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\(^{14}\) Ibid., p. 274.

\(^{15}\) Ibid., pp. 269-70.

\(^{16}\) Ibid., p. 272.
Christian God. Thereby notions of a purely magically manipulated protection against evil powers are dispelled.

The village service finally leads to a baptismal ceremony at "Jordan". Although Church membership is not an explicit condition for the prophetic assistance rendered, one usually finds that the novices turning up for baptism are the direct beneficiaries of Elison's services and some of their relatives. Thus the movement focuses on the image of the prophet as a liberating benefactor and protector against future misfortune. By this time other interested parties who also have problems with wizardry will have put in an appearance. As a result even "Jordan" baptism stands in the sign of witchcraft eradication, defined in Christian terms of fighting Satan, confessing secret sins, purification and rebirth.

When one recruitment cycle is successfully completed with the addition of new members, another one starts. Elison will be called to other villages by those who have heard of his feats and who have been impressed by what they observed at "Jordan". After a few weeks the novices who have just joined the Shinga Postora, will be called upon to attend the next village service. There they may be required to witness to their own recent experience, a challenge to active participation which leads either to full integration into the group or to eventual withdrawal.

Elison's single-minded preoccupation with wizardry not only provided the main attraction of his movement. It also constituted a serious weakness in so far as it led to the neglect of sustained pastoral care and proper organization of newly formed congregations. Lacking the leadership charism and far sighted organizational capacities of a Johane Maranke and a Samuel Mutendi, Elison remained essentially a roving prophet. The founding of eight congregations in one year (Feb. 1966 - Feb. 1967) was no mean accomplishment. But these congregations remained small because their office-bearers remained dependent on the one-sided activities of their main leader to such an extent that they neglected their own responsibility for consistent evangelistic and spiritual work.

Nevertheless, it should be stated in all fairness that Elison's work had a considerable, if in some cases short-lived, impact on the village communities he tried to serve. Through his preparatory consultations with afflicted people brooding conflicts were brought out into the open and at times resolved effectively. Although he carefully avoided direct imputations of wizardry, his prophecies during village services tended to expose individuals guilty of anti-social behaviour. Such exposure, and the underlying suggestion that...
induction of the suspects into the new movement would curb or eliminate their destructive activities, had the salutary effect of easing tensions in the village community. It also provided prospects of rehabilitation to the self-confessed witch, the would-be or suspected muroyi, for instead of urging the traditional practice of ostracism, Elison actually preached a message of hope, forgiveness and reconciliation. In this respect his Church became a haven for the misfits and outcasts of society. He was not always capable of preventing retaliatory action by tradition-oriented village elders against suspected varoyi. But in numerous cases he gave new purpose in life to those individuals whose fallen status in society had already driven them to despair.

(b) Sauro Garanuako’s activities

Unlike Elison, who was moving far and wide in an effort to build a new Church, Sauro Garanuako set himself the objective of expanding a newly founded congregation in an existing Church. Making use of his talents as an organizer and preacher, Sauro concentrated on an evangelistic outreach in the Chingombe villages surrounding his own. Whereas Elison was mainly concerned with the liberation and protection of people from evil forces, Sauro, in a display of evangelistic zeal, preached individual conversion and the necessity of active involvement in working programmes as soon as Church membership was achieved. As a result the budding new congregation soon started operating as a closely knit unit with clearly specified goals.

Group integration in this case hinged on identification by new members with the short-term objectives Sauro set them. A major objective during the first six months of the new congregation’s existence was the preparation for the ZSC Conference scheduled for August 1966, with Sauro’s village as the venue. Knowing full well that the Conference was a test for his leadership in Chingombe and for the viability of the new branch of the ZSC, Sauro arranged work parties to engage in reaping and threshing activities in the fields of farmers. He even led some of his followers to the African-owned farms of the Devure Purchase Area, where they undertook building projects far away from home to earn much needed funds for the new congregation.

Part of Sauro’s strategy was the mobilization of his village community in work parties. Having persuaded Kraalhead Kono and a number of senior villagers to join the ZSC, he succeeded in estab-
lishing a "labour force" which cut across the bounds of religious affiliation. In a sense the involvement of village elders made the scheduled ZSC Conference the concern of the entire village and not only of the Church group concerned. The local people took pride in contributing to something which they felt would enhance the prestige of their village. This in turn enabled Sauro to determine the potential for future ZSC membership in his village and to single out talented persons who could eventually be appointed as office-bearers.

The success of Sauro's strategy was borne out by the following facts. After six months of intensive activity a growing congregation with a strong sense of group loyalty emerged. A sense of achievement and pride welded the group together. They had actually succeeded in raising enough funds to provide an abundance of meat, meal and other foodstuffs for the conference. The imagination of many people in their own and the surrounding villages was fired and a climate of expectancy prevailed before the conference which enhanced Sauro's prospects of continued group expansion. Sauro himself had established his authority in Zionist circles, had demonstrated his ability to lead and had set the stage for a real "happening" in his village. In contrast to Elison Mutingwende's flair for the spectacular and the dramatic, Sauro attracted people because of the opportunities he created. The novelty and appeal to the surrounding villagers lay less in the new rules (e.g. acceptance of beer-drinking) which Sauro introduced than in his ability to create new roles and responsibilities for people, which brought new commitment and purpose to their lives.

The ZSC Conference of August 1966

To the newly formed ZSC congregation the ZSC Conference was the first major event of far-reaching significance. It was aimed at introducing the members of the new congregation to the geographically dispersed membership and senior office-bearers of the entire Church. The new group had to be officially initiated into the Church. Its preliminary appointments of office-bearers had to be sanctioned by the senior bishops. As a test for the recently appointed bishop the success of the proceedings would demonstrate, in a wide ecclesial context, the recognition and consolidation of his leadership. The outstanding features of the conference (the sermons appear in Appendix I) were the following:
Ecumenical participation: One might have expected a conference of this nature to be an exclusively Zionist affair. Yet when the more than 500 participants started arriving at the Zimbizi dam near Bishop Sauro’s homestead, it became evident that a truly ecumenical meeting was about to take place. DRC teachers and deacons received honorary seats. Representatives of the Church of Christ and Full Gospel were also present. Thus the Mission Churches of the neighbourhood were reasonably well represented. A few Topia and Chibarirwe members represented the non-prophetic Independent Churches. But virtually all the major Spirit-type Churches attended in significant numbers. There were quite a few vaPostori, some of whom were interested to see what role their former fellow Church member was playing in his new congregation. Although Elison Mutingwende was absent, a number of Shinga Postora members attended. In spite of the competition which had arisen between the two friends - Elison and Sauro - in their quest for new followers, two key figures of Elison’s movement (Evangelist Jerry Kono and Prophet Jonah Marima) were actually allowed to participate extensively through sermons and prophecies. The vast majority of participants were Zionists, however Bishop Nehemiah’s ZSC was well represented by his followers from the Gutu, Buhera, Burchenough and Bikita districts. Then there were ZCC members from both the Mutendi and Makuti camps. Of the Ndaza Zionists, the followers of Willi Sharara, David Masuka and Krinos Kuudzerema featured prominently.

Ecumenical cordiality and brotherhood did not imply a glossing over of the differences between the participating Churches. During one of the services, ZSC Bishop Mutubuki, for instance, accused the DRC of changing the Lord’s day of rest from the sabbath day to Sunday and Preacher Pawani was quite emphatic about the Popes of Rome being responsible for the “offence” of changing God’s law regarding the sabbath day 17 In addition to the Mission Churches coming under fire, the sermons on the keeping of the sabbath led to heated public debates between the Sunday-oriented Ndaza Zionists (mainly Kuudzerema’s and Sharara’s followers) and the senior office-bearers of the ZSC. 18 At times emotion ran high and arguments were flung around with such abandon that the occasion appeared more like a chaotic debating society than a Church service.

In spite of these emotional outbursts, however, the significant point that emerged quite clearly was the positive contributions made by the leaders of various Churches towards the recognition and mobilization of Bishop Sauro's newly formed congregation. A mood was generated which, during the protracted services on three consecutive days, transcended limited group interests. The vaPostori and Shinga Postora prophets who preached and prophesied were genuinely interested in the detection of wizardry and other evils amongst the participants. They were concerned about the purification of the members of the new group and in this way were actively engaged in guiding, supporting and inspiring Sauro's followers. The MuPostori Prophet Amos, for instance, exhorted the ZSC members of Chingombe to accept both the leadership and kin-group of Bishop Nehemiah Gotore. He also stressed the importance of sound relations amongst the members of the Church if they were to be correctly called the "sons of God". When emotion ran high it was the Shinga Postora evangelist Jerry Kono who delivered a challenging message of love, based on 1 Corinthians 13. He rebuked those who bickered over the day of worship and pointed out that their calls for repentance sounded hollow and ineffectual in view of their heated arguments. Moreover, it was Bishop Murambatsvete of Kuudzerema's Zion Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ who supported the ZSC preachers in propagating the uniqueness of Zion and the importance of revelations through the Holy Spirit in the process of creating sound relations in God's Church.

A comparison of the way in which Elison Mutingwende and Sauro Garanuako recruited followers and built new Church groups brings to light the diversity and flexibility in the Independent Churches. For Elison the schismatic process culminated in service to the wider community, albeit not with an open approach to other Churches. He himself and his senior officials were "centre-stage" throughout their religious, and specifically witchcraft eradication, ceremonies. People from other Churches also attended, but more as observers of an exclusively in-group and prophetically specialized service than as participants making a relevant spiritual contribution to the occasion. By contrast, Sauro Garanuako moved into the background (i.e. "off-stage") when the meeting, which was to put the seal of ritual approval on his preparatory recruitment activities, took place. In an ecumenically open situation the initiative was

shared by representatives of a wide variety of Spirit-type Churches, not only demonstrating remarkable solidarity, but assisting with the establishment and moulding of a new congregation. Instead of the vaPostori reacting to the undeniably competitive move by one of their former key figures in Chingombe, they attended in a spirit of support for the formation of the new congregation. Therefore the new ZSC congregation had its official inauguration and send-off not in the comfortable privacy of the in-group, but in a multi-denominational setting with considerable exposure to related and rival groups.

(2) Tribal factors: As is often the case, tribal divisions and infighting had an influence on the formation of the new congregation. Sauro managed to win the support of the influential house of Rut­sate, which was contesting the chieftainship of Chingombe. By giving Kraalhead Kono, the younger brother of Kraalhead Rutsate, a prominent position in the leadership hierarchy of his congrega­tion, he gained much influence amongst Rutsate’s people. This inevitably led to a measure of tribal-political conflict with those houses which opposed Rutsate and supported the then ruling Chief Chingombe. Rutsate, for instance, travelled to the conference site specially to proclaim his acceptance of Bishop Sauro Garanuako. He mentioned specifically that he did not accept the ZSC of Bishop Isaiah Mutubuki, who belonged to a politically opposed house, as having any say in Church matters in the northern regions of the Chingombe chiefdom. As a result Bishop Nehemiah Gotore had no option but to accept the establishment of two ZSC congregations in Chingombe, under the leadership of Bishops Garanuako and Mutubuki respectively. Thus the spheres of influence of the ZSC in Chingombe corresponded largely with the divisions of tribal politics.

During the services the people of Rutsate enjoyed a certain prominence. Appeals were made directly to them to repent and join the Zionist Church. One of the elders stated: "The Rutsate people who stayed at home must make up their own minds. Here [at Zion] we are eating honey." In his concluding sermon Bishop Nehemiah reached the climax of his message with a moving appeal to the house of Rutsate:

"Get up on the high mountains and shout unto the cities of Judah. Shout and emphasize: we have brought your God! Peace be with you! People of Rutsate, your God has been brought to this place. If you let us go away with Him, you won’t see Him
any longer. Look, we shall leave your place in ruins... Peace unto you! The leaders whom I give you are here. Come back to Zion, you people of Rutsate! Come back to Zion and seek salvation! These are our words and our plans for this time ... for tomorrow we die."\(^{21}\)

In addition to these appeals, the prominence of the locally dominant tribal group was underscored by Evangelist Jerry Kono when he introduced himself as the representative of Rutsate. He stated without hesitation that the authority which would deal with complaints arising at the conference and the authority expecting orderly proceedings was Rutsate.\(^{22}\)

Preoccupation with the Rutsate people did not, however, lead to tribal favouritism or exclusive identification with one tribal unit. The universal implications of God's love were actually preached as a corrective to the tendency to reserve God's grace for a particular kin or tribal group. Prophet Amos proclaimed both loyalty to one's own kin-group and acceptance of those related to a "stranger" bishop. In anticipation of antagonism against Bishop Nehemiah because of the latter's tribal background, he said: "Even if someone is a stranger to this minister [Bishop Nehemiah], let him not think of dissociating himself from his kith and kin, saying: 'I hate this tribe.' The Bible says, if you do not love your own people - those you stay with - you may come here to pray but you are merely an aimless follower because you have no one at your own place whom you love."\(^{23}\)

Preacher Albert Madyira propagated salvation in its widest possible connotation, as something offered to all mankind,\(^{24}\) and Bishop Nehemiah deliberately built a pan-tribal element into his appeal for conversion and spiritual renewal. Late one afternoon, referring to Jeremiah 3:14, he appealed to his listeners as follows:

"Now, as the sun goes down, the Lord calls every man to come to Him because He loves everyone in this world... Jeremiah, the son of Hilkia, challenges people to return to God. He says, 'Come back, come back to God! Don't backslide any more.' I have come as a husband and will take one from each city I shall take them even if they belong to different tribes - be

\(^{21}\) App. I, p. 444.

\(^{22}\) App. I, p. 430.

\(^{23}\) App. I, p. 423.

\(^{24}\) App. I, p. 441.
they Shava, Gumbo, Shumba, Moyo or Tembo. I shall take them all into Zion. Peace unto you! You backsliders [of all tribes], come back to Zion!"25

In this way Jeremiah's appeal of old was made relevant for all the tribes of Chingombe.

(3) Outstanding sermon themes: As stated above, Sauro Garanuako's recruitment strategy prior to the conference was based on short-term work programmes with little emphasis on doctrinal issues. But once the stage was set and all the dignitaries of the ZSC had arrived to inaugurate the new group officially, it was a different matter altogether. Virtually all the preachers concentrated on themes which illuminated the uniqueness of their "Zion" or "Jerusalem" in a general sense, or they propagated more specifically those laws which distinguished the ZSC from other Spirit-type Churches. To a very large extent the entire conference revolved around the projection of a group identity which by implication justified the group's existence and right to expand. It was at this juncture, therefore, that the process described by Sundkler as moulding the new Church group according to type with "centripetal rigidity" emerged most forcibly. Interestingly, it was not Sauro Garanuako, the prime mover responsible for the group's formation, who directed the proceedings, but senior bishops from "outside" and even office-bearers of other Churches in an open ecumenical context.

In their preoccupation with Zion some of the preachers dwelt on the origins of their Church in order to reaffirm their identification with the Zion of the Bible. Bishop Mutubuki compared the Zionist meeting with the Israelites receiving the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai. Moses' receiving the law was the "beginning of all schooling". In using the phrase "Ndiwo musi wavatanga kupiwa chikoro" (literally, "That is the day when they started receiving the school"), the bishop was in all probability not only referring to instruction in God's law, but also suggesting that it was the beginning of the Church: the term chikoro is often used instead of kereke to indicate the Church. When he proceeded to say that "instruction [or the Church] is not given to the ignorant but to those who are capable of understanding and following the law", he may well have been implying that the ability to heed God's laws was to be found only in the Zion of Africa as he understood and experienced it -
hence the implicit claim of authenticity on behalf of his Zion Sabbath Church. Bishop Murambatsvete, on the other hand, traced the roots of Zion to Psalm 102. It was Jesus Christ who was responsible for building up Zion as described in Psalm 102:16. Therefore it was also Jesus who still today provided the people of Zion with "good crops, wine and thick oil" - the Zionist symbols of total well-being.

Some preachers claimed that they were the true Zionists because they had inherited the message of Jesus Christ, their mediator, or because they were courageous in keeping the sabbath day. Zion has the Spirit and Zion brings salvation. In the words of Bishop Nehemiah when he appealed to the people to repent: "Come to salvation, come to salvation! Salvation has come. We have brought Zion. Do you let Zion go?" Others likened their Church to the biblical Jerusalem. It was therefore a place to be protected against defilement by merchants who traded on the sabbath day. It was also considered as a place where believers could dwell in peace, love their Lord and be prepared ultimately to dance before their God in the "new Jerusalem".

But the two main themes which kept recurring in virtually all the sermons and which were projected as the hallmarks of the new group were the keeping of the sabbath day and the role of prophecy.

(a) The sabbath day

Bishop Pawani’s introductory sermon focused entirely on the Old Testament leader Nehemiah’s efforts to inspire the people of Jerusalem to keep the seventh day of the week as the Lord’s sabbath (Neh. 13:15 ff). This is a typical example of a literal, fundamentalistic approach which seeks to establish a direct link between Old Testament laws and contemporary Church codes. Although it was not specifically mentioned, the basic assumption of Pawani’s

28 App. I, p. 427
32 App. I, p. 444.
34 App. I, p. 441.
The defection of office-bearers 191

exhortations was that Bishop Nehemiah of the ZSC was continuing with the good work of Prophet Nehemiah of old with regard to the sabbath day. This gave the ZSC a special mandate which distinguished it from other Zionists. As Nehemiah had closed Jerusalem to merchants on the sabbath day, so the ZSC prohibited all forms of trading on the day of rest. With Nehemiah's example in mind, Bishop Pawani criticized the *muPostori* who had sold an ox at the conference site on the sabbath day. "That is why I say that you should not allow cattle in here on the sabbath day because it is our Jerusalem... If any of you trade on the sabbath, you are guilty of an offence. Anyone of us guilty of such an offence will be made to sleep outside the 'walls' [i.e. the wind-shields used during open air conferences]." 35 Here then we find the ideal of reproducing in the Africanized "Jerusalem" the same conditions as existed in the Jerusalem of Old Testament times. Even the penalty for disobeying the sabbath laws had to be the same. Pawani's reference to "our Jerusalem" did not represent an exclusive claim of the ZSC as against the other participant Spirit-type Churches. Yet he was setting clear guidelines for the new congregation, at the same time stipulating the special contribution his own Church had to make to "creating" Jerusalem in the African context.

With reference to Jeremiah 17:21, Bishop Mutubuki contended that those who keep the sabbath day will be blessed and those who neglect it will be rejected. The all-absorbing centrality of the sabbath day in his Church was clearly portrayed in his enthusiastic assertion that "nothing surpasses the keeping of this law. It is wonderful. It is of no use to pursue the things of this world. Rather keep the sabbath day." By claiming that Zion had instituted this law and that the DRC had changed it according to its own insights, contrary to the laws of the Bible, the sabbath was virtually reserved as a special privilege of the Sabbath Zionists. 36 Like most ZSC preachers, Bishop Mutubuki found the proof for the sabbath day coinciding with Saturday in such texts as Mark 16:1-2 and Luke 24:1, which describe Christ's resurrection as taking place on the morning after the sabbath.

Like Bishop Mutubuki, Prophet Amos also propagated retribution or rejection for those who disobeyed the sabbath laws. "It is because of this [disobedience] that illness and hardships come upon us in this world," he said. Conversely, the blessings of those keeping

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the sabbath day could be seen in the absence of disease amongst the people of the Spirit. Prophet Amos interpreted the relative lack of scabies (*mhezi*) in the ranks of the Church of the Spirit as a sign of divine approval of those who obeyed God's laws. Furthermore, he made a point of closely relating the work of the Holy Spirit to sabbath observance. "These two go hand in hand," he said. "Those who discard the Spirit [i.e. Spirit-inspired prophecies as understood by Zionists and *vaPostori*] also discard the sabbath day of God. Have you heard of a Church which prophesies and does not keep the sabbath day? No! ... The Spirit and the sabbath go together." Although not explicitly stated, it is possible that Prophet Amos's emphasis on the close link between the sabbath and the work of the Holy Spirit derives from the conviction that the gift of prophetic revelation through the Holy Spirit comes as a reward for keeping the sabbath day.

The Rev Jeremiah Chizemah's aggressive style of challenging those who did not honour Saturday as the real sabbath, provoked greater reaction from the audience than did any of the other preachers. He insisted that everyone present check their Bibles so that nobody could accuse him of false statements. Then he proceeded to choose Exodus 31:14 as the most compelling and binding biblical text on the issue. In this text the penalty for profaning the sabbath day is described as death or ostracism. "Those who disobey shall surely be put to death," Chizemah claimed. Then he argued as follows: "Is there anybody with another name for the seventh day? My sabbath was mentioned in Exodus 31:14. What does your Bible say? You are dead, you are dead because you do not keep the sabbath! You want to follow the Bible but you put your own name - that of the Sunday - in the place of the sabbath." Small wonder that this near fanatical attack on non-Sabbatarians provoked protest and led to heated public debate.

As leader of the ZSC, Bishop Nehemiah made a brief statement on the sabbath issue without getting involved in any argument. His was an authoritative and confident assertion that "we are the true Sabbath Zionists", and on these grounds he had complete faith in (his interpretation of the laws on) the sabbath day. Having indicated that Sunday was undoubtedly the first day of the week, he concluded: "Therefore, tomorrow [Sunday] we shall go to the fields to

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37 App. I, p. 422.
plough and drink beer... A person who resists the sabbath will not be blessed before the Lord." 59

Evangelist Jerry Kono's attempt to restore order amongst the debating Sabbatarians and non-Sabbatarians was combined with a thought-provoking sermon. He first of all noted that a spirit of jealousy and confusion tended to override the true purpose of the conference - that of discussing God's Word. With reference to Deuteronomy 28:58, 59 he warned that "we can become poverty-stricken if we play Church the way we have been doing". Then he described the task of those present as one of straightening the path of the Lord as John the Baptist had done. Only then would people repent and be baptized so that they could enter heaven. "Don't just talk about the sabbath. Repent!" he added.

Preaching from I Corinthians 13, Evangelist Kono likened those quarrelling over the day of worship to the "sounding brass and clanging cymbals" mentioned in verse 1. In no uncertain terms he pointed out that the loveless attitude manifested in the debate was obstructing the very objective of persuading people to repent. "You are like gongs making a lot of noise... Having made such a noise over the day of worship, do you think those who wanted to repent will do so now? Fellowship alone is important. I invite both those worshipping on the sabbath and Sunday-worshippers into my house because I love the Bible. If I read it I shall not be cast out." Elaborating on the theme of love, Evangelist Kono said: "For me to be in Church is love. It is the love for God which causes me to invite my friends to Church. Do you think anyone will come if you invite him to fight? I would not have come if I knew someone was going to quarrel with me about the day of worship. I came because I believe we all belong to one God. We accept the non-believer and the nganga who have come and we ask him to kneel down in prayer if he submits himself to Jesus." 40

Evangelist Kono's message had a salutary impact on the proceedings, which eventually concluded in orderly fashion. His insistence that fellowship in love was more important, specifically as a prerequisite for true repentance, than deciding between Saturday or Sunday as the day of worship, went unchallenged. This illustrates one of the characteristics of the Spirit-type Churches. At the point where radicalism and fanaticism tend to obscure the essentials of Christianity, the impulses of the gospel emerge as a corrective to

clarify the issues at stake and confront people with the attitude of Jesus Christ.

Nevertheless, for a correct assessment of the persistent, almost monotonous preoccupation with the sabbath day, the objectives of the preachers and the context in which their sermons were delivered should be kept in mind. The ZSC preachers were obviously not interested in giving a balanced evaluation of biblical facts - from both Old and New Testaments - on the day of worship. They found themselves in a situation where the first steps in group expansion had just been taken and where they were moulding their recently acquired following under the close scrutiny of friends and critics from a wide range of Churches. Thus operating from a "beleaguered" and, in some respects, uncertain position, the need for a rallying point was intensified. It is therefore understandable that the emphasis was less on the balanced interpretation than on the "exploitation" of texts to establish a definite identity. In other words, theological correctness did not matter so much when it came to an orchestrated effort to unite the forces of group expansion and group integration around a central theme. With beer-drinking only mentioned incidentally, the sabbath day became the rallying point, the centripetal centre around which everything revolved. Through identification with God's Old Testament commandments, a direct bond was established with His chosen people of old and with a number of contemporary Churches of the Spirit. In the circumstances it did not appear to matter that legalistic trends emerged which clearly implied a causal relationship between fulfilment of the sabbath laws and God's blessings, as manifested in a state of well-being or even eternal life for Sabbatarians. It was simply not an occasion for weighing human meritorious activity in relation to divine grace. Neither were the accusations against the DRC\textsuperscript{41} and the Roman Catholic Popes\textsuperscript{42} for "changing" the Lord's day of rest all that serious. The intention was not in the first place to antagonize the Mission Churches, but to achieve group integration and enhance group loyalty vis-a-vis decidedly different out-groups.

(b) Prophets and prophecies

The other central theme which featured prominently in a number of sermons was the work of the Holy Spirit as manifested in prophetic

\textsuperscript{41} App. I, p. 421.
\textsuperscript{42} App. I, p. 429.
activities. Preachers and prophets could dwell on this subject without treading on one another's toes because in all the Spirit-type Churches prophecy is considered vitally important.

Positive comments on prophecy were consistently woven into sermons. Prophet Amos said that he honoured the gift of prophecy because it greatly strengthened the Church. Revelations were inspired by God so that the Church people could be instructed, particularly about the perpetration of evil, he said. Bishop Murambatsvete categorically stated that a Church without prophets is dead! In his opinion destructive forces would have free rein, undetected and uncontrolled, in the absence of prophecies. In a sense he proclaimed the ideal of complete revelation and its corollary of absolute prophetic control, when he said, "The Church of the Spirit hides nothing!" In his concluding sermon Bishop Nehemiah thanked the prophets for their work during the conference and compared them with lamps giving light in darkness.

Some of the public comments made by the two most prominent prophets at the conference were revealing of the way they regarded their own prophetic task. *Mupostori* Prophet Amos reminded his audience that he was only a servant, a go-between sent by God. The perpetrators of evil therefore had to heed the wrath of God in the first place, and not the actions of the prophet. That he felt compelled and justified to act as a prophet because of divine persuasion was evident from a remark he made about his relatives who, having heard him, allegedly encouraged him in his prophetic task by saying: "Carry on with the Lord's work because if you hide it [revelations by the Spirit] God will send you to hell." He elaborated on the idea of God initiating and controlling his activities by comparing the prophet with a cork on a fishing line. "He tells the fisherman when a fish is present, but he does not catch the fish. If the fisherman misses the fish he will say: 'Ha! I have missed that fish!' But in reality he has reacted to the cork without seeing the fish. Likewise we, the prophets, detect the hidden magic [and make the congregation aware of it]." Prophet Jonah Marima of the *Shinga Postora* Church showed awareness of the fact that he could not operate in isolation from the congregation. While addressing a pregnant woman about a threatened disease, he said: "This disease

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43 App. I, p. 422.
will surely afflict you and come close to destroying you. This man [the enemy causing the affliction] is strong, but I shall fight him while I take cover amongst the Church elders. We want to tie down the evil spirit so that it can stop doing evil in spite of its persistence."\(^{47}\) In these words we have in a nutshell, firstly the prophetic detection of the cause of affliction, secondly the promise of protection, and thirdly, the significant admission that the task of combating the evil force had to be undertaken in unison with the elders (vakuru). In anticipation of mystical retaliation following exorcism of the evil power, the prophet was confident that he could "take cover" amongst his fellow believers and prevent destruction from a position of communal spiritual power.

The interaction between prophets and their fellow office-bearers is also portrayed in the remarks of some of the preachers. Far from taking all prophetic activity for granted, a critical attitude which distinguished between true and false prophecy was noticeable. Evangelist Jerry Kono pointed out that a loveless attitude rendered the prophetic detection of witches worthless and unreliable.\(^{48}\) Bishop Murambatsvete underscored the important role of prophets in discerning the things of God and those of the devil. He then added: "I don’t believe in a prophet who says: ‘R-r-r-r! Jehovah has told me that a certain girl will come with the intention of marrying me.’"\(^{49}\) In other words, the prophet who operates out of selfish motives must be unmasked. Bishop Nehemiah in turn mentioned that true prophecies caused happiness while false ones only brought judgement on the erring prophet.\(^{50}\)

The conference sermons and prophecies underscore the point, already made in Volume 2, that the prophets are continually concerned with the control of wizards as well as the detection, prevention and eradication of wizardry practices within the ranks of the Spirit-type Churches. From a position of taking the deep-seated beliefs in wizardry in African society seriously, the prophets keep confronting evil forces with the power of the Holy Spirit. In this way they strengthen the image of the Spirit-type Church as an institution which provides protection against varoyi and which even cures the witch or curbs her activities. Detection of the evil-doer or evil magic does not necessarily lead to rejection, for built into the

\(^{47}\) App. I, p. 434.

\(^{48}\) App. I, p. 432.

\(^{49}\) App. I, p. 436.

\(^{50}\) App. I, p. 445.
prophet's strategy is also the objective of reconciliation. Instead of ostracizing the imputed or suspected witch, the Church becomes a refuge for the *muroyi*, offering prospects of improved relations and status.\(^{51}\)

In all this the prophet's role as a *preserver of good relations* looms large. One can safely say that the prophet acts as a "watchdog" of family relations among Church members and of relations among fellow believers. It is remarkable how often during the conference "good relations" (*ukama yakanaka*) were mentioned in sermons and implied in prophecies. Prophet Amos, for instance, stressed the importance of good relations in the Church and the vital role of prophets in this connection.\(^{52}\) Bishop Murambatsvete made a plea for a spirit of understanding whilst preaching about the revealing work of the Holy Spirit. "If you hate the Spirit of God you also hate the bishop, the minister and the prophet whom Jesus died for," he said. A close connection between the prophet as agent of the Holy Spirit and sound relations throughout the Church was implied.\(^{63}\) Prophet Jonah Marima's diagnostic "prophecy" provides a good example of the prophet's overriding concern with relationships in the family context. Without altogether "diagnosing" the causes of a death in a particular family, he suggested to the members concerned that their misfortunes related to one of the women having intimate relations with other members of the family, to the irritation caused by her husband calling in a *nganga*'s assistance and to the plans made by a barren woman to find a substitute wife for her husband. The implication of Marima's "prophecy" was that a solution could be found only by eliminating the negative factors in various family relationships and that this could best be achieved under prophetic control.\(^{54}\) In another prophecy concerning the anticipated illness of a child, the cause was attributed to a misunderstanding between the parents over money. As a preventive measure the parents were required to stop quarrelling and live in harmony.\(^{55}\)

While most of the prophecies dealt in one way or another with the detection of perpetrators of witchcraft, the location of evil medicines or the threat of witchcraft to individuals, *sympathetic concern for the suspected or practising witch* is best illustrated in

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51 Daneel, 1974, p. 307
53 App. I, p. 437
Prophecies II and III In Prophecy II the prophet describes the plight of a suspected witch in her husband's village. Instead of receiving love and understanding during her pregnancy she was hated and maltreated. Eventually there were threats that her child would be killed by some of the villagers. Even the witch familiars (*zvidoma*) were described as coming to the afflicted woman and causing havoc in her life, instead of the woman herself exploiting these psychic beings against her opponents as a witch would normally do. In Prophecy III the prophet reveals the plight of the woman's daughter who is unwittingly drawn into the circle of enemies so that she can also practise witchcraft. Pains in the side are symptoms of her being "ridden" at night by other witches.

In both these cases the prophets were clearly trying to establish some form of sympathetic identification with two suspected witches. Instead of blaming mother and daughter for their supposed nocturnal activities, understanding was shown for their suffering and the circumstances which gave rise to their deteriorating positions in society. They were portrayed more or less as victims of a communal social guilt. They were subjected to external powers which they could not control and therefore not solely responsible for their activities. Without condoning the destructive acts of witchcraft as such, the prophets were showing compassion and understanding for the suffering misfits of society, who stood accused and condemned by their own people. By emphasizing the wider causes of witchcraft and the relative helplessness of the two witches, a message of hope and reconciliation was conveyed to two women, whose lives had obviously been blighted by misery and rejection.

An important feature of these prophecies is that they were given such prominence during the conference services. In most of the Spirit-type Churches, prophets take the people who require their assistance a little distance away from the congregation in order to avoid interrupting the sermons, or they wait until the main service has come to an end. Should they have an important revelation for the entire congregation, they are usually restricted to a short period for communicating their message. The centrality of prophecy on this occasion was probably deliberate - an effort to mould, control and stabilize the new congregation, as well as to draw new members by consistently exposing non-Zionist participants to one of the most successful and potent recruitment devices of the prophetic move-

ment. The image projected through sermons and prophecies, to both novices and outsiders, was that of a Church which

- places a high premium on purification as a precondition for true worship;
- has the mechanisms to detect evil and control, or at least curb, evil forces;
- warns and cautions its members against involvement in witchcraft;
- protects its members against the onslaught of evil forces; and
- with an attitude of understanding and care for the social misfit, preaches a message of reconciliation.

Hence the Church was portrayed and experienced as a relevant institution, dealing effectively with the deepest needs of Africa. It was indeed noticeable that after the conference critically disposed Mission Church participants tended to criticize the periodic lack of order, the one-sidedness of some preachers and the possible misuse of the prophetic office through selfish motives. But there was never any question about the relevance of the confrontation between the revelations and liberating power of the Holy Spirit and the darkest forces conceived of in Africa.

(c) Faith-healing and Christology

Faith-healing did not feature prominently in the sermons, but it was a presupposed reality behind much of what was said and it was practised with great purpose and intensity after the services. When Prophet Amos spoke about the importance of prayer and confession of sins in the overcoming of disease in the Church of the Spirit, he was actually referring to basic elements in all Zionist faith-healing activities. An aspect of faith-healing which often remains obscure came to the fore when the therapy prescribed by one of the prophets to a sick woman involved, in addition to the use of blessed water, both her own persevering prayers and intercession on her behalf by her Church minister. Here the individual faith and prayer of the patient was stipulated as an important prerequisite for healing, by implication dispelling the notion that healing occurred

58 Daneel, 1974, p. 214f.
solely through the prophetic healer's "magical" manipulation of divine powers.

Possibly the most significant point in this connection was the explicit centrality of Jesus Christ in faith-healing. Bishop Murambatsvete, for instance, preached about what he considered to be the Pauline approach. Paul operated by faith alone. He supposedly wore garments and cords (ndaza) like the present-day Ndaza Zionists and proscribed the use of medicine. Zionist faith-healing, Murambatsvete implied, is based on the example set by Paul, in which everything revolves around Christ, the great healer. "Paul says," he asserted, "that the only medicine for those who are sick is prayer to God. The sick shall only be healed in the name of Jesus Christ." With reference to the seven sons of Sceva (Acts 19), Murambatsvete elaborated on the futility of calling on the healing powers of Christ if both faith in Christ and sincere motives were lacking. In prophecy Zion had the gift of discerning clearly whether faith-healing activities took place in the name of Christ or of the devil. 60

Nowhere did the complete dependence on Jesus Christ become more manifest than in the prayers of Bishop Nehemiah during the concluding healing ceremony towards the end of the conference. While laying hands on the sick and afflicted, he consistently addressed Christ as the "keeper of spirit, flesh and blood", the "vine who had to cleanse the branches" (i.e. Church members), the Son of God who was the "doctor of the sick" and did not tolerate medicine or witchcraft, the "helper of those in trouble", the "tree of Life" and the protector who could prevent enemies from spilling the blood of the powerless and the innocent. 61

It was most moving to observe when, in the last rays of the setting sun, the Zionist bishop carefully pressed his Bible against the body of a pregnant young woman, praying:

"You are Jesus who was there yesterday. You are the One about whom we preached today, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. You are the One who changes everything. We who are in trouble cry out to You for help - to You, the Shepherd, the Keeper of flesh and spirit. You said that the pregnant maiden who is in trouble will give birth normally and be happy with her child. She will forget all her agonies. Now, Lord Jesus, bless this maiden [murandakadzi]. We give her to

you with this sunset, so that You may keep her all her life. We ask You to help her remember the things of heaven. Cure her womb, in the name of Jesus Christ, for ever and ever Amen."

Gone, here, is the impression of Christ as a "marginal figure" or a presupposed Saviour, relegated to the background by an overwhelming preoccupation with the work of the Holy Spirit and by an overriding reliance on symbolic, ritualistic activities which obscure rather than reveal Him. Instead we find Christ here, right at the heartbeat of Zionism, fully recognized as Healer and Saviour. Handing over into His care both a young woman with the promise of life in her womb, and the setting sun, is one of the most poignant ways of expressing in Africa complete dependence on Him as the beginning and end of all things.

(d) A missionary dimension

Far from focusing only on building up the new congregation through emphasis on group-identifying themes, several preachers introduced a distinctly missionary dimension into their sermons. This involved more generalized appeals to people, both Christian and non-Christian, to seek God's salvation and the specific outreach of the Church to non-Christians.

Prophet Amos repeatedly called on his listeners to leave their evil ways, particularly witchcraft, and through love to become "sons of God." They had to seek God's salvation before it was too late. With reference to the work of John the Baptist, Evangelist Jerry Kono urged his audience to repent and be baptized so that they could enter heaven. "Be baptized and receive the law," he said, "for a man who keeps the law until his death, shall surely enter heaven. Don't just talk about the sabbath. Repent! John's work drew people from Judea and Jerusalem to confess their sins and be baptized."62

The way to salvation, in his opinion, consisted in repentance, confession of sins, baptism and keeping the law. This last component points to a somewhat legalistic attitude, but it should be kept in mind that Kono at no stage isolated keeping the law as the sole requirement for salvation and that "keeping the law", subsequent to baptism, probably referred to lifelong perseverance as a Church member. In view of his message from 1 Corinthians 13 it is also

possible that "keeping the law" was meant to include both the Ten Commandments and the new law about God's love.

Preacher Albert Madyira started his sermon by pointing out that the lack of response and repentance was due to hardness of heart which causes dullness of sight and hearing (Acts 28:27). This he noticed particularly in the lives of prostitutes and witches. He then continued to explain Acts 28:28, which refers to God's salvation in relation to the gentiles, as follows: "It means that salvation is also sent to you people who do not belong to any Church. If you accept that Jesus has died for you and you come to 'Jordan' to be baptized you will be saved... The believers carried the Word of God from overseas to make it known amongst the gentiles. Salvation is for everybody." With reference to Nicodemus' secret visit to Jesus, Preacher Madyira even suggested that tribal dignitaries who found it difficult or embarrassing to approach Sauro Garanuako publicly should see the bishop secretly so as not to forego salvation.

The Rev Peter Shaya went a step beyond preaching salvation and repentance to those at the conference. Having emphasized love of the Lord as a condition for entering heaven and dancing in the new Jerusalem, he proceeded to challenge his audience to carry God's Word to distant areas. He felt that as Paul was convinced of "an open door" which led him to travel from Troas to Macedonia (II Cor 2:12-13), he too had an open door for mission work further afield. "Paul had no peace of mind," he said. "I also have the desire to take the Word of God to them who did not manage to come to this meeting. Let us take the Word of God to the areas beyond this place!" In his concluding sermon Bishop Nehemiah followed up Shaya's message with a general appeal to his audience to turn to the Lord.

"Jeremiah says [Jer. 3:14] the Lord is calling every man in this world. Now, as the sun goes down, the Lord calls every man to come to Him because He loves everyone in this world... come back to God, you children! The Lord is calling everyone of you, brothers and sisters, at this time, that you may come to Him... Come back to Zion and seek salvation."
Characteristic of the Zionist appeal for repentance and conversion was an awareness of the universal dimension of God's dealings with man. Repeatedly one heard: "We all belong to one God," "Salvation is for everybody," "Everybody is loved by God," and "The Lord calls every man to Him because He loves everyone in this world." The universality of God's grace was not misrepresented as if it meant that ultimately all people would be saved. It was interpreted as the basis for conversion, without overlooking the importance of man's responsibility in responding to God's invitation. Understandably, man's response (i.e. repentance, confession of sins and acceptance of baptism in Jordan) was portrayed in Zionist fashion. To some this probably meant that the Zionist response was the only way, as a result of which they would have been inclined to consider all non-Zionists as the "gentiles" in need of salvation whom Preacher Albert Madyira referred to. To the ecumenically minded Zionists who accepted more readily the diversity of Zionist and non-Zionist Churches the call for conversion applied more specifically to those without any Church affiliation.

Whatever the various interpretations attached to the appeals for repentance, the missionary impulses at the conference resulted in several new members being baptized in the ZSC towards the end of the proceedings. Significantly, therefore, the ZSC officials succeeded in combining consolidation and expansion. On the one hand the recent recruits of Sauro Garanuako were subjected to the teachings of their new Church. To them it meant absorption of essentials through repetition in sermons of the distinctive codes of the group, such as the above-mentioned keeping of the sabbath day. Their loyalty was being formed in this group-integrating process. On the other hand the missionary outreach of the Church was not obscured in this process, and the members of the new congregation were made to feel that they were part of a mobile group which could only grow internally through witnessing to those not yet converted. This combination of internal group instruction and a concern for the unconverted was not based on systematic theological reflection. It emerged in fragmented and incomplete statements which nevertheless contained enough gospel truth to provide a truly biblical guideline for the future growth and development of the Church group concerned.

(4) Confirmation of newly appointed office-bearers: Throughout the conference, Bishop Sauro Garanuako remained in the background. By Sunday morning the success of this new leader had already been
established on the basis of his effective arrangements and financing of such a large meeting. The climax to the recognition of the new bishop's status was the official confirmation of appointments of new office-bearers which he had made in the period prior to the conference. After much drumming, singing and dancing, Sauro led the recently appointed office-bearers into the inner circle of the audience for the consecrating laying-on of hands by Bishop Nehemiah. This ceremony of kugadza ukuru (literally, "setting the leadership right") set the Church's seal of ritual approval on Sauro's preparatory work and symbolically represented the induction of the new congregation into the bosom of the Zion Sabbath Church. The new office-bearers were as follows:

1. Kraalhead Kono, the uncle (babamunini) of Bishop Nehemiah, not previously a member of any Church, was made a "judge" (mutongi).
2. Erijah Rwawuya, the elder blood brother (mukoma) of Bishop Nehemiah, and a Zionist who had backslided and not participated in Church life for some years, was also appointed as a "judge" (mutongi).
3. Razaro, the tribal advisor of Kraalhead Kono and former minister of the Makuti Zionists, was appointed as minister (mufundisi).
4. Stephen, the son of Kraalhead Kono, with no prior Church affiliation, was made a deacon.
5. Phillip, nephew of Kraalhead Kono and formerly a deacon in Bishop Kuudzerema's ZAC of Jesus, was appointed as evangelist.
6. Chiname, who had no kinship ties with any of the others but who lived in Bishop Nehemiah's village and was a practising ZSC member, was made a deacon.
7. Job, a distant kinsman of Kono's Rutsate family from the Buhera district, was made a deacon.
8. Kraalhead Jonah Mangora, the son of Kono's elder brother and a practising muPostori until he, together with his two wives and five children, joined the ZSC during the conference, was appointed as senior prophet.

Words of encouragement were addressed to each of the office-bearers as they received the blessings of Bishop Nehemiah. When it was Kraalhead Kono's turn, one of the prophets stood up and said: "In a revelation I have seen you holding a dish in your hands. When I asked Jehovah what this meant, He said you will return to the
world [i.e. backslide] because holding a dish means to venerate the ancestors [kupira midzimu]." To this terse warning, Kono replied, "I, Kono, have told you that it will be very difficult for me as kraalhead to do justice to the task you have given me. It says in the Book that the harvest is great and the harvesters few. This means that the powers of this world will fight me and try to overpower me. Therefore I ask the Church to intercede on my behalf so that the powers of this world will not lay hold of me." This brief dialogue between prophet and newly appointed "judge" indicated acute awareness of the pressures and temptations which a Christian kraalhead is exposed. The reference to kupira midzimu in all probability hinted at the kind of dilemma any Christian kraalhead faces when traditionalist villagers urge him to conduct the traditional rain ritual (mukwerere) at the onset of the rainy season. Kraalhead Kono was reminded that his appointment bound him to a new authority which brooked no compromise with ancestral demands. His request for the intercession of his fellow believers demonstrated his acceptance of the new religious order and anticipation of encountering distracting forces in the future.

Considerations similar to those of Sauro Garanuako in joining the ZSC played a role in the decision of some of his subordinate office-bearers. To them joining the new group also meant greater leadership status. Both Erijah Rwawuya and Razaro had prior experience in Independent Churches but had lapsed into relative ecclesial obscurity for some years until Sauro's inspiring efforts brought them back into active service. They were immediately promoted to the prominent and senior offices of "judge" and minister respectively. To Phillip the change of affiliation from Kuudzerema's to Nehemiah's Church meant advancement from the rank of deacon to that of evangelist. The most spectacular case was that of Prophet Jonah Mangora who was promoted from a junior prophetic office among the muPostori to that of the most senior ZSC prophet in Chingombe. Like Sauro, he was prepared to change from the numerically most powerful Independent Church in Zimbabwe (Johane Maranke's AACJM) to a much less significant group as long as it meant an "escape" from a congested leadership hierarchy into one which held the promise of prominence and posed a greater challenge to his leadership abilities.

In the emerging hierarchy of the new congregation, an interplay of kinship and ecclesiastic leadership factors was evident. Through the appointment of Erijah, a blood-brother of Bishop Nehemiah, and Chiname - both from the Mataruse chiefdom and in close touch
Leadership and Fission Dynamics

with the principal leader of the ZSC - Sauro demonstrated his acceptance of his superior's authority. In practice these two men, because of their geographical remoteness from Sauro's homestead, were to play only advisory roles. But their very inclusion was a reassuring gesture to Bishop Nehemiah, since he could make use of a brother and close friend from his own village to obtain information and to some extent direct the development of the budding new congregation from a distance.

The appointment of Kraalhead Kono and several of his kinsmen gave Sauro a strong foothold in the influential house of Rutsate and meant that Rufura tribesmen were now in the majority. At the time of his appointment, Kono had not distinguished himself in the Church as a leading personality but he was a key figure in tribal politics and a reliable headman in village affairs. He was therefore a natural choice for an honorary position in his friend Sauro's congregation. His involvement undoubtedly enhanced Sauro's prospects of recruiting Rufura kinsmen and of controlling effectively the kraalhead's son and nephews who were appointed to junior offices. Kono's position of seniority over his relatives in the Church hierarchy actually coincided with the kinship principle of super- and subordination. The fact that Kono was a senior kinsman of Bishop Nehemiah's was an added advantage which did not escape Sauro Garanuako. Through Kono he could bring his own influence to bear on the principal leader of the Church. It also appeared as if Kono was instrumental during the conference in persuading Prophet Jonah, his nephew and a kraalhead in the Mazuru chiefdom, to become the group's senior prophet.

From a geographical point of view the nucleus of the new group's leadership fell neatly within the confines of one village. The homesteads of Bishop Sauro, "Judge" Kono, the Rev (Mufundisi) Razaro, Evangelist Phillip and Deacon Stephen were all located in one area, within easy walking distance of each other. As a result, the villagers now had their own "village Church", for there was a virtual duplication of responsibilities which senior villagers held in the village organization as a tribal unit and in the newly established Church. During village court sessions Kraalhead Kono presided over the villagers with Razaro acting as both "sergeant" and advisor, and Sauro as senior councillor. Church council meetings involved virtually the same audience with the key figures retaining their authority, this time in the somewhat different roles of bishop, "judge" and minister. By making Kraalhead Kono a mutongi, Bishop Sauro could act as principal leader of the "village
The defection of office-bearers

Church" without antagonizing his kraalhead by reversing the roles of authority As honorary Church "judge" Kono's ecclesiastical responsibilities represented an extension of his tribal duties in which field he had already proved his leadership. By drawing on his kraalhead friend's expertise in dealing with contentious village issues, Bishop Sauro could keep the balance of power intact.

I use the term "village Church" not because all the villagers became members of the ZSC, but because the same core of kinsmen which formed the dominant group in tribal politics and provided the kinship basis for the community to be recognized as a Rufura village also joined forces in the same Church. One could say, therefore, that in so far as Kono's tribal unit constituted a Rufura village, its newly attained religious allegiance also made it a "Zion Sabbath Church village" An added factor in this regard was Sauro's strategy of inducing entire family groups to join the new congregation, rather than isolated individuals. As Prophet Jonah was introduced into the ZSC during the conference, together with his two wives and five children, the Kono kinsmen also obtained membership for themselves and their entire family groups. At the time of the conference Sauro's ZSC congregation actually comprised some twelve families who, together with a few single men and widows, came to between 30 and 40 adults and approximately 70 children - a total of more than 100 members. With its base firmly established in the Kono village, the new congregation did not, however, remain village-bound, as appeared from the inclusion of members from as far afield as the Mataruse and Mazuru chiefdoms.

(5) Aftermath of the ZSC Conference: To Bishop Sauro Garanuako the August conference meant recognition in ZSC ranks of his leadership in Chingombe, the induction of his group of followers into the main body of ZSC believers, and with this the consolidation of the initial phase of relatively rapid expansion of the new congregation. The conference also served the purpose of publicizing widely the establishment of the ZSC in Chingombe. In this way it provided some of the impetus for further growth. A steady flow of new members kept joining Sauro's group in the months following the conference. Six months later Sauro was still operating from the Kono village as his base, but his congregation had expanded well beyond the neighbouring villages into the surrounding chiefdoms. The time had come for a reorganization and subdivision of congregations.
Leadership and Fission Dynamics

Asked about his success in recruiting members for the ZSC, Sauro singled out a few factors. In the first place, he thought the popularity of Church laws played an important role. He said, "What attracts many people is the tsika [customs, laws] of our Church. Many are put under pressure because of strict rules on beer-brewing. But the people want to arrange ndari beer parties so that they can earn extra money and have their fields ploughed. Because we allow this, many people now join the Church." It seems, therefore, as if lenience, particularly in connection with ndari work parties - something which did not feature prominently in the sermons at the August conference - had become a major recruitment device.

Secondly, Sauro mentioned the deterioration of group discipline in the ranks of the vaPostori, caused by uncertainty amongst vaPostori after the death during that period of Anrod, the elder brother of Johane. Anrod had played an important role at Church headquarters in stabilizing the movement after Johane's death and the schism caused by Simon Mushati. With Anrod gone, a number of vaPostori from all over the country who were sceptical of the leadership of Johane's sons, Abero and Makebo, were going over to Simon Mushati or joining other Churches. Sauro was quite openly "cashing in" on the disarray in the ranks of the vaPostori. As he said, "Because the Church of Maranke has 'broken' in this area [kereke vaMaranke wakaputsika muno], I try to attract the vaPostori and make them follow me." Through his defection Sauro had actually caused a chain reaction amongst his fellow vaPostori in the Chingombe and surrounding chiefdoms. Soon after the conference, Prophet Jonah was followed to Sauro's ZSC congregation by even more prominent vaPostori prophets like Johane and Samson, together with their families. In the course of February 1967 Sauro introduced no fewer than 20 adult women from the Maranke movement into his Church. He admitted that at first his former AACJM seniors had tried to win him back from the ZSC. But eventually they accepted his defection and, according to Sauro, even admired his success as leader in another Church.

In the third place, Sauro ascribed the general expansion of the ZSC to Bishop Nehemiah's strategy of appointing as senior officials those persons who could recruit large numbers of followers. Said Sauro, "When I was appointed, Nehemiah had hardly any followers here in Chingombe. Now there are many of us. At Gudza,

Nehemiah appointed Raphael who had a strong following of Willi Sharara Zionists. Raphael took most of them with him to the Zion Sabbath Church." This was tantamount to saying that Bishop Nehemiah exploited the discontent in the leadership ranks of other Churches by appointing men like Sauro and Raphael to senior posts in his own Church and subsequently relying on them to build new ZSC congregations through the recruitment of followers from their former Churches. Judging by the early growth of Sauro's congregation, however, it appears as if this type of "sheep-stealing" recruitment is seldom an exclusively expansionist device. It usually coincides with, and may even be superseded by, missionary drives where the objectives are much wider than the membership of a particular Church.

As regards the position of Kraalhead Kono, he continued - as the prophet had prophesied during the leadership confirmation ceremony at the conference - to play an active role in the traditional religious field. Two issues were continually at stake in his life. For years misfortunes and deaths in his family had been interpreted as the work of a plaguing ngozi spirit. This vengeful spirit had to be appeased regularly to prevent the publicly known misfortunes of the extended family group from growing to catastrophic proportions. Since most of his kinsmen were active traditionalists who had long resisted Christianity, Kono felt that he simply had to continue warding off the ngozi threat in a way his kinsmen understood. In addition, the Rutsate house was a strong contender for the Chingombe chieftainship. In their struggle for power, in which Kono played a prominent role, they regularly invoked their senior ancestors. A certain Mai Benny, the recognized spirit-medium of Rutsate, regularly articulated the wishes and directives of the senior spirit in the political conflict between the reigning houses of Chingombe. Political involvement to Kono meant participation in these traditional ceremonies.

Bishop Sauro was fully aware of Kono's activities but nevertheless upheld his position as mutongi in the ZSC. With his influence in the northern reaches of Chingombe, Kono was simply too important a figure in the expansion of the ZSC for Sauro ever to contemplate disciplining or ostracizing him. Sauro therefore opted for the compromise solution of making use of Kraalhead Kono as a ZSC "judge" and turning a blind eye to his involvement in traditional religion. On one occasion Bishop Sauro even had to accept a reprimand about a family dispute from "Judge" Kono during a Church Council meeting - a situation to which the bishop submitted
with the necessary grace. When asked about the ambivalence of Kono's position, Sauro commented:

"We do not discipline Kono because he does these things secretly. He continues with these old practices because most of his relatives do not belong to Churches. We also do not seek out these matters because we want him to confess on his own. Because he wants the Church and the ancestors and because he asks us to leave him alone we shall not chase him away. We just leave matters as they are. Even Bishop Mutendi cannot chase the ngozi afflicting Kono's relatives away, because most of them are of the world [nyika]. Should they all join a Church the ngozi will become powerless because it will then have no dwelling place."

Thus mainly for motives of Church expansion and a growing sphere of influence, Sauro had to settle for an uneasy compromise, departing from the more drastic approach to traditional religion which normally characterizes the policy and practice of Spirit-type Churches.

Another feature of the growing congregation was the deliberate continuation of ecumenical ties, evident during the August conference, with other Spirit-type Church groups. The initial bitterness and antagonism of Elison Mutingwende soon faded, whereafter he and some of his followers regularly conducted joint services with Sauro Garanuako and Prophet Healer Jaka of the AACJM. Such ecumenical services therefore included members of the Zion Sabbath Church, Shinga Postora and Maranke Apostles. In this way a general "prophetic service" came into being among the three groups. Whenever one of Sauro's senior prophets could not be present, his followers could rely on the counselling or healing assistance of Elison, Jaka or one of the other prophets associated with them. As the patterns of group interaction stabilized, personal ties also grew stronger. It was therefore not uncommon for Elison Mutingwende to be called to the homesteads of vaPostori or ZSC members to remove evil medicines if a threat of witchcraft was considered to exist. Neither was it strange for Sauro to be invited by Elison's or Jaka's fellow Church members to preach or explain Bible passages in their homes. It appeared that once the newly formed Church group had stabilized and the status of its principal leader was widely established, there was enough scope for the old patterns of friendship to reassert themselves without any threat of the one leader cramping
the other's style. Thus the regrouping of congregations did not bring isolationism or exclusivist attitudes, at least not in the wider context of the Spirit-type Churches. To new recruits it implied new acquaintances and the acceptance of new systems of authority. But to the prime movers, like Sauro and Elison, the continuation of long-standing ties of friendship was an important factor in transcending the newly created "denominational" barriers for purposes of meaningful religious interaction.

4. FISSION AND FUSION

The two case studies of Elison Mutingwende and Sauro Garanuako reflect a process of fission and fusion which takes place in the Independent Churches over the years with the regularity of the tides of the sea. It is a process of fermentation, of grouping and regrouping, of shedding old affiliations in favour of new ones, and of forming new groups - some of which stabilize and stay, while others wither away and die. This process, as I have already argued above, does not take place mainly by way of classical schisms. It is a matter of continual change going on on the fringes of the larger movements, triggered by defecting office-bearers, whose activities may or may not cause chain reactions among dissenting individual members of the parent or other Churches over varying periods of time.

A number of insights into the nature of this process were obtained from the two case studies. For the sake of clarity, I will briefly summarize and discuss a few of the outstanding features.

The conditions conducive to secession, particularly in the large movements, appear to be the following.

Crowded leadership hierarchies limit the prospects of ambitious office-bearers and cause them to seek higher office elsewhere. This crowding is brought about by the appointment of a very high percentage of adult Church members, the tendency to reserve office for individuals for a lifetime - which retards the promotion of junior officials - and the above-mentioned inheritance of leadership which often leads to dual succession\(^{67}\) to the same office and subsequent intensification of conflict. Where the subdivision of Church groups does not keep pace with this overcrowding by creating more promotion opportunities in new units or congregations, as with the hiving-off of villages, the tensions and frustrations of those with

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\(^{67}\) Infra, p. 83.
unfulfilled ideals lead to defection. This in turn is aggravated in the larger and widespread movements by only sporadic contact between Church headquarters and outlying congregations, as was observed in the case of Elison Mutingwende. The lack of directives from above leads to an accumulation of unsolved issues and consequent loss of interest at the local congregational level.

In addition to the geographical factor, where distance creates remoteness, there is also the uncertainty in the ranks of the Church brought about by leadership manoeuvres at Church headquarters after the death of the principal leader Sauro Garanuako made use of the uncertainty amongst the vaPostori in the Gutu district after Anrod Maranke's death to recruit quite a number of Maranke Apostles for the ZSC. Much depends, of course, on the state of growth or decline of a Church. Elison Mutingwende's membership of the dwindling group of Masowe followers in Chingombe had much to do with his need for a greater challenge. In Sauro's case, the AACJM had already passed through the initial phase of fervour and ready acceptance of strict rules as a sign of belonging and loyalty. After Johane's death much of the momentum and excitement of the first years was lost, as a result of which prominence in a smaller Church appeared to Sauro to be preferable to a stagnated office in the more prestigious AACJM and an image stigmatized because of beer-brewing. Whatever the rationalizations advanced by defecting office-bearers, one of the root causes of their actions is unfulfilled leadership ambition.

To both Elison and Sauro the anticipation of change led to intensified religious activity. Numerous visits to the officials and meetings of surrounding Churches and return visits by interested bishops who sought to attract the prospective "defectors" stimulated intergroup contact. Admittedly, such contacts are pragmatic and negotiation-oriented. They are seldom inspired by entirely genuine ecumenical ideals. Because of the multiplicity of Churches and the continual flux in the affiliation of individuals, the signs of change seldom provoke enthusiasm of a lasting nature in the wider community. The manoeuvres of Elison and Sauro were observed philosophically or with a certain apathy by many people in northern Chingombe. Nevertheless, the prospects of regrouping and religious change, coupled with the promise of leadership promotion, can have a considerable impact on a village community, as we observed in Sauro's preparatory activities which culminated in the August conference. Some of the Kono villagers identified wholeheartedly with the ideals of their friend who had risen to the status of bishop. A
new dimension of group participation emerged which led to the suc-
cessful demonstration of competence and independence by the new  
congregation - something in which even non-affiliated Kono vil-
lagers took pride. In terms of village history Sauro had indeed pro-
vided the highlight of the year 1966! Through his ordination as  
bishop, his introduction of objective-oriented work parties and his  
successful staging of a major conference near Kraalhead Kono's  
homestead, he had, so to speak, "placed the Kono village on the  
map"

In contrast to large-scale schisms which are the products of con-
fllict and crisis throughout an entire movement, the breaking away  
of office-bearers is deceptively unspectacular. It is such a common  
phenomenon to see office-bearers "changing sides" or setting out to  
form their own little "Churches" that it seldom provokes sharp or  
prolonged protest in the Churches concerned. Against the back-
ground of "kraal-splitting", inherited traditional leadership and  
ecclesiastical denominationalism, the process of fission is  
applied, accepted and even condoned. Theological arguments  
against it are seldom heard. Unlike other defectors, Sauro and  
Elison did not elevate a doctrinal issue as justification for dissenting  
from their parent Churches. To Sauro accommodation with regard  
to beer-brewing and beer-drinking was important. But in both his  
and Elison's case there was little effort to hide the fact that  
leadership ambition was a driving force behind their activities. The  
reason for this is possibly that their positions in the parent bodies  
had already deteriorated to such an extent by the time they  
dejected that face-saving justification was no longer important.

The impact of defections on the Churches concerned is decep-
tive, because the unsettling effect of such events may only come to  
the surface over a period of time. When Sauro joined the ZSC, the  
uncertainty caused by his actions amongst fellow vaPostori was not  
immediately apparent. Then, gradually and sporadically, a number  
of vaPostori and their families started joining Sauro's congregation.  
Once the unrest and uncertainty in the ranks of the vaPostori  
became more widespread after Anrod's death, a chain reaction of  
defections set in with quite a number of Apostles following Sauro to  
the ZSC. This trend can be qualified as parasitic in that the growth  
of one group hinges on recruitment from another. Periods of  
destabilization in the larger movements are exploited by the smaller  
Churches. Bishop Nehemiah Gote's strategy of stimulating Church  
growth was to some extent based on the adaptation of his Church  
laws to accommodate disgruntled office-bearers leaving other
Spirit-type Churches, particularly over the issue of beer-drinking. In addition, he concentrated on the appointment of influential defectors to senior ZSC offices, well aware of the fact that, once they were properly motivated through improved leadership status, he could rely on them to draw substantial numbers of members from their former Churches into his fold. Yet it would be wrong to interpret the process of fission and fusion exclusively along these lines. Although neither Elison nor Sauro hesitated to recruit followers from the ranks of their former Churches, they were not concentrating their main drive in that direction at all. Elison was appealing to whoever experienced the threat of wizardry and required his services, while Sauro, during his first year of service in the ZSC, counted more traditionalists and lapsed Christians from a wide range of ecclesial backgrounds amongst his converts than vaPostori. This is a vitally important distinction for our understanding of the seemingly negative process of distintegration and regrouping in the Independent Churches. Far from leading only to disenchantment and apathy, the process also unleashes a positive and creative response which gives rise to an evangelistic outreach to people beyond the normal sphere of influence of the group concerned.

Fission and fusion in the Independent Churches, as was amply illustrated above, have decidedly positive features. Although the motives of secessionist leaders are not always altruistic or free from egotistic ambition, the intensification of recruitment activities stimulates Church growth and leads to experiences of conversion and spiritual revival. There is no doubt that to many individuals who became followers of Sauro or Elison the experience of conversion and identification with fellow believers was genuinely Christian, liberating in many respects and spiritually uplifting. Elison emerged from a stagnant and lethargic movement to specialize in the highly complex field of wizardry beliefs. His attempts may not have implied a complete breakthrough in a magic-oriented thought world, yet he introduced the Christian message at a vitally important existential level to dramatically represent Christ's victory over evil.

In contrast to the relative seclusion in which Elison operated, Sauro built his congregation in an open ecumenical situation. The atmosphere that prevailed during the August conference was one of reciprocity and inter-Church assistance. On the very occasion of initiating a new congregation into the main body of the Church and officially confirming its hierarchy of office-bearers, there was
The defection of office-bearers

scope for the prophets of several other Churches to assist in rendering the meeting "presentable" before God, warding off evil and healing the sick. There was also scope for the preachers of quite a few Churches to help in strengthening and inspiring the newly formed Church group. Analysis of the sermon contents brought to light a rich variety of themes. In this case "centripetal rigidity" emerged in the projection of those laws which established the identity of the ZSC and, in order to lend force to the sermons, in the demonstration of two prophetic services on which recently affiliated and prospective members could rely. The regular calls for conversion and mention of the missionary task indicated awareness of the fact that the internal growth and stability of the Church stands in direct relation to, and depends on, its evangelistic and missionary outreach. In spite of the unsystematic and, in some respects, fragmented presentation of themes in the sermons, the inspired message of love preached by Evangelist Jerry Kono and the strong Christological emphasis in the healing activities of Bishop Nehemiah are indicative of God's Word functioning as a corrective and of His Spirit inspiring truth amongst His people. As attested in the life of Sauro, the process of fission portrays man in his sinfulness and brokenness, while the fusion of believers into a new context reminds one of a Christian God who cares about man as he is, and who therefore gathers and heals.

Part of the healing manifests itself in the perpetuation of ecumenical ties in the wider context of, in this instance, the Spirit-type Churches. Such "ecumenicity" counteracts isolationism or exclusivist attitudes in the regrouping of congregations. It supports my suggestion that we find the "seeds of ecumenism" in the traditional conception of the tribal ward as home. In spite of village segmentation the basic loyalty to the ward headman, the ward itself and the dominant lineage remains unchanged. Likewise, in Independent Church terms, in spite of fission and the regrouping of Church members, the basic loyalty to the spiritual home, the "Church family", or in this case more specifically the prophetic movement, remains unaffected. Once the secessionist leader's authority is established and his position among his followers consolidated, he tends to seek meaningful co-operation in the familiar wider ecclesiastic framework. Such "natural ecumenicity" provides a basis for more comprehensive and institutionalized attempts at ecumenical cooperation. Fambidzano's experimental efforts since 1972 to promote Church unity amongst the Shona Independents have actually met with a great deal of success because of the inherent sense of
belonging which had existed all along between prophetic Churches of the same "family"

5. DEFECTION AND REGROUPING IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

What happened in the long run to the two leading figures, Elison Mutingwende and Sauro Garanuako, and to their initiatives in forming new religious bodies? Were the events of defection and the subsequent chain reaction of religious realignment in the lives of numerous individuals and families just a flash in the pan, or did they yield lasting results? In the course of 1985-1986, some twenty years after the two men had first embarked on a new course in their religious lives, I revisited Chingombe to try and find the answers to these questions. A full-fledged survey of a representative number of individuals involved in the process of religious change, as described in this chapter, was not possible. Yet interviews with Elison himself and with the relatives of Sauro - who had died in February 1985, just before I visited Chingombe - yielded the following picture:

The Shinga Postora movement had lost momentum in the intervening years. Small congregations are still operative in the Gutu chiefdoms of Munyikwa, Nyamande, Mazuru and Chingombe, as well as in the adjacent district of Buhera. These are the areas in which Elison rose to prominence during the late 'sixties as a prophetic detector and destroyer of evil medicine. The movement did not grow to more than a few hundred adherents - many of whom were drawn from the dwindling ranks of John Masowe's Apostles. Nevertheless, the fact that a nuclear body of followers, organized into a "Church" of small congregations by a roving prophet, had persisted over the years suggests a lasting and profound impact on the religious experience of an admittedly limited group.

Various factors contributed to the stagnation of what had initially been a virile and fast developing movement. Elison, as a result of his restless and somewhat eccentric personality, lacked the organizational capacity and leadership charisma to sustain the initiative over any length of time. While his following grew he remained the kingpin in the recruitment of new members through his prophetic service, but when it came to the institutionalization of the movement, it was the Rev Samuel Dziro, formerly the senior *mufundisi*
of the Masowe Apostles in Gutu, who was chosen as bishop of the Shinga Postora and not Elison. This must have dampened Elison’s enthusiasm considerably. When, subsequent to Dziro’s death, Muchemwa – also a former Masowe Apostle – was chosen as successor bishop and Elison was once more overlooked, he temporarily lost interest and went through a spell of deep depression. For several years he suffered from mental disorders, for which he received treatment in Gweru. It is at this stage that the expansion of the Shinga Postora movement – bereft of its most enterprising and flamboyant personality and stymied by an inhibiting war situation – came to a halt.

In the aftermath of the war Elison resumed his position as senior minister and prophet of the Shinga Postora congregation in Chingombe, but the “glory” of yesteryear was not to be revived. Both the dream of leading a Church of his own and the excitement of embarking on a new recruitment cycle (detection of evil medicines followed by baptismal ceremonies) had gone. Elison still contents himself with rendering a prophetic service in Chingombe – now aimed more at the general practice of faith-healing than at his speciality of combating wizardry – instead of engaging in far-flung campaigns as he used to do in the past. The direct correlation between the growth, stagnation and current signs of decline in the Shinga Postora movement, and the peak of inspiration and religious fervour, followed by disappointment and lethargy, in Elison’s religious life, clearly illustrates the extent to which movements of this nature are built around and depend upon their leading figures.

Significantly, and probably due to the waning influence of Elison, Shinga Postora members nowadays see their movement as one of renewal within the Apostolic Church of Masowe. This is a face-saving interpretation not only for the Masowe Apostles involved but also for Elison, for it minimizes the factor of individual defection and the creation of a new group which could be regarded as a splinter Church. Elison himself now maintains: “Up to this day we call it [our movement] the Shinga Postora of Fr Johane Masowe.” Evidently such a reinterpretation affords credibility and prestige for a relatively minor movement. To be known as an extension and revival of a defunct branch of the still popular and widely known (in Zimbabwe, Zambia and South Africa) Church of


69 Personal communication, Aug. 1985.

70 Sundkler, 1961, p. 323f.
Leadership and Fission Dynamics

Masowe, is obviously more acceptable than to highlight the failure of what was originally expected by Elison and several others to become a new mass movement.

In Sauro Garanuako's case the developments which followed his involvement in Gotore's Zion Sabbath Church, was even more surprising. Having observed the dedication with which he organized and led new ZSC congregations in Chingombe, I would not have predicted his return to the Apostolic movement of Johane Maranke. Yet, this is precisely what happened. According to Mrs Garanuako, senior wife of the deceased, Sauro withdrew as Zionist bishop after only a few years of service in this capacity. Apparently his success as organizer and campaigner in the Zionist fold caused the local vaPostori to invite him to return to his "mother Church", of which, prior to his "Zionist excursion", he had been a member to since 1949. Apparently as an "outsider" and a prestigious Zionist bishop he found himself in a much stronger position to bargain for a senior leadership position in the Chingombe branch of the AACJM than while he served as a senior baptizer not quite at the top of the local leadership hierarchy Upon his return to the ranks of the vaPostori he was appointed as the most senior (full rabaumahl) baptizer of the Chingombe congregations. In addition, the Chingombe congregations were soon afterwards given regional autonomy. This meant that they were allowed to have their own Pendi centre at the Basera township where they could conduct their "Pentecost" (holy communion) ceremonies and could develop their own leadership hierarchy independently of the vaPostori of the adjacent Mazuru chiefdom, to which Pendi circuit they had belonged up to that stage. What had happened, therefore, in traditional terms, was an application by the top leadership of the vaPostori of the "kraal-splitting" principle to break the deadlock and stagnation arising from "overcrowding" in the leadership hierarchy of the Gutu East congregations - an ecclesiastical situation which to a large extent had caused the dissatisfaction and defection of Sauro Garanuako and the vaPostori who followed him into the Zionist movement.

According to Mrs Garanuako this change, which brought Sauro and several of his fellow office-bearers promotion to leadership, besides elevating the status of the Chingombe congregations, triggered a new phase of numerical and spiritual growth in the local AACJM. As he had done in the ZSC, Sauro once more emerged as a

71 Personal communication, Aug. 1985.
fervent campaigner, which led to many conversions and the addition of new congregations in the Chingombe and surrounding chiefdoms. Although the vaPostori nowadays tend to look upon Sauro's "sojourn" in the Zionist camp as a period of spiritual relapse (kuheduka: i.e. to backslide) it is generally recognized that in both Churches he had distinguished himself as a man of compassion, evangelistic zeal and outstanding organizational talent. It is thus that he is remembered and respected throughout the Chingombe chiefdom and beyond its borders.

Sauro's return to the AACJM caused disappointment in the then still growing ZSC congregations. Several former Apostles who had turned Zionist followed Sauro back into the old fold, while Kraalhead Kono and a number of kinsmen in his village withdrew from what had become a "village Church" and became active once more in traditional religion. This change, underlining yet again the "fluidity of IC leadership", did not cause a complete disintegration of the ZSC congregations in Chingombe, for it brought promotion for junior office-bearers to higher, more responsible positions and enabled other Zionists to further consolidate the expansionist work of Garanuako. Thus Bishop Gotore, having benefited from the evangelistic zeal of a muPostori turned Zionist, gained and retained a much wider sphere of influence in the Gutu district even after Sauro's eventual withdrawal.

If one considers only the destabilizing implications of individual defections, the chain reaction of regrouping among numerous individuals in rural congregational life, and the fact that Sauro's involvement in the ZSC may have formed part of a deliberate long-term strategy on his part to achieve the kind of leadership status and power in the Apostolic movement to which he had aspired for many years, a negative appraisal of the process of fission and fusion seems inevitable. At any rate, from a strictly theological point of view the casual fragmentation and prolifération of the Church as Christ's body has no biblical foundation.

A theological critique does not detract, however, from the positive trends quite clearly manifested in the events narrated in this chapter. Ironically, both defecting leaders eventually found themselves back in their old folds - the one through a reinterpretation of his past campaigning activities, the other through a deliberate act of re-affiliation. Besides, neither of the two at any stage of their operations "outside" the organizational structures and spheres of authority of their parent Churches deliberately turned against these bodies. Instead, both of them pursued their religious initiatives with
at least a degree of ecumenicity and loyalty within the wider framework of the "family of Spirit-type Churches" which included the local representatives of the groups from which they had defected. Given this wider religious framework, shaped as it was by both the traditional concept of unity or "home" in the ward (dunhu) context and an awareness of the biblical imperative for ecclesial unity, the positive outcome of their recruitment activities in terms of Church expansion and spiritual renewal far outweighs the confusing and divisive implications. Through imaginative use of individual talent and religious genius, each of these figures helped to inspire religious "events" within their own and the surrounding chiefdoms. These events included what I consider to be a great number of genuine conversion experiences, spiritual growth, liberation from the fear of wizardry threats and acceptance of new ecclesiastic responsibilities. Therefore, however critically the activities of these two figures may have been judged by the ingroups of their parent Churches, the fact remains that within the wider framework of the religious history of Chingombe and the surrounding chiefdoms there had been positive development in Christian expansion and spiritual revival. A philosophical attitude towards human weakness, which included understanding of the so-called "back-sliding" of office-bearers as a result of their leadership ambitions, enabled the Independents themselves to refrain from an exclusively negative judgement of men like Elison and Sauro. Despite their personal failings and reactionary behaviour they were generally considered by their fellow Church members and rural acquaintances to have contributed uniquely to the expansion of God's kingdom.
In the previous chapter we discussed the positive role which leading figures in one Church can play in relations with members of another Church. In the case of Garanuako, the formation of a new Zionist congregation was in a sense observed, supported and confirmed by the office-bearers of other members of the "family" of the Spirit-type. However, apart from stimulating growth and intensifying spirituality, inter-church co-operation can also disturb in-group stability and promote fission. This happens when a Church leader disturbs the equilibrium between the leader and followers of another Church through a strategy of direct or indirect interference. The late Bishop Mutendi's manipulative and destabilizing involvement in the Ndaza Zionist movement is a case in point. I have not been in a position to gauge accurately the impact of Mutendi's activities on Ndaza Zionists generally. Nevertheless, an analysis of the role he played in Bishop David Masuka's Zion Apostolic Church of South Africa provides some insight into the kind of strategy adopted by one leader to destabilize the leadership and influence of another and to create a climate of uncertainty in a particular Church which could trigger defections. Ironically, the tables were turned on Mutendi after his death, when Bishop Masuka played a key role in more or less sanctioning the growing rifts in the ZCC by officially consecrating Ruben as successor to his deceased father in opposition to Nehemiah, a younger brother who had been elected by popular ZCC vote. An analysis of this destabilizing interaction between Mutendi and Masuka forms the main focus of this chapter.

Right from the inception of Zionism in Rhodesia in the early 1920s there were close ties between the pioneer leaders, Samuel Mutendi and David Masuka. This relationship was an ambivalent one, marked by close co-operation and mutuality on the one hand and by rivalry on the other. When Mutendi joined Lekhanyane in forming the Zion Christian Church, Masuka did not follow suit but remained loyal to Mhlangu, who was then the principal leader of
the Zion Apostolic Church of South Africa in the Transvaal. Mutendí probably resented this, particularly since he considered his own role in encouraging Masuka to continue expanding his Church at a time when the latter experienced a spiritual relapse to have been decisive for the future of Zionism in Rhodesia. In Mutendí's "History Book" (Rungano) Masuka is depicted as a man "who had fallen back onto the world because of his fear of imprisonment" by the authorities when Mutendí visited him in 1923. Mutendí's encouragement and support in the years that followed evidently rekindled Masuka's religious enthusiasm but also placed him at a disadvantage, for Mutendí was to build up his own image as the "man of God" with continual reference to the key role he had played in opposing the white administration while men like Masuka backslided as soon as they came under pressure. Masuka's role as a Zionist "forerunner" was therefore always denigrated in the popular historical accounts which became such a central feature of ZCC preaching over the years.

Mutendí's exploitation of Masuka's weakness, his influence over his bishop friend and the patronizing way in which he tended to refer to the Ndaza Zionists as his "children" must have been particularly galling to Masuka's senior office-bearers. It undoubtedly became a potent factor in a number of secessions prior to and immediately after Masuka's death in 1950. When Peresu, the eldest son of the deceased bishop, turned down the offer of his father's junior bishops to ordain him as successor to his father (a line of action which in any event would have undermined his authority), and turned instead to Mutendí of the ZCC to ordain him, Ndaza office-bearers like Willi Sharara simply "walked out", taking large segments of Masuka's Church with them. To many it was the last straw in the game of "interference tactics", which the "impostor" from Zion City had played so effectively over many years.

Once Peresu found his feet as Bishop Davíd Masuka, Junior, he stabilized what was left of his father's Church, gave new impetus to Church growth and managed to establish a certain degree of unity amongst the splinter Ndaza Zionist groups, mainly through the organization of a joint Church building programme at the old Church headquarters in Bikita. Close ties with Mutendí were

1 Daneel, 1971(a), pp. 289,291,294,298,301,303,414.
2 Ibid., p. 426-7.
3 Ibid., pp. 303f.
4 Ibid., p. 304.
11 Senior Rabaumah Baptizer of the AACJM, wearing monogrammed vestment to indicate his rank, preparing bread for holy communion.
12. Apostolic prophet prophesying and explaining Spirit manifestation to congregation.
13. Bishop Nehemiah Gotore ordaining the muPostori Sauro Garauako as bishop of the Zion Sabbath Church.
14. Elison Mutingwende of the Shinga Postora explains to congregation the size of the horn (containing destructive medicine) which he is about to remove from the house of an afflicted family.

15. Witchcraft eradication service of Shinga Postora. From left to right: prophetic healer Elison Mutingwende, Kraalhead Ratsate (below Elison), the Rev. Samuel Dzire and Evangelist Jerry Kono.

Leadership destabilization in inter-church relations

maintained. This did not imply complete subservience to the "man of God", or that Mutendi consistently manipulated the organization of the young Masuka's Church. It is even to be doubted that Mutendi's "destabilizing tactics" paid dividends in terms of a large flow of former Ndaza Zionists into the ZCC fold. Apart from individual defections I have not found concrete evidence of substantial factions of Masuka followers joining Mutendi's Church at any one time. Nevertheless, there were sporadic incidents of ZCC involvement in Ndaza circles which sent minor shock waves through Masuka's Church, because they highlighted both the strange, spell-binding fascination Mutendi held for his audiences and, by comparison, the weaker hold of Masuka Jr on his own followers. This was vividly demonstrated by the role Mutendi played in the proceedings at Masuka's headquarters in July 1967, which Bishop Masuka Jr had planned as a Church-opening ceremony.

1 MUTENDI'S ROLE AT THE OPENING OF MASUKA'S CHURCH

During the weekend of 8 and 9 July 1967, Ndaza Zionists from the central and southern regions of Rhodesia gathered at Rabinoni ("Lebanon"), Masuka's headquarters in Bikita, for the festive opening of the new Church building (see App. II). This Church, which had taken many years to build, had become the symbol of ideological unity among the numerous Ndaza Zionist groups which traced their origins back to the pioneering work of the deceased Bishop Masuka. The occasion was intended by Masuka Jr to be a massive demonstration of Ndaza solidarity and achievement, in spite of the organizational disintegration of the ZAC of SA, secessions and the decline of the Masuka leadership of the past. But this was not to be: Bishop Mutendi had other plans.

When he arrived at Rabinoni early on Saturday morning with buses and cars packed with ZCC dignitaries, he was accompanied by Chief Mazungunye - an ardent ZCC member - who promptly stated that there could be no official Church-opening ceremony. Chief Mazungunye claimed that he had not been informed by his subordinate, Chief Masuka, of the proposed meeting and that the appropriate permission for such an event had not been obtained from the senior chief's court. In this matter Mutendi had sufficient influence to persuade Chief Mazungunye to change his attitude. Yet it became evident that the two of them were collaborating to embarrass rather than support the younger Masuka in the eyes of
the numerous Ndaza Zionist visitors, many of whom gave only partial allegiance to Masuka. Considering the background of schisms in Masuka's Church and the dispute over the successor bishop's ordination in 1950, it was to be expected that Mazungunye's move would create an atmosphere of uncertainty amongst the Ndaza Zionists. In addition, it suggested incompetent leadership, because everyone knew of the importance of obtaining the chief's permission for a mass meeting in any tribal area. The fact that neither Bishop Masuka nor Chief Masuka presented themselves at the Church building to face the ZCC officials publicly seemed to confirm Mazungunye's claim. The continued absence of the two key figures throughout the morning put the Ndaza Zionists on the defensive. To those Zionist leaders who had resented Mutendi's involvement in Ndaza Zionist affairs all along, it must have been a bitter experience to see the ZCC leader arrive at their Church and more or less assert his superiority over Masuka Jr by taking the initiative, first of all by blocking the planned proceedings, and secondly, by calling all the Zionists together next to the Church for a so-called "prayer meeting".

The Rev Mudosi, brother-in-law of Bishop Masuka Jr, introduced the visitors to the meeting. His "sermon" reflected a degree of stress caused by the presence of Chief Mazungunye. He said, "I am being trodden upon. Had I been a mouse my tail would have broken off. But I refuse to accept the breaking off I therefore introduce to you those who are here." Uncertainty and frustration lay behind the statement, "we want to be taught so that we can see where we stand." An attempt was also made to defend Chief Masuka by declaring that the absent chief had made known that he had sent a message to Chief Mazungunye because he could not have the Church opened in the absence of his "father". In saying this, Mudosi was actually challenging Mazungunye's spoiling tactics and indirectly pointing an accusing finger at Mutendi. But his conclud­ing laconic comment indicated that there was little he could do and that Masuka's absence was confusing: "So you see we are just saying dziva, dziva like a chicken standing in the rain [i.e. we are at an impasse]."

5 App. II, p. 447.
Leadership destabilization in inter-church relations

In the brief address by a ZCC Sotho minister who was visiting Mutendi from South Africa at the time, there was a veiled comparison between the leadership of the "man of God" from Moriah and Masuka Jr. Mutendi was portrayed as the one who had come to uplift Masuka, and the latter as a subordinate who was spiritually dependent on the ZCC bishop and the support of his own Church Council. A narrative of a child's fear of his father after he had herded and lost some cattle suggested that Masuka did not have the courage to face his spiritual "father", Mutendi. In all probability the "lost cattle" referred to the many defectors from Masuka's Church, in which case it was a fairly obvious accusation of incompetent leadership resulting in secessions. As the Sotho minister who gave this address had not had prior dealings with David Masuka, he was uncritically projecting impressions based entirely on what he had learnt from Mutendi; hence the flagrant contrast between effective and ineffective leadership. He was caught up in a process of image building and power play without knowing the full details of the inter-Church relations involved. As a result his address was full of caricatures and unwitting misrepresentation, taking little account of Masuka Jr's successes in restructuring and expanding what was left of his father's Church.

Mutendi himself excelled in making contrasts and comparisons. Masuka was both praised and criticized, encouraged and accused. Overt and more subtle comparisons between Ndaza Zionism and Zion City always hinted at the latter's superiority. The central theme, presented in a tone fluctuating between humility and near arrogance, was predictably the elevated position of "the man of God" and the explicitly stated or implied benefits derived from allegiance to his Church.

Mutendi started by telling the people of the big meeting that was taking place at Zion City and inviting them to go and see for themselves. At a later stage he accused the Ndaza Zionists of not visiting Zion City, whereas he visited them from time to time. Having contrasted the lack of impressive numbers at Masuka's Church (despite the presence of a few thousand Zionists) with the meeting at Zion City, where the mass of people - including quite a number of chiefs - were "like ants", Mutendi once again invited them to

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come to his headquarters. By contrasting the weak and the strong, the unimpressive and the spectacular, and by arousing his audience's curiosity about the activities at his own headquarters, Mutendi all but turned the occasion into a ZCC recruitment campaign. Through his emphasis on the importance of chiefs who could assess and authorize (religious) activities, Mutendi was reminding his listeners of the numerous chiefs (about fifteen at that stage amongst his own following, as opposed to the few, who were not even present, in Masuka's Church. His words, "if one does something and finds that it is not assessed by superiors [chiefs], it reflects the unimportance of such doings" were calculated, in view of the absence of Chief Masuka, to stress the relative insignificance of the occasion at "Rabinoni"

With a more positive approach to Masuka's leadership, Mutendi stated: "We are most thankful, seeing that you have a leader who leads well." Making a strong case for the legitimacy of inherited Church leadership, with reference to King Solomon's inheritance of David's kingship, he intimated support for David Jr as successor to the position of his deceased father. In typical Zionist fashion, Mutendi also likened Masuka's building of his Church to King Solomon's building of the temple in Old Testament times and asserted the identity of Masuka's headquarters and Jerusalem, the dwelling-place of angels. These positive remarks were probably calculated to neutralize other comments which could have antagonized the audience.

On the negative side, Mutendi repeatedly referred to Bishop Masuka in terms such as "our minister", "my child", and "my official", implying a close relationship between the two men but at the same time placing Masuka Jr in a decidedly subordinate position to Mutendi. By stating that Rabinoni was the headquarters of Masuka's Church where the people had to participate in Holy Communion under the direction of "his official", Mutendi came close to describing the Ndaza Church centre as a regional "substation" of his

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16 App. II, p. 450.
own Zion City When, after the service, Mutendi inspected the Church, he made a similar claim by saying: "We have entered our home." Instead of strongly affirming Masuka's leadership, Mutendi adopted a wait-and-see attitude when he said: "If he [Masuka] was commissioned by God he will stay. If he was not sent by God, you will see the result for yourselves." By following this up with a reminder that the deceased Masuka had not been able to fulfil his ideals because of pressure from the police, Mutendi focused on a low ebb rather than on the peak periods of Masuka leadership in the past. His words, "Don't seek assistance from a junior Church member, for he will lead you astray", sounded like a subtle reflection on the ability of Masuka Jr to keep his flock together. More directly accusing, in connection with Masuka's absence, were the words: "If a man appoints himself Church leader he should appear in front of others." This was tantamount to accusing Masuka of cowardice for not putting in an appearance. But here again the stinging thrust was quickly followed by a disarming gesture when Mutendi urged the Ndaza Zionists not to despise the youth of their leader.

In both subtle and blatant terms, Mutendi repeatedly referred to the uniqueness and elevated nature of his own leadership in sharp contradistinction to that of Masuka. First of all he spoke about the biblical cornerstone which was rejected by the builders. In Rhodesia the rejection of the cornerstone resulted in many people going astray. By naming some of the strayed leaders, such as Peter Mutema, Mutendi clearly implied that he himself was the rejected cornerstone. One could hardly escape the impression that Mutendi was also hinting at Bishop Masuka's refusal in the early 1920s to follow him into the ZCC. The words, "a bishop who strays loses his followers tomorrow", could have been an unspoken assertion that the disintegration of Masuka's Church was a result of his perhaps unwitting rejection of Mutendi as the "cornerstone of Zion". In the second place, Mutendi, with reference to the laying of the foundation of the temple at Jerusalem (Ezra 3:10) claimed to be the founder of Ndaza Zionism in Rhodesia. "I am the one who started with these cords [ndaza]," he said. Although this claim was not

entirely true, Mutendi’s additional reference to his suffering, persecution and arrests in those early years served to highlight the key role he had played as the most prominent and successful Zionist opponent of the repressive measures of the administration. In the third place, Mutendi reminded his listeners that it was not his Rozvi tribe as a whole which had suffered on behalf of Zionism, but he himself. He contended: "The Rozvi people are overly concerned with their monarchy. Yet we [the Rozvi] gave you a bishop; do you want another one in addition? ... Our first bishop was Enginasi Lekhanyane. Then there was also Mhlangu. But amongst these [forerunners of Zion] I am the only one left. All the others have passed away." What emerged clearly was Mutendi’s firm conviction that he was the foremost Zionist authority in the country—partly perhaps because of his royal Rozvi descent, which he knew appealed to many people who had nationalistic ideals, but mainly because of his seniority as the only remaining stalwart of a group of leaders who had by then already passed into the realm of legend. His view of his own position as exclusive and sacrosanct in Rhodesian Zionist ranks was reflected in his question whether the Zionists wanted another bishop besides the one of Rozvi descent.

In the fourth place, Mutendi reached the climax of his claims to unique leadership by describing his continuing duties on behalf of African believers beyond the grave. His warning against the disruptive effects of incompetent and immature Church leadership was followed by the following words:

"One most important thing for all you black people in this country, Rhodesia, to take note of is that when you reach heaven and are judged there, know that I shall be there. I shall be your witness [mufakazi]! None of the other Church leaders in this country belonging to the black people, not even Mai Chaza, witnesses in heaven about the activities of this world. I am the one witness; I see it all happening."

Considering Mutendi’s reluctance to make public statements about the mediatory role his followers believed he would play after death, and his deliberate efforts to avoid creating the impression that he provided an alternative to the Christ of the Bible, this con-

tentious declaration was somewhat out of character. Through his deliberate affirmation of the key role he would play in heaven on behalf of all members of African Churches in the country, he was trying to establish in the minds of his listeners his own countrywide and divinely instituted authority. One could interpret his claim to a witnessing role in heaven, based on his awareness of things happening in this world, as an assertion of omnipotence and an attempt at self-deification. Such an assertion is, of course, biblically untenable. It should be borne in mind, however, that on this occasion Mutendi was not attempting to make a balanced doctrinal statement. On the contrary, he was aiming at maximum impact on his audience with a view to widening his sphere of influence, even if it meant deliberately exploiting the African's concern with mediation in the after-life through claims that could promote closer ties and greater dependence on his leadership. Mutendi's motive at this juncture was obviously not to usurp the mediatory function of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, one could not but gain the impression that a theologically inappropriate self-assertion underlay Mutendi's pronouncement, as if the bishop was issuing a warning that the passage of African believers into heaven could be jeopardized if they did not acknowledge his leadership. This obviously came close to a negation of the New Testament conditions for eternal life.

The reactions to Mutendi's "sermons" were varied. Some Ndaza Zionists considered his visit merely an unwanted intrusion and his comments on Masuka's leadership an unnecessary and unfair reflection on their bishop's capabilities. Others passively accepted Mutendi's presence, while quite a number appeared to be utterly fascinated by his performance. It is possible that although this latter group did not agree with everything Mutendi said, they took pride in the prominence this man had achieved, particularly as one of the most forceful representatives of African resistance to European domination. Mutendi at all events achieved his objective of sowing doubt in the minds of some Ndaza Zionists about Masuka's position in their movement, and of presenting them with a dynamic alternative in Church leadership should they consider a change in Church affiliation.

The thwarting of the Church-opening ceremony was undoubtedly an embarrassment to David Masuka Jr. Not only did Chief Mazungunye refuse to give the required permission, but the Rev. Mutendi hinted at an indefinite postponement of such permission.
when he said, "Even if it [the Church building] should have no value, with no one being allowed to enter it, the one who has built it has completed his task." With their proceedings disrupted, their followers dissatisfied, and general uncertainty about the future of Rabinoni as Church headquarters, the senior Ndaza officials held several Church Council sessions soon after Mutendi and his followers had left. Great dissatisfaction was expressed with the change in programme, and Bishop Masuka was hard pressed to explain such factors as the struggle for tribal political superiority between his uncle, Chief Masuka, and Chief Mazungunye which - rather than his supposedly inefficient arrangements - was the real cause of Mazungunye's attitude. His relatives in the council all supported his assertion that all the chiefs in the district had been informed weeks in advance of the Church-opening ceremony. Some of the representatives of secessionist groups who were critical of Peresu's "inheritance" of his father's office in the Church were clearly eager to exploit Masuka Jr's predicament. But, despite Mutendi's remarks, Masuka demonstrated remarkable tact and maturity in handling the crisis. He gave his critics ample time to vent their feelings and listened sympathetically to their complaints. Instead of countering the statements Mutendi had made in his absence, he acted as if there had been no meddlesome activities at the Church building at all. Through his announcement that such secessionist leaders as Bishop Chowe, who in the past had broken away from his Church, would be given a chance to preach during the main service on the following Sunday afternoon, he managed to swing the reactionary tide in his favour. With the promise that the tribal political obstacles delaying the inauguration of the new Church building would be overcome in the near future, the failure of the meeting was subtly turned into a promise for the future. By the time of the service on the Sunday afternoon, a remarkable change in atmosphere had taken place, so that even the most outspoken junior bishops, who had openly criticized Masuka Jr, were vying with one another to dance as close as possible to their principal leader.

In stark contrast to Mutendi's provocative address on Saturday morning, Masuka's main sermon on Sunday afternoon was characterized by moderation, humility and spiritual conviction. It consisted of three themes:

30 App. II, p. 452.
31 App. II, p. 453f.
an introduction with a strong Christological emphasis, in which Jesus Christ was acknowledged as the originator of the Church and the particular occasion;

(2) a brief reassurance that the necessary arrangements would be made for the future opening of the Church, without debating the issues raised by Mutendi; and

(3) an account of the building of God's temple, closely identifying it with the biblical King Solomon's building of the temple in Jerusalem. In the latter account Masuka emphasized the mutuality and co-operation between Hiram and King Solomon (1 Kings 5:1ff) as an example of the spirit of love required amongst the fragmented N'daza Zionist groups. Like King David, his father had also failed to build a temple. "He only succeeded in building a few places of mud and grass," he said. Whereas King David had been diverted by continual strife with the enemies of Israel, Bishop David Masuka Sr had been "too involved in the struggle to make the whole country believe this Word of God", Peresu contended.

In a moving manner he continued:

"Is there anyone here who does not know the son of Jeke? No! You may ask, Who is this? Who is coming here and for what purpose? It is David. Who has converted the world? David my father has! Now look, my heart responded by saying that I want to build Jehovah, our God, a temple. Solomon said to Hiram: 'I want to build this temple with you, my father's friend, knowing about it.' As with Solomon the house [temple] was pledged by our fathers to God. There it is! [David points at Church building.] Can't you see it? We here fulfil the laws of our fathers. Nothing exists without an inheritance! Solomon built his father's and I built my father's. Some will build that which is associated with bad medicine, and others that which relates to witchcraft. But this one [the Church building] is for the Lord, which Solomon, Hiram and David promised Jehovah. Solomon told Hiram that the Lord swore to David that his own son would build a dwelling place for Him. Likewise, I am now sitting in my father's chair There! Over there stands the house I have built on behalf of my father What for? For Jehovah, so that the people can believe in him..."
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Masuka's sermon, amongst other things, reflected the Zionist tendency to establish its authenticity and find justification for its activities in a close identification with Old Testament characters and a virtual re-enactment of episodes from Old Testament history. It also underscored the preoccupation with tradition in respect of inherited leadership and inherited responsibilities. But the essential point on this occasion was that Masuka was defusing a still uneasy and destabilized situation by detaching the entire Church building and inauguration issue from the local situation with its besetting problems and placing it in a biblical context, where common ground and reconciliation for the organizationally diversified Ndaza Zionists could possibly be found. Through a combination of tact, spiritual conviction and a clever reinterpretation of aspects of the history of his Church in biblical terms, he was neutralizing a potentially explosive situation which could well have led to numerous defections and further disintegration of the movement he had started to rebuild. Thus in this particular instance - as far as one could judge from the facts available - the "threat" from Zion City was averted, not through a display of leadership genius aimed at out-manoeuvring Mutendi, but through humility and wisdom which appeared to be inspired by the Word of God.

2. MASUKA'S ROLE IN THE ZCC LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION STRUGGLE

In September 1949 Mutendi and Masuka Sr arranged a special meeting to discuss leadership succession in their respective Churches. They were obviously anxious to keep the leadership in their families, as well as to maintain a valid succession-link with the Churches they had found in South Africa. These Churches represented to them an authentic and legitimate bond with the original Christian Church. Because of their regional autonomy and relative isolation from the South African ecclesiastic situation they could not count on Church leaders from the south to conduct ordination ceremonies for their successors. As pioneering Zionist leaders their own original links with the South African Churches therefore had to suffice. Thus it was agreed that in the event of the death of the principal leader of one of the two Churches, the bishop of the other Church would ordain the inheriting successor of the deceased to take his place. Both leaders agreed that it would be quite impossible for subordinate Church officials to legitimately
ordain the most senior bishop of their Church. In addition, it was decided in the presence of several witnesses that Peresu was to succeed David Masuka, while Enginasi, Mutendi’s second son, would succeed his father. With this agreement still fresh in his memory when Bishop Masuka died in 1950, Peresu had no hesitation in requesting Mutendi to conduct both the burial and his own ordination ceremony.

When Bishop Mutendi died on 21 July 1976, the situation in his Church had changed considerably. After the move from the Bikita Church headquarters to Gokwe in the north in the late 1960s, Ruben, who had remained behind as caretaker of the numerous ZCC congregations in the Gutu, Bikita, Ndanga and Nuanetsi districts, had risen to prominence as an influential leader in the Church. As the younger brother of Enginasi, he had been entrusted with wide-ranging responsibilities for outlying ZCC congregations at an early age, while Enginasi himself played a key role in the organization and council proceedings at Zion City. Soon after his father’s death Ruben, who over the years had maintained closer contact with Bishop Masuka in Bikita than any of his numerous brothers, requested the Ndaza leader’s assistance in ordaining him as Mutendi’s successor. This Masuka refused to do. Mindful of the agreement between the two deceased Zionist leaders, Masuka Jr travelled north, as he stated himself, “first of all to bury Mutendi and then to make preparations for the ordination [kugadza] of Enginasi, who was chosen by his father”. Not having been in regular touch with the ZCC headquarters in the distant Gokwe, Masuka was probably unaware of the fact that Enginasi no longer commanded the same degree of authority in Church matters as he had done in earlier years. Rumour had it that Enginasi was drinking heavily and that the ZCC people themselves were opposed to his becoming the deceased bishop’s successor. Moreover, Nehemiah, a younger half-brother of Enginasi and a school-teacher of considerable influence had captured the imagination of many Zionists with a display of competence, tact and a progressive attitude to the handling of Church responsibilities.

Faced with this dilemma Masuka nevertheless insisted that he was the only Church leader in the country who could ordain Mutendi’s successor, that Mutendi himself had conferred this power on him and that, according to the 1949 agreement, Enginasi was the only legitimate heir to Mutendi’s Church leadership. In September 1977 Masuka complained to me: “The problem with Mutendi’s Church is that it has become a ‘business’ and that many parties
want to stake their claims. In this situation," he continued, "it is my
duty to appoint the proper successor who was chosen by Mutendi
himself." The bishop undoubtedly had feelings of loyalty towards
the deceased ZCC leader and wanted to honour their agreement. On
the other hand, having suffered in the past because of the above-
mentioned destabilizing tactics of the ambitious "man of God", it
appeared at this stage as if Masuka himself was not entirely free
from a desire to retaliate. It was obvious that, instead of judging
the mood of the bulk of ZCC members and working towards a
compromise solution which could possibly mend the rupture in the
ZCC, Masuka, through his insistence on the literal application of an
old agreement, was indulging in interference tactics. At this point
his involvement in the ZCC succession struggle fostered division
rather than unity.

How was this done? Masuka in no uncertain terms rejected
Nehemiah's claim to leadership. He stated that all the prophecies
and dreams in support of Nehemiah's leadership were false, because
they were contrary to the deceased bishop's wishes. According
to him the whole concept of electing a leader by vote was introduced
by the Rev Champion, the senior and longest serving minister in
the ZCC, who had cleverly swung the general opinion in the
Church in favour of Nehemiah. Masuka disputed the introduction
of the voting system to decide Church leadership, maintaining that
it could only apply to secular leadership. It was not a biblically
sanctioned practice which Mutendi would have approved.

There is no doubt that Bishop Masuka at this stage was deeply
involved in the ZCC succession crisis. He travelled in the Bikita,
Zaka, Ndanga and Nhema districts and consulted at least seventeen
prophets from a number of Zionist and Apostolic Churches. Keep·
ing a record of the names of the prophets and their prophecies, he
was quite satisfied that there was adequate divine confirmation of
Mutendi's original choice of Enginasi as successor. He said: "We saw
that the Spirit 'collided' with the one who was chosen by his father
(tauona kuti Mweya yokandobondera panauya wakaketwa nababa
hwacho)." When I pointed out to him that Enginasi's popularity had
waned somewhat, he remarked, firstly, that the vote had been
manipulated by the Rev Champion and Nehemiah to make it
appear as if Enginasi had no following; secondly, that Enginasi and
his supporters insisted that the old agreement be honoured; thirdly,
that the only legitimate course was to honour the deceased's wish;
and fourthly, that there was no doubt in his mind that the "shade"
of the deceased Mutendi would draw the mass of Church members
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To support the successor of his own choice. This latter point was obviously an overriding consideration in Masuka's mind. He insisted that "according to our African customs the spirit [or shade] of the deceased arranges matters according to his wishes. The spirit will come and say: 'I have been robbed in this or that way! Do things like this...!'" Besides, he had been in touch with Mutendi on several occasions before his death and there had never been any indication of changing the 1949 agreement.

Masuka believed that one of the practical problems that had arisen at the ZCC headquarters in Gokwe was that Sainos, Mutendi's eldest son, who inherited the deceased's headmanship, and Enginasi had established their own villages away from the bishop's central village. Their younger brothers, as well as Nehemiah and the Rev. Champion, who lived in the central village, feared that Enginasi would shift the headquarters of the Church to his village and in the process deprive them of the Church's income. Convinced that Enginasi's younger half-brothers were conniving against him, Bishop Masuka had little hesitation in comparing Nehemiah's activities with those of the Israelite king David's son, Absolom: "Like Absolom, Nehemiah said: 'Let me seek out my own followers and let me make a bid for the leadership ahead of the others.' So you see, these things have happened before. It is nothing new to us."

Bishop Masuka had no doubt about the validity of his involvement in the ZCC. Asked about this and about Mutendi's role in his Church opening ceremony (ten years prior to our discussion!) he said: "Bishop Mutendi could actually act in that manner at the Church opening because he had ordained me as leader in my father's Church, and therefore had a certain authority over me. This was also the result of the co-operation that there had been between my father and Mutendi. I could not properly open my own Church without his being present... The same now applies to the ZCC. I have to be there as the senior leader whenever a Church building is opened. Just as I was subjected to Mutendi, so, when I have ordained the new leader, I shall call him 'my child' [mwana wangu]. It is not as if the ZCC people resent my involvement. Why do you think Ruben and the others want me to confirm their leadership? Even Champion says: 'We have clad Nehemiah in his father's clothes. What remains now is for Bishop David Masuka to gadza [confirm or ordain through laying-on of hands] this matter.' They know that I am the only one who can perform this ceremony."
From Nehemiah's comments, however, it was evident that he considered Bishop Masuka as an impostor who had no right to meddle in ZCC affairs. After he was installed by the Church council as bishop in 1977, he stated:

"Masuka does not know all the sons of Mutendi. He only knows Sainos, Enginasi, Ruben and a few of the others. When he came to my father's funeral he indicated that he wanted to ordain one of these three. But it has never been indicated to us by my father that Masuka should come and arrange our leadership. It is simply a matter of Masuka thinking that, because he was ordained as bishop by Mutendi after his father's death, he is now entitled to arrange the *ubishop* of our Church. He was actually notified by Sainos and Enginasi who wanted his assistance in obtaining the leadership. Masuka wants to interfere in our Church affairs... It was obvious from the attitudes of Church members that they were not happy with Masuka's presence at the funeral. He nevertheless insisted that we notify him to come and ordain the new bishop as soon as preparations had been made. Nobody heeded this directive because the twelve senior ministers of our Church had been instructed about the procedure to be followed.

"Masuka wrote to our people, saying: 'Come soon so that the ordination can be arranged, because I am troubled in my dreams.' But we told him that he was causing disunity between the Churches and thus he was destroying the co-operation which had existed between his father and Mutendi. Even now Masuka is making private arrangements with Enginasi to ordain him as bishop. We have recently intercepted a letter of Enginasi in which he expresses appreciation for Bishop Masuka's willingness to assist him in his quest for leadership. He indicated that he would travel to Bikita to meet Masuka and that all the ZCC leaders of that district should be notified of the meeting. He seems also to want to join forces with Ruben. So it seems as if Masuka, who took fright here in Gokwe, is now arranging for Enginasi to be installed as bishop at his place."

Nehemiah, who had only started to play a prominent role in Church life shortly before Mutendi's death, was clearly not interested in the possible arrangements between his deceased father and Masuka in earlier years. As a teacher and progressive organizer of Church affairs, he certainly did not have a high regard for
Masuka’s leadership, and it was to be expected that he would consider the latter’s involvement in the succession struggle of his Church disruptive. He realized that Masuka’s outspoken opposition to his own rise to power in the ZCC could not seriously threaten his position, as he had received the majority vote in both the ZCC council and a mass Church meeting. Nevertheless Masuka’s role prolonged the leadership strife, strengthened the position of opposing factions, and worst of all provided religious sanction for dissent. Nehemiah was aware that Masuka’s support and ordination of one of his elder brothers could lend sufficient esteem and validation to such leadership to cause the defection of an increasing number of individuals from the main body of the ZCC. Geographical distance between the Gokwe headquarters and the original stronghold in the Bikita district had already at the time of Mutendi’s death contributed to alienation of some of the older congregations. Ruben’s sustained presence and leadership in the central and south-eastern districts, during the long spells of absence of the deceased leader, had moreover created expectations in many ZCC circles that he would in fact become the principal leader with Masuka’s support, underscored by an ordination ceremony with all the necessary claims to legitimacy based on the 1949 agreement, Ruben would be in a position to consolidate and expand his leadership among a substantial section of the ZCC.

This is precisely what happened. Enginasi was outvoted in the Gokwe district, and his response to this event indicated to Masuka that he would move south at some stage to assist his brother Ruben in leading what he and Ruben considered to be the authentic ZCC. Thereupon the Ndaza bishop decided to ordain Ruben as his father’s successor. It must have been clear to Masuka after two visits that the Gokwe situation had developed to a point which left him no meaningful role to play. Enginasi himself had more or less cleared the way for Ruben, and Ruben persisted in requesting support. Ruben moreover lived near Masuka’s own headquarters in the Bikita district, making inter-Church co-operation relatively easy. Hence Bishop Masuka was left with virtually only one realistic option if he was to have at least some manipulative influence in the ZCC.

On 26 March 1978 Bishop Masuka attended a large meeting in the Bikita district, attended mainly by ZCC followers of Ruben Mutendi but also by a large number of Ndaza Zionists. It was Ruben’s official ordination ceremony, and an analysis of Bishop Masuka’s sermon in particular is quite revealing of his own concep-
tion and justification of the role he was playing in the ZCC at that stage (see App. III).

One of the main features of Masuka's "ordination sermon" was an overriding preoccupation with the dreams and visions he had had. These were presented as revelations of absolute truth, vindicating his course of action and shedding new light on a confused situation of leadership claims and counterclaims. Considering the significance of dreams in the African world-view, they added weight to Masuka's views and elevated the entire ceremony to a level where myth merged with reality, where the dividing line between the living dead and the living was suspended sufficiently for the audience to feel the presence and ongoing control of the deceased principal leaders of both the ZCC and the Ndaza ZAC. In a presentation of this nature, where the wishes and ongoing concern of deceased leaders are related to a rendering of Old Testament facts which supposedly sanctions inherited Church leadership, historical and personal inconsistencies are easily eliminated. Masuka no longer made any mention of Mutendi's original choice of Enginasi. On the contrary, Enginasi's claim to the Church's "kingship" was played down, together with that of Nehemiah, as unwarranted compared to the now mystically sanctioned claim of Ruben. Masuka now asserted that as far back as 1974, while Mutendi was still alive, he had explicitly chosen in favour of Ruben, and that on 9 January 1977 Ruben had already been consecrated by Masuka as Church leader at Masuka's "Jerusalem" (Church headquarters). There was no mention by Masuka of the support he had tried to drum up for Enginasi in the course of 1977 and the seventeen "prophecies" he had so ardently collected in support of Enginasi's installation as bishop. As so often happens in any religion, it appeared as if prophecies, dreams and visions could be adapted to suit circumstances, as if they followed in the wake of pragmatic considerations, confirming a planned course of action, rather than providing unpremeditated guidelines communicated from the unknown Beyond to the known world. The visions and dreams which no longer fitted the new situation were conveniently discarded and ignored!

A theme which dominated Masuka's discourse on dreams was that of co-operation between his and Mutendi's Church. His account of the deceased Mutendi's recurring appearances in his dreams conveyed an impression of him and the deceased bishop working closely together to solve ZCC problems. But mainly it was a matter of the deceased Bishops Masuka and Mutendi appearing together, acting together as the mainstays of unity between their Churches. In
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The one vision the two of them appeared at a meeting where both ZCC and Ndaza Zionists were gathered, divided from each other by a cluster of trees. The trees obviously symbolized division and the two leaders showed concern about this. They indicated that if Church unity failed on earth, it could also not be achieved in heaven, as if to say that a manifestation of mutuality and sound Christian relations between the two Zionist Churches was virtually a condition for entry into heaven. As the main focus of their concern was the honouring of the 1949 agreement and the successful conclusion of the leadership strife in Mutendi's ZCC, the ultimate expression of unity lay in the solution of this issue as it presented itself in the dream. The deceased Mutendi made Ruben stand up in front of the meeting with the words: "Look! there is my choice. He was afraid at first of the people but now I order him to lead my people." This was followed by the dreamer, Masuka Jr himself, ordaining Ruben as bishop, and the deceased Masuka confirming and authorizing the ordination.

Hence we find the visionary peak of inter-Church cooperation in unified action between the living and the living-dead: the deceased Mutendi exercising his choice and his living son accepting the responsibility of leadership; the deceased Masuka authorizing the consecration ceremony performed by his living son; and the two living Church leaders - Peresu Masuka and Ruben Mutendi - committed for life to meaningful interaction between their Churches. The deceased Masuka's authorization of Ruben's ordination by implication cast Masuka in a leading role in Zimbabwean Zionism, for he more or less "conferred" Bishop Mutendi's healing and rain-making powers on Ruben. Moreover, he required that in future Zionist prayers in both camps should start with a reference to the God of David Masuka and Samuel Mutendi, to honour the memory of the two pioneering leaders of Zionism who had "fetched the gospel from South Africa". As the traditional prayer formula of the ZCC always started with the name of Lekhanyane, in recognition of the South African leader's seniority over Mutendi, the new formula was clearly intended to elevate David Masuka above Mutendi, as the most senior Zionist leader in Zimbabwe.

This brings us to the intriguing reversal of roles between the two deceased Zionist bishops. In contrast to the real-life situation, in which Mutendi had always assumed a leading role, even to the point of ridiculing the deceased Masuka and publicly scolding his
succeeding son, the younger Masuka’s dreams and visions exacted a certain degree of retribution for the arrogance he had to endure from the ZCC camp in the past. As if dreams held at least the promise of fair play, they were shown to portray a new distribution of power and authority which in most respects favoured the deceased Masuka. In Masuka’s dream world, his father came from the east, which in religious symbolism carries greater weight than the west whence Mutendi came. Masuka carries a spear, which symbolizes greater authority than the knobkerrie carried by Mutendi. In the discourse between the two pioneer leaders it is Masuka who takes the initiative. It is he who commands that there should be Church unity and that the 1949 agreement between him and Mutendi should be implemented in the ZCC leadership dispute. If this is not done he will not be able to "see properly", which means that he will not rest but will keep coming back to the living members of the two Zionist Churches, demanding proper conduct of Church affairs.

The deceased Masuka also did not hesitate to accuse the ZCC people of causing divisions in their own Church. Instead of Mutendi confronting the Ndaza Zionists, as he had so often done in life, it was now Masuka’s turn to actually rebuke Mutendi for having scolded his son Peresu – an offence against the entire house of Masuka, which the deceased leader could not ignore. This visionary process of cutting the deceased Mutendi’s image down to size did not represent mere wishful thinking. In Peresu Masuka’s reasoning it implied a practical situation of fairness and reciprocity between the ZCC and the ZAC, whereby, through the same act of ordination he would have his turn – as Mutendi had had with him – to assert some authority over Bishop Ruben Mutendi and his ZCC followers. This assumption manifested itself, for instance, in his address of Ruben’s followers as "my children". Although the Ndaza bishop was much less aggressive and assertive in his sermon addressed to ZCC members than the ZCC "man of God" had been in his approach to the Ndaza Zionists, one notices elements of reaction and retaliation. Such a response to the paternalistic and discriminatory treatment to which the deceased ZCC bishop had at times subjected him was to be expected. Nevertheless it contributed to the process of fission in ZCC ranks, because in supporting the

34 App. III, p. 468.  
35 App. III, p. 467  
exclusive claims of Ruben and rejecting Nehemiah's leadership, Masuka, in spite of his pleas for co-operation, was furthering the growing rift between the two Mutendi brothers instead of promoting reconciliation and inner cohesion in the ZCC.

How was this achieved? First of all Masuka tried to convince his audience of the legitimacy of his role in the ZCC. He invoked an inter-Church agreement which was binding because it was "finalized in Harare",37 which qualification was supposed to add weight to his claims. He stressed the fact that in the absence of the deceased Mutendi, the latter's followers were turning to him for advice. Thus the ZCC, according to his own interpretation, was in effect confirming the key role he had to play. In his visions and dreams he played a central role in resolving the ZCC leadership issue, in conjunction with the deceased Zionist leaders. His constant concern in this regard had even caused him to grow thin and frail. Perhaps the most telling point in one of his dream narratives was the suggestion that the deceased Mutendi was relying on his, Peresu's, insights. After he had told the bishop that he was concerned about the fragmentation of the ZCC, the bishop allegedly said: "You must advise me, because they [my followers] are in your hands!"38 Whether invented or actually experienced, this was the most powerful visionary claim Masuka could possibly make, because it conferred mystical sanction from the ZCC "man of God" himself.

Additional biblical justification for his role in the ZCC was introduced by Masuka through a simplistic and fairly straightforward identification with Old Testament figures involved in the anointment of the Israelite kings. With reference to the prophet Elisha's role in Jehu's anointment as king (II Kings 9:1f), Masuka argued, for instance, that the ministers of a particular Church cannot anoint their own bishop. As in king Jehu's case, a priest from another house had to come along to perform the installation ceremony.39 Samuel's anointment of David (1 Sam 16:1-13) was cited as biblical proof that it was not necessarily the oldest son of a particular family who was chosen for a position of leadership. Identifying his role with that of Samuel, Masuka asserted that he too was both prophet and priest, and that he had been specially sent to anoint the chosen one, in this case Ruben Mutendi. Masuka then

37 App. III, p. 466.
proceeded as follows to relate the installation of Joshua as successor to Moses (Numbers 27:15-20) to his own ordination of Ruben:

"Moses had a similar position to that of Samuel Mutendi; so when he saw his days were full he took a man by the name of Joshua, the son of Nun, since Jehovah told him to do so. He had to present Joshua before Eleazar the priest. Now, I am Eleazar! I was told by Mutendi that he gives me his son [Ruben] whom I must ordain, so that he can spread the gospel over the entire country. Am I not saying exactly what stands in the Book? I have been sent, so I see clearly in which direction you [ZCC] people are being diverted. I have been instated by Moyo [Mutendi], and so I also instate Moyo's son. He is therefore of David Masuka as I am of Samuel Mutendi. Peace to you all!"  

In the second place, and closely linked to the presentation of his own visionary and biblical "credentials", Masuka repeatedly sought to justify his ordination of Ruben. He claimed that Ruben had been elected by Bishop Mutendi in 1974, prior to his death. When Masuka first lay hands on Ruben on 9 January 1977, much rain fell. As the deceased leader was a rain-maker of repute, the coincidence of this ceremony with rain was taken as a sign of divine approval. According to Masuka's dreams Mutendi confirmed his choice of Ruben on several occasions. Then there was also the fact that, unlike any of his other brothers, Ruben had been chosen many years before Mutendi's death to act as a senior Church leader and as representative of Zion City in outlying ZCC congregations. This had given him a unique status of independent leadership which none of his brothers or half-brothers could lay claim to. It is more than likely that it is precisely this aspect of independence which had troubled Mutendi in his lifetime and which caused the old bishop to actually scold Masuka. Ruben's control over numerous remote ZCC congregations may have been experienced by the aging bishop as a threat to Church unity, and he more than likely anticipated that Ruben might enter into a pact with Masuka in order to consolidate his leadership over at least a part of the ZCC.

40 App. III, p. 471.
41 Supra, pp. 278, 284, 467
42 App. III, p. 469.
43 App. III, p. 467
More telling even than Ruben's leadership was Mutendi's insistence just before his death that he wanted to die in the presence of Ruben. In his own sermon prior to that of Masuka, Ruben had likened this experience to that of Christ visiting His disciples (John 20:19-23). Analogous to the privacy of locked doors (v 19), Mutendi requested Ruben to be alone with him. He then allegedly told Ruben that his inheritance was not of this world, but consisted in preaching God's Word. Instead of valuable property he gave Ruben staves as symbols of authority in the Church. As Jesus breathed on His disciples for them to receive the Holy Spirit (v 22), the dying Mutendi leaned against Ruben's breast with his mouth open, as if to convey to him a last message and his spirit. Said Ruben: "It was like Jesus who showed himself to his disciples. He had nothing to clothe himself with, because his garments [earthly possessions] had been destroyed. But He had the inheritance of the Holy Spirit. That is what I too [with my father's death] have found."\(^{44}\) It is this experience which Masuka cited as conclusive proof that Ruben was the legitimate heir to his father's ecclesiastic power.

In the third place, Masuka identified and criticized those he considered to be his and Ruben's opponents. The more generalized accusations concerned the "people of Mutendi" who were responsible for unrest in the ZCC. In Masuka's visions these were narrowed down to the ZCC ministers who were accused by both the two deceased leaders for causing confusion in the ZCC through their mismanagement of the *ukuru* issue. Instead of furthering unity, the leading officials themselves were responsible for "dividing the kingship"\(^{45}\) by not applying the 1949 agreement on leadership succession. Masuka concluded that their inability to maintain unity was causing the two deceased leaders to be restless, so that they kept returning in visions to settle unresolved issues. Masuka's antagonism towards the ZCC ministers who supported Nehemiah derived to a large extent from their unwillingness to allow him to take the initiative in the ordination of Mutendi's successor, their presumptuousness in applying the voting system to choose a successor and their discrimination against Ruben when it came to the distribution of the deceased bishop's inheritable property. In the latter connection he lashed out at the ZCC ministers as follows:

\(^{44}\) App. III, pp. 463-64.
\(^{45}\) App. III, p. 468.
"What would you think about a son who receives the kingship from his father, and when the father dies, the son leaves and goes into the bush? Would you say then that the son's kingship is of heaven? That is your own stupidity, you ministers of the Church! Did the father not have a village in which he was living? You, ministers, are surely mad. You act as if you are children of God, and meanwhile you are wizards! Is this man, Ruben, not the one you loved, the one who holds Moyo's kingship and the one who should live at Jerusalem [i.e. Zion City]? Those who refused him, live like madmen of this world. They are lost. They lay claim to the deceased's property without proper rights. We may laugh about this now, but I swear that this poses a major problem which will cause much trouble in the future. You must be careful not to sell a person, because if you do you will destroy the Church" 46

With this scathing attack and sharp rebuke, Masuka made it more than clear what he thought of the ministers' handling of the ZCC "kingship"

Masuka's main offensive, however, was directed against Nehemiah Mutendi, who had meanwhile been elected and appointed by the ZCC ministers as his father's successor. When Nehemiah appeared in one of his dreams to inform him that he had been chosen as Mutendi's successor, the Ndaza bishop ignored him. 47 In another dream Nehemiah's messengers arrived at Masuka's homestead with a request that he go with them in order to ordain Nehemiah. He then swore that he would never do such a thing. There were two main reasons for this refusal: firstly, that Nehemiah was not "given to Masuka in his visions" as the chosen one, and secondly, because he considered Nehemiah to be "playing with" the God of David Masuka and Samuel Mutendi through his rise to power in the ZCC. With reference to the Israelite king David's choice of Solomon as successor without the king himself anointing his son, Masuka argued that no bishop could ordain his own son as successor while he was still alive. In this way he tried to refute Nehemiah's supposed assertion that he was installed as successor before his father's death. Masuka considered a public ordination ceremony, conducted by a senior priest after the leader's death to be absolutely essential, for the following reason:

"If you are not properly installed before the people, they will accuse you of wizardry. If your father ordained you shortly before his death, the people will say you bewitched your father for wanting the leadership. This is actually the way it is with Nehemiah, who claims to have been installed by his father. So we say, perhaps he did kill his father." 48

At another point in his sermon, Masuka, not restricting himself to subtle innuendo but turning to direct allegation, said:

"Anybody who simply takes this position [of bishop] without proper installation by another bishop has bewitched our father Samuel Mutendi with the intention of taking his leadership. Those who have done so have worked together to kill Samuel Mutendi." 49

This allegation was obviously aimed at Nehemiah and the ZCC ministers who supported him. As the imputation of wizardry is legally forbidden, I doubt whether Masuka intended this as a literal accusation of murder through wizardry. It was probably a forceful attempt on his side to expose Nehemiah and his collaborators as the culprits he considered them to be. These people, according to him, were the real bogeymen who, in their search for power, were responsible not so much for Mutendi's death as for the disintegration of the Church itself.

Having clearly identified the "enemy", Masuka proceeded to preach about Saul's victory over the Amalekites (II Sam. 15:1-10). He then challenged Ruben to heed this example by setting out to conquer his opponents. "We have given you the power," he told Ruben, "so that you can go and destroy [kuparadza] your opponents." With an appeal to the entire audience he summoned: "You men, strengthen and support this man [Ruben] you have chosen to destroy his opponents, so that it can be seen where Jehovah stands." 50

It is obvious that Masuka felt himself entitled to propagate an Old Testament type of militancy in his opposition to Nehemiah on the strength of his own and Ruben's mystically sanctioned roles,

49 App. III, p. 471.
50 App. III, p. 471.
starkly contrasting with Nehemiah's supposedly illegitimate bid for power. Such militancy could only deepen the rift between the two Mutendi brothers. Aimed at strengthening Ruben's position, this call for active opposition to what in effect still represented the main body of the ZCC had little to do with New Testament concepts of love and reconciliation. Hence, in the name of inter-Church cooperation and Old Testament justice, fission in a particular Church was in effect being sanctioned and promoted. As the deceased Mutendi's interference tactics had created embarrassment in the ranks of the Ndaza Zionists, the younger Masuka's role in the ZCC now destabilized rather than furthered cohesion and unity in the latter movement.

Throughout Masuka's sermon it was evident that he did not see Ruben's ordination as an isolated event. His own expectations had been influenced by the somewhat domineering and patronizing attitude the deceased Mutendi had adopted towards him over a period of many years. Without claiming complete authority or control over Ruben's branch of the ZCC, he conveyed quite clearly Ruben's filial relationship to him in ecclesiastic matters. He expected to be consulted in serious Church matters, to be called for major meetings, to play a central role whenever a new Church is opened - in other words, to interact on a regular basis with Ruben, with himself as recognized "patron" of the ZCC. That he expected such interrelationship, with the role of "patron" alternating between leaders in accordance with inter-Church powers of ordination, was clearly illustrated in his public announcement of the son he had chosen as his own successor, when he added the injunction that after his death Ruben would be responsible for the ordination of his successor. In addition, he quite sternly required that Ruben should also adhere to David Masuka's and Samuel Mutendi's law on leadership succession, by pointing out which of his sons would eventually succeed him. Without such adherence to Church laws Ruben, according to Masuka, could not expect to be a successful leader of his followers.51

Masuka's entire sermon therefore was in many respects a masterly act of moulding opinion in a substantial segment of the ZCC. Through setting the stage for ongoing interaction between Ruben, himself and their succeeding sons he created certain expectations in his audience which, he well knew, could have far-reaching implications for the leadership of both Churches in the

years following his death. With a full blast of visionary dream narratives, the alleged demands of the deceased Church leaders against the validating backdrop of an historically verifiable agreement (the one of 1949), mystical sanction and a cleverly slanted yet convincing use of biblical data justifying the ordination procedure, Masuka was asserting his authority as patron of another Church. He was also to some extent exploiting Ruben's need for a "proper ordination" in his power struggle with Nehemiah, by binding Ruben into a public alliance with the ZAC, in which he would more or less be dependent on Masuka's initiative.

(a) Ruben's response

Ruben's sermon on this occasion reflects his dependence on Masuka. He described the agreement between his father and Masuka Sr in the context of a brief and highly subjective rendering of the historical development of the Zionist Church from biblical times up to the present in an effort to give it conclusive significance. In a sense the correct ordination procedure was here construed as an absolute condition for an ongoing link with early Christendom and the future wellbeing of both the ZCC and ZAC. Having emphasized that one could only be a proper bishop on the basis of a valid ordination and having implied that Masuka Jr was the only person who could perform this ceremony with any degree of legitimacy, Ruben concluded his sermon as follows:

"Bishop Masuka has come. I will sit down because, today, the leader is here. If I get lost Masuka will know; if I do wrong Masuka, his God and the deceased Mutendi, will know. Let them all meet there in heaven. They have given me this position. Let them judge there. I am not to be judged here. The prophets too, have seen all this."

In a subsequent sermon Ruben preached:

"Verily, verily I say unto you, the servant is not above his master; the one sent not above the one who sends... As I have now been ordained by Bishop Masuka and Masuka by Mutendi, I am Masuka's child, as Masuka is Mutendi's child. If you people say I have been ordained by the people of David, you
are cursing Mutendi; you are cursing him while he rests."

Aware of the fact that the strengthening of his leadership through an historically sanctioned ordination, demanded a certain price, Ruben was quite prepared to publicly confirm his alliance with Masuka. He even expressed his acceptance of Masuka's patronage in a way which could be interpreted as complete subservience to the ZAC bishop. The act of sitting down in a leader's presence and the admission that personal errors in leadership would be known, assessed and judged by such a leader, certainly indicates recognition of an advisory if not controlling authority. However, by tying Masuka's authority, to that of the deceased Mutendi and to the sovereignty of God, Ruben was in fact defining the limitations of Masuka's position, for the assessment of Ruben's performance in heaven implied that Masuka could not make arbitrary demands on the ZCC leader which did not have the approval of the deceased Mutendi. By emphasizing his own "sonship" to Masuka and Masuka's subordination to the deceased Mutendi, Ruben could underscore the relative power of Masuka and place the future identity of his branch of the ZCC beyond doubt. He allayed the possible fears of his followers about the intrusion of Ndaza Zionists into their ranks by warning in the strongest terms that Bishop Masuka's special task should not be interpreted as if the "people of David" (i.e. the Ndaza Zionists) are responsible for his leadership. His comment that such a misinterpretation would be tantamount to cursing the deceased Mutendi could well have included a warning to Masuka that he should not overrate his status as "patron" of the ZCC.

3. THE IMPACT OF AUTHORITY IMPOSING TACTICS

Having looked at the interference tactics of two prominent Zionist bishops in related Churches, we should consider the destabilizing or other impact of such activities on the Churches concerned. Historically speaking the sequence of events in this respect can be traced to Bishop Mutendi's authority-imposing and somewhat condescending relations with the ZAC during the 1950s and 1960s, after he had consecrated David Masuka Jr as successor to his deceased father. In the 1970s Bishop Masuka retaliated, after Mutendi's death, by insisting on playing a prominent role in the ZCC leader-
leadership succession crisis. How did this affect the ZCC and the ZAC in the 1980s? Were any long-term group-disintegrating forces unleashed by these leaders or were the incidents described above short-lived and sporadic manifestations of the personal ambitions and fancies of individual leaders? Could Bishop Masuka assert any meaningful authority over Ruben Mutendi's branch of the ZCC, considering his alleged limitations as Church leader and the attitudes of superiority and exclusivism which ZCC members had often adopted towards the Ndaza Zionists?

The long-term effects of Bishop Mutendi's influence on the Ndaza movement is difficult to assess. There are no indications that he had a direct hand in any of the major schisms that occurred in the ZAC following Masuka's death in 1950. Nevertheless, his forceful assertion of authority in the Ndaza movement and his virtual domination of Peresu Masuka, in the presence of the latter's subordinate office-bearers - for instance during Masuka's Church-opening ceremony - had an undermining influence on the young Masuka's leadership. It is therefore quite likely that he indirectly served a destabilizing purpose by withholding full support from Masuka Jr which gave the potential Ndaza secessionists who were already critical of the Masuka leadership prior to the principal leader's death the justification they required for secession. In the course of time Mutendi's progressive leadership and popularity as a successful healer, triggered individual defections of Ndaza Zionists who joined his movement. On the other hand, Mutendi's patronizing attitude towards the Ndaza Zionists was also counterproductive from a ZCC point of view, because it caused sufficient irritation amongst some of the loosely affiliated Ndaza bishops for them to work with greater dedication towards closer cohesion under Masuka's leadership.

In the light of ZCC attitudes of superiority over Ndaza Zionists one could have expected Ruben Mutendi to "use" Masuka's assistance for the consolidation of his leadership and then gradually to sever ties with the Ndaza bishop in order to avoid the embarrassment of accusations by ZCC people that he was being led by a bishop of a lesser "Zionist order". Surprisingly, however, this did not happen. In the seven years following Masuka's ordination of Ruben, the alliance between the two Churches grew and new patterns of co-operation emerged. Instead of diminishing, Masuka's influence grew in Ruben's branch of the ZCC and he helped the
young bishop to firmly establish his leadership in the Bikita, Zaka, Gutu, Buhera and Nuanetsi districts. Ruben's proper ordination undoubtedly contributed towards his recognition as his father's legitimate successor by numerous ZCC people, particularly those who were unable over the years to stay in touch with the ZCC headquarters in the distant Gokwe district, or those who were dissatisfied with Nehemiah's appointment as leader of the main body of the ZCC. In this period Ruben's following grew to an estimated 40,000 to 50,000 members.

Whatever the justification for or criticism against Masuka's involvement in the ZCC succession struggle, the fact remains that his deliberate choice and ordination of Ruben, his public opposition to Nehemiah and his sustained patronage of Ruben, whom he unceasingly proclaimed the sole inheritor of Mutendi's ecclesiastical leadership, made him an active agent of destabilization in the ZCC. Supported by an historical background of interaction between the two Churches, the retention of inherited leadership in Zionism, and his convincing claim to legitimacy through the use of dreams and visions, Masuka had become a key figure in sanctioning consolidating and expanding one of the largest schisms ever in the ZCC. In so far as he had contributed towards Ruben's prominence and autonomy as ZCC leader, he was by implication obstructing the reconciliation between Ruben and Nehemiah which could have led to the unification of ZCC branches. Although Masuka eventually changed from his initial opposition to Nehemiah to a call for cooperation between the Mutendi brothers (as I shall indicate below), his insistence that Ruben should unconditionally be accepted as the principal leader of a united ZCC evoked stalemate rather than progress in the inter-group relations of the fragmented Church. Hence, from Nehemiah's point of view, and judged solely in terms of ZCC progress, Bishop Masuka's role was that of an unwanted intruder who had abused the close historical ties between the ZAC and the ZCC. Despite his firm control over the main body of the ZCC, Nehemiah increasingly found himself confronted with a combined and growing Zionist force, mainly in the Bikita district where Ruben and Masuka have their headquarters - a force which not only challenged his leadership but also provided an alternative to the malcontents in his flock. The unsettled situation was triggering individual defection in both camps, with members moving from one to the other in both directions.

From a wider ecclesiastic point of view Masuka's involvement in a branch of the ZCC had positive ecumenical and Church-
expansion implications. Through the regular contact between the two leaders and joint ZAC-ZCC meetings the ecumenical ties between these groups were strengthened (see plates 5, 17, 18 & 19). Ndaza Zionist office-bearers were allowed to play a much more prominent role in ZCC services than before, especially through their preaching. This was made possible by a much younger "man of God" who exercised a less exclusive and overriding authority than his deceased father, Bishop Mutendi, did. Besides, the close ties between the two Churches were based on mutual recognition of leadership and a growing appreciation in ZCC ranks of the Ndaza bishop, whose increased stature inspired growth and stability instead of irritation and distrust in Ruben's group. Conversely, Ruben's aggressive drive for expansion and development work inspired David Masuka to reorganize his own Church, to exercise greater control over outlying congregations and to modernize his headquarters. It was also Ruben who in 1984 finally persuaded Masuka to join the African Independent Church Conference (Fambidzano), thus removing the last vestiges of isolationism in one of the oldest Independent Churches in Zimbabwe.

An analysis of the outstanding features of a ZCC Paschal meeting at Ruben's headquarters on 25 April 1984, six years after the ordination described above, clearly portrays the nature of the relationship between the ZAC and Ruben's faction of the ZCC as it has grown over the years (App. IV). On this particular occasion Bishop David Masuka and several of his senior office-bearers arrived in full regalia at the afternoon meeting, attended by some five to seven thousand ZCC members. The Ndaza Zionists were given honorary seats as a sign of appreciation for their presence - something which never happened during Bishop Samuel Mutendi's era, because at that time a show of ZCC splendour was an exclusive event which did not permit ecumenical overtures. Even more remarkable was that the introduction to each sermon, by both ZCC and Ndaza preachers, recognized the God of David Masuka and Samuel Mutendi, as Bishop Masuka had actually requested six years before. This kind of introduction would have been unheard of before Bishop Samuel Mutendi's death because from the inception of the ZCC in the then Rhodesia all sermons started with a reference to the God of Enginasi Lekhanyane and Samuel Mutendi, the founder leaders of this movement. The change of the introduc-

54 To be discussed in my forthcoming publication on Fambidzano.
55 App. IV pp. 477-78.
tory formula in all sermons, itself a potent reminder of the origins of Zionism, therefore not only switches the focus from the exclusive ZCC angle in South Africa - the formation of the ZCC by Lekhanyane and Mutendi in 1925 - to the Zimbabwean situation, but it is also historically accurate in mentioning Masuka and Mutendi in that order, for it is in this order that the pioneers of Zionism came to Zimbabwe. This change of formula struck me as a remarkable breakthrough of ZCC exclusivism, an expression of ecumenism - at least as far as the proliferated "family" of Zionist Churches is concerned - and a recognition of Masuka's "patronage" of Ruben's branch of the ZCC. In the introductory formula of Bishop Paul Chuto, second-in-command in Masuka's Church, mention was also made of Bishop Andreas Shoko, which meant recognition of all three pioneer Zionist leaders amongst the Shona. A significant implication of this, despite the division of the ZCC, was that the ZCC audience was being conditioned to think of themselves as part of the entire Zionist movement instead of as a Church apart. Bishop Chuto's reminder of "an inherited pot in which food was cooked for everyone", in direct relation to the three Zionist leaders, was undoubtedly an attempt to promote Zionist unity.

An outstanding feature of the first three sermons preached by ZCC ministers, was the recognition of Bishop Masuka's important role in the ZCC. He was mentioned with obvious respect and acclaim. The Rev. Muroyi of Zaka referred to Masuka as a real "father" to his Church, a veritable "miracle" surpassing all miracles. He concluded that the Nzaza bishop had widened the horizons of the Church, proof of which was to be found in the presence of so many visitors. The Rev. Mugadza of Buhera repeatedly thanked Bishop Masuka for having "given" them Ruben as Bishop. Much of his sermon was addressed to Masuka, as if Masuka was in some way responsible for the leadership and power of Ruben which, according to the common Zionist interpretation, had ensured survival for Ruben's followers in the war situation. The Rev. Mupangani of Harare thanked Masuka for giving the Church a hive full of honey, the contents of which was tasty - meaning the effective leadership of Ruben. He illustrated this point by narrating how Ruben had prevented a ZCC delegation from being killed by the bush fighters.

56 App. IV p. 478.
57 App. IV, p. 478.
58 App. IV, p. 477
59 App. IV, p. 477
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at Mberengwa, and how awareness of a landmine on the road they were travelling had enabled the "man of God" to avert disaster by choosing an alternative route.\(^{60}\) Although the typical ZCC preoccupation with the "man of God" - in this case the deceased's son - was still evident in these sermons, the connection with the authorizing Ndaza bishop was given full due.

In Ndaza Bishop Chuto's sermon one finds the same kind of preoccupation with dreams that characterized the Ndaza sermons at Ruben's ordination. This served the purpose of justifying Masuka's involvement in the ZCC. Over the years it had become a regular feature in ZAC-ZCC interchange, as if to remind ZCC members of the authenticity of Masuka's original dreams and to confirm divine revelation as the basis of Ruben's leadership. Having told his audience of his own dreams which corroborated those of Masuka, and having mentioned further dreams of Masuka's which, in conjunction with other Ndaza dreams correctly revealed the end and aftermath of the war, Chuto concluded that Masuka's dreams were "real prophecies of truth"\(^{61}\) Here then we find a statement of faith, a recurring element, relating historical fact to the mystical world, aimed at safeguarding the basis for ZAC-ZCC co-operation - namely the authenticity of a Ndaza-sanctioned leadership within the ZCC - and elevating Masuka's intervention and continuing authority in the ZCC to a realm beyond question or doubt.

Bishop Masuka's major concern, in turn, was to review and confirm entrenched viewpoints concerning the ZCC leadership.\(^{62}\) He honoured the deceased Mutendi whom he described as "alive" and still influencing his Church. Masuka's ordination of Ruben was yet again held up as a valid response to a directive from the deceased bishop. In many respects the main theme of Masuka's address was simply the confirmation of Ruben's leadership as legitimate successor to his father. At one point he specifically proclaimed: "He [Ruben] is the man of God, whom you have been given, the one shown to me, so that today I can confirm this chair [leadership] of Moyo. There he is! [Masuka was pointing at Ruben] I have come today to make known once more to the entire country and overseas that he is the true leader of Zion [the ZCC]!" Masuka concluded his address in similar vein when he pointed at Ruben with the words:

\(^{60}\) App. IV, p. 478.
\(^{61}\) App. IV p. 479.
\(^{62}\) App. IV p. 479f.
"So there is your bishop, the king of kings of Zion!"\textsuperscript{63}

In opposition to Nehemiah’s leadership, Masuka claimed that a deceased person can only have one inheritance, one legitimate heir. A "second inheritance" could only be the invention of an intruder an alien (mutorwa) who did not belong to the deceased’s clan. In saying this Masuka was disparaging the role which he assumed the Rev Champion, who indeed was not a member of Mutendi’s clan, had played in bringing Nehemiah to power. Here, then, we find a marked change of tactics in relation to Nehemiah. Having over the years adopted a more realistic attitude towards Nehemiah, who had meanwhile shifted his headquarters from Gokwe down to Mbungo in the Bikita district, Bishop Masuka steered clear of his earlier outright accusations of wizardry\textsuperscript{64} against this obviously popular and powerful leader. Now that overt signs of goodwill between the two Mutendi brothers were replacing the earlier antagonism, it was more opportune to attribute the rift in the ZCC to outsiders who had meddled with and divided Mutendi’s inheritance. Mindful of the accusations from within Nehemiah’s camp that he was an impostor, Masuka now deliberately opted for the role of championing the cause of Church unity. He actually challenged his audience as follows:

"You of Ruben Mutendi, and you of Nehemiah, if some of you are here, co-operate and build one thing! Be united because the inheritance of a man is one thing not two!... I know you now have two Church groups. However, whatever happens and wherever you go you will and should cooperate and build one thing. Even if it takes years and you get despondent, saying that the division will never end, the ancestors [deceased Zionist leaders] are down here fighting [for unity]. You will work together! You will work together! That, and nothing else. [Muchabatana! Muchabatana chete!] I accept Ruben, I also accept Nehemiah. But even if Nehemiah’s followers are here to observe our proceedings and whatever their plans are, I pronounce clearly that your principal leader is this man [pointing at Ruben]."\textsuperscript{65}

\textsuperscript{63} App. IV, p. 482.
\textsuperscript{64} App. IV, p. 480.
\textsuperscript{65} App. IV, p. 481.
It is quite revealing that Masuka here was not basing his appeal for Church unity on the unity of believers in Christ, but on inherited leadership and the involvement of ancestors, in this case the deceased bishops Masuka and Mutendi. This reflects to what extent Masuka's concept of the Church was still influenced by traditional notions of leadership, customary law, kinship ties and the active involvement of the ancestors in the well-being of their descendants. With the slogan, "one inheritance, one Church", Masuka was not only reaffirming his choice of Ruben as sole heir to Mutendi's ecclesiastic inheritance. Neither was he merely laying down Ruben's principal leadership as the condition for a united ZCC with, as he believed, the original sanction and ongoing support of the deceased Zionist leaders. He was in a sense also propagating the Zionist Church as a traditionally conceived extended family unit, deriving its well-being and coherence from the retention of control within the nuclear family group of the founding principal leader. With the definition of the Church determined so exclusively by its leadership, it followed that there would be an overriding preoccupation with the transfer of authority from one generation to the next within the blood-line of the founding leader according to recognized norms of inheritance. This explains to a large extent why Masuka emphasized his close identification with Ruben in the kinship terms of older brother and younger brother, although it was only through ordination at the hands of Mutendi that he could claim to be the latter's "son". It also explains his concern for the training of a possible successor while he was still alive. In this connection he said: "It seldom happens that a father raises his son to an elevated status [as Mutendi had done with Ruben, and as Masuka himself had done by appointing his own son as secretary of the Church] for everybody to see. Yet, we work with our sons so that the things belonging to our blood-line will not be lost." According to this view the unity and future of the Church hinges on the ability of a chosen family to carry the responsibility of leadership with the active support of both the living and deceased members of that family.

Finally, Masuka wanted to make sure that there could be no misunderstanding about his own authority over the Mutendi brothers. Having already referred to himself as Ruben's older brother, a position which in kinship terms implied seniority, he

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66 App. IV, p. 480.
67 App. IV, p. 480.
stated: "I am number one, because the hands [of Mutendi] which came from the Union of South Africa are the hands that ordained me. So I am not half [in terms of authority] but complete, and the power has been handed down so that there can be legitimate ordinations of leaders..." To illustrate the uniqueness of this privileged power he had received from Bishop Mutendi, he claimed that Ruben's ordination at his own hands was superior to the appointment of Nehemiah by ZCC ministers. As a result the followers of Ruben could more appropriately be described as the "children of Mutendi", incorporated into the extended Church family of the "man of God", than could the followers of Nehemiah. Such remarks clearly convey the ambivalent attitude of the Ndaza leader, who could not resist severely criticizing the group he was trying to draw into closer union with Ruben's branch. The question arises therefore whether self-interest in the entrenchment of his own influence in Ruben's Church did not obstruct rather than promote the prospects for reconciliation and union between the ZCC factions.

On this occasion Bishop Ruben Mutendi refrained from dealing extensively with the role of Masuka in his Church. His ministers having already sung the praises of his bishop friend, and Bishop Masuka having addressed himself virtually exclusively to the ZCC leadership issue, emphasizing his support of Ruben nearly to the point of embarrassment, the ZCC bishop introduced an entirely new angle. He first of all dwelt on the divine commission of Christ to this world by His Father, and then proceeded to build a strong Christological emphasis into his own ministry. He implied that his own works reflected divinity and that he was "amongst them [Father and Son], talking to them" He claimed that from this vantage point "I shall lead the singers, I shall control the prophets, I shall keep the preachers, I shall control all your ways and show you where I am, as Christ in between [presumably between his followers and God]."

If one considers the tendency of ZCC members in the past to attribute a mediatory role to the deceased Mutendi, it is understandable that Ruben, in an attempt to model his own leadership on his father's, would liken his own responsibilities to the mediation of Christ. Without any pretence of usurping the position of Christ, Ruben thought it befitting his unique position as successor of the

68 App. IV, p. 481.
69 App. IV p. 482f.
70 App. IV, p. 482.
famed "man of God" to make appropriate assertions about his close­ness to Father and Son. Only in this capacity, in terms of popular ZCC belief, could he effectively represent and control his followers.

In his response to the preachers who had appreciatively men­tioned his preservation of life during the war, Ruben gave the fol­lowing explanation: "I prevented death, so that the world can know that I am working together with my father. The world knows I am in my father, following his ways, not having any additional rules of my own." In speaking of his being "in his father" Ruben was obviously using the biblical model of God the Father and Christ, His Son, to impress on his listeners that he was more or less the personification of his deceased father, whom he had claimed earlier on was present as an ancestor at the day's proceedings. This close identification with the deceased leader, coupled with an affirmation of the retention of all his laws, in all probability had a twofold purpose. In the first place, Ruben was confirming Bishop Masuka's claim that there could be only one legitimate heir to the deceased's "estate." His professed "oneness" with his father and with the power that could protect life could only be interpreted as proof of his being the true and sole successor of his father. In the second place, Ruben must have been aware that the presence of Ndaza Zionists, the prominence of Masuka and the changes his alliance with Masuka had caused (e.g. in the above-mentioned introductory for­mula of sermons) was raising the question of ZCC identity in the minds of some of his followers and prospective followers. He was therefore allaying the hidden fears of change with the reassurance that he was maintaining the old order, at least without disruptive change.

Well aware of the confusion a divided Church was causing in the minds of many ZCC supporters, Ruben then continued with a strong appeal that Zion's law of love should also be applied to Nehemiah. He indicated that he had successfully resisted all attempts by outsiders to sow hatred between himself and his brother Nehemiah, that there could be no real separation between the two of them, because they still ate porridge together and shared the same blanket while resting, and that he would tolerate no inter­ference from outsiders when it came to finally settling the inheritance issue in his family. In this respect Ruben was not crit­icizing Bishop Masuka, despite the signs of opposition to Nehemiah
which were evident in Masuka's sermon. At most he was demonstrating to his supporters that his apparent "dependence" on the patronage of the Ndaza bishop did not prevent him from pursuing his own initiatives, in this case exploring avenues that could lead to reconciliation between him and his rival brother. His accusation of interference was mainly aimed at those ZCC members involved in the in-fighting between the two groups and his show of goodwill towards Nehemia could, amongst other things, have been a tactical move to oppose the Nehemia supporters in his audience. Anticipating future development towards reconciliation and the unification of ZCC factions, Ruben at this point was leaving the door wide open for negotiations. He was also trying to defuse the tensions of group rivalry by not explicitly raising the issue of principal leadership in his mention of close bonds with Nehemia.

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Having considered the intervention of two Church leaders in each other's Churches, the most outstanding features of such involvement can be summerized as follows:

1. On the negative side, one cannot deny the destabilizing impact on the Church group of patronage imposed from outside. Mutendi's tactics caused individual defections in Masuka's Ndaza movement, and Masuka's support of Ruben in the ZCC power struggle was instrumental in sanctioning and consolidating a major schism. Over a period of years it also stimulated individual defections and realignment between the two ZCC factions.

2. The long-term destabilization derives from the embarrassment foreign intervention can cause the incumbent leader. This could jeopardize a leader's authority over subordinates and trigger defections which may have been averted.

3. In the complexity of leadership interaction the positive implications should not be overlooked. The regrouping brought about by defections and/or schisms stimulated Church growth and intensified ecumenical activity. (This was also observed in the previous chapter in connection with Sauro Garanuako's founding of a new congregation in Chingombe.)

There is no doubt that the mutuality between Ruben and Masuka, brought about by the latter's role in the ZCC power struggle, was beneficial to both

73 Infra, pp. 220–21.
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the ZCC (Ruben's branch) and the ZAC in terms of improved organization, increased numbers of adherents and particularly the development of new and stable patterns of ecumenical cooperation. Over a period of years the two bishops had formed much more than just a casual friendship of convenience. They had developed a sense of responsibility towards each other, as a result of which each periodically attended the other's services with the express purpose of inspiring spiritual and other progress.

4. One of the root causes for the above-mentioned kind of intervention is to be found in the deep-seated need for a plausible "apostolic succession" which can be claimed as an authentic link with the earliest Christian community. In the Zimbabwean situation it means leadership succession within the blood-line of the pioneering leaders who had "found" and were initiated into the true Christian Church in South Africa, as it had been handed down through the generations. With such a strong fixation on the historical link with the Independent Churches in South Africa, the claim to authenticity can only be maintained if the ordination of the successor to a principal leader represents a convincing ritual confirmation of the historical and mythological connection, via South Africa, with the Church's earliest origins. That is why Bishop Masuka could claim that he was "number one" in relation to the Mutendi brothers. It was the deceased Bishop's "hands from South Africa" which had conveyed to him the privilege and power to consecrate the heir to the "throne of Zion". If the ordination ceremony had not become such a vitally important issue - for the aforementioned reasons, as well as the earlier judgemental attitudes of Mission Churches, which heightened the Independents' need for recognition within the historical mainstream of Christianity - neither Bishop Mutendi nor Bishop Masuka Jr could have achieved such far reaching influence in each other's Churches.

5. The above-mentioned processes of interaction and intervention are most revealing of certain characteristics of the Independent Churches. It shows how leadership issues can become the overriding concern of Churches for long periods, to the extent that virtually all the preaching during services revolves around this theme. Under such circumstances, particularly in the ZCC with its tradition of a powerful, all but Messianic leadership, the leader in a sense is the Church and he is the Message! Other features that have been highlighted include the importance of
dreams and visions as a means of establishing truth; the on-going and active influence of deceased leaders in their Churches which in some respects represents a Christianized version of the traditional ancestor involvement in the realm of the living. In this regard the IC concept of the Church is very much that of an extended family unit, comprising both the living and the living dead, with the leadership passing from father to son according to norms derived from both traditional Shona laws on inheritance and Old Testament patterns of Israelite kingship. Finally, the significance of the time factor is evident, for it appears from my observations stretching over nearly three decades that the protracted process of leadership intervention, destabilization, regrouping, co-operation and growth in the ZCC and ZAC can extend over many generations.
CRISIS AND SCHISM FOLLOWING A PRINCIPAL LEADER'S DEATH

The formal aspects of inherited leadership were discussed in chapter 4, and it was remarked that this practice constitutes the Achilles heel of the Independent Churches. It is through the combination of traditional African and biblical norms of leadership that unresolved issues, carrying the seeds of fission, are introduced into the Independent Churches. The death of the founder and/or principal leader of an Independent Church, more than any other occasion, brings these conflicting issues to the surface with such force as to cause a serious crisis resulting in one or more schisms. After Johane Maranke's death the ambitious prophet, Simon Mushati, broke away with a large group of vaPostori on the explicit grounds that Church leadership is simply not inheritable in the same way as the estate of a Church leader. After David Masuka's death several Ndaza bishops broke away, not so much because they were opposed to inherited Church leadership or because they were dissatisfied with the deceased's leadership - although this did play a role - as because they felt entitled to greater autonomy in leading their own congregations, in much the same way as family members of an overgrown village will feel entitled to hive off and establish a new village. As we shall see below, the issue between the contesting Mutendi brothers of the ZCC, after their father's death was not so much the principle of inherited leadership as the application of this principle. The one group claimed that the heir had been chosen by the deceased bishop, while the other insisted that the Church's vote should be decisive in selecting the true successor to Mutendi.

From these somewhat cursory remarks it appears that traditional practices regarding leadership succession, differently applied, interpreted or opposed, had a profound impact on the process of Church disintegration which followed the deaths of the founder leaders of

1 Infra, p. 166.
2 Daneel, 1971(a), p. 334f.
3 Infra, p. 168f.
the three largest Spirit-type Churches in Zimbabwe - the AACJM (vaPostori), ZAC (Ndaza Zionists) and the ZCC. In each case a different set of forces was at work. In the case of all three movements, however, the basic expectations amongst the bulk of supporters - that the founder leader would remain in control of his Church for life, to be succeeded on his death by one of his sons - were fairly consistent. It is therefore only through more detailed consideration of particular schisms, the circumstance involved and the roles played by the key figures, that greater insight can be gained into the actual process of Church fragmentation following a founder leader's death. For this purpose I have selected the ZCC, the Chibarirwe and the First Ethiopian Church, for the simple reason that I have been in a position to observe at least some of the events in these groups immediately preceding and/or subsequent to the deaths of their leaders. This permits greater accuracy of assessment than, for instance, in the case of the earlier schisms in the Ndaza and vaPostori movements, for which I had to rely mainly on oral accounts. The main focus will be on the ZCC, since as the "adopted son" of the deceased Bishop Mutendi's household, I have acquired the most extensive data on this movement. Even then, my analysis remains cursory and incomplete, because I make no pretence to having probed exhaustively the complex power struggle, fraught with conflicting motives, contradictory narratives and a series of events the significance of which, even in popular ZCC terms, is not always clear.

1. A RUPTURED ZCC

(a) Death of the "man of God"

Bishop Samuel Mutendi, the "man of God", one of the most remarkable IC leaders in Zimbabwe who built and for some 50 years led the ZCC in this country, died on 21 July 1976 at his "Jerusalem" at Defe in the Gokwe district. In the ZCC - as in all Independent Churches when the founder leader dies, but even more so because of the overwhelming prominence of its leadership - a succession crisis loomed large. On numerous occasions key figures in the movement and government officials had asked Mutendi who his successor would be, but during the last few years of his life, despite earlier preferences for one or other of his sons, he refused to publicly announce his choice. This secrecy may have been deliberately maintained by the old bishop to prevent feuding
amongst his sons from his extensive household of 17 wives and more than 70 children! Several of these considered themselves serious contenders, thereby contributing to the uncertainty, frictions and schisms which followed the bishop's death. During his last country-wide round of Paschal celebrations the frail old bishop had actually told a District Commissioner who enquired about the matter that he refrained from pointing out a successor, lest fighting break out amongst his sons. He contended that God Himself would take care of the leadership issue after his death. On this particular journey the ZCC bishop must have had a foreknowledge of his coming death, for he told his followers during the various Paschal celebrations that he would not be seeing them again, and that he was being called to heaven to receive the crown that was due to him. He also insisted that his son, Ruben, should accompany him from Gutu back to Gokwe.

Accounts about Mutendi's death vary, but it appears as if he did insist on the presence of the "holy one", Ruben, and a few of his wives some hours before his death. Ruben himself states that his father died in his arms, a fact which he interpreted as one of the surest signs that his father wanted him to lead the Church. Because of Mutendi's prominence as a Christ-like figure in the lives of his followers, many of them expected their leader's death to be followed by events similar to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. ZCC ministers insist that the bishop had predicted while alive that three days after his death he would send a sign for all to see to reassure them of his presence. Evangelist Gierson, who for many years had acted as Mutendi's driver and who was to become an influential schismatic leader, stated that on the night after Mutendi's death he had a dream in which the bishop told him that he would rise after three days. Gierson maintains that in those three days he and many other Zionists were wondering whether Mutendi would make a physical appearance like Jesus Christ of the Bible. Popular Zionist belief holds that on the third day Mutendi's sign did come! As some say: "Mutendi went into a star. It was clear for everybody to see, because the star reflected his appearance. It came from the east, moved around the entire country and then hovered over the open and newly dug grave. It eventually disappeared into the grave." Apparently all the people at Church headquarters were called out to see what was happening, and there was much ululation and clapping of hands in acknowledgement of the "man of God's" presence - his "resurrection". According to the Rev Champion,
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the most senior minister in the ZCC, this was a sure sign that Bishop Mutendi had really been sent by God.

In a virtual re-enactment of the Zionist interpretation of biblical events after the death and resurrection of Christ, there followed a period of conscious waiting for the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, in Mutendi's "Jerusalem" There is consensus in ZCC circles that after about a month of waiting the Spirit came with great power and filled Mutendi's followers. There was much speaking in tongues, accompanied by healing miracles and spiritual renewal. Mutendi himself started appearing in visions and dreams to many of his office-bearers, giving numerous directives about the control and leadership of his Church. Many of these directives which were considered authentic, and which corroborated the general expectations about the leadership succession at Church headquarters, were carefully recorded and kept in a confidential file by the Church's senior secretary, Mushonga.

According to most accounts the intensification of spiritual fervour, manifestations of the Holy Spirit and the near fanatic preoccupation with dreams and visions lasted for about a year, until Nehemiah was officially appointed as the new Bishop Mutendi. During this interim period when the ZCC was "leaderless" speculation and uncertainty about its future were rife. It was a period described by some ZCC officials as the "non-existence of our Church" because of the absence of a leader, which sentiment underscores the earlier observation that in this kind of movement the leader is the Church.4 The forceful presence of the Spirit and the numerous dream appearances of the deceased Mutendi were, however, interpreted as forms of divine intervention preventing the "non-existent" Church from totally disintegrating. Delegations of senior ZCC officials were also regularly sent from the Gokwe headquarters to accessible Church districts to keep people informed of unfolding events, to strengthen bonds in the midst of confusing rumours and to set the stage for the appointment of a new leader.

There are a number of reasons for the year's delay before Mutendi's successor was officially appointed:

1 Traditional custom determines that the kugova nhaka (distribution of the inheritance) procedure can only be conducted a year after the deceased's death. Because of the close link in the Independent Churches between Church leadership and the inheritable

4 Infra, p. 265.
possessions or estate of a prominent leader, it stands to reason that there would be an inclination not to separate these issues but to finalize everything at once after an appropriate period had elapsed.

2. Because of the war situation at the time, communications between Church headquarters and outlying congregations were not always adequate for the top officials to know how ZCC supporters would respond to proposed plans of action. It is therefore likely that uncertainty and hesitation caused by the relative isolation of part of the Church could have caused further delays.

3. More than anything else, the different phases in the development of the ZCC probably caused tension and indecision after the bishop's death. Over a period of many years the bishop had shown preference for different sons, who were involved in Church work in varying degrees at the time. During the 1950s and 1960s, for instance, while ZCC headquarters were still at Bikita, there was little doubt that Enginasi was the one whom Mutendi favoured as his successor. Ruben at the time was considered mainly as "guardian" of the Gutu congregations. After the move to Gokwe there was a time when Solomon, first-born of the wife who for many years was the leading figure in the Ruwandzano (Women's Association), was entrusted with major responsibilities. Yet during the last three years of his life the bishop increasingly relied on Nehemiah to help him conduct Paschal celebrations and to arrange constitutional matters. Nehemiah, who at the time of Mutendi's death had already proved himself as a capable leader, was in a sense a natural choice. With his experience as a school teacher he was probably better equipped than his brothers to act as Church spokesman in dealings with government officials, to promote the educational work in which the Church was increasingly engaging, to undertake agricultural schemes, etc.

But the demands at the time were, of course, much more complex than simply a need for progressive leadership in the general development towards a more modern, Western-type of life-style. Much of the success of Zionism still hinged on traditional customs, beliefs and philosophy. The question must have arisen in the minds of senior ZCC office-bearers whether Nehemiah could combine progressive Western-oriented ideas with sufficient respect for tradition-oriented Church practices (such as polygamy, the use of a holy staff for exorcism, the burning of paper and the use of holy
objects to drive off afflicting spirits) to the extent required of the "king" (ishe) of Zion City. Historically, Enginasi did have a valid claim, even though the peak period of ZCC growth in Bikita and the agreement with the Ndaza leader Masuka about Enginasi's ordination had become remote in the Gokwe situation. Geographically, on the other hand, it was evident that Ruben had established his own authority in numerous congregations which had formed the first stronghold of the ZCC.

In the midst of all these conflicting and confusing factors it is understandable that the leadership issue took some time to resolve itself. Influential office-bearers like the Rev Champion, the senior minister, justified the delay by saying that the deceased bishop had told him in a vision that all the Zionists should be at ease because he, the "man of God", would reveal his wishes in dreams. Stimuli of this nature inevitably heightened the entire Church's preoccupation with dreams as a channel of guidance and a means of group consolidation. Such a preoccupation was probably one of the most effective ways of defusing the tensions of crisis and confusion. Certain outstanding features of the dream life of members during this period of flux in the ZCC will be discussed below.

(b) ZCC factions emerge; claims and counterclaims

It is difficult to assess accurately whether the speedy appointment of a successor, soon after Mutendi's death, would have averted the emergence of several ZCC factions. The sheer geographical distance between Ruben's sphere of influence and the Gokwe headquarters, as well as Ruben's independent leadership before Mutendi's death, seem to indicate that he would have been likely to break away from the main body of the Church if he was not accepted as Mutendi's successor, regardless of the time factor. Prior to Nehemiah's official appointment, Bishop Masuka - after his initial abortive effort to have Enginasi installed - had already privately ordained Ruben. Ruben therefore appears to have set the stage for alternative leadership in his own prospective Church if he failed to sway the general opinion of the ZCC in his favour, well in advance of the cumbersome, mystically directed power play which eventually led to Nehemiah's appointment. Gierson, the deceased bishop's driver, also seems to have decided on independent action and Church-building at an early stage, for soon after Mutendi's death he moved far away from Gokwe to Nyamhundo in the south of the Chibi district, where he founded a new Church headquarters for a fast growing
ZCC of his own. Hence by the time Nehemiah was appointed bishop, the ZCC already consisted of three distinct factions: the main body, comprising the bulk of senior ministers who had chosen and remained loyal to Bishop Nehemiah; and the two breakaway movements of Ruben and Gierson. In retrospect, Nehemiah believes that the lengthy "leaderless" interim period contributed considerably to group disintegration. As a result he has already arranged constitutionally that upon his death his eldest son should succeed him as bishop and that his appointment should take place without delay, to avoid a period of uncertainty and dissent.

It is of interest to note that the claims to authenticity in the camps of both Nehemiah and Ruben revolved around three central issues: both men's claims to being the "chosen one" were based on historical events; in both camps dreams and visions were seen as a mystical cause and/or confirmation of the group's choice of a leader; and numerous incidents were cited in both camps as proof that Mutendi's miraculous powers had descended on their respective leaders. I shall briefly examine the nature of each claim.

(i) The "Chosen One"

An outstanding event which increasingly became a focus of discussion in the main body of the ZCC during the interim period, was Mutendi's blessing of Nehemiah in 1963. In Nehemiah's own words, the following is what happened:

"In 1963 I travelled with my father to Gutu to celebrate holy communion. After the holy communion service, at night, I heard my father discussing with the ministers - Bracho, Majekechera, Makusha, Phinias, Pianos and others - who should succeed the deceased minister Chikumbo. They said: 'Julius, the younger son!' They said so because Chikumbo had loved his younger son. When Mutendi asked Masuka who should succeed him after his death, Masuka said, 'Phillip', who is also a younger son. To Mutendi's question why not the oldest son, Masuka indicated that he was especially attached to his younger son. At last Mutendi asked whom they thought should succeed him after his death. They all thought it should be Enginasi. My father remained quiet for a while, then asked: 'But how did you know that Julius should succeed Chikumbo?' They said: 'Well, we know of Chikumbo's real love for Julius.' Then my father enquired: 'Why do you not ask whom I love?"
They replied: 'Sorry! Please tell us what is in your heart.' He then mentioned my name and sent someone to call me. I had to put on my coat. In the Rev Samson Bracho's house my father then [in the presence of the ZCC ministers] blessed me by laying hands on me... on my head and on my hands. He then sent me out of the house and for a long time did not discuss the leadership issue with me."

There is little doubt that this episode increasingly became a central theme in the minds of Nehemiah and his supporters once the succession to leadership became a matter of urgency. For instance, when the attorneys, Ashton and Cook, who had helped Bishop Mutendi draft a new Church constitution, wanted to know who his successor would be, and the bishop said that his ministers would know the answer, Mutendi probably had the above-mentioned blessing of Nehemiah in mind. According to Nehemiah, he knew then in his heart that his father had intended the 1963 event as the consecration of the new bishop. Additional evidence emerged from a secret will which Mutendi had drafted in 1973, and which was opened after his death. It is reported to have contained the following phrase: "I (Mutendi) have agreed that upon my death the Church leadership will pass on to Nehemiah. He will be called Bishop Samuel Mutendi."

What was still required was confirmation by the Church itself that it accepted Nehemiah as the "chosen one", the one whom the deceased bishop had really wanted to be his successor. This was obtained a year after Mutendi's death, during two Church meetings at Gwelo, when first the ZCC ministers and later a much wider group of ZCC office-bearers, were required to vote on the matter. The ZCC ministers voted as follows: Nehemiah - 50, Solomon - 3 and Enginasi - 2. In the second round of voting, which was called a "general election", the result was: Nehemiah - 415, Enginasi - 41 and Ruben - 2. Apparently some dissatisfaction was expressed by the supporters of Enginasi, but the majority of senior officials were anxious to have Nehemiah installed without further delay, particularly as a measure to prevent further uncertainty and dissent.

The general acceptance of the 1963 blessing was interpreted as a sign that Mutendi's choice concurred with that of the Holy Spirit. It also provided justification for the appointment of a younger instead of the oldest son as ecclesiastical "heir". This deviation from traditional inheritance laws, prompted by considerations of affection, leadership experience and competence, as well as the introduction
of a democratic electoral principle, clearly indicates innovation and change as far as Church leadership is concerned. Yet it was not a complete breach of the old order, for the inheritance principle was retained - it was merely applied differently to the now separated posts of religious and tribal-political leadership. According to customary law, during the kugova nhaka (arrangement of inheritance) procedure, Mutendi's eldest son Sainos, as name-bearer of the deceased, should have received both the headmanship responsibilities (with 14 villages at the time of his death, Mutendi was approaching the status of a recognized sadunhu [ward-headman]), and the traditional religious duties which the head of a family performs on behalf of the extended family group.

In a remarkable merging of old and new laws, the problem was solved through the ritual appointment of two heirs, one for the headmanship and the other for the Church.

The kugova nhaka procedure which, true to custom, took place a year after the bishop's death, soon after Nehemiah's election, did actually include the traditional name-giving ceremony. Chief Gumunyu was called to have Sainos, the eldest son, placed on a mat (rupasa) and to address him as Mutendi. Tosiyanaya was the additional name used, in recognition of Mutendi's headmanship being conferred on Sainos. To demonstrate that this was no longer a truly traditional ritual, CocaCola was served instead of the ancestral beer and the Church band headed by Nehemiah, marched and played in front of the dignitaries attending the occasion. Then came the kufpekedza (clothing) ceremony, during which Nehemiah was clad in his father's regalia. This marked his public appointment as leader of the ZCC with the official title of Bishop Samuel Moyo - the Church's version of "name-giving".

Significantly, no ordination through laying on of hands took place. This reflected the dilemma of the ZCC: there was no senior Zionist bishop other than David Masuka - who was absent because of his opposition to Nehemiah - to conduct an ordination ceremony. A solution, however, was soon found when it was suggested that the deceased bishop's blessing of Nehemiah in 1963 was already an ordination, rendering a second ceremony of this nature unnecessary. Hence the "chosen one" of 1963, confirmed by the Holy Spirit through the explicit choice of the Church in 1977 and installed as bishop in a Christianized version of traditional ritual, at last became the recognized leader of the ZCC. What clearly distinguished the kufpekedza ceremony from the traditional transfer of religious authority was the role played by the new Church leader. Instead of
sitting on a mat and being told by senior relatives about family problems relating to the ancestral world, he himself took the initiative as the new "man of God" with a rousing sermon on the centrality of Christ and the need for reconciliation. In Nehemiah's own words:

"During the kupfekedza I preached to the people, emphasizing the life of Jesus Christ. I said that the name of the Lord Jesus should be honoured on this day. I also pointed out the work which Jesus had done through my father. I asked for reconciliation between the members of our family [because of divisions on the leadership issue] - that hatred, jealousy and opposition should be set aside. We had to start amongst ourselves by forgiving each other. Now that we have been given our father's Church, we have the responsibility of making a fresh start. Let us praise and worship God together and be strengthened against the temptations of tomorrow. Let us be inspired by the example of our father who had shown us many great miracles. Like Jesus I called for increased prayer and fasting, so that we, and especially I, could be strengthened as my father had been."

Another indication that the ancient inheritance ceremony was being transformed in the ZCC context was the omission of the kudarika uta (crossing of the bow) ritual. The deceased bishop's numerous wives were not subjected to this "test" of proper sexual behaviour and not one of them was "inherited" by Mutendi's relatives. They all preferred to continue living with their children in the Zionist colony. Bishop Mutendi, while alive, had conducted regular prayer meetings for his wives in order to mould his polygamous household according to Christian principles. It is evident that a new set of norms, together with the social protection offered by Zion City, had rendered the customary kugara nhaka (inheritance of the deceased's wives) superfluous.

Nehemiah found the transition from full-time teaching to Church leadership exacting. Apart from the benefits of power and prestige, being the "chosen one" also included an element of "being owned" by the Church. The prophets had told him that he would be disciplined (kupuwa shamhu: lit. to receive the whip) severely by God Himself if he should neglect his leadership responsibilities. Said the young bishop: "At first I wanted to continue teaching and I

5 Daneel, 1971(a), pp. 109,273,334,481.
refused to accept what the prophets were saying. Then I fell ill and had more pain than at any other time in my life. Gierson prophesied that the illness would not subside if I continued teaching. I tried for three weeks, but saw that it was to no avail. So I accepted the illness as a sign of God and gave up teaching. How could I refuse all the signs of having been chosen as leader of the ZCC?" At this point the Rev Champion, who also attended the discussion, commented laconically: "Yes, it is like Jonah, who at first refused to obey the Lord."

If we turn now to Ruben’s leadership, we see that several events in his life, quite unrelated to the experience of Nehemiah, led him to believe that he was the "chosen one" who would succeed his father. These events were referred to in Ruben’s ordination sermon. In the first place he preached about his appointment as overseer of the ZCC congregations in Gutu in the following manner:

"The Holy Spirit came in 1964, as you know, and Bishop Mutendi then said: ‘I am also now looking for the child of my choice to whom I can give the responsibility of my work, the one whom I shall instruct.’ You surely heard about this yourselves. He told the prophets to seek out a son with an appropriate disposition. He said: ‘Dream, and find me the right child!’ When the question came: ‘Who is it?’, the prophets said: ‘The Spirit has indicated Ruben!’ Is the lot to be thrown twice? Is there to be another choice? They clad me then and ‘threw me’ into Gutu, and they all said, there at Mutarara in 1966: ‘Give him the task.’ My father said: ‘I have given you an area of your own. Don’t be diverted by the people! Work with all your might!’ Am I not telling you the truth?”

In Ruben’s mind the fact of having been singled out by the Holy Spirit as the "child of Mutendi’s choice" was of singular importance. The Church recognized this choice with a special clothing ceremony (kupfekedza), which Ruben considers to have been of greater importance than Nehemiah’s kupfekedza during the inheritance procedures because he was entrusted officially with ecclesiastical responsibilities more than a decade before Nehemiah’s rise to power. Ruben’s suggestion that he was "thrown into" Gutu, a measure taken by Mutendi at the time to maintain control over the

fast-growing and enterprising Gutu congregations, was calculated to impress his audience with the far-reaching powers he had already received as senior representative of Zion City at that stage. Ruben recalled, in addition, that his father confirmed his original choice at a meeting in 1974 when he told Bishop Masuka to ordain Ruben as his successor after his death.

According to Ruben the most decisive incident, however, was his presence at his father’s deathbed. That he, as the "holy one", was the only one of the sons chosen to be alone with the "man of God" during the last few hours of his life was conclusive proof of his father’s wish that he, Ruben, should be the successor bishop in Zion. It was already mentioned above that Ruben narrated this incident in biblical terms during his ordination ceremony. His experience of those last few hours with his father was compared with Christ’s visitation to His disciples (John 20:19-23). By referring to the privacy in which Christ met His disciples "behind locked doors" (v 19), Ruben emphasized the exclusive nature of this meeting, and by implication suggested the final transfer of ecclesiastical authority to himself, as follows: "Mutendi showed himself to me, having called me and not the others, before he left... When the time had come he [Mutendi] arranged for Ruben to come. And the doors were closed. Nobody else was allowed in..." Then followed the discussion in which Mutendi is said to have told Ruben that his inheritance was to be the preaching of God’s Word and not earthly possessions. As Christ told His disciples to go forth, because He Himself had been sent by the Father (v 21), Mutendi told Ruben to go forth courageously and preach to the entire world. Likewise, as Christ breathed on His disciples that they might receive the Holy Spirit (v 22), Mutendi, in breathing his last breath on Ruben’s chest, conferred on him "the inheritance of the Holy Spirit".

From a Western theological point of view assertions of this nature may appear to indicate that Mutendi was being substituted, in the Zionist context, in the role of the biblical Christ. It should be kept in mind, however, that the objective of Ruben’s sermon was not correct theological formulation but the postulation of a close identity between Christ and Mutendi, in an attempt to underscore
the legitimacy of his own claims to leadership through a virtual re-enactment of biblical events. In a world not given primarily to abstract theological reflection or the correct formulation of dogma on the basis of so-called "objective" Bible study, the iconic identification between Church leader and Christ appears to present few problems, particularly not as regards the generally professed uniqueness of the latter's Saviourhood. It is in the experience and interpretation of real-life events in direct relation to biblical figures and episodes, intensified in the Zionist context by the leader's personal response, that the "good news" of Scripture comes alive as the pervading source of inspiration behind all that transpires in the believer's life. Meaningful, therefore, as Ruben's experience was in terms of "receiving" the Holy Spirit from his dying father, his narrative at this point was intended solely to convince his audience that along with the Spirit he had also "inherited" the responsibility for the ZCC. Despite the close identification between Christ and Mutendi, Ruben was not inferring that the relationship between Church leader and Holy Spirit was the same as that between Christ and the third person of the Trinity. Whatever the theological implications of their respective claims to leadership, both the Mutendi brothers were convinced, each on the basis of a different set of historical facts, that he had been "chosen" as successor to the deceased bishop. Nehemiah, admittedly, appeared to have the stronger claim, supported as he was by the main body of the ZCC and the majority of the Church's senior office-bearers. He objected to Ruben's aspirations to leadership, on the grounds that Ruben had misinterpreted his position as "caretaker" of a number of ZCC congregations to which he had been appointed in earlier years. His outright rejection of Bishop Masuka's role in the ZCC leadership struggle was not in the first place because of the Ndaza bishop's involvement in an ordination ceremony, but because Masuka had deliberately negated a majority decision by the Church. According to him, Bishop Masuka could have played an officially correct role in the ordination of a ZCC bishop if he had recognized the sovereign right of the Church first of all to elect a leader of its own choice. Ruben, on the other hand, backed his own claims to succession with an appeal to the correct ordination procedure at the hands of Masuka, which established, in his reasoning, the only authentic link with the early Christian Church. He considered Nehemiah's success to be the result of an agreement between his brother and the ZCC ministers, based on misguided concern with the things of this world - notably the
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Moreover, he interpreted his own failure to mobilize majority support in the ZCC during the first rounds of the power struggle as a fulfilment of Mutendi's prophetic declaration that many would hate him, Ruben, for his endeavour to uphold the true inheritance of the "man of God" - that of propagating the gospel with persevering strength.

(ii) Validation through dreams and visions

As I have mentioned above, a heightened preoccupation with guidance and group-consolidating dreams marked the succession crisis in the ZCC. In both Nehemiah's and Ruben's camps claims to authenticity were bolstered by a host of dreams, visions and supernatural signs, all of which were interpreted in varying degrees as guidelines for action or as justification for a course of action already taken. To understand more fully the centrality and use of dreams in the mobilization of opinion and support, as well as in the affirmation of individual convictions, we need to note some of the attitudes towards dream directives and certain outstanding dreams signalling divine sanction or intervention at the time.

As a well-educated teacher Nehemiah was not given to public narration of his own dreams. He nevertheless fully appreciated the significance of dreams as a means of persuasion and control in the ZCC. Instead, therefore, of minimizing their importance, he required that a systematic record be kept of dreams. "It was arranged before my election," he said, "that if anybody should receive dream messages, they would have them written up by the secretary. These recorded dreams were to be kept secret so as not to influence the people in their choice of a successor. It is only now, in retrospect, that we check on the dreams and prophecies. They virtually all confirm what has happened."

The introduction of a secretive element in all probability only stressed the importance attached to the recorded dreams. It reflects Nehemiah's determination to have a fair election and to safeguard the voting process against undue criticism. Nevertheless, he must have known that the recorded dreams were an open secret amongst his supporters. The secretary, Mushonga, who was responsible for recording such messages, stated that in October 1976, three months after Mutendi's death, "we started to move all over the country to strengthen the Church people and to make known all the dreams and prophecies." There can be little doubt that the narration of dream messages on such excursions was used as a powerful device
to sway the opinion of thousands of Zionists in favour of the mystically sanctioned "chosen one"

What then were the contents of these recorded dreams? Mushonga reports:

"Stephen, the younger blood-brother of Nehemiah, was the first to dream. He saw that all the sons of Mutendi were called together to elect a leader. They decided to vote amongst themselves. Nehemiah received the majority vote, and Enginasi [at that stage the main rival] stated: 'We accept you, Nehemiah, as bishop of the Church.' Everybody clapped hands in agreement.

"MuRozvi [the shoe-maker from Masvingo] dreamt that Nehemiah was herding cattle in a very big plain, which stretched some thirty miles in front of him. He had a staff which he pointed heavenward, then down, before he ordered people to look after the cattle. There were also rows upon rows of houses on the plain, where Nehemiah caused much rain to fall. This dream confirmed Nehemiah's leadership, because he was already known to have fed the people. At whatever school he taught he was appointed chairman of the school committee; and he maintained good relations with all people, his parents, brothers and Church people.

"In a third dream, one of our people heard a voice say: 'Build the house of Nehemiah. Fix the zinc sheets of his father's house to his roof, then plaster the house!'

"Another dream indicated Mutendi's arrival at a big meeting. He said: 'See, I have come to bless my sons whom I love, Enginasi and Nehemiah. Stand at my right, Enginasi, and you on my left, Nehemiah. Now take my hands crosswise!' The result was that Nehemiah was now on Mutendi's right and Enginasi on the left. Mutendi then said: 'Have you seen what I have done? I ask God to bless Nehemiah!'

"I also recorded a dream of Enginasi and Nehemiah appearing before a big meeting. A voice said: 'Enginasi will be the keeper of the village. Nehemiah will be the bishop of the lord [Mutendi].' Nehemiah was then clad in a uniform which had belonged to Bishop Mutendi. Enginasi said: 'There is the bishop who has been chosen for us by God.'

"The messages we found in these dreams are: (1) a voice confirming Nehemiah's leadership; (2) Enginasi proclaiming Nehemiah's leadership to the people; (3) Nehemiah himself seen
to 'feed' [lead] the people; and (4) Nehemiah winning the election."

The Rev Champion, one of the most influential figures in the ZCC power struggle, reported that the night before the election took place, he had a vision of the deceased bishop appearing before him. Once again there was a star, as there had been shortly after Mutendi's death. Mutendi told him to order the people to rest, as he would reveal himself in dreams. When this was done the star made a loud noise like a thunderclap whereupon everybody present was "caught by the Spirit with great force". During the ecstatic commotion that ensued, the star receded into the background and vanished. True to his promise, however, Mutendi appeared to Masunda in a dream that night. Champion's account of this dream runs as follows:

"Masunda saw Mutendi appearing and ordering people to pull a huge wagon. The entire gathering of people tried to pull the wagon, but failed completely I [Champion] was then called, and together with another minister we managed to pull the wagon up to Mutendi's house. Upon arrival the tent of the wagon was lifted. A whole sea of sheep started jumping out. There were so many of them that they filled the land from Gokwe to Bikita. Masunda was subsequently ordered by Mutendi to distribute the bags of peanuts for the people to eat. But when he opened one of the bags, he said: 'This is not peanuts but Nehemiah in here.' To this Mutendi replied: 'Yes, indeed, it is he who will be ordained tomorrow as bishop.'"

Champion concluded his account with the assertion that Masunda reported his dream to the entire meeting the next morning. It was then generally agreed that the combination of the star-related Spirit manifestation and Mutendi's dream revelation was conclusive evidence both of Mutendi's divine commission, past and present, and of his final choice of Nehemiah as his successor.

There are two main reasons why the preoccupation with dreams in Ruben's camp was even more intense and prominent than in Nehemiah's. In the first place, Ruben was known to have received and responded to numerous dream directives over a period of many years. These dreams were widely publicized in the ZCC and from as early as 1952 they had enhanced his image as a "seer" or "holy one". This contrasted sharply with Nehemiah's image as a modern and progressive administrator. It was as if Ruben carried with him a
whole legacy of dream messages which had influenced his life at crucial points, had prepared him for senior leadership in the Church and which, more naturally than in Nehemiah's case, invited an emphasis on dreams and visions in religious experience. In the second place, Nehemiah's popularity at Gokwe headquarters and the early signs of massive support in the ZCC after Mutendi's death made him less dependent on dream manifestations than Ruben who, from the outset, commanded much less support. In a transitional period of uncertainty and change it was to be expected that the need for divine sanction, justification and confirmation was more keenly felt in Ruben's minority group of ZCC adherents than in the main body. Ruben's building of a new and what he considered to be "the real" ZCC was virtually shrouded in dreams. In his own words: "When I started as bishop I had only a few followers. But the people came in great numbers, sent and drawn here by their dreams. Even some of David Masuka's followers joined and explained that their dreams caused them to do so. So I say it is my [deceased] father who sends them." In this case the channel for divine validation of Church formation and growth was an intensified dream-life, the initiation and orchestration of which were attributed to the deceased yet active Church leader.

A brief glimpse at Ruben's "dream record" reveals a persistent pattern of religious ardour and leadership ambition. In 1952, as a young man, he had several dreams of "climbing steps" and meeting Christ in heaven. He requested to see God, but when Christ consented he found himself confronted with a sun of blinding light, impossible to look at. Christ then gave him a "book of life of all creation", which was also the book containing the details of his followers, their lives and deaths. Such dreams no doubt reveal his early anticipation of Church leadership. When Bishop Mutendi was notified of these dreams by Ruben's mother, he urged Ruben to keep a record of his dreams but to keep them secret. Well in advance of his appointment as Mutendi's representative in the Zionist stronghold in Gutu, Ruben had already dreamt about building his and his father's houses on Mt Rasa in the Gutu district. According to Ruben, he was aware of the similarities between these dreams and those of Joseph, recorded in the Old Testament. He was also confident that the "prophecies" of Prophets Gierson and Munjanje in response to his dream narratives (to the effect that "you, Ruben, will one day became the Church's bishop") were truthful.

12 Daneel, 1974, p. 150.
and binding. There is little doubt, therefore, that Ruben had over a period of many years, lived with the very real expectation of ultimately becoming the Church's principal leader. Subsequent to his "Joseph" dreams, Ruben had a vision of being ordained by heavenly "messengers" (angels). When he rose he was Spirit-filled and frequently spoke in tongues over a long period. He claims that in this phase he received the gift of probing people's thoughts, an extra-perception of their non-verbalized wishes and problems. Asked about the overall significance of his dreams, Ruben confided without hesitation: "I take all these dreams as signs of my calling to this work of a bishop which I am doing now."

Significant as Ruben's dreams were in supporting and validating his leadership ambitions, they were not focal during the period of leadership succession and the subsequent phase of group formation. As was mentioned above in connection with Ruben's ordination, the dreams and visions of Bishop Masuka - the contents of which concentrated exclusively on the directives of the deceased Ndaza and ZCC leaders - dominated the proceedings. In addition, a large number of witness-dreams in support of Ruben's leadership were publicly recounted by Zionist well-wishers during the campaigning meetings concerned with his installation as bishop. The following two dreams were, for example, recorded during a Zionist gathering at Bikita Minerals on 10 September 1977 (the occasion of another of the several "ordinations" of Ruben at the hands of Bishop Masuka):

Dream I: "I dreamt that I stood at a river. There were two fountains, surrounded by prophets. As I looked Mutendi emerged from one of the fountains. He then asked where Ruben was. When Ruben was pointed out to him he descended upon him like a reed swaying in the water. Having done so he returned into the fountain and slowly faded away. His face gradually turned into that of Ruben."

Dream II: A Zionist from Mutare witnessed: "I was called in a dream to the Sabi river. There I was shown the reeds in the river bed. A voice asked whether I could see the multitude of people, all of them Zionists. I said: 'Yes.' Thereupon the voice ordered all the Zionists to cut the reeds in the riverbed and to shake these in front of the person they wanted to be their leader. All of them came to where Ruben stood and shook their reeds in front of him."
The dreams of senior office-bearers carried considerable weight in swaying the minds of their subordinates. One such dream was that of the Rev. Musiza, Ruben's righthand man and the most senior official in the movement. His dream experience persuaded not only himself but numerous undecided ZCC members to follow Ruben. He gave the following account:

"When the ordination of our bishop was at hand, I was seriously considering a trip to Gokwe in support of Nehemiah. Then I dreamt. Bishop Samuel Mutendi's voice beckoned me: 'Musiza! Musiza!' I replied: 'Father.' The voice said: 'I am Mutendi. Do you see those two granaries, the one to the right and the other to the left?' I said: 'Yes, I see them.' He said: 'Go into the one on the righthand side.' I did as I was told, and upon entry found an instrument of iron, shaped like a telephone. Mutendi ordered me to use this instrument, and I called as if using a telephone. When I did so, Mutendi himself responded from heaven and told me: 'Today you must rise and proceed to Mandadzaka [Ruben's headquarters] here in Bikita.' I then put the instrument down and was ordered into the granary on the lefthand side. Here I searched in vain for a similar instrument, whereafter I was required to leave and close the door. The voice then said: 'Did you comprehend? The granary on the right is the one of Ruben and the one on the left of Nehemiah. You are now finding yourself in Ruben's group. Whenever Ruben directs his prayers to heaven, asking according to his wishes, his prayers are answered. So, forthwith, rise and go there!' Thus I rose and told my wife and children: 'Let's go to Ruben at Mandadzaka and not to Nehemiah at Gokwe.' "

"Upon arrival at Mandadzaka I found Bishop Masuka there, gathered with only a few people, to ordain Ruben as bishop. On the same occasion I was chosen as Ruben's mutevedzeri [lit. next in order, i.e. second-in-command]. In those days Ruben's followers were few. But now the entire countryside and all the cities and towns abound with his followers."

As the conflict of loyalties between two factions is not necessarily resolved after the initial decision in favour of one of the two leaders, the original and frequently narrated persuasion dreams are augmented by what could be termed the control or group-consolidating dreams of individual followers. These are of a repetitive nature, less prominent, and recounted only when a demonstra-
tion of loyalty is required. One example will suffice. Mai Esaya Mukavhu, a widow and niece of the deceased Bishop Mutendi, who lives near Ruben’s headquarters, contended with a "temptation" to visit Nehemiah as follows:

"Sometimes I think it would be nice to visit Mbungo and see Nehemiah. Yet whenever I have such thoughts I find Bishop Mutendi visiting me in my dreams, together with my deceased father vaMhepo. They always ask me: 'What do you want to go and do at Mbungo?' Then they command: 'Go to Ruben! That is where we want you to be.' After such dreams I rise without strength as a result of which I never visit Nehemiah. I follow my dreams and continue going to [worshipping at] Ruben’s."

It is not only the masses of Church members who experience control-dreams of this nature. Both Bishops Nehemiah and Ruben, as well as Gierson, the other schismatic leader, claim that in the nine-year period after Mutendi’s death the deceased has visited them regularly in dreams to maintain control over his admittedly schismatized flock. Hence the intensified preoccupation with dreams which characterized the ZCC succession conflict during 1976 and 1977 has never fully abated. This is evident particularly in the case of Ruben who has all along been more inclined than the other two to concentrate on and be influenced by dream experiences in his personal religious life. He had this to say:

"My father simply comes all the time. He comes to check his work. That is his main concern. Whenever I consider doing wrong, he visits me in my dreams, telling me what to do and what his wishes are. That happens without fail. He will never stop doing so. He simply appears before me as a living human being. I am very happy with this state of affairs because he always encourages me to keep preaching and to make progress. When I see him, the Church makes progress. Even those who refuse to become converted find themselves incapable of resisting. Then they yield. I tell them he [Mutendi] has died but is alive. What he does is beyond description."

If one surveys the overall role of dreams and visions during and after the involved process of leadership strife, group division, shifting loyalties and subsequent group formation and growth, the following features are salient.
1. During the succession crisis following the principal leader's death, *dream-directives are expected not in the first place from the prospective successors but from other members of the Church.* In Nehemiah's case quite a few of the recorded dream messages came from individuals who were living far away from Church headquarters. As for Ruben, the decisive dreams came from Masuka, Musiza and others. Possibly it is felt during a crisis of this nature that revelatory dreams from people other than the opposing and directly interested parties would be more objective and carry more weight.

2. As stated in Volume 2, a clear distinction between a vision (*kuona*: to see) and a dream (*kurota*) is seldom made. In a thought world still conditioned by intense experience of the pervasive presence of the supernatural, the co-existence of the living and the living dead and the inspiration of insight and skills in individuals through spirits (e.g. the *shavi* spirits), it is not so important to distinguish between these two modes of communication as long as the message from the mystical Beyond is clearly perceived. It is even possible that some of the dreams and visions narrated during a period of crisis and conflict are the result of individual insights emerging in a state of heightened expectation and growing group consensus rather than actual dream or visionary experiences. In other words, it is likely that in some cases at least the strong belief in and anticipation of divine revelatory manifestations, be they through dreams or visions, give rise to the narration of what God, or His messenger Mutendi, is expected to reveal, and are not actually experienced. In so far as such accounts concur with prevailing group consensus, they will not be considered as misleading or false by those who "invented", "envisioned" or "dreamt" them.

In the case of Ruben Mutendi, his persistent reference to dreams and visions is a way of giving expression to ongoing contact between him and his deceased father. It is a recognized means of demonstrating right-mindedness and steadfastness in the ways of Zion. Such a sustained demonstration of mystical closeness between deceased father and living son, as Ruben undoubtedly realizes, holds a special attraction for those who

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13 Ibid., p. 141.
14 Daneel, 1971(a), p. 128f.
were close to the deceased bishop, and as such it has distinct recruitment value.

3. There can be little doubt that the *selection* and *stereotyped character* of the dreams considered to be of genuine revelatory significance are *patterned to the emerging preference of the group concerned*. The dream messages recorded by the ZCC secretary Mushonga at the request of Nehemiah clearly reflect the preference for Nehemiah at a time when Enginasi was still regarded by some as a contender for the deceased's position. As if to justify the abrogation of the 1949 agreement between Mutendi and Masuka, the recorded dreams ironically reflect Enginasi - the would-be successor of earlier years - as taking the initiative in recognizing and acclaiming Nehemiah's leadership. The one dream where Enginasi stands on Bishop Mutendi's right and ends up on his left, with Nehemiah on the righthand side, appears to recognize the shift of preference which apparently started while Mutendi was still alive. Such a dream would undoubtedly have been interpreted as divine confirmation of the ascendancy of Nehemiah. Likewise, Stephen's dream implied the confirmation of an election, an issue about which there was considerable uncertainty in Zionist ranks during the interim period. Although it remains difficult to determine at what point the various dreams were brought into play - in other words, whether they were preliminary guidance dreams triggering a certain line of action, or confirmatory dreams subsequent to group decisions - they were probably selected at a time when group consensus was either sufficiently predictable or beyond doubt. Some dream revelations may have been added to the record at a much later date to strengthen the element of divine sanction of what actually happened. For instance, if the group conscience is uneasy because of irreconcilable leadership inconsistencies of the past, with the opposing claims of a rival group actually highlighting such inconsistencies instead of allowing them to fade, one could expect an ongoing selection of confirmatory dreams and an intensified preoccupation with retrospective dreams.

In leadership rivalry of the kind evinced in the ZCC, the considerations controlling the selection of "correct" dreams or visions are decidedly pragmatic.

4. Great psychological satisfaction is undoubtedly derived from dream validation. Against a background of unquestioning acceptance of dreams and visions as media of divine revelation, the
narration of corroborating dreams is one of the most convincing methods of vindication, placing individual and group claims beyond dispute. In the midst of the tension, uncertainty, divided loyalties and discontent generated by schism, peace and stability are achieved when the attention is diverted from purely human considerations to what is experienced as the guidance and support of a loving God. Whether it is God Himself or His messenger Mutendi who appears in visions or dreams, a harmony conducive to group cohesion is created. As implied above, once sufficient evidence of divine support is established the message content can be used to shape mass opinion and exercise group control, whatever the degree of premeditation and the envisaged purpose - be it choice of a leader, the implementation of new plans or the confirmation of events unfolding in the group.

5. In view of the important and dominant role which Bishop Mutendi had played in his Church in his lifetime, it is not surprising that in death, he featured prominently in the dream life of both his sons' rival groups. It is doubtful whether during the succession crisis the leadership nucleus in each group was fully aware of the similarity between the appeals made in their respective ranks to the revealed support of the deceased Mutendi. To some Zionist members who were in touch with both prospective leaders it must, however, have been obvious that both sides were claiming the deceased bishop's mystical support for mutually exclusive leadership claims. Whether such knowledge caused much confusion I do not know An individual's identification with the group behind either of the two leaders in all likelihood implied acceptance of the truth and validity of the dream revelations generally regarded as normative directives by that group. Therefore, once an individual had firmly decided in favour of a particular leader, loyal participation in accordance with the mystically defined guidelines of the group must have been more important than the objective question of the truth of the contradictory claims to sanctioning revelations by the rival groups.

A comparison of the relationship between Mutendi and his sons in the dream content of the two groups shows up at least one important difference. The image of Ruben as being consistently in close touch with his father and therefore in closer harmony with his will and directives than Nehemiah, emerges forcefully in the dreams quoted above. In Musiza's dream, for instance, the "telephonic connection" between Ruben's granary
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and heaven suggests a regular and direct communication link between father and son, while the change of Mutendi's face into that of Ruben, as narrated in Dream I at the Bikita Minerals meeting, virtually implies that Ruben is the "incarnation" of the deceased. Although the dreams mentioned by Mushonga indeed indicate Mutendi's preference for Nehemiah as his successor, the closeness between father and son is less poignantly portrayed than in the dreams in support of Ruben. This difference may be explained by the fact that Nehemiah was assured of majority support from an early stage of the power struggle, which to some extent lessened the need for dream validation. By contrast Ruben's following, being a distinct minority, felt a more acute need for supernatural justification. What more effective sanction for the "rebel" leader could there be than the complete identification of the deceased "man of God", the embodiment of the Church, with his long-serving son?

The centrality of Mutendi in the above-mentioned dreams once more raises the question of theological evaluation. Is the deceased leader not in reality usurping the position of the Christian God in the minds of his followers and is his continued involvement in and control of the ZCC not just a modern version of ancestor veneration? Having already indicated the semi-Messianic trends in the ZCC leadership, the issue of theological evaluation is only mentioned in passing. It should be noted, however, that both Ruben and Nehemiah would be the first to deny that the preoccupation with their deceased father in their Churches implies a substitution of the Christian God. In their view it is only to be expected that the deceased messenger of God, as one of the living dead, would continue to play an active role, not in an attempt at self-deification but to keep directing those for whom he felt responsible to the kingdom of the Christian God. This does not mean that the danger that the iconic leader, instead of mirroring Christ to his followers, will actually obscure Him, is entirely averted. On the other hand, in observing the parallels with ancestor veneration, one should consider that the ZCC pattern of mutuality between the living and the living dead is not a mere perpetuation of traditional beliefs. In addition to the professed revelations about leadership, the deceased bishop was and still is believed to convey messages with a distinctly Christian ethical connotation. These aim at the inspiration of

15 Infra, pp. 114, 124.
Christian spirituality and the advancement of Zionist-Christian morality in a revolutionized and vastly extended Christian family unit, and not merely at the traditional conception of the well-being and protection of the family or clan unit, bound as it is by blood ties. Theologically problematical as this may be to Western theologians, it appears as if in Africa this is the experience and expression of what, in biblical terms, would be called the *communio sanctorum* and/or the influence of the "cloud of witnesses" (deceased believers) on the lives of living followers of Christ.

6. As regards their *symbolic content*, the above dream revelations appear to be less varied and rich than the call-dreams and group-consolidating dreams referred to in Volume 2. Colour symbolism, for instance, appears to fade into the background where leadership choice and group mobilization are the paramount issues. From the dreams recorded by Mushonga one gets the impression that dream content is to some extent reduced to the essential message of who the new Church leader should be. As long as the message is clear it does not matter whether the dreamer merely hears a voice or whether the deceased leader briefly appears to declare his wishes. Such a reduction to essentials is the result of pragmatic concern about group control, as opposed to the detailed projection of individual religious fervour which characterizes the narration of call-dreams.

Nevertheless, the recorded dreams are not devoid of symbolism. The more detailed ones (e.g. those of MuRozvi, Masunda and Musiza) all contain images reflecting a bishop's concern for the material well-being of his followers, particularly in a rural context; and the subsequent Zionist interpretation of salvation shows a strong emphasis on rural economic progress *here* and *now* as a sign of God's blessing. Hence Nehemiah's control over a large herd of cattle, in MuRozvi's dream, symbolizes not only Nehemiah's leadership of a vast following, but also the prosperity and progress of his Church. The numerous houses and plentiful rain, also "seen" by MuRozvi, symbolically strengthen, in Zionist terms, this image of progress, peace and development under Nehemiah's leadership. Likewise, in Masunda's dream the "heavy" wagon which could only be moved by the most senior ministers of the Church, reflects the singular importance of the deceased's Church with the added implication that, during the interim period, the ministers had a spe-

16 Daneel, 1974, p. 143f.
cial task in safeguarding it or, more literally, "bringing it home" to its owner. Here, too, the emergence of a "sea of sheep" which "filled the land from Gokwe to Bikita" symbolized both Nehemiah's supremacy over the deceased's flock and their economic progress. The vast extent of Nehemiah's authority was depicted by the qualification "from Gokwe to Bikita". It was historically relevant, for it referred to the two districts in which Mutendi had had his headquarters; geographically it conveyed the concept of a Church of enormous size. That Nehemiah should emerge from a bag supposed to contain peanuts while Masunda was in the act of distributing agricultural produce amongst Mutendi's followers, must have been a sure sign of Nehemiah's close identification with the agro-economic aspect of his father's leadership.

Similar features are noticable in the dreams about Ruben's leadership. In Musiza's dream the identification of Ruben with the granary on the righthand side unmistakably symbolized his leadership in agro-economic progress. A correctly placed granary clearly implies successful farming and good crops, which epitomize Zionist well-being. In this case, however, economic security is coupled with spiritual progress, for Ruben's granary also holds the secret of a direct, consistent link with heaven, where all Ruben's prayers - and, by implication, those of his followers - are favourably considered. Hence both tenets of Zionist leadership - the material and the spiritual - are symbolically manifested. Significant, too, is the actual and implied presence of water in the two dreams narrated at Bikita Minerals. Reference to the Sabi river could well have meant the conduct of numerous legitimate baptismal ceremonies by Ruben in "Jordan" - in other words, Church expansion. The shaking of the Sabi reeds before Ruben is a variation on the biblical Joseph theme, in recognition of his leadership. Abundant water, suggested by Mutendi's appearance from a fountain, could be a symbolic reminder of his preoccupation with both crop fertility (his rain-making feats) and the procreative powers of women (his healing of barren women). If so, Mutendi's transfiguration into Ruben in a context of water represents the most succinct expression of the latter's complete identification with the unique ministry of his father.

(iii) Mutendi's powers

The third cardinal issue in the claims to authenticity is the interpretation of the "miraculous" feats of both Nehemiah and Ruben as
17 ZCC Bishop Ruben Mutendi attending ecumenical Church service at his headquarters (Mandadzaka).
18. Bishop David Masuka confirms his ordination of Ruben Mutendi as ZCC bishop by laying on hands.
19. Bishop Ruben Mutendi prepares to lead procession of his senior office-bearers (including tribal chiefs) at commencement of Sunday service.
20. Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi leads procession of ZCC ministers to reconciliation ceremony at Matenda Gierson’s headquarters in Nyamhondo.

21. ZCC trumpeters sound an enthusiastic welcome on the arrival of their bishop.
22. ZCC Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi warns against betrayal by Judas figures during reconciliation ceremony at Gierson's headquarters.
23. ZCC Rev. Gwande (Champion) emphasizes a point concerning the scourge of Zionist schisms.
24. The Rev. Matenda Gierson prepares to hand over musical instruments and clerical vestments to Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi.

27. Celebration of reconciliation in the ZCC fold.
28. The music of ZCC reconciliation.
sure indicators that Mutendi’s faith-healing and rainmaking powers were passed on to them. In each camp this is seen as the ultimate confirmation that its leader is the true successor to the deceased bishop.

Nehemiah stated with conviction: "The power of healing and rainmaking that was in my father was passed on to me. One of my sisters was very ill and also mad. I used that staff of my father’s until she recovered. Now she accompanies us all over the country. This staff is a symbol of God’s power. I liken it to the staff of Moses."

The Rev. Champion supported this statement of his new bishop with the following account:

"As with Bishop Mutendi the rain comes down where we are. The other day we went to Bulawayo. There were no signs of rain, but after our arrival it started raining heavily. The same thing happened when we went to Gwelo. That first morning before we rose it started raining heavily. We went to Masvingo and there it also started raining. Then Gwelo again, and Sinoia, Harare and Mutare... always the same thing; it started raining. You must understand, this is no coincidence! It is the power which Mutendi used which is now revealing itself again."

This kind of experience is preached about endlessly with great conviction by senior ZCC officials, greatly consolidating the new bishop’s leadership throughout his entire Church. Witness-sermons recounting the "miracles" of the successor bishop, similar to those of the deceased leader, play a vital role in allaying the misgivings of those who are still critical or undecided about the succession issue.

From the sermons preached during Ruben Mutendi’s Paschal celebration in April 1984, it is evident that witness-sermons testifying manifestations of divine power in the activities of the new leader are a regular feature of religious life. They are not, therefore, restricted to the initial phase of group formation. Prominent and intense as such testimonies are at first, they eventually become a familiar hallmark of all religious ceremonies, a constant reminder to all participants of the legitimacy of their leader’s divine charge and of the validity of his succession to his father’s position. In Ruben’s case, his image as "man of God" - the honorary title which in the ZCC was the exclusive prerogative of his father in his

17 App. IV, p. 477f.
lifetime - was moulded in a climate of persistent anxiety caused by the liberation war. During the war Ruben had linked the safety of his followers to the mystical powers of his deceased father, and he proclaimed the successful outcome of the war as proof of his rightful claim to ZCC leadership. Consequently, in the view of his followers, Ruben emerged a courageous war hero. In the Paschal sermons of Mugadza of Buhera and Mupangani of Harare he was depicted as "the preserver of life" during the war, the one who was guided by the Holy Spirit to avoid landmines and who averted disaster for his followers whenever contact was made with the guerrilla fighters. Hence the same fearless spirit which had marked the deceased bishop's attitude towards a restrictive white administration was considered to be manifested once again in his son.

The following account by the Rev Enias Sithole of Malipate, Chiredzi gives a clear impression of the wartime role attributed to the new "man of God" by his followers and of their interpretation of the implications for his leadership of the Church:

"The problem of dissent started when the ZCC ministers refused to accept Masuka's role in the ordination of a successor, as Mutendi had arranged. They wanted to vote. So they voted for Nehemiah. But the revelation of power and signs that followed spoke for itself

"At that time only a few ministers followed Ruben. They were Chitsiku of Nyanyadzi, Matyambuza of Belingwe and Zivengwa Munyikwa of Gutu. I was an evangelist at Hippo Valley at the time. In September 1977 we had our first Paschal celebration. Only a small group of people attended, yet surprising miracles took place. That man [Ruben] cried and prayed to his father, saying: 'Father, if you have given me these people so that I should proceed with your work, you will make them numerous. These few I give the task of healing people, the task of performing miracles and signs. I want none of them to die in this here war.'

"Sure enough, that was what happened. We went all over the country, preaching God's Word without fear. Even the comrade fighters of war allowed us to proceed with our work. Our opponents tried to have Ruben killed by the bushfighters, but they refused after they had interviewed him, fearing that they would all die if they killed the 'man of God.' In September

18 App. IV, pp. 477-78.
1978 the comrades called him and took him up a mountain where he prayed for them. Because of his prayers they fought the war fiercely and undauntedly. It really worked... Wherever we went we, too, performed miracles. So, slowly, slowly, the people started joining us. We compare this with the life of Jesus. When He started to preach the gospel many refused to listen. But when the people saw His works they were convinced and started flocking to Him. Because Ruben started in a similar way we were convinced that his father had left this task for him. I speak the truth... we saw many miracles. The bush-fighters brought a lame man and a dying child. They told Ruben: 'We want to see if you really are a "man of God".' When Ruben prayed and healed both of them, so that the man could walk and the child walk away on its own, the comrades were surprised. They confirmed that he really was the 'man of God' and told him to continue with his work. From then on, whenever we were held up by the comrade fighters, we only had to identify ourselves as Ruben Mutendi’s followers, whereupon we were allowed to proceed with the work of the 'man of God'.

"At the time of the cease-fire there were again threats to kill Ruben. He took recourse to a meeting at Mutare in February 1980, which was attended by Chief Tangwena and the Minister of Mines, Comrade Nyagumbo. At the meeting we showed the Government people a receipt from the bushfighters for Z$2,500, which was our Church’s contribution to the comrades for the liberation of our country. The comrade commander of Bikita, who was also present, was surprised to find his own signature on the receipt. We told them of the remaining comrades in our district who were sent to kill our bishop. As a precautionary measure Minister Nyagumbo had a letter written on behalf of ZANU PF to forbid any interference with our ZCC, a copy of which was sent to the President of the Party, Comrade Mugabe. Then we were taken to a big rally at the Sakubva stadium where our Church was greatly honoured for its role in the liberation struggle. The people were told of our financial contributions and our support in prayer, whereupon they cheered: 'Pamberi na Zion! Pamberi na Zion!' It was a miracle, for some of the comrade fighters witnessed to their being healed by us during the war. We interpreted all that transpired as a sign that our bishop was sent by God.
"The great miracle took place when the Rev Muroi reported to our bishop a big bomb which fell at his village without exploding. Bishop Ruben responded by saying: 'If He is really the God of my father, Samuel Mutendi, and if my father really gave me this office, nobody will get hurt.' He then prayed to God: 'Jehovah of Samuel Mutendi, reveal your strength, take away the bomb from the homestead of my follower; send lightning to explode the bomb, without anybody getting hurt.' In reply, God sent heavy rain and lightning, which pointed the bomb at a nearby mountain and exploded it. The huge hole it ripped in the ground is still there today... Whereas many people should have died, nobody was hurt.

"All these miracles prove to us that Ruben is the 'man of God' We feel that his miracles and signs even exceed those of his father! In the Acts of the Apostles it says that the successor to the one who founds the Church will have greater strength. That is what we see here. Ruben's power is more than that of his father. He is really sent to do this work. The powers which God gave Mutendi have surely been passed to this son of his. Yet Mutendi also received them from Lekhanyane, and Lekhanyane from Edward of Basutoland, the one who started this Church. So we say, Ruben now has this Church! He is not arrogant but humble. Having started modestly, he is now going from strength to strength. The power and signs within this Church are simply astounding."

Although it is impossible to assess to what extent Sithole's account combines historical fact and a process of religious myth-making, it is a fair rendering of the general image of his bishop fostered in the thought world of his followers. The backdrop of the liberation struggle is fully exploited to highlight the unusual qualities of the "man of God": that of a courageous leader following in the footsteps of his father, making a religious and financial contribution to the national cause of liberation and, through selfless use of divine power, keeping his followers safe from harassment and possible death. The guerrilla fighters' recognition of his leadership and their use of the title "man of God" add weight to the claim that he is the divinely inspired and true successor to his father. Through his faith-healing, intercessory and other miraculous activities, the new leader once more underscored the protective nature of the ZCC, demonstrated particularly in the supernaturally directed discharge of a bomb without any cost of life. All these feats are interpreted as
divine validation of Ruben's position in the 'leadership lineage' of the ZCC: Edward of Basutoland, Lekhanyane, Samuel Mutendi and now Ruben. Probably in an effort to outbid similar claims by Nehemiah's camp, the assertion that Ruben's miracles outshine those of his father is added to the one about his legitimate 'inheritance' of the powers once wielded by his father.

* * * *

What we have been looking at is merely an outline of the attitudes and thought-processes in respect of three major issues and related events in a destabilized ZCC during the nine-year period following Mutendi's death. These issues are to a large extent pivotal in the ideological and religious framework in which the two opposing ZCC groups operate. Although these issues were utilized positively for purposes of expansion or membership integration in the respective groups, they provided the grounds for separation and, as they became entrenched through repeated narration, served to cement in-group ties and 'endorse' the rift in the ZCC to the detriment of reconciliation. One is struck by the similarities between the battery of arguments used by the two groups. In both cases the arbitrary interpretation of historic events, namely that Mutendi chose a specific successor, is elevated to sacrosanct fact. Likewise, this arbitrary interpretation of historical events in the lives of the two successor-leaders leads to the near fanatical and unassailable assertion by each group that the mystical powers of the deceased had devolved exclusively on its leader. Similar dreams and visions are cited by both sides with equal fervour and tenacity as signs of divine sanction. With such persuasive claims to authenticity, it follows that in both groups the external features - such as the use of uniforms, wearing of the ZCC badge and the characteristic patterns of worship and Church organization - have also remained essentially unchanged. One can hardly expect the persistent affirmations of the deceased bishop's approval to be followed by religious innovation.

The most significant religious change introduced by either of the two leaders, however, was Ruben's accommodation of and cooperation with the Ndaza Zionists. His acceptance of a changed introductory formula to ZCC sermons - one which honours the God of both the Ndaza Zionists and the ZCC - represents a major deviation from established ZCC practice. This did not trigger any serious reaction amongst Ruben's own followers, and the growth of his Church, relative to its modest beginnings, appears to have out-
stripped that of Nehemiah's. From his Mandadzaka headquarters in Bikita he now presides over an estimated forty to fifty thousand followers.

Nehemiah, on the other hand, has emerged as a progressive leader who succeeded in consolidating the majority of his father's followers under his leadership. In addition to the Defe headquarters in Gokwe, he started developing a new headquarters on Mbungo Farm in the Bikita district. Here he is currently erecting, with substantial foreign financial assistance, educational facilities for more than a thousand primary and secondary scholars. He is also engaging, with an impressive ZCC task force, in large-scale agricultural schemes. In view of the geographical dispersal of his Church, Nehemiah has, in addition, stabilized the decentralization programme introduced before Mutendi's death. As a result Paschal celebrations are no longer conducted exclusively at Church headquarters, but are also held at regional centres such as Chikwanda, Chingombe (both in the Gutu districts), Zimuto, Mazungunye (Bikita) and Ndanga (Zaka). Although no exact figures are available Nehemiah must have well in excess of 200 000 followers at present.

(c) Schism and reconciliation

Schisms can accelerate Church growth and lead to the eventual reunion of schismatic factions instead of a hardening of divided relationships. This is well illustrated in the case of Matenda Gierson's Church. To understand Gierson's breakaway after Mutendi's death, the rapid growth of his Church and his eventual reunion with Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi, a brief survey of the background factors and actual events is required.

Matenda Gierson joined the ZCC in 1951 while he was working at Shabani. Like many other Zionists he had little educational background and soon came under the spell of Bishop Mutendi's forceful leadership. Dreams played an important role in his religious experience from the outset. It was therefore not surprising that soon after becoming a Zionist he started having call-dreams in which he was summoned to full-time service at ZCC headquarters. These dreams were closely linked to recurrent spells of illness which, in Gierson's interpretation, confirmed his calling to Zion City Aware of Mutendi's mystical powers, Gierson was fully convinced that the "man of God" was capable of and responsible for bringing pressure to bear on him in this manner. The pressure did not produce immediate results, for Gierson insisted on continuing with his job
in Shabani. The syndrome of dreams and illness persisted, however, as if to underscore the bishop’s explicit prediction that Gierson would ultimately be unable to resist his call. Finally, in 1960, when Gierson tried to return to Shabani after a Paschal celebration at Zion City, he fell ill at Fort Victoria (now Masvingo), dreamt that he had to become the full-time driver of the "man of God" and had a prophet confirm that he really had no choice in the matter. Shortly afterwards he settled at Zion City and for the next fifteen years served Bishop Mutendi as driver and evangelist-prophet.

Through regular contact with the bishop while travelling, and through marriage to the bishop’s granddaughter, Gierson was in a position to observe and associate with the "man of God" at close quarters. Apart from the relationship of mutual respect between the two men, Gierson became totally dedicated to the Zionist cause. The far-reaching influence of the "man of God" over Gierson’s entire existence was unmistakable. He mentions, for instance, how he was always struck by Bishop Mutendi’s reliance on God’s protection. No trip was undertaken without the bishop praying in the vehicle for a safe journey. Having participated in the move of the Rozvi community from Bikita to Gokwe in 1967, and having made numerous trips in Zionist vehicles in aid of the northward "trek", Gierson unhesitatingly likened Mutendi to the biblical Moses. Mutendi, the Shona Moses, was leading the oppressed people to a new region of liberation and opportunity. Gierson himself narrates numerous instances of Mutendi’s miracles performed on behalf of participants in the exodus from Bikita. The many threats by wild animals such as lion and elephant in the new region were considered to have been averted by Mutendi’s prayers. Then there was the occasion when an influential nganga by the name of Mabharabhara tried to drive Mutendi’s followers from a certain area through the use of sorcery. The nganga also threatened to turn lion-spirits (mhondoro) loose on the Zionists. What was considered a serious challenge from the nganga was so effectively neutralized by Mutendi that his people settled without fear in that area, so that the nganga eventually had to move elsewhere.

Impressed by what he had seen, Gierson probably developed a desire to perform similar feats. At all events he formed ideas about the "man of God" which went beyond what could be considered popular Zionist doctrine and which reflected limitations in his theological insight. He considered Mutendi not only to be like God, as Moses had represented God to the Israelites, but to be God. In line with this thinking, he believed that Mutendi, in his posthumous
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state, could place people in heaven because he knew everything about them, such as whether they worshipped falsely or truly. When asked how this was possible, Gierson replied: "Because Mutendi has become the Holy Spirit!" The relationship between Mutendi and Jesus Christ he described as follows: "Mutendi is the Jesus of today. As Jesus left Peter to keep His Church after His death, so Mutendi left us. We are therefore the Peters of today. Both Mutendi and Jesus are the Sons of God. They did the same kind of work, except that Mutendi, having preached for fifty years, had a much longer public ministry than Jesus... Jesus will mediate at the gates of heaven on behalf of the Whites, whilst Mutendi will be the mediator of the Blacks. Mutendi is the Jesus of the Black people. He taught all things. When there was illness he simply said, 'Stand up and walk' and it happened."

Remarks of this nature indeed suggest a conceptual process which goes beyond the above-mentioned concept of iconic leadership in an attempt to deify the deceased leader. It is possible, therefore, that despite Mutendi's warnings during his lifetime, a degree of divinization of his person and replacement of the Christian deity with a Black Messiah is taking place. If so, it could be a more serious theological misconception in the ZCC movement than I formerly observed, considering Gierson's far-ranging influence after Mutendi's death. It should be noted, however, that Gierson's enthusiasm about a man he greatly respected and his inexperience in cautious theological formulation could well have contributed to an identification of the deceased leader with God. This identification could possibly reflect his concern for wider recognition of Mutendi's unique calling as a Black man of destiny rather than an attempt to find an African substitute for or equivalent of the Christian God. The key to Gierson's views would be "identification" and "re-enactment", for it appears that in his philosophy authenticity derives from the closest possible identification with biblical figures and the re-enactment of biblical events. The ultimate proof of divine sanction of Mutendi's mission lay in the fact that he, like Jesus, was "resurrected" three days after his death; that he revealed himself to his followers in the form of a star, as well as in visions and in dreams; and that he eventually emerged as a contextualized manifestation of the Holy Spirit. In this form he filled and comforted those of his followers who, like Christ's disciples of old, had kept a vigil after his death. Gierson, in particular, had a very vivid

19 Infra, p. 114.
experience of the outpouring of the Spirit, which he explains not in terms of a substitution for the Spirit of God, which had inspired him all along in his prophetic activities, but as a strengthening of his total dedication to God's work. In his re-enactment of the biblical events in Jerusalem, Gierson identified himself with the disciple Peter The Holy Spirit revealed to him that he had to build the Church through a specific ministry of making people confess their sins. Despite his identification of Mutendi with Jesus and the Holy Spirit, Gierson did not see his own Spirit experience as inspired entirely by Mutendi. In this respect he made the following observation: "The many dreams which people had about Mutendi's appearance showed that Mutendi's spirit was present guarding over the people of the Church so that they should not get lost." In other words, Mutendi was not considered to have completely taken over the role of the Holy Spirit, as described in the New Testament. His was rather a controlling and protective function in relation to his own followers - a final confirmation and fulfilment of the work of the Holy Spirit.

Three focal points emerge quite clearly in Gierson's religious experience shortly after Mutendi's death, all of which decisively influenced his eventual course of action. First of all he underwent a spiritual renewal during the period of waiting at Zion City, which culminated in a forceful Spirit-filling, instilling zeal for Church-renewal and Church-expansion.

In the second place, his close association with the "man of God" in life and his near deification of this person in death, brought an awareness of the latter's pervasive presence. This became a control factor in Gierson's views, placing him under the continual surveillance of the deceased bishop. There was an increase in mystical power rather than the reverse. Mutendi was considered to be even more exacting in his demands on the loyalty and obedience of his followers than before his death. As a result Gierson became even more emotionally and spiritually dependent on Mutendi than before, to the extent that in later years he could not follow up his independent Church building with a final severance of ties with the main body of the ZCC. More than anything else, Gierson's strong faith in Mutendi's ongoing control of his Church, and the threat such control posed to his own well-being and salvation in the event of disobedience, caused him after eight to nine years of independent leadership to be reconciled with Nehemiah, Mutendi's official successor.
In the third place, Gierson's identification with the disciple Peter is no coincidence. It shows a genuine sense of responsibility for the growth of the Church and a need to exert greater authority in official Church matters. In this identification one actually finds both the anticipation of prominent leadership and a degree of justification for the independent action on which Gierson embarked as soon as he moved to the southern regions of Zimbabwe. Gierson's image of himself as a Peter-figure even raises the question of the extent to which he may have had ambitions of occupying the top position in the entire Church - something which, as he well realized, was at no stage within his reach.

Gierson claims that in the aftermath of the ZCC Pentecost he was sent by Nehemiah to settle in Nyamhondo in Chibi South hundreds of miles from ZCC headquarters in Gokwe. He was to preach and convert people while the leadership issue was being sorted out at the distant headquarters. Although it was understood that he was officially working on behalf of the ZCC, Gierson soon found himself in a relatively isolated situation. Apart from his own leadership ideals, several external factors contributed to his development of an autonomous Church. Geographically he was working in remote regions, far from the regular network of congregational interconnections with Zion City. The duration of the interim of uncertainty prior to Bishop Nehemiah's official succession to his father's position, as well as the subsequent years of regrouping and stabilization of the new leadership, created a vacuum in which Gierson was largely left to his own devices. In addition, the intensification of the war, which impeded long-distance travel, caused a considerable degree of isolation. Small wonder, therefore, that Gierson soon came to look upon his own homestead as a kind of Moriah or Holy City, at the centre of an ever increasing number of budding new congregations. The great majority of new converts had not formerly paid allegiance to Zionism. Hence it was natural that the regional leader, over a period of sustained absence of any other authority, came to be generally regarded as the "bishop" of a new Church.

Although he was ideally placed to achieve complete autonomy, Gierson at no stage set himself up as an independent bishop. He regularly announced in public that he was merely a chikonzi (lit. messenger of court) who had come to Nyamhondo on behalf of a superior bishop. His main task, he told everybody, was to convert people through the confession of sins. There is little doubt about Gierson's total commitment to his work, about the central emphasis
on the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and about his ability to inspire zeal in the office-bearers he commanded. In his own words: "The Holy Spirit filled me totally. He sent us out at all times, war or no war. Wherever we went we made people confess their sins, we converted them, laid on hands, healed them ... day and night." Gier­son's activities undoubtedly brought spiritual revival and renewal in many villages. His influence was felt mainly in the Chibi, Belingwe, Nuanetsi, Chiredzi, Hippo Valley and other southern Zimbabwean districts. In the eight to nine years of his sojourn in Nyamhondo (1977 to 1985) he accomplished the remarkable feat of gaining some forty to fifty thousand followers (more than 40 000 baptismal entries appear in his books) and organizing them into approximately a hundred congregations, each with its own minister and evangelists and an average membership of between 200 and 600.

As time went by the pressure on Gierson to develop an autonomous ecclesiastic system increased. It would have been impractical for him to urge the new converts to travel all the way to Gokwe to celebrate holy communion. Instead, he started holding his own communion services and formed his own band with modern instruments for the celebration of festive occasions. All this was done in typical ZCC fashion, as Gierson had observed Mutendi doing it. Having copied the very activities which for many years had been the sole prerogative of the deceased "man of God", Gier­son - despite his claims of not being an independent bishop - had virtually established the autonomy of the new movement. Whatever his own intentions, the community in which he operated considered it to be "Gierson's Church" and his followers experienced a self­sufficiency which no longer required a bishop from outside to come and perform certain ritual duties. This was observed by the repre­sentatives of the mainline ZCC who, on one or two occasions, visited Gierson to request his presence at Zion City in the north. However, as Gierson procrastinated opportunities of renewing con­tact and negotiations with Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi, it was also generally accepted at Mutendi headquarters that Gierson had decided to steer his own course as Church leader.

The war obviously had a great influence on Gierson's Church expansion. He himself considered the tension and suffering a great inducement to people to join the Church. He contended that "because of the war people simply flocked to the Church. They came to hide in the Church from danger. They saw that everybody in the Zionist Church was being protected. No house or Bible of a Church member was burnt. When the dangers became less towards
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the end of the war many people backslided and left the Church. Nevertheless I still experience God's protection. The other day when the Ndebele dissidents cut off the noses and lips of the four school-teachers, I had just completed two weeks of preaching in that very area. Yet I was kept safe...

Throughout the war the theme of protection through the God of Mutendisi was central in the Church. There were numerous risky incidents at the Moriah of Nyamhondo, such as the arrival of mijiba (youth volunteers) who accused the Zionists of collaboration with the colonial forces, threats by soldiers to "bomb" Gierson's village from their helicopters, and numerous visits by bushfighters (vakomana). Apparently none of these hazards resulted in anybody being killed. The initial suspicions of bushfighters soon made way for co-operation, particularly when it became obvious that in both Church and guerrilla combatant ranks there was a central concern with the detection and eradication of wizardry.

At first Gierson was put to a severe test when a number of guerrillas forced him to perform faith-healing miracles at gunpoint. When the outcome was satisfactory and word spread to other bushfighters operating in the area, it became regular practice for the vakomana to send those accused of wizardry to the Zionist centre for prophetic scrutiny.

The persistent tensions and conflicts caused by the war found expression in a marked increase in charges of wizardry. As a result the guerrillas were confronted with numerous accusations made by villagers at the secret pungwe meetings. In addition, they themselves were apprehensive of being poisoned or bewitched by those villagers who did not really support them. In these circumstances the guerrillas considered it their primary task to rid society of the evil of uroyi. To determine the validity of accusations and the degree of guilt of the accused, the assistance of both the traditional religious authorities (e.g. the svikiro) and the Independent Church prophets was co-opted. Gierson states:

"The comrade fighters sent many suspects to me. They would be accompanied by the kraalhead of their village. I would then make the suspects confess their sins and write a note to the comrades. I always indicated that the accused had confessed publicly and that he or she should not be killed. As far as I know none of those whom I sent back after they had confessed were executed by the comrades. There were a number of old female witches who were afraid that because of their public
confessions they would be killed. I told them this would not happen. Later they brought me cattle, claiming that I had saved their lives... The comrades were appreciative and said they would not kill me because I helped them to prevent the varoyi from destroying the land.

It is clear from this statement that during the war Gierson saw it as his duty to fight evil, particularly by drawing out and confronting the destructive attitudes of people, and at the same time to try and preserve life. He also rendered faith-healing services to bush-fighters who became ill or mentally disturbed. Several of these stayed for long periods at Moriah for treatment or would return from time to time with recurring ailments. Thus one of the guerrillas, a certain Save, refused to leave Gierson's Moriah after treatment for mental illness. He was baptized and eventually made a deacon in the home congregation.

The intermittent presence of both guerrillas and soldiers of the regular army must have created a state of perpetual anxiety. Betrayal and detection of collaboration were very real prospects that had to be faced every day. Attempts were actually made by members of the rural community to have Gierson - who from a tribal point of view was a "foreigner" in Nyamhondo - discredited in the eyes of the guerrillas. Yet each new threat was somehow averted and Gierson survived. Whenever a crisis occurred, the deceased Mutendi appeared in his dreams and urged him not to be afraid but to continue with his task of converting people. In these dream encounters Mutendi repeatedly assured him that he would come to no harm. The promises of protection were, however, linked to directives that Gierson should return to the main body of the ZCC. When Gierson protested on the grounds that there were now two Churches - one under Nehemiah, the other under Ruben - Mutendi apparently made it clear that Nehemiah was his true successor. When Gierson indicated fear of Nehemiah's resentment about the "schism", Mutendi simply stated that he himself would pave the way for reconciliation and a peaceful reunion. Ironically, therefore, the war situation, which had brought about Gierson's isolation, facilitated schism and stimulated the rapid growth of his Church, also intensified the need for mystical protection, highlighted his dependence on the deceased "man of God" and by implication, set the stage for a return to the old Zionist fold.

There was no immediate resolution to Gierson's inner conflict as expressed in his dream life: conflict between leadership ambition
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and loyalty to the memory of a man who had so radically influenced his life, between his desire to mediate independently the healing power of God and his need for the proven protection extended by the deceased leader. The war had brought these conflicts into focus and in a sense set the stage for reconciliation. Nevertheless, it was not until several years after Independence, towards the end of 1984, that Gierson entered into negotiations with Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi at the latter's new headquarters on the Mbungo estates near Masvingo. It is possible that Bishop Nehemiah's move from Defe in the distant north to the Masvingo area, coupled with his growing popularity even in the districts where Gierson was operating, had put some pressure on the latter. The new "man of God" was engaged in the creation of impressive educational facilities for Zionists, and was putting in appearance in the more remote southern regions which he had largely neglected for many years. As a result it became urgent for Gierson to determine finally the right relationship between his and Nehemiah's ZCC.

It must have been a difficult decision for Gierson, for he was fully aware of the exclusive nature of the ZCC leadership hierarchy, which placed all effective power and authority in the hands of one principal leader and did not allow for any other office above that of minister (mufundisi). Reconciliation with Mutendi's successor would therefore inevitably lead to the incorporation into Nehemiah's Church of all the congregations he had so painstakingly built; he would lose effective control over them and his status in the united ZCC would be reduced to that of mufundisi. Nevertheless, the mystical persuasion of the deceased Mutendi swayed Gierson. It was not possible, it seemed, to believe in such a close identification between Mutendi and the Supreme Being, attributing a near salvific function to the deceased leader, and then disobey his direc­tives. In view of the long history of recurring illness and the faith-healing support he had always received from the "man of God" it is conceivable that Gierson feared that his persistence as an independent leader would incur the ultimate withdrawal of Mutendi's protective powers from his own life and subsequent exposure to misfortune. His own response to my question about his main motive for reconciliation hints at this. He simply stated: "I returned to Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi because one can get lost along the way if one does not honour the principal leader." In Zionist terms being "lost along the way" could mean the loss of both spiritual and material well-being in this existence as well as the
ultimate loss of eternal salvation. In Gierson's view there was the added risk of leading his followers astray. In a religious world with such a dominant concern with authenticity, derived to a large extent from a legitimized historical link (through the Church's principal leader) with the original Church of Jesus Christ, recognition of such legitimacy always remains a problem for the secessionist leader.

Here we have one of the cardinal issues which sooner or later each secessionist leader has to confront and resolve if he wants to retain his following. It is an even more pressing problem for the successors of such prominent leaders as Mutendi (ZCC), David Masuka (Ndaza Zionist) and Johane Maranke (AACJM), whose claims to historic authenticity have become so firmly established in their Churches over a period of many years that it is virtually impossible for a new leader to sever ties completely and to claim a similar authenticity. Part of the problem derives from a concept of salvation so closely, sometimes even exclusively, related to the specific principal leader and his Church that it becomes well-nigh impossible for the secessionist to preach that salvation unless he continues giving full allegiance to the Church of the deceased leader, even if the leadership of an inheriting son proves problematic. The solutions to this kind of problem vary, of course. Prophet Simon Mushati, for instance, who broke away from Johane Maranke's sons over the inheritance of Church leadership, simply claimed that his own movement was the true manifestation of Johane's Church.20 The secessionist leaders who broke away after David Masuka's death, on the whole did not sever ties completely but maintained a loose affiliation with Bishop Peresu (David) Masuka, the deceased's succeeding son.21 Hence they could proclaim Bishop Masuka's Zionist-type salvation without undue loss of credibility.

Against his own background of sustained close ties with Bishop Mutendi, Gierson, when eventually faced with the powerful and highly competitive leadership of the late bishop's successor, had to look to more radical alternatives. Either he was going to maintain the autonomy of his Church at the risk of losing some of his members to the influential Nehemiah, with the distinct prospect of forfeiting some of his prestige as a trail-blazing "messenger" in southern Zimbabwe which he had all along claimed to be, or he had to accept the complete incorporation of his movement into the main

21 Ibid., p. 308.
body of the ZCC, entailing both the advantages of Zionist well-being, protection and salvific security and the disadvantage of a loss of leadership status. There was no compromise between these options!

Once agreement on unification was reached between Gierson and Nehemiah a special weekend of reconciliation ceremonies was arranged in January 1985, nearly nine years after Gierson had set out to work in the Nyamhondo area. Busloads of Bishop Nehemiah's followers travelled to Gierson's headquarters and the majority of key figures representing Gierson's numerous congregations were present for the epic occasion. A scrutiny of some of the ceremonies and the sermons (App. V) preached sheds some light on the actual enactment of reconciliation and on the inherent problems involved.

One of the most interesting ceremonies was the induction of Gierson's congregations into Nehemiah's Church. This was done by laying hands on the minister or most senior office-bearer of each congregation, prior to which each had to make a public statement of loyalty to and acceptance of Nehemiah's leadership. It was obviously felt that in this way Gierson's representative decision would be made more binding on his entire Church. Yet the first few declarations highlighted the very problem Nehemiah was trying to overcome, for it was obvious that Gierson's ministers, having experienced only his leadership, were interested primarily in his praises and expressing loyalty to him. I have included in the Appendix the statements of the Rev Muparanga and the Rev Nyoni, which clearly illustrate this point. Both men spoke with the greatest respect about Gierson and the work he had done. They emphasized that Gierson saw his task as "cleansing the world through the confession of sins" and that he had always presented himself as a "messenger" (chikonzi) and never as a bishop. They themselves were the ones who had more or less urged Gierson to consider principal leadership. What they were in effect saying was that if anyone was to blame, it was they and not Gierson. The depth of their attachment to Gierson was apparent in Muparanga's assertion that Gierson's faith-healing miracles revealed that he was sent with the power of Jesus Christ, and in Nyoni's equation of Gierson's work with that of the late Bishop Mutendi. Nyoni in fact went on to say that it was because of this likeness that they had tried to persuade Gierson to become the ishe (lord; bishop) of the Church. Gierson was, moreover, credited with successful exorcism of evil spirits, a feat which other preachers had failed to accomplish. He was cast in the role of a powerful exorcist who
could fight the fiercest of spirits (chikara chomweya) – particularly the feared spirit of wizardry – and make them flee to "the wards without water" (matunhu asina mvura: traditionally the dwelling place of evil spirits). All this was cited as proof of Gierson's divine mission.22

Having depicted Gierson's work as that of a messenger who was rounding up cattle for their owner and having reiterated that Gierson had always declared his intention of ultimately leading his followers to the principal leader, Nyoni concluded with an account of the conciliatory meeting between the two leaders at Nehemiah's headquarters. "I was very happy with this outcome [Nehemiah's acceptance of Gierson]," he said, "with the fact that the 'messenger' and us were received without any conflicts arising. I am happy because we have ultimately arrived at the bumbiro [Church constitution] of Mutendi."23

Bishop Nehemiah's office-bearers were obviously ill at ease with the prominence given to Gierson in statements of this nature. It was all too obvious that the role Gierson had been playing whilst working in Nyamhondo was similar in many respects to that of the late bishop Mutendi. Despite his title and his gestures of loyalty to the ZCC, Gierson had in fact acted as "man of God" to his followers and was honoured as such. The leadership system of Zion could not accommodate two "men of God" and the implications of a competitive relationship between Gierson and Nehemiah, albeit not intended by Gierson's followers, could not be tolerated by Nehemiah's camp. Unaccustomed to having praises sung to anybody but their own "man of God", Nehemiah's officials soon instructed Gierson's ministers to restrict themselves to brief statements of loyalty to Nehemiah. After that each minister was only given an opportunity to identify his congregation and indicate acceptance of Nehemiah's leadership – as the Rev. Samson Hove's statement illustrates.24 This deliberate change of procedure highlighted the prevailing interpretation in Nehemiah's camp of the union between the two groups. To them it was more a matter of "conquest" and absorption of a group of potential rebels than a unification of equal partners!

The speeches of both the Rev. Champion and Boas (a brother of Bishop Nehemiah) in response to the ministers' declarations of

loyalty reveal this "conquest" attitude quite clearly. Champion likened Gierson to the prodigal son, who had squandered all his money in a foreign country before returning to his father's house. This was tantamount to saying that the acceptance of Gierson, once he had decided to return, was never in doubt. Yet the mention of squandered money was a reminder of the negative implication of Gierson's actions - that of flouting for such a long time the authority of Bishop Mutendi's successor. In a subtle way Champion was reminding his audience that in spite of Gierson's achievements, he was not without blame and that he was returning as a contrite son, accepting his father's authority, rather than as a reputable Church leader in his own right (plate 23).

Boas elaborated on this theme. First of all he called for full recognition of Gierson's achievements, particularly his courageous perseverance under duress during the liberation struggle. This recognition was immediately qualified, however. As Boas said: "The stumbling-block to us is that all you ministers recognized Gierson." Yet Gierson's authority could never be complete because his followers, according to Boas, were like a pack of rugby forwards who were forever scrumming without the ball coming out. Hence there could be no progress in the game. The incompleteness of Gierson's Church work prior to his return was also hinted at when Boas suggested that Bishop Nehemiah had brought a "dry-cleaning service" with Surf (detergent powder) and soap for a proper cleansing of heart and attitude. Those who did not accept this service, it was suggested, would be raising a ngozi spirit of destruction, a spirit of divisiveness. By strongly emphasizing a total change in worship and working conditions under Bishop Nehemiah's authority Boas was trying to instil the idea of religious progress - movement from a lesser religious order with a somewhat inferior leadership to a higher order where an historically legitimised leader could render a complete service. It was inevitable, it seems, that an attitude of conquest, based on a concept of exclusive leadership, would result in public deprecation of any other leader who - even if only in the minds of people - could rival or threaten this sacrosanct position. The criticism of Gierson's leadership implicit in both Champion's and Boas's speeches, was therefore aimed not so much at specific wrongdoings on his part. The point at issue was the effectiveness of a full-scale transfer of power and the radical introduction of a new order with a new figurehead and a geographically distant power base. Bishop Nehemiah's henchmen were far too aware of Gierson's entrenched position in Nyamhondo and the problems of maintaining
effective control over remote congregations simply to take the given situation at face value. They had come to Nyamhondo to assert themselves, to initiate an entire movement into their Church and to establish a new rule, even at the expense of existing patterns of authority and control.25

What was the attitude and response of the two prime movers on this occasion? In his sermon, preached on the Saturday evening, Gierson gave an account of how he had worked with the late Bishop Mutendi and how, after the latter's death, he was sent out by Nehemiah to Nyamhondo. He qualified his motive for doing so as follows: "I am giving you this history so that you can, once more, take note of who the real owner [of the Church] is, the one who sent me here. It was a matter of the ZCC lacking someone [a leader] in this area, and then sending me."26 In showing his followers the "real owner" of the Church, Gierson was publicly conceding full recognition of Bishop Nehemiah's authority. He was also indicating that, despite possible misunderstandings about his leadership, the congregations he had built had all along fallen under Mutendi's jurisdiction. In a candid manner Gierson acknowledged that his procrastination of his return to Zion City was due to his enjoyment of the situation in Nyamhondo. The Rev Champion's warnings during visits and dream revelations that such procrastination could lead to total estrangement between himself and Mutendi's ZCC went unheeded as he kept postponing the visit to Gokwe headquarters. Gierson also admitted to feelings of anxiety as time went by and he could no longer be sure of acceptance by Mutendi's successor. Although it was not explicitly stated, the chances are that Gierson had over the years experienced a strong sense of guilt, stemming more from his close acquaintance with the deceased bishop than from his association with the bishop's heir.

After a vivid description of his trip to Nehemiah's Mbungo headquarters, his fears of rejection and his need for a go-between to present his case to the Church Council, Gierson had the following to say about the friendly reception he received:

"Listen well, you people of Nyamhondo. Upon my arrival God simply chose to forgive; that same Father whom I have sinned against. The whole issue was then discussed after it was properly introduced by Mpofu and Gwande [Champion]. They could

have turned upon me with the accusation that I have been eating other people's flesh [i.e. an accusation of wizardry]. Instead, they said: 'This person has returned. Although he has killed the Church for many years it does not matter because he has come back.' I was asked whether I would be fully able to meet the conditions for reunion. I replied: 'Well, if a person comes to his own court of his own accord, he would be a fool if he goes back on the new agreement. If we make an agreement in heaven, with your God confirming it, we too will witness in front of God that we have truly come back ... our intentions are steadfast.'

In Gierson's admission of guilt before God and his open acknowledgment of the radical statement made by a member of the Church Council that he had in fact for many years "killed the Church" - something he need not have stated publicly - one observes humility and honesty. It also reflects unquestioning acceptance of the jurisdiction of Bishop Nehemiah and his council, since it was extremely doubtful whether an accusation against Gierson of "killing the Church" could in all fairness be upheld. On the contrary, he had been more enterprising in building the Church after Mutendi's death than any of those sitting in judgement over him. He had set an example of missionary zeal and courageous churchmanship, in the light of which the long delay of his so-called "return" to the main branch of the ZCC paled into insignificance. Well aware, however, of the exclusive and absolute nature of ZCC leadership, Gierson concluded his sermon by portraying Bishop Nehemiah as a man of great achievement who was promoting education for Zionist children, as the law-giver who had to be obeyed and as a man of compassion, tending to the needs of his followers at all times.

This sermon, which may be described as an introductory "statement of intent", was followed on the Sunday morning by the official ceremony of unification, which amounted to Bishop Nehemiah's takeover of Gierson's following. On this occasion Gierson opened proceedings by making the ministers of the various congregations and their wives stand up so that he could introduce them to Bishop Nehemiah. Having given a brief description of some of the achievements of these ministers, Gierson more or less "handed them over"
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to Nehemiah, telling them: "Let your spirit be directed to Mbungo!" At this point he presented their bishop as the one who had come to "carry the prayers". Hereby he was not only referring to the principal leader's control of worship through holy communion ceremonies, but also to his mediatory or intercessory function between his followers and God - the function formerly attributed to Bishop Mutendi. 29 Such qualifications signified recognition of Nehemiah as the true successor and representative of his late father.

Gierson then proceeded to hand over to Nehemiah all the band instruments and plates he had used for holy communion (plates 24 & 25). As these objects represented the authority of a Zionist bishop, and their use had been an act of rebellion against the "man of God", their passing into Nehemiah's hands symbolically demonstrated Gierson's final capitulation and his complete acceptance of the "real owner's" leadership. Addressing his ministers he stated:

"From now on your Church centre is at Mbungo. I have handed over everything. Look at all these plates we were using for holy communion. I am handing them over to be taken to Mbungo. I am giving everything to our leader. Whatever happens and whether we like everything or not, there can be no reversal of decisions [hapana 'reverse']. We ourselves have decided on this 'marriage'. I have been your messenger and you will follow me to Mbungo..." 30

To underscore the finality of his decision, Gierson went on to exhort his subordinates to follow him into Nehemiah's fold. He described the move as life-giving and spirit-preserving, the very antithesis to death out in the wilderness: having handed over to Nehemiah, having responded to the late Mutendi's dream directives and having found a convincing reply to his prayers, Gierson now expected from his bishop strength, life, truth, care and support. In these qualifications one notes the relief of a man anxious about the prospect of forfeiting, for himself and his followers, the full measure of salvation through an act of rebellion which could lead to spiritual ostracism and eventual "death in the wilderness". In Gierson's act of surrendering self and leadership ambition the true link with historic Christianity was felt to be restored, salvation appeared more secure and liberation from a sense of unease, caused by the

distinct prospect of mystical retaliation by the deceased bishop, was achieved.

Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi’s sermon on the Saturday evening was a masterly act both of introducing change and of offering reassurance about change. He started by commenting positively on Gierson’s leadership. At no stage, he said, had he shared the scepticism about Gierson felt by some of his office-bearers. Neither did he consider Gierson to be a real backslider but someone who had made an outstanding contribution to Church expansion. He reassured his audience that he would not have their "messenger" removed from the Nyamhondo area because he wanted the Church there to continue flourishing – as it obviously did under Gierson’s care – and "to continue expanding, all the way to Beit Bridge". He also referred to Gierson as the prodigal son, but with a more positive connotation than the Rev Champion had done. It was the prodigal son who made progress when he returned to his father, and not the dissatisfied brother. The only real point of criticism was Gierson’s procrastination and hesitation to return to the old fold. This was raised several times as an example of an attitude which could thwart future progress. Said Nehemiah: "The talk of a backslider is self-justification. He will say, ‘I have been like this; I have been like that’ – all of it talk about yesterday. There is lostness in such harking back! It is a way of putting off the real issue. Gierson, for example said: ‘I think it will ripen and then when things are ready I shall go [to Zion City] with the people.’ Take care! That kind of thing does not just disappear Watch! Tomorrow it starts again." 31

Aware of the risk of eliciting counterproductive reactions by launching too sharp an attack on Gierson’s leadership and by the sudden imposition of radical change, Nehemiah tactfully explained the purpose of his visit with reference to the classical text in Matthew 5:17 on Christ’s attitude towards the law: "I have come not to cancel the laws of Moses and the warnings of the prophets. No, I have come to fulfill them and to make them all come true." Nehemiah applied the text directly to his visit as follows: "We did not come to break up that which goes [that which is meaningful]. What goes, goes; they who work, let them work... for God. We did not come to destroy; we did not come to prevent prophecies from being prophesied. Let those who preach, preach! We have come to

see and to strengthen." The only thing he really wanted to change, the only attitude he had "come to bomb", was that of procrastination and hesitation. Here Nehemiah was obviously hitting out at the independence and self-assertiveness of Gierson and his followers which had for so long been the cause of evasion and even negation of his (Nehemiah’s) own leadership.

Elaborating on the theme of fulfilment as opposed to destruction, Nehemiah made a strong plea for a concrete manifestation of the envisaged unity between the two Church groups. He mentioned the formation of one national army, consisting of erstwhile government soldiers and bushfighters, as a good example of the process of integration and reconciliation which still had to unfold. To give substance to the concept of unity, Nehemiah announced that joint work programmes were under consideration, one of which was to build a Zionist school in Nyamhondo. Through his emphasis on concrete benefits to be derived from the realization of short-term objectives, Nehemiah was attempting to offset the disadvantages which the union would bring for Gierson’s followers, such as the shift of their power base from their immediate environment to distant Mbungo.

Aware of the precariousness of the accord between himself and Gierson, Nehemiah warned several times against future dissent. He addressed those who, like the brother of the prodigal son, reacted negatively to the conciliatory pact between "father" and "son": "Many of you will stay on the other side, satisfying yourselves only with this work of introduction [to Church union]," he said. The union was a great test for both Church groups. "Many will be lost," he contended. "They will be angry [about the pact between ‘father’ and ‘son’] and will therefore take their hoes and go to the fields when the celebration starts." In calling upon Gierson to help him with those dissident office-bearers who were reluctant to co-operate in a union - the ones who he anticipated would "go into reverse gear" - Nehemiah was actually expressing his confidence in Gierson’s determination to make the union work. With reference to Revelation 3:9 ("I will force those supporting the synagogue of Satan, while claiming to be mine, to fall at your feet and acknowledge that you are the ones I love"), he nevertheless warned that the synagogue of Satan would be opposed to the "synagogue" of Mutendi. This threat would come from within both his and Gierson’s folds: "You will see it. It does not take long to emerge. It will

emerge from my own and Gierson's house. You must help me so that we can see it quickly. It comes in the form of uncertainty. It arises at the point of our integration..."

Undaunted, however, by the prospects of dissatisfaction and dissent, Nehemiah throughout his sermon drew a very positive and powerful picture of the Zionist Church. He had no hesitation in identifying his Church with the body of true believers as depicted in the New Testament. Through a very literal application of certain texts in Revelation 3 (on the lukewarm congregation of Sardis) to Gierson's followers, he was implying that there would be a selective incorporation of worthy believers into his own fold. As in Sardis, there were some people who had not soiled their clothes (Rev. 3:4) and would therefore walk with God; there were those in Nyamhondo who were worthy of following the laws of Samuel Mutendi and who would be taken with to the true city of Zion. Just as those who conquer will have their names written in the Book of Life and announced before God the Father (Rev 3:5), so the Gierson followers against whom there were no complaints would be taken to their new Church headquarters, clad in white, and presented there to Samuel Mutendi. With reference to the "key of David" (Rev 3:7) which finally locks or unlocks, Nehemiah intimated that he had brought such a "key" - an exclusive and divinely inspired solution - to Gierson's area. Now that he had "unlocked" the area there could be true worship, the building of a school and other developments which formerly could not take place. Both the conditions and rewards of participation in the true Church were finally explained in terms of Deuteronomy 11:13,14: "And if you will obey carefully all of his commandments that I am going to give you today, and if you will love the Lord your God with all your hearts and souls and will worship Him.... then He will continue to send both the early and the late rains that will produce wonderful crops of grain, grapes for your wine and olive oil." In his exposition of these verses Nehemiah more or less presented himself as a Moses figure - the law-giver who represented the true code of conduct of the God of Zion. He called on all those present to obey the God of Zion with their entire minds and hearts. "Then," he added, "there can be no deception. We test you because God Himself tests you. I am giving you the water you have been missing for many years, that which you have been thirsting for. Come back, not only with your hands and feet, but with all your hearts... Turn your hearts to God. We are preparing for holy communion... Gierson will remember how we
did it at Moyo’s place... how the prophets caught out the wizards. It is not a cheap issue of just allowing everybody to participate.”  

These words spell out some of the benefits of obedience to the God of Zion - economic well-being because of plentiful rainfall, and religious well-being symbolized by true holy communion services. Underlying Nehemiah’s entire commentary on the Zionist Church is the exclusiveness and prominence of the Mutendi leadership. Although there were repeated calls for obedience to the God of Zion, the test of worthiness hinged very much on recognition of the laws of Samuel Mutendi. A clearly stated reward for the bearers of white garments was that Nehemiah would present them to the deceased leader, presumably so that they might procure the benefits of his mediation. Moreover, Nehemiah, as his father’s representative, portrayed himself as the one who controls the "key of David" and who provides rain for obedient believers. Given this close identification between Church leader and Christ and the decisiveness of the relationship between leader and followers for both spiritual progress and eternal salvation, the pressure on Zionist members to comply with the wishes and accept the near absolute powers of the principal leader is understandable. This in itself explains Gierson’s predicament over such a long period. Having been close to the "man of God" for many years he simply did not have the conviction, despite his success as an "independent" in the field, that he could establish a true Christian Church without Mutendi’s leadership.

In response to Gierson’s Sunday morning sermon and his symbolic "hand-over" of leadership and following, Nehemiah preached at length about the implications of the union between the two groups and the prospects of dissent.  

In his overriding preoccupation with a Judas figure who, he predicted, would emerge from Gierson’s fold in due course, one discerns a degree of uncertainty about the successful outcome of the move towards union. Nehemiah obviously sensed that the move could have a disruptive effect throughout his entire Church if there was insufficient control over the vast number of newly inducted Gierson followers, and if dissenting elements were allowed to cause confusion amongst his ZCC adherents. He therefore warned in no uncertain manner against the confusion and suspicion that could be caused by traitorous opponents of his and Gierson’s reconciliatory agreement. He had no

34 App. V, p. 500f.
hesitation in challenging the Judas figures to show their hands promptly so that they could be dealt with. He likened them to dogs and snakes who, in Zionist doctrine, were objects of destruction and rejection and consequently had no right to enter the City of Zion. Through his radical dissociation from the "dogs", the "snakes" and the wizards - coupled with a forthright accusation that a Judas would emerge from the ranks of Gierson's ministers - Nehemiah attempted not only to underline the ideals of sanctity and purity of his Church, but also to assert his authority in a manner which could leave no doubt about his determination to deal severely with dissenters. Having noticed the close relationship between Gierson and many of his ministers and having recognized the divisive potential of this closeness, Nehemiah asserted that it was ultimately not a matter of following this or that leader, for it was God Himself who chose the true inhabitants of Zion. This assertion reflects a certain wariness of Gierson's stature and far-reaching influence which, at least in the minds of some of Gierson's followers, represented a rival force to Nehemiah's leadership. Nevertheless, in this particular sermon Nehemiah came out if full support of Gierson by calling on everyone present to follow the example of the Nyamhondo leader.

In the Sunday morning sermon there was a marked shift from the previous day's focus on the deceased Mutendi's leadership to a strong Christological emphasis. The "synagogue of Satan" (Rev 3:9) was now contrasted with the "synagogue of Christ" and not with that of Mutendi. Christ's love was repeatedly cited as the only solution to conflict and disunity, the only basis for meaningful cooperation between the merged bodies of Zion. To illustrate this, Nehemiah referred to the animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans, a breach within a nation which could not be healed until the message of Christ's love started to penetrate that world. "Likewise," he insisted, "the differences amongst us must be settled from this day on. Let there no longer be Jews and Samaritans in our camp. I have asked you ministers to sit as a group over there as a sign of this change. Love [of Christ] makes the difference."

In his call for unity and spiritual renewal, Nehemiah repeatedly named the love of Christ as the cardinal factor of change. He claimed for instance, that the ultimate miracle was not any of those performed by Gierson - a dominant theme in the thought world of Gierson's followers! - but the miracle of a new state of being in the love of Christ "when the duiker [small antelope] and the lion live side by side by
side and when a child puts his hand in the hole of an adder without being bitten" Nehemiah also urged all individual Church members to be vigilant, because Satan had his followers cleverly disguised in uniforms throughout the Church. In the process of assessing this for themselves, the believers had only one truthful measuring rod: Jesus Christ.

Taken together, the two sermons of Nehemiah reveal the following characteristics:

1. **The sincerity of his appeal for Church unity** was unmistakable. This unity was to some extent conceived of in terms of a "conquest mentality" because of the exclusiveness of leadership. Yet Nehemiah never lost sight of the fact that union would be a futile exercise unless it was based on spiritual renewal, perseverance and love of the Christian God throughout his Church. God's initiative and man's response were at the core of his message. "What we are aiming at," he preached towards the conclusion of his second sermon, "is simply co-operation [between the unified Church groups] and in that co-operation, to do serve each other with love, with love! Work and pray together in your houses! God Himself will reveal what is hidden [i.e. the forces opposing unity]." 

2. Nehemiah's message was thoroughly contextualized. It related directly to the aspirations, fears and suspicions of his own and Gierson's followers. Biblical injunctions were directly related in understandable terms to the immediate and physical realities of the Zionist Church. The objective of Church unity was also given a wider meaning by relating it to the quest for political unity. Prime Minister Mugabe, for instance, was portrayed as having won the "war of the rifle", now engaged in the "war of love" - that of establishing unity amongst all people throughout the country. Although Nehemiah did not directly mention the Shona–Ndebele conflict, the inference was clear that to both State and Church the more formidable challenge, against the backdrop of suspicion and hatred, was the "war of love".

3. An aspect of contextualization was Nehemiah's rich use of imagery, based on traditional beliefs and world-view. Through his identification of the biblical Judas with the entire field of wizardry - for instance, his reference to a dog returning to its own vomit, a snake (witch familiar) which had to be destroyed,

or a wizard who would be prevented from entering the holy city - he was placing any form of opposition to the pact between him and Gierson in a context which at once qualified it as abhorrent and destructive. Justification for such a radical stance derived from an exclusivist ecclesiology which assumed such a close identity between the ZCC and God's kingdom that to cause confusion through non-participation in the envisaged Church union was tantamount to obstructing the sanctity and expansion of the kingdom itself. In terms of a traditional world-view Nehemiah's categorization of the prospective traitors as social misfits and destroyers of wholesome relationships also constituted an effective assertion of his own authority. This was achieved not only through explicit use of traditional imagery regarding wizardry, but through repeated direct and indirect reminders of mystical intervention and exposure. Considering the wide-spread belief in Mutendi's near divine powers, such reminders could well have been perceived as veiled threats of mystical retaliation against dissenting opposition; in other words, they were intended to act as deterrents to disunity. An example of a threat of exposure of any would-be opposition was Nehemiah's exposition of the unpredictability of the human heart. He said: "The heart of a human being brings forth what is rotten and stinks. Who will assess it? Nevertheless, tomorrow it shall be revealed. We will find you [Judas]. Where the water stops running it stagnates for all to see." The last two sentences speak for themselves.

4. Nehemiah did not attempt an explanation of the relationship between the late Mutendi and Jesus Christ. Taken on its own the first sermon seemed to imply a substitute Christology. In the comparison of the congregation of Sardis with Gierson's following, Mutendi's prominence in "receiving" the new members and in acting or mediating on their behalf could be interpreted as a virtual usurpation of the role of Christ. This is the result of a limited ecclesiology in which the leader in a sense is the Church, and where his role, at least as regards admission to the Church, is considered decisive. In the second sermon, however, where the focus shifted to reconciliation and the maintenance of Church unity, Christ and His love were central. In this respect the second sermon, which should be seen as complementary to the first, served as a kind of corrective to any misconceptions that could have arisen about the leadership of Mutendi. Although

these sermons most certainly were not intended to be balanced expositions of Church doctrine they are sufficiently revealing of the centrality in the ZCC of both Christ and Church leader to demonstrate the problems attending an attempt to interpret and assess the theology of this Church. From the sermon material presented it is evident that, depending on the observer's bias or emphasis, a strong case could be made for the ZCC representing either Black Messianism or a pronounced biblical Christology.

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In the course of 1985, during the aftermath of the reconciliatory unification of Zion (plates 20-28), Gierson and a number of his Nyamhondo followers were totally immersed in the building, agricultural and religious activities at Zion City. It was obvious that despite Bishop Nehemiah's promise to the Nyamhondo congregations that he would not alienate their "messenger" from them through long spells of absence, he was monopolizing the latter's work programme to the extent that there was simply no time for the returned "prodigal son" to minister intensively to his flock in Nyamhondo. When I asked him about this, Bishop Nehemiah admitted that he was wary of the potential for dissent should Gierson be allowed to spend long periods with his followers in Nyamhondo. He was clearly not yet at ease about Gierson's wide influence in the southern regions of the country. Questioned some months later about the traitor (Judas) he had preached about, Nehemiah indicated that a number of Gierson's congregations had indeed broken away, presumably under the influence of his rival brother, Ruben, to join the latter's branch of the ZCC. The unification of Nehemiah's and Gierson's Church groups was therefore not entirely without blemish, and the question arises whether it would not have been wiser for Bishop Nehemiah to allow Gierson greater freedom to maintain the cohesion of the congregations he had built, even if it meant directly monitoring and supervising Gierson's activities in the south from the Mbungo Zion City.

On the other hand, Gierson's flair for organization and Church-expanding evangelistic campaigns was fully exploited. He was, for example, placed in charge of Zionist campaigns both to Bulawayo and into Mocambique, the results of which pleased Bishop Nehemiah. He was also sent for a while to minister to the Zionists living at the headquarters at Defe, in Gokwe. It was rumoured then that he might be put in charge of the still vitally important north-
ern headquarters. If such a move is still to come, it would, from Nehemiah's point of view, serve the double purpose of neutralizing to some extent Gierson's influence in the south and of blowing new life and enthusiasm into the ZCC congregations in the north. Whatever the motives, it is evident that Gierson, through his experience, dedication and missionary zeal, has given new impetus to the outreach and growth of the ZCC.

2. SCHISMS IN THE AFRICAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (CHIBARIRWE)

(a) Leadership succession and schismatic strife

Before his death in 1971 the aged Chibarirwe president, the Rev. Sengwayo (plate 10), faced the dilemma of leadership succession. There was no heir who could succeed him because his eldest son, Pauaro, never participated in Church activities, neither did he have the inclination or leadership potential to become his father's successor in the ecclesiastical field. In African terms, Sengwayo therefore faced a psychological predicament: the leadership of the Church he had founded and nurtured could not be attached to his name and blood-line through succession. His name would live on for some time in the memories of his followers but his kinsmen in the direct line of descent were, so it seemed, not destined to play an influential role in the future of "his" Church. Ironically, this clear case of absence of a suitable heir to the "Church presidency" occurred in a Church which in many ways distinguished itself from the other Independent Churches in championing the preservation of the customs of the forefathers.

There were other factors which complicated the leadership issue. Sengwayo had never achieved the same kind of status and power in his Church as the popular Spirit-type leaders, Samuel Mutendi and Johane Maranke. Lacking the necessary charisma, ambition and leadership drive, he had for many years remained a benevolent father figure, depending on the dynamic personalities of Pahla and Dzukuso in the Chipinge area, and on the highly influential Moses Ruwana in the Bikita and Gutu districts, for the planning, expansion and organization of his Church. Against this background the concept and practice of a "floating Church headquarters" had come about, whereby the President's homestead and person in the remote

38 Daneel, 1971(a), p. 357f.
Chibunji (Chipinge district) had little or no centralizing impact on the Church. Only during the annual conferences, held in the various Church districts on a rotational basis, did the leadership hierarchy with its ruling and organizational powers become manifest. The few influential ACC leaders, such as the Rev Pahla of the Chipinge district, who had a similar Mission Church (American Board) background as Sengwayo, were both friends and rivals of the principal leader; but among them there was no obvious key figure whom Sengwayo could look to for a successor. Committed as he still was to the original "home base" of the Chibarirwe - the vaNdau peoples of Chipinge, amongst whom he had spent most of his life - Sengwayo was, moreover, reluctant to see the principal leadership of his Church go to the Gutu district where the largest concentrations of Chibarirwe people were to be found.

Was there any solution at all which could help to preserve the already precarious cohesion in the widely scattered ranks of his Church? Sengwayo opted for the closest "relative" he could find, a certain Mr Makaya, who was married to his niece and who could therefore be relied upon to maintain at least some kind of meaningful link between the President's family and his Church. As a prominent businessman, then residing at Nyika Halt in Bikita, and an influential former MP, Makaya possessed some of the prominence and prestige Sengwayo had lacked. But he had the serious disadvantage of not having belonged to the ACC prior to his appointment and not having played a significant role in it subsequently.

This circumstance highlights two issues: first, the depth of the ailing president's need for a reliable kinsman to proceed with and honour what he considered to be a life task; and secondly, the extent to which he was out of touch with distant members in believing it possible that they would accept a complete "outsider", in Church terms, to take over the leadership. Whatever Makaya's parliamentary and business qualifications, he failed in the eyes of many Church members to meet the most important requirement: he was an outsider without any record as a Church leader by which he could be judged.

Aware of their numerical strength the Gutu congregations in no uncertain terms objected to President Sengwayo's arrangements. The Rev Muongani, senior minister of the ACC in the Gutu district, acted as spokesman of the malcontents. When Sengwayo visited Gutu just before his death, accompanied by the already anointed "Rev" Makaya, Muongani was supposed to explain to the Church the president's move with regard to the leadership succession.
Instead, Muongani (plate 29) pointed out to Sengwayo that he had acted unconstitutionally because he had not consulted the Church Council. He alleged that the ordination of Makaya was invalid, since only a few senior Church officials, including the Rev Jimeiri, the Rev Zinhata and the Rev Shongorarurwa, had attended the ceremony. More seriously, he voiced the complaint of the Gutu members: "We don't know Makaya, we have not seen him in Church and we have not had a chance to observe the quality of his life."

Hence Sengwayo's successor was faced with clearly verbalized opposition to his leadership, and when the old president finally left Gutu, critically ill and bitterly disappointed with the failure of his last attempt to unify and inspire his followers - with only the final "lonely passage" awaiting him back home - the Chibarirwe stage was set for conflict and schism!

"President" Makaya, experienced politician and respected public figure, versus the Rev Muongani, unpretentious, little known and supposedly subordinate office-bearer in a rural district: it seemed an unfair struggle, particularly when Makaya promptly went for the jugular by having Muongani arrested for not handing over all the Gutu Church donations. But if he had thought he could intimidate the "near illiterate upstart" in Gutu into submission, Makaya was badly mistaken. Muongani in a subtle way held the trump card: majority support, not only in the Gutu ACC congregations but also in most of the other Church districts. Moreover, Muongani, undaunted by Makaya's efforts to impose his authority on the Gutu congregations, found himself a solicitor and defended his position in the District Commissioner's office on the grounds that the new ACC "president" unfairly taxed the Gutu people for donations, which were then used to purchase books and certificates in other districts. Over a period of several years the conflict over financial control between these two Church leaders flared up repeatedly and resulted in three court cases, two at Gutu district headquarters and one in what was then still the Salisbury Appeal Court. The central issue in all these court cases was the financial contributions made by the ACC Women's Associations (Ruwadzano) in the Gutu district towards the publication of a large number of hymnbooks. Under pressure from and supported by the female leaders of these associations, Muongani claimed that the Gutu women first had to be reimbursed from the proceeds of the book sales - as he had initially believed would happen when he forwarded their funds to cover printing expenditure - before any other financial objectives could be considered. Makaya, on the other hand, claimed that as principal
leader of the Church he had sole jurisdiction over all the earnings from book sales. He was clearly not interested in accommodating his opponent Muongani's efforts to meet his promise of reimbursing the women's associations.

This conflict was never entirely resolved in court and led to warnings and urgings by Gutu district officials for the two leaders to co-operate. It created much bitterness amongst the Gutu ACC supporters and led to their eventual total estrangement from Makaya. Their major complaints were threefold:

1. Makaya was exploiting the Gutu congregations by taxing them too heavily for contributions and by deciding autocratically how the funds were to be used.
2. Makaya was no true Church leader, for he conducted Church ceremonies like secular meetings without ever preaching from the Bible. The Church members complained, for instance, that "Makaya arranged Church affairs only according to his own wisdom, without ever explaining biblical truth"
3. The most serious complaint was that Makaya no longer adhered to the institutionalized organizational pattern of conducting Church conferences on a rotational basis, in line with the "floating Church headquarters" concept. Instead he was trying to centralize the power base of the Church by insisting that all major meetings be conducted at his homestead at Nyika Halt.

As the parting of ways loomed large during 1976 and 1977, Makaya warned Muongani not to campaign under the banner of the African Congregational Church outside the Gutu district. Twice when the Rev Muongani, not heeding this threat, visited ACC congregations in the Enkeldoorn (now Chivhu) district, he was detained by the local police and requested to leave the area. In desperation Muongani sought the advice of the Gutu District Commissioner. Of this incident he said: "I went deliberately with some of my followers - Timias, Mutsengi and a few other evangelists - to seek the DC's advice. I told him that Makaya was trying to prevent me from preaching under the banner of the ACC. So he said that the only solution was for me to do Church work under another banner. He advised this because otherwise, as he said, we would continue fighting each other without really doing the work of God. We followed his advice, with the result that Makaya had his and I had my own Church. The name of my Church was: Chibarirwe, African Church - Dare raVatema (Court of the Black people)."
From Muongani's point of view the legitimacy of the schism derived from what he considered to be Makaya's poor leadership, the elimination of leadership strife as prerequisite for constructive Church work and the somewhat convenient "justification" provided by the local secular authority, the District Commissioner. What was still required to sanction the ecclesial division, which was already an accomplished fact, was the ordination of the by now popular leader of the Chibarirwe in the Gutu district. For this ceremony, conducted in August 1975, Muongani turned to leaders of other Independent Churches: his fellow participants in the ecumenical conference, Fambidzano, Bishop Krinos Kuudzerema of the Zionist Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ, Bishop Zacheo of the Zionist Apostolic Church (former also called the Zionist Reformed Church), and the Rev. Nemapare of the African Methodist Church. The Chibarirwe minister, Madyauta, also participated, so that the ordination was conducted by two Ndaza Zionist and two Ethiopian-type leaders. In terms of earlier attitudes of antagonism and rejection between Chibarirwe and Spirit-type leaders, religious interaction at this level would have been most unlikely. Yet in the atmosphere of ecumenical co-operation created by Fambidzano — of which Bishop Kuudzerema was general secretary at the time and Muongani's prospective Church a new member — it did not seem to matter that Zionist bishops should participate in anointing an Ethiopian-type leader, as long as they were recognized representatives of the "historic line of descent" from the early Christian Church and, through the symbolism of anointment, could confer authenticity on the new leader. Once this ceremony was performed, the legitimation — both secular (through the District Commissioner) and spiritual (Zionist-"Ethiopian" anointment) of the new Chibarirwe leader was considered complete.

Muongani said about his ordination:

"Through Fambidzano an ecumenical ordination was made possible. Because it involved a very senior position the authority of several senior Church leaders was required for the occasion. I remain responsible to these men. If I do not lead my Church properly they are in a position to 'judge' [kutonga: lit. judge; in the sense of reprimand] me .... With the laying-on of hands they prayed to God, saying: 'Here is your servant, oh God, whom we have given the great responsibility of leading all the elders and young ones in the Church. He is the "great eye" who sees everything and who has to solve all the problems' ...."
Through this ordination I am in the line of Apostolic succession, in the line of Jesus Christ. It is such an important position of authority that the Church people no longer approach me directly. They first see the 'sergeant' so that they can address the bishop with the required respect."

Once liberated from the inhibiting link with Makaya, the Rev. Muongani immediately started to reorganize the Gutu congregations; he revisited those of Enkeldoorn, this time with the official support of two District Commissioners (of Gutu and Enkeldoorn), and he campaigned as far north as Sipolilo and Mt Darwin. In June 1977 the revamped Chibarirwe had many thousands of followers with an estimated 80 congregations, 21 evangelists and 73 preachers. Muongani himself was directly responsible for the congregations in the central and western chiefdoms of Gutu (Chitsa, Nyamande, Munyaradzi, Mutunduru, Maburuse, Gutu-Gadzingo, Chiwara, Nemashakwe), while the Rev Dzinotyiwei Makomo of Chingombe became the overseer of those in the eastern regions of Gutu (Chingombe, Munyikwa, Mataruse and Mazuru). The senior ministers overseeing Church circuits in other districts at that stage were the Rev Pahla of Chipinge, the Rev Mugero of Bikita and the Rev Madyauta of Chibi. Under the new leadership considerable Church expansion took place: current membership is estimated at between 15 and 20,000.

At the time of the schism "President" Makaya was supported by the following ministers: Jimeire of Gutu, Muriro and Marima of Bikita and Moto of Buhera. These ministers did not, however, command the same popular support as those backing Muongani. In Buhera, for instance, Evangelist Bota and several other office-bearers refused to support their local leader, Moto, and requested Muongani to conduct their holy communion services. Nevertheless Makaya for some time retained the loyal support of at least eight prominent chieftain families in the Gutu district, most of which were headed by successful businessmen such as Pambai and Simbi of Basera, Chingombe, and Tigere, Mhara, Gapa and Zinhata. The Rev Muongani alleged that these families only maintained their allegiance to Makaya because they were allowed privileged trading rights at ACC Conference meetings, something which Muongani had abolished as undesirable discrimination in his own Church. It appears, therefore, that while the more affluent and sophisticated Makaya held a certain attraction for the supposedly progressive and rich rural people, Muongani more readily identified with and drew
people who, in Western terms, belonged to the economic middle and lower classes.

When Makaya died in 1983, yet another leadership succession crisis arose in what was left of the ACC. The two contestants were the Rev Marima, who had supported Makaya from the outset, and the more senior Rev Mugero, whose allegiance had vacillated over the years between Muongani and Makaya but who now saw an opportunity to become principal leader of the ACC. For nearly two years the leadership conflict remained unresolved until, in August 1984, the Church Council elected the Rev Marima as Makaya's successor. This move apparently finally alienated Mugero who, according to Marima, "withdrew from us, on the grounds that he is senior to me and that he did not wish to co-operate with a leader who was junior to him." With a schismatic following of a few hundred, Mugero now conducts his own Church affairs. Marima alleges that Mugero shuns official publicity about the fact that he had left the ACC; that Mugero had actually "gone into hiding with the name of the Church" because of his leadership aspirations.

In an effort to blow new life into an ailing Church, the Rev Marima has introduced reform in the ranks of the ACC, mainly in the Bikita district. He now levies a Church contribution of Z$5 from adult members each year for the purpose of building a community hall at his village and he has organized a Youth League into an effective tool of Church expansion. Progressive in outlook and an ardent supporter of Fambidzano's development programmes, Marima already has between nine and ten thousand followers listed in his meticulously kept Church records.

(b) Ecclesiastical change through changes of leadership and external factors

Despite the fact that Muongani seceded from Makaya, it appears to be more correct to characterize his numerically much stronger Chibarirwe as the continuation of the original ACC (Chibarirwe) than as a schismatic body compared to the much smaller ACC "inherited" by Makaya and currently led by the Rev Marima. The spirit of the "old" Chibarirwe (a popular designation first introduced in the Gutu and Bikita districts, descriptive of the reaction of former DRC members who joined the ACC against this Mission Church's radical rejection of traditional practices: ancestor veneration, polygamy, beer-drinking, etc.) manifests itself more clearly in Muongani's Church than in Marima's. This in no way detracts from
the fact that the change of leadership, together with external factors, has brought substantial change in Muongani's Chibarirwe. In this subsection we shall focus on the main features of this change.

(i) Ritual and organization

Muongani has retained the concept of a "floating Church headquarters" which implies the constitution of an organizational centre for the duration of each rotationally shifted Church conference - one of the most distinctive features of the original ACC. Thus there is very little about his homestead at Chatikobo in the Nyamande chiefdom of Gutu to distinguish him as an influential Church leader of thousands of followers. Likewise, the same uniforms, songs, liturgy and style of preaching - which resemble the sober patterns of worship in the Reformed Church - are still in evidence today. Two important changes were however introduced. First, the title of the principal leader is no longer "president" but "bishop". Both Muongani and Marima are addressed as bishops by their followers. Amongst the Independents this term has distinctly Zionist connotations. One can only surmise that the Chibarirwe insistence on a distinct and unique identity in relation to the Spirit-type Churches abated after the first years of reactionary group formation. In the second place, the prohibition on dancing has given way to the introduction into the liturgy of traditional musical instruments such as the hosho (rattle) and the drum, and a number of dances which, like those of the ZCC, resemble traditional shavi dances. This innovation undoubtedly accommodates the requirements of the growing numbers of young people in the Church. That both these changes reflect Zionist influence is probably a further indication of improved ecumenical ties in the context of Fambidzano, expressed not only in the changed attitudes of Church leaders but also in ecclesiastical change. The incorporation into the Chibarirwe of distinctive features of those prophetic Churches whose leaders in earlier years were highly critical of what they considered to be "pagan practices" in the Chibarirwe is one of the surest signs of change in the broader spectrum of inter-IC relations.

(ii) Church membership

Neither Muongani's Chibarirwe nor Marima's ACC can still be exclusively qualified as a "Church or sanctuary of the old people". During and after the liberation war the withdrawal of white mis-
sionaries and a subsequent tempering of Mission Church laws regarding traditional practices have resulted in a lower rate of defections of adults from these institutions. Hence, with a major source of recruitment reduced to insignificance and driven by the realization that the image of their Church as a movement of elderly people was costing them the membership of their young people, the leaders of both the ACC and the Chibarirwe shifted the focus of their activities to the youth. The resultant change from a predominantly "aged" membership to the recruitment of increasing numbers of young people is a good example of the ability of the Independent Churches to introduce meaningful innovation - and in the process effecting change in the very nature of the Church - following deliberate efforts to interpret the impact of changing external factors on Church growth.

Muongani not only introduced dancing into Church services to attract the youth but, accepting the challenge to give the youth greater responsibility in the Church's leadership hierarchies, he has of late started to encourage young people to prepare themselves for the ministry through participation in Fambidzano's theological training programme. Progressive in its anticipation of future change, this latter view places an entirely different complexion on Chibarirwe leadership which in the sixties was marked by the near complete domination of all key positions by men aged upwards of 40 and 50. Marima of the ACC, on the other hand, states that he formed a Youth League in his Church to prevent the children of members from straying to other Churches. One of the prime objectives of the Youth League is to train the young people "to campaign in the villages through singing and preaching so that they can recruit others for the Church and in the process prepare themselves for God's work of tomorrow".39 Special youth weekends are arranged for this purpose. Other activities include the organization of work parties in the field of agriculture and fund raising for Church projects. The appointment of the Rev E.S. Chidembo as leader of the ACC youth movement marks a decidedly new chapter in the history of this Church.

(iii) Attitudes to traditional customs, rituals and beliefs

For the first few decades of its existence whilst the ACC-Chibarirwe grew as a "Church of old people" under the dynamic

39 Personal communication in Bikita; 27/10/1985.
leadership of Dzukuso, Moses Ruwana and others, the reactionary trend as regards Mission Churches was so strong that traditional practices were incorporated virtually at random. After the death of Sengwayo and the final break with Makaya, Muongani - who had gained in leadership stature - started introducing reform at the very core of the Chibarirwe. It was not so much a matter of imposing radically new measures and rejecting the old practices - something which would have antagonized and alienated elderly members - but of subjecting these to evangelistic impulses and encouraging the elders to get rid of unchristian excesses. On this subject Muongani expressed the following views:

Beer-drinking: "I observed that many Church members are heavy beer-drinkers. They are unable to drink in moderation. Not much was done about this in the past. Now I am encouraging the people to stop heavy drinking. I have indicated that those who continue to drink excessively must be disciplined by the dare [Church court]. Some are even suspended. In the past I was also a heavy drinker, but I have stopped altogether. Even sweet beer [mangisi] I do not touch. I was very ill as a result of beer-drinking after I was appointed as a minister. I was convinced that God was speaking to me and warning me through this illness. He said: 'You cannot be a leader of people and just do what you like.' I accepted the warning and stopped drinking. Many Church members followed this example. Even the Rev. Makomo of Chingombe has completely stopped drinking. Evangelist M. still drinks, but I warned him in a Church meeting that we no longer tolerate leaders who drink excessively. I hope he will improve ... I once made the beer-drinkers stand up at a Church meeting. There were only a few of them, which shows that, unlike the past, the majority of the Church members nowadays are non-drinkers. The Church itself is changing and we are happy because we see real progress. It seldom happens these days that former Mission Church people join us on account of being disciplined for beer-drinking."

Polygamy: "We have not abolished this practice. Some polygamists have a good life with many wives [Muongani himself has two wives], but some fail because their families are too large and they cannot provide for all the members. Jealousy and strife between co-wives and accusations of favouritism against men are the common problems of polygamous
households we have to deal with. We counsel the spouses and encourage them to co-operate in a Christian spirit ... If we judge by God's Word we recognize that the woman came forth from the man, that she was given as an aid to him and that only man and wife should live together. If we therefore take more than one wife it is simply our own wish, running contrary to the directive of the Bible. Polygamy is the custom of our forebears and not the law of the Bible. It is, however, on the way out, because most of our Church members, for economic reasons and some also on moral grounds, at present are monogamists ...

"As in Sengwayo's time we still allow polygamy, but we now place a much stronger emphasis on harmony in polygamous households. Men who do not care for their wives are brought to the dare and disciplined, something which was not done in earlier years."

Ancestral rituals and veneration:

Question: What do you do about the numerous kraalheads in your Church who conduct the rain rituals [mikwerere] for the ancestral spirits and still participate in Church life?

Muongani: This, of course, is not quite right. It means the following of two roads. The problem is that these elders have become used to the old practices and even if they are converted to Christianity they do not fully understand the demands made on them. It is extremely difficult to judge these old ones. We cannot chase them away. The kraalheads say this is their Church where they want to be. How can we reject them? It is difficult to solve this problem.

Q: And ancestor veneration?

M: There are many Christians who still pira midzimu when things go wrong. I am aware of that. I know that it is wrong. If you teach them to discard these things they agree to do so, but secretly they will not do so ... Cases of ancestor veneration are not brought to the dare for discipline ... It must be taught with greater clarity that there is no other name [but Jesus'] through which we can be saved; that although we must honour our fathers and mothers [before and after death, which is still officially the Chibarirwe position], there is only one mediator, namely Jesus Christ ... People still believe in the powers of the ancestors because they do not understand or fully accept the
Bible message. I often preach about this subject. Then people come and ask me: 'What should we do about the midzimu? We want to brew beer for them.' I explain in response that this practice is wrong; that God is one [Mwari ndimumwe]; that there cannot be two gods. I tell them they will be judged according to their own deeds and that there is only one mediator, Jesus Christ ... In a time like this [of war, in 1977] I am sometimes accused of preaching against the old customs. But I just carry on preaching despite opposition, and people just keep flocking to the Church regardless of the pressures of the present circumstances, because the Church really helps [nokuti kereke rinobetsera chose].

Muongani's comments reflect a shift of emphasis in Church praxis, as well as evangelistic ideals which may never be fully realized in the Chibarirwe context, for the old Chibarirwe identity has shown remarkable resilience over the years. During a recent discussion with Bishop Muongani and several of his senior office-bearers - nine years after the above-mentioned comments were recorded - it was evident that if anything, one could speak of a resurgence of interest in and appreciation of the old customs of the fathers. The consensus in the group discussion was that the upswing in Church growth over the past few years was largely attributable to the Church's policy on tradition, particularly ancestor veneration. Said one of the office-bearers: "Many people nowadays come to the Chibarirwe because they see that in our interpretation of the fifth commandment, which means the honouring of our fathers and mothers before and after death, the pira midzimu [ancestor veneration] of old is safeguarded. I know myself that if I venerate my forebears and believe in God, I shall live in Christ!" Bishop Muongani himself combined a pronounced Christology (Christ's salvific work) with the preservation of ancestor rituals. In connection with post-burial rituals, for instance, he maintained that the Church allows both the runyaradzo (Christian consolation ceremony) and kugadzira (traditional induction rite) to be performed on behalf of its deceased members. He said:

"In the runyaradzo the Church 'escorts' [kuperekedza] the deceased member so that he or she can enter heaven. This ceremony takes place on the day death occurs. We do not address the deceased, but concentrate mainly on comforting the bereaved relatives ... Then, we [as Church] leave the kugadzira
procedure to be conducted by the 'guardians of the family' [varidzi veimba] ...I, too, expect to be gadzwa'd after I die. It is the customs of my fathers I have to undergo. In that case my senior Hera relatives will come and tell God: 'You have taken our relative, Mwari. We have come to gadzira him. We must give his name to his son.' The senior ritual officiant at the occasion will address all the 'sleeping' [deceased] lineage forebears. He will lift up [the dead person] to Nyandenga [the owner of heaven], to Musikavanhu [the creator of mankind]. That will not be missed out. He will say: 'Musikavanhu, here is the deceased person you have taken; receive him in your hands and take care of him; and here is the one who takes his name: take care of him as well, so that he will be like his late father ...' If the deceased person was a preacher of God's word [i.e. Muongani himself] the implication of the kugadzira address is that the name-bearer is blessed to pursue his father's vocation.

Muongani's brief description of the kugadzira raises the interesting question whether it is in fact still the traditional ritual or a Christianized version he has in mind. What is at stake here in Muongani's thought world is a partly transformed ritual which, instead of inducting the deceased into the realm of the ancestors in the traditional manner, "lifts up" the deceased to God - who is addressed in traditional terms - in the presence of the lineage ancestors. In this rendering of traditional ritual it appears as if the objective is twofold: to honour the customs of the fathers and, through improvisation, to reinforce distinctly Christian objectives, that is, facilitate the deceased's passage to heaven and obtain God's blessing for the name-bearing heir's assumption of his late father's ecclesiastical duties. Whatever the more detailed theological implications of these views, the important point at this juncture is that the ecclesiastical change which followed schism was not merely superficially liturgical or organizational but affected the very core of Chibarirwe identity. For it is obvious that despite the efforts of office-bearers to maintain a certain continuity of identity, their own central values, traditional beliefs and approach to those traditional rites which they want to preserve are in a state of flux. Whereas the Chibarirwe still has the image of upholding African tradition, the internal process of Christianization - stimulated amongst other things by ecumenical interaction, youth work and a growing commitment to Christ through theological progress - is causing a shift from the original ultra-traditional conservatism
towards a decidedly more, yet not exclusively, Jesus-oriented evangelical movement.

(c) Disintegration and regrouping in the aftermath of schism

It has been argued in respect of both defecting office-bearers (chapter 5) and schisms that such events have surprisingly positive repercussions in that they stimulate Church growth. Muongani's secession from Makaya, for instance, most definitely introduced a new phase of accelerated Chibarirwe Church growth. For his estimated current following of fifteen to twenty thousand members he has appointed seven ministers and scores of evangelists, preachers and deacons. These minister to five circuits in the Gutu district, one in Chivhu and one for the Dande and Mt Darwin districts in the north, where the Rev Magombedze tends six congregations. With a few old Chibarirwe congregations in Zimuto, near Masvingo, coming to life at present, the establishment and reorganization of yet another circuit is under consideration.

Muongani's main expansionist drive, however, was directed at his home district of Gutu, and to the north where he was breaking new ground beyond the Chibarirwe's original field of recruitment. In the process the circuits to the south-east (Chipinge) and south-west (Masvingo and Chibi) of Gutu, were somewhat neglected. Subsequent to Muongani's ordination the contact between the new bishops and the senior circuit-leaders of these regions, the Rev. Pahla, the Rev. Mugero and the Rev. Madyauta, became sporadic and virtually ceased during the past few years. Despite his successes elsewhere, Bishop Muongani therefore lost considerable ground in those circuits which were the earliest Chibarirwe strongholds. Thus the aftermath of schism was marked by the processes of both Church growth and disintegration. It is not as if the aforementioned regional leaders broke away in an attempt to form new schismatic Church movements in opposition to Bishop Muongani. Rather, such disintegration appears to be one of the long-term effects of the classic schism or schisms following a principal leader's death. In many Church circuits unpopular leadership arrangements made by President Sengwayo before his death, more than anything else, contributed to uncertainty, loss of interest, diminished participation in Church conferences and ultimately the disintegration and atrophy of congregations.

Additional factors in this retrogression are the following:
1. Owing to its very organization (i.e. the absence of a geographically localized headquarters, the absence of a powerful leadership centred in a charismatic figure and a geographically widely dispersed membership) the ACC/Chibarirwe never developed the overriding and compelling cohesion often found in Spirit-type movements. Church members were to a large extent dependent on the leadership of their senior circuit officials and when these lost contact with the main body of the Church, religious decline was bound to set in.

2. After the break with Makaya, Bishop Muongani found the reorganization and stabilization of the numerous Gutu congregations an all-absorbing occupation. Apart from a lack of time he also lacked financial backing to travel regularly to the distant congregations in the south. It is possible that he did not have the vision for comprehensive leadership of the entire Church as it had existed prior to Sengwayo's death, particularly not after the disarray in its ranks caused by the conflict with Makaya. It is more likely, however, that Muongani trusted the above-mentioned circuit leaders to perform their regular duties to the point of neglecting his own responsibility to visit and encourage them in their work. Consequently a degree of fragmentation took place, with unconvincing claims of wide-ranging ecclesial stability both by Muongani and the officials of declining Chibarirwe congregations in the Chipinge, Bikita, Masvingo and Chibi districts - backed only by sporadic correspondence and not by common participation in Church life.

3. The war years undoubtedly also contributed towards a decline in Church activities and liaison between the different circuits. During the late 1970s travel in the tribal lands of Masvingo Province had become hazardous and the rotational conferences of the Chibarirwe had come to a virtual standstill. A situation of isolation between Church leader and distant senior office-bearers, similar to the one described in the case of Gierson's independent work in relation to Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi of the ZCC, arose in the Chibarirwe. Some of the bushfighters looked approvingly upon the Chibarirwe as the "Church of the ancestors" and therefore as an ally to their cause of liberating the country through the assistance of the ancestors as varidzi venyika (guardians of the land). Others, however, were less accommodating. Said Muongani: "Some of our people were prevented from worshipping and a few of our officers were killed by the freedom-fighters here in Gutu. Those fighters who said: Down
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with Jesus! hated us and caused our women to burn their uniforms and hide their Bibles for fear of retaliation. Church life was stifled because of numerous threats from the side of the fighters that Church people with Bibles would be killed." Similar comments were made by Evangelist Makekerere of the Masvingo district. He said "During the war years we rarely attended Church. The comrades came and said: 'Down with the Church!' The pressure on us was too great. We were forced not to worship. Nobody in this region attended Church. It was depressing times for us. We did not have a minister and did not know what to do with our Church." 40

If anything, the war aggravated the alienation between senior officials of the Chibarirwe, as well as the disintegration of congregations after the delicately balanced cohesion of the past had been ruptured by schisms. During the war years many other Churches also suffered a decline in their activities, some of which were driven underground (e.g. services) or became defunct (e.g. pastoral or official visits). Consequently an exact analysis of the impact of schism becomes complicated, for it is virtually impossible to unravel in retrospect the extent to which the disenchantment caused by schisms and/or the pressures of war contributed towards structural disintegration and individual apathy. At present we are in fact still in a phase in which many Mission and Independent Churches are in the throes of re-establishing links with alienated or partly defunct congregations, of rebuilding old structures and emerging generally from a lengthy period of spiritual stagnation and existential trauma.

A brief survey of a few Chibarirwe congregations highlights the total dependence of these groups on their regional leaders and their vulnerability in the event of the death of these leaders. During the early fifties four Chibarirwe congregations (Mashate, Nyamafufu, Gororo and Garai) were established in the Mushawasha Purchase Area of the Masvingo district. They flourished under the leadership of their local evangelist, Tinos Chirashanye - a former DRC member turned polygamist - and the Rev Moses Ruwana, the most prominent and influential leader of DRC extraction ever to serve in the ranks of the ACC. To the several hundred members of these congregations President Sengwayo was but a distant figurehead in Chipinge. Existentially, therefore, they belonged to the "Church of

40 Interview with Evangelist Makekerere of Mushawasha, conducted on 14/5/1986 by research assistant, Leonard Gono.
their traditional customs" run by Tinos and Moses. After all, it was Moses Ruwana who had introduced the Chibarirwe and was the driving force behind the Church's growth in the Bikita, Gutu, Victoria (now Masvingo) and Chibi districts.

At one stage Tinos Chirashanye, who was ordained as ACC minister in 1953, ministered to well over a thousand followers in the then Victoria district wards of Zimuto, Mushawasha, Majiri and Jena. Loss of membership, however, took place even prior to his death, as old age and illness prevented him from maintaining contact with all his congregations. But it was mainly after his and Ruwana's death that serious regional decline in the Chibarirwe set in. Of the four Mushawasha congregations Gororo and Garai disintegrated as the members joined other Churches or apathetically stayed at home, while Nyamafufu survived under the leadership of Evangelists Aspinas and Elias, and Mashate under the leadership of Evangelist Makekerere. At an earlier stage Chibarirwe cohesion had already begun to crumble when the Rev Zvobgo and Sibambo broke away in 1953 to form the African Reformed Church (Shonganiso). It was then that other neighbouring congregations like Makumbe, Majiri and Nyarire disintegrated into leaderless clusters of Chibarirwe members. The general mood of despondence and disenchantment increased after the deaths of Tinos and Moses because there was no local minister to tend the Masvingo district congregations or to conduct holy communion services. In these circumstances the Mushawasha evangelists appealed to ministers of the Gutu and Bikita districts to visit their congregations occasionally for holy communion. But even this form of interaction was abandoned after Makaya and Muongani finally parted ways. The major ACC (Chibarirwe) schism virtually sealed the isolation of the Mushawasha congregations. There were no inspiring visits from the new leader of the Chibarirwe, Bishop Muongani, neither was there any inclination on the side of the Mushawasha people to strengthen ties with the old congregations of Moses Ruwana in Bikita, which had come under the influence of the "intruder" Makaya of the ACC. The old order had gone! The glorious days of Chibarirwe expansion had ended with the deaths of the movement's founding leaders. From the Mushawasha perspective - which was not cognizant at the time of Muongani's expansionist drive elsewhere - the Church was in tatters, dying, lost. The mood was one of despondence and gloom.

During the war years the evangelists of the ailing Mushawasha congregations turned in desperation to the Chibarirwe minister, Madyauta, of the Chibi district. He visited them a few times for holy communion services, but never developed a close commitment to the Masvingo congregations. Eventually, therefore, his promises to the Mushawasha evangelists to help reorganize and revive the Church in their district came to nought. In the Mushawasha area the growing disenchantment with Chibarirwe leadership even led to rumours that the Rev Madyauta had become a practising nganga.

After Independence in 1980 the history of the two surviving Chibarirwe congregations in Mushawasha (Nyamafufu and Mashate) was marked by dogged tenacity in the maintenance of local cohesion and repeated, if unsuccessful, attempts at regrouping - that is, linking up with other groups of the fragmented Church. Alienated from the Gutu circuits of Muongani and disillusioned with the unpredictability of Madyauta of Chibi, these congregations once more turned to their fellow believers in Bikita under the leadership of the Rev Mugero, who had meanwhile settled on a farm in the Bikita Purchase Area. They considered co-operation with the Rev Marima - the successor and kinsman of Makaya - out of the question, because to them Makaya’s ACC still smacked of leadership intrusion, the major cause of the break-up of their Church and, by implication, of their own isolation.

When Evangelists Elias and Makekerere started negotiating with the Rev Mugero in 1986, they represented congregations which had led a relatively isolated existence for nearly two decades. Most of their followers hardly knew the senior Chibarirwe leaders such as Bishop Muongani, or those of the ACC, Marima and Mugero. For many years they had not attended a holy communion service and they were thoroughly disillusioned with the ministers of their Church who in the past had repeatedly failed to live up to their promises of visiting the Mushawasha area. For spiritual sustenance they had become entirely dependent on the local evangelists, Elias and Makekerere, Aspinas having of late become too old and frail to retain the initiative. Against this background it is understandable that expectations flared high when the Rev Mugero agreed to conduct a holy communion service in Mushawasha in May 1986 and to follow this up with a conference in August, with the prospect of ordaining Elias as minister to the Masvingo district. Suddenly the future of the neglected congregations seemed to brighten. At least they were on the verge of official incorporation into the wider body of the Church (even if it was only a fraction of the schismatized
Chibarirwe movement), resumption of the full range of Church activities, particularly regular communion services, and there were prospects of progress and expansion under a local mufundisi.

What happened to the holy communion service of 24–25 May?42 Some 200 members of the Mashate and Nyamafufu congregations gathered at Chikawa in Mushawasha. The arrival of the Rev Mugero was eagerly awaited but the time went by and eventually the proceedings had to start without him. I have included some of the sermons, speeches and prayers at the Saturday evening and Sunday morning and afternoon services in Appendix VI, because these admirably portray the mood and spiritual profile of this neglected and sorely tried group of people. In the following discussion only the major features will be touched upon:

1 *Anticipation of disappointment* and a mood of despondency about the absence of the expected guest, Mugero, surfaced occasionally in most of the sermons and even in the prayers. Well aware of the unfulfilled promises of Church leaders in the past and the negative reactions these tended to unleash, Mrs Gono, for instance, appealed to the meeting to show forbearance: "Even if our father [Mugero] fails to put in an appearance, let us not lose heart; let us be like the disciples of whom we have heard, persevering in our expectations." Anticipating a backlash of feelings of rejection, Mrs Gono called on her audience to respect the leadership of Mugero. She reminded her listeners that Mugero had to undertake a long journey to reach them. Whatever happened, she was convinced of his care for them.43 Behind this effort to find in advance some justification for the minister’s absence and in this manner to soften the hurt of neglect which seems to have become the lot of the Mushawasha congregations, one senses a feeling of powerlessness to change an unwanted situation.

In Mrs Zirima’s prayer the same mood prevailed. "We call you, Jehovah," she prayed, "You who are silent up there as if you don’t see; yet you see everything here on earth ... Wrench out and sever our tongues which are incapable of speech [witness]. This evening while we are waiting for our father [Mugero] who is to come and give us Your body and Your blood

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42 Owing to the pressures of completing this volume I could only include particulars of the May '86 proceedings and not of the August '86 conference.
43 App. VI, p. 506f.
[holy communion], keep him and let him travel safely until he reaches us here. Even if there should be an obstacle preventing him from coming, let us persevere in worship. Jehovah, be with us and with him until we meet once more on a day of your choice..."\(^{44}\)

There is a tone of lament and near accusation in this address to a God who is silent and does not see, yet sees; there is reaction against the impotence of the local congregation to witness and grow; there is also near fatalistic acceptance of the distinct prospect that the one responsible for the sacrament, so long overdue, will fail to come. The lament, however, does not lead to despair for Zirima's prayer obviously also holds hope and plea for a better future - a day of God's choice.

Towards the end of the Saturday evening service Mugero's absence caused uncertainty Evangelist Elias told his people that he was not sure what the subsequent procedure should be. It appeared as if all expectations had once more been in vain. A note of sadness and disappointment was unmistakable in his concluding remarks: "Even if we have no mother [i.e. senior leader], we do the best we can, knowing that God hears if we do it with all our hearts ..." Remarking on the lateness of the hour, he said, as if embarrassed: "I had thought it a good idea to wait for his [Mugero's] arrival, but now he has failed us."\(^{45}\)

The next day, during the morning service, Evangelist Zirima in prayer identified the plight of the Mushawasha congregations with that of the Israelites in Egypt. In the absence of God's messenger (Mugero) the people felt forsaken and were in need of liberation and change, as Israel had been in an alien country. The assertion that Moses and Aaron were still liberating the afflicted (i.e. the Mashawasha congregations) probably expressed the wish for sound leadership which could overcome the long-standing local impasse.\(^{46}\)

In his closing speech Evangelist Elias once more gave vent to feelings of frustration and disappointment at the failure of Mugero to attend the proceedings. Both the baptismal and holy communion ceremonies had to be cancelled, as if to underscore the evangelist's earlier characterization of his congregations as being "without a mother" He was obviously embarrassed about

44 App. VI, p. 512.
45 App. VI, p. 513.
46 App. VI, p. 514.
the entire situation because Mugero's failure had also cast a shadow over his own initiative in raising the expectations of his followers. Overcome for a moment by dejection, he declared: "If I go home now I do not know whether I can maintain the same spirit as I had today. If I do I shall come back." These were the despondent words of an official who felt like walking away from it all, after he had been let down for the umpteenth time by one of his superiors. Such words reflect the sadness of those who feel neglected and forgotten in the aftermath of schisms; symptoms which, if allowed to dominate and harden, inevitably lead to final dissociation from the main Church body concerned, joining of other Churches or total apostasy.

2. Significantly, however, the mood of despondence was counterbalanced by the manifest and strong will to survive, to organize effectively and to expand. Right at the outset of the weekend proceedings Evangelist Elias insisted that a Church calendar should be found, according to which the annual religious programme could be regulated. Instead of an attitude of passivity which one could well have expected to result from the disconsolate mood described above, we find here a need for order and control. The will to persist and not be immobilized by disillusionment emerged even more forcefully when, immediately after his expression of personal disappointment in the closing speech, Evangelist Elias called on everybody present to be active and stay in touch with the Church as a lover with a beloved. In a sense he was contradicting his own utterance of despondence by turning the focus on the practical implications of Christian involvement. Those present were reminded of the August conference which, it was generally hoped, could well lead to the ordination of one of the local evangelists. In addition, an appeal was made for consistency in the payment of annual Church dues. Thus despondence did not lead to defeat or despair. Even though the isolation from the main body of the Church and the resultant spiritual deprivation were sorely felt, the emphasis on practical issues which implied care for each other seemed to repudiate dejection and once more raise hope for future progress.

47 App. VI, p. 517.
48 App. VI, p. 506.
49 App. VI, p. 518.
Besides, throughout the weekend's sermons regular calls were made to all the participants to respond to the pentecostal theme of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit by engaging positively in evangelistic campaigns, with the purpose of converting individuals and expanding the Church. Evangelist Elias, for instance, concluded one of his sermons with this appeal: "Let us go from here, possessed by the Holy Spirit, fearless to preach God's Word because the possessed one fears nobody and speaks the truth..." 60 Evangelist Makekerere echoed the same challenge when he called on everybody to be filled by the Spirit, to be "worthy containers" of both the Spirit and God's Word, in order to preach in the villages in strength and in tongues. 61 Without fail the women preachers responded to this by entreatting the audience to put the message of inspiration into practice in their lives. Said Mrs Zirima: "Don't be ashamed to witness publicly because Jesus will disown us if we deliberately ignore him ... Be Christian, whereby you will cause others to live. Instruct others in the ways of righteousness. If your deeds are bad others will not follow you ..." 62 Mrs Chuma forcefully proclaimed that subsequent to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit "we will be inspired to go out into the villages to preach, speak in tongues and convert the people ... We will have to preach to others [instead of making selfish claims on Christ] so that they, too, can accept Jesus in their hearts. Let us fetch the others; Let our numbers grow! This we can achieve only if Jesus is constantly in our midst, in our hearts ..." 63 The spirit reflected here is one of evangelistic zeal and practical outreach under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in union with Christ; not one of dispirited dejection because of repeated failure to link up with another segment or with the main body of the schismatized Church.

3. The theological profile that emerged in the sermons was one of concern with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, integrated and convincingly linked with a prominent Christology, with the missionary outreach in the world as its practical manifestation. Much attention was given to Christ's disciples, their preparation - obedient and persevering waiting - for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which highlighted Christ's directives prior to His

50 App. VI, pp. 508-9.
51 App. VI, p. 510.
53 App. VI, p. 513.
ascension and His instrumentality in "bringing down" the Holy Spirit. A close identification of the Chibarirwe believers present with the disciples of Christ therefore included the expectation that Christ would once again on this occasion usher in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In the words of Mrs Gono: "Tonight we await the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, brought down to us by Jesus." Throughout the sermons this integral relationship between Christ and Holy Spirit was a refrain, the one never seen in isolation from the other as some Spirit-type Churches tend to do.

Although Evangelist Elias was considered to be the senior official of the Mushawasha congregations and on this occasion responsible for quite an illuminating exposition on Spirit "possession" (he used the traditional term: kusutswa, i.e. to be possessed, as descriptive of the indwelling Spirit), it was Evangelist Makekerere who featured as the "theologian" of the group and captured the imagination of the audience with his practical illustrations. He explained the central theme of Spirit-inspiration as follows:

"Let us consider our own filling with the Holy Spirit. If we should take a container which is open on both sides we can pour all the water of the sea into it, but it will never fill up. When the Spirit was "poured" into the disciples they were sealed containers which did not leak. Now that we expect the Holy Spirit will I, or you men, women and children fill up properly? Can I maintain that God pours out the Spirit into my heart, if I am a leaking container?... Jesus' disciples were containers sealed with proper sealer which did not leak. Hence the Holy Spirit filled them completely and they spoke in strength, in unknown tongues."54

In his second sermon Makekerere used this illustration of the sealed, as opposed to the leaking, container to good effect to encourage an inspired future missionary outreach and ministry. Amongst other things he said:

"Today is the last day.... Are we [the containers] properly sealed? Have we repaired the broken calabash?... The time is now fulfilled. Some of us will go forth and speak in tongues

54 App. VI, p. 510.
at Mugabe, Masvingo, Zaka or Zimuto, so that the country will be receptive to our preaching. If we are not leaking containers the people will follow our example, and many of them will become converted. If we are leaking vessels we are useless. 65

It was evident from the repeated mention of Makekerere's container illustration in numerous applications to spiritual life by the other preachers, that this evangelist's influence was considerable and that his exposition of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit had made a remarkable impact. In response to Makekerere's sermon Mrs Zirima confessed that she was not a worthy container for the "inpouring" of the Holy Spirit. She proceeded, however, to use the same image to illustrate the significance of a sound container (i.e. appropriate spiritual preparation) if the benefits of holy communion and the message of love are to be "contained" over any length of time. "You come as leaking containers," she preached. "How will you store the [spiritual] food for the journey ahead of you, and how will you contain the holy communion you 'drink'? The blood of Jesus which we drink, how can we keep it inside us, for it to purify our hearts? Even if I work all the time or keep a regular vigil, it is all to no avail if I do not have love. Without love I am only a hollow calabash swaying in the wind [containing nothing] 66

In the overall picture of Mrs Zirima's message the worthy container (i.e. the believer who responds to God's call) is the one who receives and contains the Christian essentials of the Holy Spirit's inspiration and undergoes the salvific purification of Christ's blood. The overriding preoccupation with the individual's responsibility to become a worthy container could well obscure the sola gratia, sola fide perspective of God's salvation. Nevertheless, one can but respect the persistent focus, once again clearly portrayed in Zirima's message, on the inseverable Christ-Spirit relationship.

4. An outstanding event towards the end of the Saturday evening proceedings, and one closely linked with the central focus throughout the service on the Spirit's presence in people, was the healing ceremony. Several office-bearers formed a circle around the afflicted, Mrs Javangwe, and prayed for her healing. The

65 App. VI, p. 515.
66 App. VI, p. 513.
power of God was invoked to triumph over Satan - the evil enemy - responsible for the patient's malady. A direct request was even made for the displaced sinew causing the pain to be restored to its proper place in the patient's body.

Mrs Javangwe responded the following day with a witness speech, which attested to a personal experience of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and physical improvement which demonstrated God's victory over Satan. She sharply contrasted her many years of unfulfilled spirituality in the Church with the new state of Spirit indwelling. "Will I [who over the years have become a grandmother in this Church] be found wanting once more while others are filled by the Spirit?" she asked.

Subsequently a public confession was made which appeared to be both personal and representative of women in general. It ran as follows:

"Last night ... I ignored the seriousness of the matter [of the leaking container]. Let us be aware of this danger, you mothers, because we, the women, are the sinners, the threat to our families. The Holy Spirit will not enter me because I am a witch, He will not come to me because I am a prostitute; He cannot come to me because I am a thief ... We, the womenfolk, are the ones who cause confusion at home. You may find the angels fluttering around the house in an attempt to settle, but because we do not support our men there is no peace. Do you think that the angels can settle under such circumstances? ... Today I have opened myself to be filled by the Holy Spirit. If I keep the bottle closed [another illustration of Makekerere to describe the impenetrable heart] or have a leaking container, I shall arrive home and die, I shall be cast away."57

I have quoted this testimony to healing and the Pentecost experience, as well as the public confession of what is experienced as particularly sinful in the female world, because these are far from stereotyped features of Chibarirwe practice.

5. One of the most striking features of the Chibarirwe sermons was a thoroughly contextualized Pentecost message. Two examples will suffice:

57 App. VI, p. 517.
In the first place, as could be expected in a strongly tradition-oriented Church, Evangelist Elias explained the Pentecost event of Acts 2 in the traditional idiom of spirit-possession (kusutswa nomweya). Reference was made to the well-known practice of a spirit-medium (svikiro) being possessed by an ancestral spirit and, in a state of trance, conveying the specific message of the possessing spirit. Likewise, in the event of possession by the Holy Spirit, the message of God - and no other - is verbalized by the possessed person. In his interpretation of Spirit-filled speaking in tongues, Elias was inclined to emphasize the use of understandable language. Using Peter's address on the day of Pentecost as an example, he urged his audience to "speak understandably in your own language, in the language of your home [elsewhere he said: 'the language of your ancestors'], for it is the language of God." Elias was actually concerned about divisions that could arise amongst his followers as a result of divergent interpretations and manifestations of speaking in tongues. "Be careful," he warned, "not to take the tongue of another; to prophesy in a language which is not your own." It was as if Elias instinctively realized that in a group threatened with disintegration through isolation for many years, it was the understandable message of God, and not incoherent, ecstatic forms of Spirit-manifestation, which would inspire individual renewal and congregational unity and growth. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit, in Elias' conception, therefore in the first place meant inspired, coherent, evangelistic preaching; a true verbalization of the inhabiting Spirit's wishes in an idiom which the listeners could understand. It also implied a courageous attitude, which he did not hesitate to compare with that of a possessed shavi-medium. He said: "The person who is shavi-possessed does not hesitate to talk, because of the courage and strength of the invading shavi-spirit. Likewise, Peter, when possessed by the Holy Spirit, had the courage to address the people." This illustration finally led to a rousing challenge: "Let us go from here, possessed by the Holy Spirit, fearless to preach God's Word, because the possessed one fears nobody and speaks the truth - as long as you speak in your own tongue."
As the "theologian" of the group Evangelist Makekerere was more sensitive than Elias to the prospects of misinterpretation as a result of a contextualization which placed the Pentecost event so squarely in the field of traditional spirit-possession. In a tactful manner he therefore, in the course of his own sermon, provided a corrective to Elias's sermon by distinguishing clearly between ancestor and Holy Spirit possession:

"Jesus wants to pour the Holy Spirit into us, into me too, so that I can leave here inspired by what I have learnt, speaking the truth and not misbehaving because of being possessed by the ancestral spirit of my home. When our leader [Evangelist Elias] said that we should be possessed by the ancestor of our home, he meant God, our Creator, the One whom we are waiting for ... We came here to be possessed by the message of God; the message which inspires and builds." 61

By thus shifting the focus from traditional ancestor possession to the "possession", or rather inspiration, of God's Word which builds, Makekerere was introducing the tenets of the Reformed tradition to which he had been exposed in earlier years in the Dutch (now Zimbabwe) Reformed Church. It is a tradition which, in terms of Pauline theology, remains sceptical about ecstatic forms of Spirit-manifestation (i.e. glossolaly) whenever these are not convincingly related to constructive edification of the body of believers.

In the second place, the unity and perseverance of Christ's disciples in waiting for the arrival of the Comforter was repeatedly highlighted and given special significance in the context of the long history of often thwarted expectations of progress in the Mushawasha congregations. Contextualization at this point was quite deliberately aimed at raising the flagging spirits of those disillusioned with their religious situation. Summing up the Pentecost event of Acts 2, Evangelist Elias said: "Thus we see that the people received that which they faithfully waited for. Why did the Holy Spirit come to fulfil His work amongst those people? Because these people waited faithfully in perfect unity, they being one thing!" 62

61 App. VI, pp. 510-11.
62 App. VI, p. 507.
In this view there appears to be a causal relationship between the unity and perseverance of Jesus' disciples and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The fulfilment of Jesus' promise takes place in direct response to a humanly realized situation, as if the disciples' obedience and preparation usher in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Similar trends are noticeable in Makekerere's sermons. For the Comforter to come "they [the disciples] had to be united, of one heart, living in harmony..."\(^63\) Emphasizing that certain conditions must prevail in the human situation for the presence of the Holy Spirit to become manifest, he preached: "When Jesus came from heaven he did not pour out the Spirit on everybody on earth. He poured out the Spirit on those he knew, his disciples. The conditions for them were clear: they had to be united, to wait perseveringly and share with each other in love."\(^64\)

Although the implications were not spelt out at this point, the influence - which was also implicit in virtually all the other preachers' preoccupation with this subject - was clear: if the Chibarirwe congregations remain united, wait faithfully and serve each other in love, their expectations of re-establishing meaningful links with the main body of the Church, achieving leadership promotion, Church expansion, regular celebration of the sacraments, etc., would be fulfilled.

Theologically, it is debatable whether such an emphasis on human endeavour for the achievement of religious goals sufficiently recognizes God's free acts of grace which are not bound in any way by the human condition or merit. It should be kept in mind, however, that in the circumstances the contextualized message was aimed at the stimulation of individual responsibility in the face of spiritual alienation and deprivation which could easily follow the disappointment of repeated failure to achieve the desired aim of a meaningful link-up with others of the same Church. The Pentecostal message was here addressed to people who over the years had often been assailed by doubt about the viability of their organized Church life, people who in a sense had to fight for their spiritual survival. Against this background Pentecost as preached in the Mushawasha congregations acquired meaning as a challenge to spiritual renewal; a challenge undaunted by disappointment but

\(^{63}\) App. VI, p. 510.
\(^{64}\) App. VI, p. 515.
stimulating evangelistic outreach under the professed guidance of the "in-poured" and "internally contained" Spirit instead.

From our analysis of one weekend event in an isolated Chibarirwe faction it is quite clear that neglect by senior office-bearers (in this case the Rev Mugero) who fail to meet the expectations of those in search of a meaningful regrouping and reorganization of their local Church life, causes a mood of gloom and despondence amongst the "forgotten ones". Such negligence could lead to an escalation of fragmentation and decline in those geographically scattered "satellites" or pockets which, despite isolation, continue to exist as the shattered remains of a once powerful movement. If one considers that next to the above-mentioned Mushawasha group there are also other isolated Chibarirwe "satellite" units (such as the followers of the Rev Madyauta in the Chivi district, a few congregations in Zimuto and those still surviving under the leadership of the Rev Pahla in the Chipinge district) the seriousness of the geographically wide-spread problem is evident. From the point of view of these "satellites" the situation is further complicated by the fact that instead of one main body, they currently have a choice of three "main bodies" - each claiming to be the authentic Church originally founded by Sengwayo - with which to identify: Bishop Muongani's Chibarirwe (the largest of the three) and the ACC, represented by either the Rev Marima or the Rev Mugero.

Our analysis of a weekend's events in the Mushawasha congregations clearly illustrated, however, that isolation and disappointment do not necessarily lead to decline and despair. The evangelical impulses were all too clearly in evidence in virtually all the sermons and speeches. It appears therefore that where there is a willingness to listen and respond to the Gospel message in a group of Christian believers, despite lengthy periods of ecclesial deprivation through isolation from the main body of the Church - manifest, for instance, in forfeiture of sacramental participation - spiritual growth and congregational expansion are not only possible but actually take place against all apparent odds. Thus, despite repeated failure of the attempts of isolated "satellite" units to achieve meaningful regrouping in the aftermath of divisive schisms, regional coherence and spiritual drive can well be maintained successfully in opposition to those forces which make for stagnation and lethargy.

Under the adverse circumstances of isolation as described in the case of the Mushawasha congregations, much depends on the initia-
Crisis and schism following a principal leader's death

tive of the local leadership. Here too the principle, which I have
mentioned elsewhere, of the leader being the Church applies. In the
absence of the guidance and directives of senior ministers, the local
office-bearers, such as Evangelist Elias and Makekerere, assume
new roles of authority and inevitably make a deeper impression on
the believers than would have been the case under normal circum­
cstances. Wittingly or unwittingly, the local leaders in their capacity
as "guiding lights" of their congregations become the "guardians" of
group identity, the interpreters of the message proclaimed and/or
the innovators of congregational life. This explains the emergence in
the Mushawasha congregations of features which can be described
as atypical of the Chibarirwe. The above-mentioned preoccupation
with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the deliberate linking of
speaking in tongues with the evangelistic outreach of the Church,
the centrality of healing sessions during services, coupled with
public confession of individual states of sinfulness - are all signs of
local innovation, a leaning towards the practices of the Spirit-type
Churches not commonly found in the Chibarirwe. Ultimately, there­
fore, the overall picture of a schismatic Church shows that,
despite the negative implications of organizational disruption, group
fragmentation and the isolation of geographically remote Church
units, there are also positive indications of Church growth, spiritual
renewal and religious innovation. It will become evident over the
years whether the more virile and obviously ·
changing "satellites"
will successfully regroup, and in the process enrich the main
Church body through renewed interaction, or whether they will
eventually claim to be "new Churches" in their own right, under the
leadership of those who have grown strong through years of
deprivation in isolation.

3. LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION (INHERITANCE) AND
STABILITY IN THE FIRST ETHIOPIAN CHURCH

When Bishop Nheya Gavure of the FEC died in August 1984,
having ably led this Church for 32 years after the death of the
founder leader, Chari Chidembo, in 1952, the question arose
whether inheritance of the deceased's leadership would once more
be followed by strife and schisms. Could there not be one "success
story" of a Church making the stormy passage of uncertainty, bick­
ering over leadership and the anticipation of secession, without
being torn into different factions?
It did seem as if the *Topia* was better placed than most Independent Churches after the death of its principal leader to maintain stability in its ranks. Bishop Gavure had been a humble yet stable and consistent leader, respected and loved by virtually all his followers, with a remarkable capacity to bring about peace and reconciliation whenever serious conflicts arose. Contrary to the ACC leadership of Sengwayo, Gavure had established a stable Church headquarters at his homestead at Norumedzo in the Bikita district, from where he organized Church activities and regularly visited a growing number of congregations in the Bikita, Zaka, Gutu and Buhera districts. Commanding much more respect and loyalty in his Church than did the increasingly remote *Chibarirwe* president Sengwayo, the chances were good that his wish to be succeeded by his eldest son, Ishmael - a wish which he had already verbalized publicly during my research in the 'sixties - would be generally honoured. Ishmael, moreover, was admirably equipped for the task. Today still a young man in his early thirties, he has proved since 1975 as one of the most consistent and dedicated senior tutors in the *Fambidzano* TEE programme and his record as a tactful yet firm leader in the *Topia*, with very similar character traits as his father, was unblemished. Thus, with valid claims to his father's inheritance in terms of customary law, supported by outstanding theological qualifications and sound experience in Church affairs under the constant guidance of his father, Ishmael's position was predictably secure.

Or was it? Were the shadows of the past not still to be overcome, hidden opponents to be fought, "traitors" to be exposed and a passage of vulnerability to be endured on the way to consolidation of the new leadership? Did the deceased bishop not predict that his maternal uncles, Chapinga and Musasikwa - respectively the senior *vaongamiri* of the Bikita and Zaka congregations - would refuse to co-operate after his death? Did Jekera Mutubuki, the senior *muongamiri* of the *Topia* congregations in Gutu who had followed up the backsliding Bodias and who had always been an independent character, not made some snide remarks to the young bishop about inherited leadership which could spell trouble? And was it not true that the Rev Joshua Chabata, the one who had supported Chidembo Jr in forcing a minor schism in opposition to Nheya

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65 Daneel, 1974, p. 379.
66 Ibid., p. 374.
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Gavure in 1957 and who had afterwards accepted Gavure’s leadership, was again trying to cause dissent? Yes, indeed these were the tricky and explosive issues facing the deceased bishop’s successor, each of which, potentially at least, posed a threat to the future cohesion and expansion of the Church. However strong and legitimate the claims of Gavure’s heir - in terms of both traditional and Christian norms - the seeds of fission were contained in the historical background of the Church and the time of testing for both leader and Church had come. Let us briefly trace the contours and the sequence of events which marked the period of leadership transition in the Topia.

(a) Ecumenical legitimation of leadership

Topia history - that is, the election and appointment of Nheya Gavure in 1952 as the successor to the deceased founder leader, Chari Chidembo - laid down that, despite general recognition of inherited leadership as an important factor, the Church council as the highest ruling body has the final say in leadership succession. Official confirmation of the deceased bishop’s wish by the council therefore still had to be obtained as prerequisite for the new bishop’s installation.

On 9 September 1985, during the ritual proceedings popularly referred to as Gavure’s runyaradzo (consolation ceremony), both the election and ordination of Ishmael took place at the Bikita Church headquarters. It was a colourful ecumenical event attended by senior representatives of several Independent Churches: Topia, the ZAC of Makamba, other Ndaza Zionist groups, "Seventh Church" (IC rendering of the Seventh Day Adventists), Chibarirwe and others. Several thousand Topia office-bearers and ordinary members from the various Church circuits attended the proceedings. Under the circumstances it was difficult to conduct a Church council meeting, so it was decided to put the choice of a new leader to the vote. Great excitement prevailed as four nominations were put forward and the four candidates (including Ishmael) were required to go and stand in the four wind directions about a hundred yards from where the people were gathered. As everybody was then required to move to the candidate of his/her choice, wild rejoicing and ululations erupted as the entire meeting converged on the somewhat embarrassed and self-conscious heir to the Topia bishopric. The

Ibid., p. 375.
other three candidates, who were probably nominated as actors in the "election game" rather than as serious contenders, joked with the few "supporters" they had drawn and then clowned their way into the procession which, with dancing, singing and jubilant hilarity, appeared to be victoriously sweeping the bishop elect to the Church building, at one end of which the consecration had to take place. Through joyous celebration unanimity of choice was enacted. Whatever the feelings of any hesitant Church official, this was not the time to raise doubts or query an overwhelming popular decision. The die was cast! Through inheritance and through virtual unanimous recognition of sound leadership, the house of Gavure and the First Ethiopian Church had become one. It was as if the much loved bishop had "come home" to his people and in his successor was participating in the proceedings.

Speeches and sermons, good wishes, admonitions and encouraging statements of support by the senior representatives of the different Churches made up the greater part of the ordination ceremony. Possibly the most telling feature of this ceremony was the official recognition of the new bishop's authority and status as heir to the deceased bishop, through the "throwing of money gifts". It was the name-giving ceremony of the traditional kugadzira, when the name-bearer, sitting on the ritual mat, is addressed for the first time by the name of his deceased father. In this case, however, the ritual was filled with new content. Instead of the groups of different relatives "throwing their gifts" (kukanda zvipo) in public recognition of their newly instated family head, the delegates of the different Topia congregations brought their gifts with brief speeches of support and pleas for assistance addressed to the new head of the Church family. Hence, through African ritual symbolism, the family unit - in this case the Church - was conferring on the heir to the nhaka (inheritance) the lifelong function of ritual officiant of the "family". In this manner traditional legitimation of ritual responsibility preceded and simultaneously blended with Christian legitimation, as the principal leaders of the different Churches, clearly under the jurisdiction of Zionist Bishop Makamba, surrounded and laid hands on the kneeling young Gavure. In the background there was a deep, guttural murmur of approval as the outstretched hands of ancient-looking bishops, accompanied by softly murmured prayer and speaking in tongues conveyed to the new Topia bishop the blessing of induction into the age-old apostolic succession of the Christian Church (plate 33).
I have included excerpts of a few of the sermons and speeches made on this occasion (Appendix VII). They clearly illustrate the preoccupation of key figures with the significant role the deceased Church leader had played in their lives, their encouragement of the successor to follow in the footsteps of his father, the intimate bond between departed leader and succeeding son, and the pervading centrality of the theme of ecumenism to which the bishop and his Church had become committed. This latter aspect clearly demonstrates that the runyaradzo and ordination ceremonies did not represent merely a chance ecumenical event as a result of the participation of Churches in the neighbourhood. On the contrary, the ideal of Church unity as embodied by Fambidzano and zealously promoted by the deceased bishop, was clearly envisaged as an objective and integral part of the Topia Church’s work programme.

Mrs Agnes Rabson, a prominent figure in the Topia Women’s Association and holder of the Fambidzano certificate for theological training, portrayed the deceased bishop as one who respected and encouraged the contribution of women to the Church. She described Gavure’s death as the chopping down of a tree, the shade of which had a protective function, particularly for women. Reassurance was found in close identification of Christ’s promise to send the Spirit as Comforter (John 14) with the task of the deceased bishop to intercede on behalf of his followers— as if to contribute to their future passage into and dwelling in heaven — and the anticipation that the new Church leader would feature strongly in the role of “comforter” as his father had done. Through elaborate parallels between Christ’s association with women such as Mary Magdalene and others (Luke 8:1f) and the work of the deceased bishop as he travelled between villages and liberated women from illness and evil spirits, the image of the deceased in his special care for women was further strengthened. Through the message of Christ’s death and resurrection, hope prevailed. In his ongoing influence and spiritual presence, the deceased was in a sense still alive in his Church. For the Topia members, heeding of the deceased’s “living example” and recognition of God’s Fatherhood had become inseparable realities.

In this conception of the ongoing prominence and influence of the deceased bishop, it is important to note that Mrs Rabson singled out two important features of his work: he had elevated the status of women in the Church and he had championed the cause of ecumenicity through Fambidzano. In the latter regard she said:
"We have our concern called Fambidzano. This body safeguards our theological education. It keeps our books, many of them. The bishop told me: 'Mother this [Fambidzano and its training programme] is my inheritance! At my death I shall not have thrown away a single page of this institution, and all those who stay behind will see them.'

"So we have all these theological training books, some of which are so deep that even our schoolchildren cannot comprehend their full meaning. They differ from the ordinary rules of education." 68

In these words Bishop Gavure emerges as one who fully identified with the ecumenical and theological objectives of Fambidzano. Having himself participated as a student in the TEE programme, his keeping of all the training materials - for all to see after his death - symbolized his full support of and pride in this ecumenical venture. The suggested "depth" of the prescribed books strengthened the impression of something of unique value. In the statement that the bishop had considered Fambidzano - of which he was president for five years - as his nhaka (inheritance), one finds a most pregnant reminder of total dedication and commitment to the ecumenical cause. Without explicitly saying so, these words conveyed a potent challenge to Ishmael Gavure, as inheriting son, to cherish and pursue the ecumenical legacy his father had left him.

Muongamiri Chapinga, oldest and most senior Topia official at the ceremony and himself a former Fambidzano student, elaborated on the theme of ecumenism. In his prayer he dwelt on my presence as the founder of Fambidzano, thereby recalling the years when the deceased bishop and I had forged a close bond of friendship in our joint labours in the IC ecumenical movement. The prayer included references to me as "father" of the Topia Church, to Bishop Gavure as "alive" and present at the occasion, and to the in-dwelling of Jesus Christ in those present as a sign of His blessing on the Topia Church. 69 During the ordination ceremony, Chapinga further highlighted the ecumenical dimension by "submitting" the young Gavure to the hands of Bishop Makamba and the other Church leaders present for consecration. He concluded his speech as follows: "So, Father Daneel, I ask you to intercede on our behalf. You who brought the relish [meat eaten with stiff porridge] which we call

68 App. VII, p. 520.
30. Bishop Moses Makamba in silent contemplation during the *runyaradzo* ceremony on behalf of his friend, the late Bishop Nheya Gavure.
31. Senior Nadaza Zionist official and former Fambidzano student, the Rev. Guruveti, preaches at Topia consolation-cum-ordination ceremony at the Gavure homestead.
32. In true ecumenical spirit, the Zionist Rev. Guruveti addresses the congregation at the ordination ceremony of the late Bishop Gavure’s successor. From left to right: Ishmael Gavure, the bishop elect; the Rev. Chapinga; Bishop Makamba (in background); the Rev. Musasikwa; and Bishop Moyana (Seventh Church).

33. Ordination of Bishop Ishmael Gavure by (from left to right) the Revd. Mususikwa, Bishop Moyana, Bishop Makamba and the Rev. Chapinga.
Fambidzano into this country - you who brought unity when we were disunited, I tell you that we ordain this young one 'in' your hands." In saying this the elderly Chapinga was not only reminding me of a spiritual responsibility towards his Church, but he was interpreting the new bishop's task as fully integrated into the tradition of IC ecumenism, as it had become known and institutionalized amongst the Shona since 1972. It was tantamount to including in the new bishop's office the inescapable duty not just of narrow ecclesial but of wide-reaching ecumenical leadership.

In Chapinga's repeated reference to Ishmael as his "leg" (i.e. representative), the old man's deep-seated wish to succeed to the Topia leadership becomes manifest. Yet his public recognition of the young Gavure as his "father in the Spirit" was an acknowledgement of what was transpiring. As I shall indicate below, Chapinga at no stage posed a serious threat to the young bishop's leadership.

The two Zionist leaders who played the most prominent role in the Topia proceedings were Bishop Makamba and the senior warden of his Church, Muongamiri Guruveti. The latter, together with the young Gavure, had participated in the first TEE classes ever conducted for the Independent Churches in the Bikita district. At an early stage of ecumenical development he had therefore distinguished himself as a progressive leader fully supporting theological innovation within his own Church as well as experimental attempts to improve inter-Church relations. In Zionist circles he had become known for his conciliatory role which on a number of occasions enabled him to prevent threatening schisms in Makamba's Church - successes which he attributed to ecclesiastical insights gleaned from Fambidzano's Church History classes. He was also noted for the positive role he had played over the years in establishing close ties between the Zionist and Ethiopian-type Churches.

Against this background it is understandable that Guruveti emerged as the "theologian" at young Gavure's ordination ceremony. He was expected to give an introduction prior to the laying on of hands. This he did with a brief exposition of the close link between Gavure's ordination and Solomon's inheritance of David's kingship upon the latter's death (I Kings 2:1f). In this way he once more provided the theological justification, so typical of Independent Church thinking, for the inheritance of Church leadership. Virtually repeating the biblical words of David, Guruveti called on the young bishop to "be strong, be a man and keep that in which your Lord
God has instructed you in... Keep His witness according to the laws of Moses so that you will prosper in anything you do.  

During the consolation ceremony Guruveti (plates 31 & 32) dwelt on the subject of divisiveness and the multiplicity of Churches. He attributed this phenomenon to the hubris of man, who claims God for his own group, then grows self-satisfied and by implication spiritually stagnant within the limitations he imposes on himself and his Church. The very nature of God repudiates ecclesial incapsulation. "To know God means to co-operate in God's work, to do God's work together right here," he said. The theological basis for Guruveti's appeal for ecumenical cooperation was that true knowledge of God of necessity included recognition of the unity of His Being despite the plurality of beliefs and denominations among men. With eloquence and conviction he told his audience:

"Now the time has come to rethink and to question the existence of all these Church groups. Is it right, considering that God is one? There was no unity in the past. It did not happen that a member of one Church would go and worship in another. Whenever we did meet we fought each other, accusing each other and burning each other's books. All of us had the same Bible, but in addition we cherished our own little book or history [of our separate Churches], forgetting that there are not two types of Christians, for Christ is one."  

Towards the end of his sermon Guruveti intimated that the Holy Spirit had already brought about a breakthrough in the deplorable state of insularity and self-satisfaction of Churches. Evidence of this was to be found in the interaction between the Zionist and Topia Churches, with the Zionist presence and deep involvement at Bishop Gavure's burial and runyaradzo as convincing examples of the unity required by God Himself. By intimating that Bishop Gavure knew some of the Zionist homes more intimately than the Zionists themselves did, he was not only paying tribute to the ecumenical stature and altruistic integrity of the late bishop, but was describing the far-reaching implications of ecclesial union in Christ.  

Having in a rudimentary but most effective way integrated the theological imperative and empirical reality of ecumenism,

73 App. VII, p. 524.
Guruveti was inspiring both his multi-denominational audience and the newly instated Topia leader to persevere along the course of inter-Church co-operation and ultimate unity in Christ, as exemplified by the deceased.

In both Guruveti's and Bishop Makamba's sermons one finds a literal interpretation of Christ's preparation of a place for His followers in heaven, as stated in John 14. Significant clues for an understanding of Zionist views on life and death emerge in such sermons, but these can only be mentioned in passing. Guruveti, for instance, considered all human beings to have been created by God out of dust, a spirit being instilled as a life-force. "When the clay disintegrates, God, as the owner of the spirit, claims it back. Upon death the spirit of each person, is claimed back by the owner." An ambivalence at this point in Guruveti's thinking appeared to be that God as owner of all spirits claimed these back whenever it pleased Him, while at the same time it seemed possible that premature death, as a result of murder, could create an unsettled situation, where the "builder" in heaven has not yet completed the dwelling place of the deceased. Bishop Makamba (plate 30) in turn emphasized the vital control of God over all human life. The "work" of death and consolation was in His hands. Subordinate to God and the law of death, man could but acknowledge his status as a seed in God's hands; seed which, despite rebellion and incomprehension, had to find its destiny in the soil through death before it could yield fruit. On the one hand the frail old bishop seemed to portray a picture of life and death which some would interpret as reincarnation. He said, for instance: "We come and go like Jesus did. We are the grain in God's fields. He prepares the fields and we, the seed, are sown. We germinate and grow Then we are removed [reaped]. So we go away; then we come back again. That is it!" On the other hand he was at pains to emphasize the reality of Christ's promise to fetch His people once and for all, in the event of death.

It was at this point that the Zionist leader's close identification with his friend, the late Topia bishop, surfaced, as if their ecumenical duties extended beyond the grave. He anticipated that in one way or another they would both be involved in Christ's activity of preparing dwelling-places for and fetching their people in this world to heaven. He depicted this as "the most splendid task, one

74 App. VII, p. 524.
that surpasses all others" and "a joyous task which pleases the Lord." His additional qualification that it was an "incomprehensibly difficult" task for human beings reflects respectful hesitancy in the face of an unfathomable mystery which lies beyond the grasp of human reason. These thoughts tie in with the introductory function of the IC leader at the gates of heaven, which I have mentioned before.77 Makamba’s repeated reference to God’s overriding authority in life and death dispels any suggestion that he had in mind an exclusive mediatory function in the afterlife. Concerned with the reality of death which he felt he would soon be facing himself, and steeped in a philosophy which assumed close bonds between the living and the living dead, the old bishop was projecting an intuition which to him appeared meaningful and which underscored rather than threatened the uniqueness of Christ’s mediatory work.

The two senior representatives of the "Seventh Church" - Bishop Moyana and the Rev Zimuto - both dwelt on the close ties between their Church and the Topia, as well as the practical prospects of religious interaction. During both the consolation and ordination ceremonies Bishop Moyana mentioned with appreciation the key role the late Gavure had played in opening up his Church. Having closely associated with both Chari Chidembo and Nheya Gavure in earlier years, he had come to consider the Topia Church as a spiritual father and he compared his mourning for the late bishop with the biblical Joseph’s mourning for his father, Jacob.78 But far from merely dwelling on the past, the elderly Moyana was concerned with the future. He warned his audience against spiritual decay lest the suffering of the principal IC leaders in the country be rendered meaningless. He recognized the frailty and the mood of despondency of the Topia Church which could cause it to break, and asked its members: "Of which Topia will I be the son if you allow it [the Church] to disintegrate?"79 He himself was prepared to play an active role in the maintenance of stability in his parent Church and therefore invited its members to call on him in the event of trouble. Such was his confidence in the solidity of the ties between his and Gavure’s Churches that he jubilantly declared: "There is nothing which will overcome our victory over the spirit of

77 Infra, p. 114.
By balancing out the statements of his own active involvement with affirmations of acceptance of the new bishop's authority, Moyana dispelled any possible fears that he might upset the new leadership through over-involvement. That is why he could, on the one hand, go so far as to say: "I give you your task, Bishop [Ishmael Gavure]," as if the new leader would be in a position of subservience to him, while, on the other hand, he maintained that as the "son" of the deceased bishop he himself was the last-born, thus expressing his recognition of the seniority of Ishmael as the deceased's name-bearer. This fact he underscored with the observation: "There is no other truth which will emerge in the future. It is the same as when Jesus said: 'I am the beginning and the end!'"

Sensitive to the Zionist presence at the occasion and in an attempt not to undermine in any way the close ties between the Topia and Ndaza Zionist Churches, Moyana effusively thanked Bishop Makamba for his role in the proceedings. Makamba was portrayed as a man chosen by God, the One who knows no boundaries, to act as leader of the Topia ceremonies. As Moyana may himself have been required to play this leading role, his generous address to the Zionist bishop reflected humility and integrity of a high order, something which forcefully underscored the genuine ecumenical spirit of the occasion.

The Rev. Zimuto introduced his message by referring to the ongoing presence and influence of the late bishop in his Church - he, who had appeared in white garments in the dreams of his followers, who had removed the grief of the mourners and who takes the first step of progress into the future. With simple beauty Zimuto described the close bond between deceased father and inheriting son as that of a living shoot growing out of an old felled tree: "... although He [God] has chopped out the tree, the living shoots must proceed ... So we acknowledge that in the place of the old tree which was removed, a new one is growing. Today, therefore, we have the new Gavure; he being at the same time, the Gavure we had yesterday." This close bond, in which the departed one "lives on" in his son, formed the basis for a renewal of the mandate for ecumenical involvement. Hence the joyful expectation that "the

82 App. VII, p. 528.
83 App. VII, p. 528.
new Bishop Gavure will visit me as the old one had done" and the explicit trust that "he [Gavure] will come to all our places [congregations] to worship with us, because we are one body!" 84 To the young bishop the unity already existing between the Churches implied both a challenge and a support. Zimuto assured him of intercession and goodwill: "All the Churches are filled with the wish to go and see and co-operate with you." Yet in this inter-relationship the young bishop was expected to be not only a recipient, but also an agent. So Zimuto urged him to "pray for them all to remain united as they were united when your father was alive" 85 Through a comparison of the young bishop's ministry with that of the Old Testament Elisha, Zimuto forcefully challenged him to shoulder his responsibilities with courage and compassion.

Gavure's leadership was therefore legitimated in a truly ecumenical setting. A rich tapestry of ecumenical thought, mindful of the past and of the future challenge, emerged in the sermons mentioned. Within his own Church, Ishmael was confronted with the inescapable inheritance of an ecumenical task and he was placed squarely in the tradition of Fambidzano, no longer simply in his past role as TEE tutor of IC students but as full-fledged bishop and as such, conciliator between Church leaders. Zionist affirmation of the role his father had played reminded him of on-going and far-reaching commitments within the Spirit-type Churches, while the gestures of support and interdependence in Church affairs from the Seventh Church leaders already translated the concept and ideal of Church union into practice. Thus the new responsibilities entrusted to the young bishop in an atmosphere of trust and goodwill presented both a daunting task and a privileged challenge.

(b) Ecclesiastical vulnerability and mystical intervention

One may have expected that after such a resounding, supportive inauguration in his new office, Bishop Ishmael Gavure could count on the full co-operation of all his followers and plan for the future with confidence. But the period of ecclesiastical vulnerability which appears to follow the death of all principal leaders in the Independent Churches was not to be averted. To the Church the first phase of new leadership, particularly in the case of a young successor facing the natural traditional authority of numerous elders, is the

84 App. VII, p. 528.
85 App. VII, p. 529.
hour of the wolf. It is the hour of temptation to the enterprising regional leader who feels entitled to question the leadership of the "young one" in that section of the Church which he had himself built over the years. To some of the vakuru (Church elders) the temptation to break away and work towards independent glory which, as I have suggested, then attaches to the name and house of the schismatic leader, is very real. This finds expression during the phase of vulnerability in the general anticipation of conflict and ecclesial fragmentation. Ishmael had to contend with the aspirations of the influential vaongamiri (regional wardens) Chapinga of Bikita and Jekera of Gutu, as well as the self-styled "bishop" Joshua Chabata of Zaka.

To the young bishop it was a traumatic period of being beleaguered by the "enemy" Much like Ruben Mutendi, David Masuka Jr and Muongani, Ishmael described his experience of these circumstances as one of sustained mystical threat: a very real threat of wizardry which could well prove fatal if not properly guarded against. But the young bishop was not caught unawares. He was thoroughly prepared to meet the onslaught of evil forces in a state of total identification with the superior, unconquerable power of the Holy Spirit. As he confidently yet humbly claims in retrospect:

"During all the Church meetings subsequent to my father's death my opponents came to attack me and do me harm. Many of them threw their zviposo [destructive medicine used by male sorcerers, believed to be sent or thrown through the air] at me but it always returned to them without harming me. I clearly saw all these attacks. How it happens I do not know, but I have changed after my father's death when I became completely filled [ndakapindwa: I was entered] with the Holy Spirit."

There was no doubt in the mind of the young bishop that he was fully protected by the Holy Spirit in this "mystical battle" between the powers of darkness and light. On the very night of his father's death a spiritual transformation of grave magnitude had taken place, from which he emerged for the first time as a Spirit-filled visionary. Was this experience triggered by anticipation of and anxiety about the coming "hour of the wolf"? One can but guess. In Ishmael's own words:
"I did not sleep after my father's death because that same evening a star appeared in the east, approached our Church building and settled on it, thereby illuminating the entire environment. It was not a dream, because I was awake and saw it all happen before my eyes. As the light of the star faded, the Holy Spirit fell on me [ndawirwa nomweya Mutsvene] with force, as has never before happened to me. I started speaking in tongues. The people took me outside, away from the body of my deceased father, thinking that I was overcome by grief. But I knew exactly what was happening ... From that time onward things have changed completely and I am always shown in visions in advance when something important is about to happen."

According to Ishmael's accounts about climbing to the top of mountains for prayer and contemplation, and numerous dream encounters with his deceased father, the source of his spiritual power and extra-perception is twofold: his deceased father and the Holy Spirit. Ishmael's views about the relationship between the two will be considered below. The question here is: how did the young bishop, clad as he was in the formidable armoury of the Spirit, fare in the mystical warfare with his adversary, and how did he experience the mystical intervention of the two above-mentioned spiritual forces in this struggle?

(i) Chapinga's challenge to the young bishop was not very serious. This muongamiri had lived close to the Gavure family for many decades. Because of his close friendship and loyalty both to the deceased leader - his sister's son - and to the successor son, nobody really believed that this Topia warden would in his old age make a serious bid for the Church's topmost position. To an outsider, however, the claims of the old man, made in public during large meetings, appeared quite ominous. In no uncertain terms Chapinga asserted that as the oldest and most senior office-bearer, who had converted more vaTopia than anybody else, he had to be made bishop and that Ishmael, the "young one", whose birth he had attended, should be appointed as his mufambiri (representative).

In a tactful way the disgruntled old man was reprimanded by his fellow vaongamiri. They pointed out to him that, by virtue of the legal nhaka procedure, it was now Gavure's son who was the Church's mukuru (elder) and that he, Chapinga, was actually a muduku (junior) in relation to the new leader, a position he had no
option but to accept as FEC office-bearer. So the "wise one of many seasons" relented and publicly pledged his obedience and loyalty to the new leader. Subsequently, in a moving scene, the newly ordained bishop, in an attempt to re-enact the confrontation between Christ and Peter, asked Chapinga three times whether he loved him. It was an emphatic yet caring assertion of authority, to which the aged muongamiri responded positively with dignified humility. Evidently both parties cleared this hurdle with such face-saving composure and goodwill that no animosity was left and the prospect of prolonged friction, which could eventually have led to ecclesial fragmentation, was nipped in the bud.

A factor which, in an unobtrusive yet decisive way, contributed to moderation and cohesion in the relations between Ishmael and his senior vaongamiri was the influence of Fambidzano. Through their common participation in the two-year theological training programme of this institution the two most influential regional leaders of the FEC - Chapinga and Musasikwa - had shelved their earlier rivalry and both started championing the cause of intra- and inter-Church unity. Mindful of the ecumenical role he had started to play and of the ecumenical nature of Ishmael's ordination, Chapinga was obviously under pressure not to persist with claims which could well be interpreted as selfish and destructive of the very group cohesion he was trying to promote.

(ii) Jekera's domineering and imposing, yet independent, aloof and enigmatic personality, caused the young bishop far greater concern. Ishmael correctly sensed that if he antagonized this proud and powerful leader of the distant Gutu congregations, he could incur a costly loss of followers. Puzzled by the problem of combining authority with tact in his relations with this man, who was not only his senior in years but who also seemed secretly to enjoy his predicament, the young bishop was left with a degree of inner uncertainty which he could ill afford. Eventually the anticipation of betrayal surfaced in the young bishop's dream-life.

Jekera's absence from several important Church circuit meetings in the various districts, following Ishmael's ordination, heightened the anticipation of dissent. Seriously concerned about the Gutu leader's absence when he arrived in Buhera for a holy communion service, the Topia bishop had the following dream:

"My father appeared in his uniform, wearing his collar and with his staff in hand. He asked: 'Did you come to conduct a
Church service?' I said: 'Yes.' 'Did Jekera also come?' he asked, 'No, he has not arrived,' I replied. 'Don't you remember,' he inquired, 'that I suggested to you that whenever you go to Church meetings you must prepare yourself through withdrawal from others, fasting and prayer?' I replied: 'Yes, I do remember.' So he said: 'Tomorrow morning when it is still dark I want you to climb that mountain over there, you and Mawere [a senior Topia official from Gavure's village], and pray up there.'

In response to this dream directive, which Ishmael regarded as a preparation for a possible encounter with Jekera, he and Mawere climbed the mountain the next morning. At the summit Ishmael once more had an experience of being entered by the Holy Spirit and of speaking in tongues. On this occasion Mawere, who had previously interpreted the Spirit's revelations coming through the young bishop's spells of "possession", could not discern any Spirit-message. Nevertheless, Gavure Jr interpreted the experience for himself as a warning to be careful in his dealings with Jekera. Both his deceased father and the Holy Spirit were, through their presence and intervention, preparing him for a potentially dangerous situation. "When Jekera later arrived at the meeting," Ishmael narrated, "he came to greet me. His hands were slippery as if he had just rubbed them with soap. I could hardly clasp his hand; for it was so slippery that it slid out of mine, and he just stood there looking at me. It was a strange encounter, something I have never experienced before. Whenever I see him, I get the feeling that something [sinister] is bound to happen."

Ishmael was careful not to make any direct accusations but his narrative conveyed the impression that he not only suspected the betrayal of defection, but also seriously considered the perpetration of wizardry against his person. When I asked about the nature of the "mystical danger" he was facing, he shrugged it off, as if it was an embarrassment he wanted to forget, saying: "Perhaps it was just suspicious thoughts of the flesh which entered my mind. They need not necessarily reflect the truth. Because Jekera for quite a long time did not attend our meetings, I suspected defection. But nowadays his behaviour indicates that he has returned. Judging by his sermons and discussions with others he co-operates and belongs." 86

86 Personal communication, 9/10/1985.
In contrast to the case of *Muongamiri* Chapinga which was amicably settled and forgotten, it remains an open question whether for the *Topia* congregations in Gutu the "hour of the wolf" has passed. Depending on the nature of his support in Gutu and its effect on Jekera's inner conflict between loyalty to his parent Church and the urge to break away and have his own Church, the Gutu warden holds the key to the future. It is too early, as yet, to predict or judge the outcome of what could still erupt into a protracted power struggle between the dedicated young bishop and the elderly "man of many seasons" who has become used to doing things his own way. At all events, the evidence suggests that the first round goes to the young bishop.

(iii) *Joshua Chabata*, Gavure's old rival of earlier years who had turned friend, posed a different kind of threat. Less influential than Jekera, the chances of his causing a major schism were remote. Nevertheless, he was suspect because at a time when foreign development aid through *Fambidzano* became a real prospect for Independent Churches, he conveniently remembered that Macharutya Chidembo had ordained him as an "Ethiopian" bishop in earlier years, so he had his name entered as Bishop Chabata, leader of the First Ethiopian Church, and applicant for development funds. At that point the Development Committee of *Fambidzano* refused to recognize Chabata as leader of an independent *Topia* branch unless he could provide proof of having such a following. This he could not do, with the result that *Fambidzano* officials urged him to cooperate with Bishop Nheya Gavure who was then still alive and the recognized leader of the FEC. Ishmael, who was aware of what had transpired, let the matter rest. Chabata at the time appeared to heed the advice he had received and continued, under *Muongamiri* Musasikwa's surveillance, to work as minister and eventually *muongamiri* in the *Topia* congregations of Matsai, in the Zaka district.

After Bishop Gavure's death, however, rumours again started circulating that Chabata was setting himself up as the true bishop of the FEC and that he was about to hijack some of the FEC congregations in his district in a bid for independent leadership. Although it did not seem as if anybody, apart from his old accomplice and friend, Macharutya Chidembo, was prepared to follow him - apparently even the wives and children of the two men had refused to leave Gavure's fold - the newly ordained Bishop Gavure could not allow such a test of his ability to impose
his newly attained authority to go unchallenged. He raised the question in the Church Council whether the First Ethiopian Church recognized two bishops, or whether there could be two Churches with the same name. Once again dream directives played a central role in the ensuing conflict.

As with Jekera, Ishmael's decisive dreams occurred on a Friday night just before the commencement of a regional Church meeting, at which a confrontation with the prospective schismatic leader was expected. It seems therefore as if a specific pattern of mystical assistance rendered at the time of anticipated or actual leadership crisis was established. Were these dreams self-induced or the result of stirrings in the subconscious caused by anxiety in a period of intensified stress and uncertainty? Whatever the answer to this question, Gavure was fully convinced about the mystical legitimation of his leadership conveyed to him through the supportive and directive nature of his dreams. His narration of his experience ran as follows:

"That Friday evening before the meeting in Ndanga district we were sleeping at a school. I dreamt that my father was approaching me and asking whether the Church was progressing well. He said: 'Do you see what is happening?' I replied: 'Yes, I do.' 'And what do you intend doing about it?' he asked. I replied: 'Well, I will have to ask God for guidance, because as a young and inexperienced person I cannot find solutions on my own.' So my father said: 'See what is happening over there!' I looked 'into' my dream and saw a person clad in white garments approaching me. He stood in front of me as if taking a picture with one of those things [flashes] that goes: Ga! Then he said: 'On Sunday you must preach from John 14, about Jesus comforting His disciples. As you preach you will know that Jesus had sound relations with his disciples, but from their ranks came the enemy who betrayed Him.' I said: 'Yes, I know that history.' So he [the messenger] said: 'In your sermon you must also give an example of a whore. She dresses nicely to attract men. But she also puts red medicine on her lips, the colour of which spells danger. That woman is really attractive. Despite the sign of danger men are drawn to her. They sleep with her and after a while they contract venereal disease. Nevertheless, she is as beautiful as ever. That is what happens in my Church.' I asked: 'But how should I interpret this example?' And he said: 'Don't you understand what I am saying?' I
pointed out that I did not know how to join up all these things. So he said: 'I'll give you another example. When we are in town we find a robot. How many colours has it got?' I said: 'Three; red, amber, and green.' 'What does red stand for?' he asked. 'Danger,' I replied. 'What danger?' So I explained that if you cross the road against the red light you could get killed by the traffic crossing from the side.

"I asked how I should explain these examples and he said: 'In your Church there is a man like a robot [the inference being that this man shows green to the Church members while, in reality, the situation itself requires red: do not proceed!]. I also gave you the example of the whore, because the appearance of this man is most pleasing, while he represents danger.' When I once more asked how I should interpret all this, he said: 'Go and preach as I have told you, and you will see what happens.' The man's name was not mentioned and the dream just ended like that."

According to Ishmael he preached with some trepidation, yet in complete accordance with his dreams. The Church elders were greatly surprised. After the sermon, when they were back in their misasa (wind-shields), two of the senior officials came to Ishmael and said they were disturbed, as were the disciples of Jesus when he warned them of the coming betrayal. This was the opening Ishmael was waiting for. Upon questioning these men they suggested that the "hidden deceiver" must be Chabata, the one who had set himself up as bishop. "That man must be the 'whore' who deceives people. He tries to attract us with his pleasing manners, but we do not know what he really aims at. So he must be the one who represents danger."

Thus, with the matter brought into the open through the dream interpretation of others - which was the Church's affirmation of Ishmael's mystical legitimation - the young bishop was free to publicly confront Chabata. In a special meeting of all senior office-bearers, which Ishmael deliberately called after the holy communion service so as not to disturb the congregation's peace of mind, Chabata was required to explain his earlier overtures to Fambidzano. Chabata explained that in 1972 Macharutya Chidembo, a certain Moyana and some Chibarirwe leaders had ordained him as bishop. It remained unclear from his explanations, however, whether this position implied authority in the Topia or Chibarirwe Church. The Topia Church Council got the impression that Chabata
might be acting as a *Topia* official in an attempt to lure some members into a new movement under his leadership.

Bishop Gavure subsequently challenged Chabata to go and have his name, as bishop of the FEC, erased from the *Fambidzano* books, and to continue his work as a fully recognized *Topia muongamiri* under Gavure's leadership, or to withdraw entirely if he wanted to form a new Church. Said the bishop: "Chabata, we will not oppose you if you want to introduce a new Church with a new name. We will not oppose you, nor will we follow you..." Chabata responded with a request that he be allowed to continue worshipping in the *Topia* until the end of 1985, whereafter he would withdraw. The Church Council interpreted this as a deceptive ploy, which would give Chabata a chance to strengthen his position and to break away with an enlarged faction of *Topia* members. So, pressure was brought to bear on him for immediate consideration of the alternatives facing him. Eventually it was decided that a test would be set for Chabata. If he brought Bishop Gavure the money required for the preparation of the holy communion service in the Matsai area, which was to take place later in 1985, it would be a sign that he accepted Gavure's sole authority as bishop of the FEC. If, on the other hand, he insisted on using the Church collection for *chirairo* preparations himself, it would be interpreted as an effort to start a new Church on his own.

Late in August 1985 Gavure conducted the holy communion service in Matsai, but Chabata neatly evaded the entire leadership issue by staying away. He participated in the eucharist conducted by Madyaruto, a *Topia* schismatic leader with only a small following in the Chigombe chiefdom of Gutu. According to Bishop Gavure, the *Topia* members in Matsai, including Chabata's relatives, all dissociated themselves from their *muongamiri*'s devious activities. Nevertheless, Chabata has managed for the time being to keep everybody guessing about his future plans. It is possible that he is trying secretly to recruit some followers before making a final move. Yet on the face of it it seems as if he has virtually no support and that an attempt to establish a new Church in the present circumstances would only create embarrassment for himself.

What are the causes, then, that the FEC came through the initial phase of vulnerability - "the hour of the wolf", as I have called it following Bishop Nheya Gavure's death, without any noteworthy fragmentation or schisms in its ranks?

First of all, the Church itself had been built into a cohesive unit, despite the wide geographical dispersal of its congregations, under
the exemplary leadership of a well respected and loved bishop, whose humility was a reminder of Christ's image as the servant of his followers. The deep impression which this man of outstanding integrity had made on his followers had a binding influence even on those congregations which, because of their geographical remoteness from FEC headquarters, had only sporadic contact with the principal leader. This background of sound and harmonious relations between leader and followers gave the necessary impact and effectiveness to the successor's claims to the deceased bishop's mystical intervention. Hence a protracted FEC history of sound leadership, followed by convincing signs of ongoing guidance of the Church through visions and dreams, reinforced the bond between the house of Gavure and distant congregations. This explains to a large extent why the potential schismatic leaders mentioned above could not muster sufficient support for whatever designs of secession and subsequent independent religious action they may have had.

Second, the successor embodied the same outstanding leadership qualities as his father Ishmael's unassuming authority and endless patience, backed by a long record of selfless service as a Fambidzano tutor, quickly won him all the support he required to guide the Church through the first few months of uncertainty and reorientation. His shrewd use and interpretation of mystical intervention will be briefly discussed in the next section.

In the third place, the subtle yet decisive influence of Fambidzano should not be discounted. The prominent role Bishop Nheya Gavure had played for five years as first president of this IC ecumenical body, after its inception in 1972, had a profound influence on his entire Church. On the whole the vaTopia were proud of the legacy of Church unity and stability which their deceased leader had left them. Ecumenical events, such as the Ndaza Bishop Makamba's leading role in the ordination of the new Topia bishop, were a reminder of Fambidzano's commitment not only to unite Churches but also to combat internal disunity and schisms in its member Churches. The very openness of the internal affairs of affiliated Churches - which, without this ecumenical body, would have remained unknown in the wider ecclesiastical context - in itself served as a deterrent to schisms. Thus the fact

87 Details about Bishop Gavure's ecumenical contribution are given in my forthcoming publication, Fambidzano: Ecumenical movement of the Shona Independent Churches in Zimbabwe.
that Fambidzano had already taken issue with Chabata over his earlier claims to FEC leadership meant that things were out in the open well before Bishop Gavure's death. As a result Chabata had much more than just a new young bishop to contend with. In a sense he was up against an ecumenical movement which provided both encouragement for and critical appraisal of his activities. The pervading illumination provided by the ever widening network of ecumenical relations made secret canvassing and organization for schism complex if not impossible.

(c) Innovation and consolidation

Although the history and leadership of the FEC during the past few decades certainly afforded Ishmael Gavure an easier passage to power than was the case, for example, with the inheriting successors of Mutendi, Johane Maranke and David Masuka, it was by no means a matter of the young Topia bishop simply walking effortlessly into a ready-made position. Once ordained, the new bishop had to exercise authority and launch new initiatives in order to consolidate his position and stabilize his following. He knew that the "hour of the wolf" was the time of testing, that he had to find new ways of firing the imagination of his followers, giving them meaning and hope for the future and binding them in loyalty to the Church's top office without inhibiting regional initiatives through autocratic domination. Success certainly did not lie merely in protection of group stability through controlling the processes of appeasement of or confrontational dialogue with potential dissenters. How did the young bishop rise to the daunting and comprehensive challenge of introducing innovation for purposes of group cohesion, Church growth and leadership stability?

To start with, Ishmael worked out a schedule of regional meetings and holy communion celebrations (Paseka) to be held in all Topia circuits in the course of 1985. As a salaried tutor of Fambidzano the young Gavure had a very tight schedule and had to insist on strict adherence to the set dates for Church meetings in the various districts. Although this conflicted with the free and easy concept of time of ruralists, it had the advantage of providing Ishmael with a means of asserting authority, which in the course of time earned him the respect rather than antagonism of his predominantly rural followers. During these meetings he could familiarize himself with conditions in the various congregations and gauge the nature of their adherence to his leadership. As seen above, he was able on
such occasions to meet, confront and, if necessary, unmask potential dissenters on their home territory. The stimulation of new ideas and ventures for the future also took place in the course of these meetings. Having noticed the need for more regular contact between headquarters and outlying congregations, Gavure Jr introduced novel fund-raising campaigns, with as one of the most urgent objectives the purchase of a vehicle for his own use on regular circuit visits. The fact that this was not disparaged as a selfish move by the bishop, and that by the end of 1985 some Z$2 000 had already been collected for a new vehicle, signalled general support for the introduction of new projects and represented a vote of confidence in the new leader.

As the administration of the sacrament of holy communion is the prerogative of the principal leader in most Independent Churches, it was the young bishop's control of these ceremonies more than anything else which, on this first round of district-visits, epitomized to his followers his unquestioned accession to power. The positive response of the district "wardens" (vaongamiri) - with the exception of Chabata - to the bishop's directives for chirairo preparations indicated public acceptance, the local circuit's affirmation of the legitimation by ordination, of the new leader. It redounds to the credit of the late bishop Gavure's heir that he correctly assessed the psychological significance of a prompt follow-up of his ordination through this series of regional meetings. By thus combining Church Council sessions with paschal celebrations he was indirectly calling upon the cluster of congregations in each circuit to demonstrate their loyalty and to set their seal of ritual approval on his newly acquired authority.

However, Gavure Jr realized that initiating a chain of Church events in which his assumption of authority could be publicly acclaimed by loyal office-bearers and symbolically demonstrated by himself in ritual, was not enough to create a close bond between himself and lay Church members. Drastic innovation in the sense of imposing Church reform from above, so soon after his father's death, was bound to be misinterpreted and counterproductive. Instead he introduced a new ministry of pastoral healing in which he himself was to play a central role. This ministry included intensive counselling of afflicted people under the revelatory guidance of the Holy Spirit (which started on the eve of Nheya Gavure's death when Ishmael was first filled by the Spirit) and the laying-on of hands during prayer. It was an extension of Topia healing practices which had already in the past acquired prophetic faith-healing fea-
It was therefore a safe innovation, not bound to provoke serious negative reactions. As introduced by Ishmael, it was an ideal means of bridging the gap between himself and lay members - that remoteness which, through pressure of circumstances and the nature of religious leadership, often characterizes relations between principal leader and laity. What was decidedly new about Ishmael's approach, were his efforts to model it on the ministry of Christ and his introduction of Spirit-directed diagnostic and therapeutic work, similar to that marking the faith-healing activities of the prophetic healers in the Spirit-type Churches.

The "imitation of Christ" emerged in the imagery of Ishmael's dreams. It is not clear whether the messenger introduced by the deceased bishop to his son in the above-mentioned dream at Ndanga was considered to have been an angel or Christ himself. But, by way of mystical sanction, the command to preach from John 14 placed the relationship between Ishmael and Chabata within the framework of Christ's relationship with His disciples, including, of course, the anticipation of betrayal by one of them. This close connection with and re-enactment of Christ's relationship with His disciples was vividly manifested in the way the young bishop modelled his discussions with his most senior office-bearers, the vaongamiri, on similar lines. It was not mere coincidence that he asked first Chapinga, and later the other vaongamiri as well, whether they loved him, after the style of Christ's testing of Peter's loyalty. The way in which this was done elicited great respect for the person of the new bishop from the Church elders, as a result of which they in turn responded to their bishop during council sessions in the idiom of Christ's disciples. Possibly the most potent representation of the image of Christ was the young bishop's sudden and overriding preoccupation with pastoral healing. When asked about it, he attributed this innovation to the guidance of God. "When God wants His work amongst people to make progress," he said, "He uses a particular method. He makes great use of the troubles and illness of people to redirect them. He now uses me, because whenever I pray for the afflicted it is revealed to me what the cause of affliction is, as well as the remedy - be it prayer, laying on of hands or washing with or drinking of holy water." Thus by Gavure's own admission there is a causal link between his Christ-like healing activities and the "progress of God's work" (in this case consolidation of his leadership and Church growth). In his own assessment of change, the Topia leader suggested that "these new things started to happen after my father's death. They are like miracles, which have
greatly helped the people." And the result of these miracles? Said the bishop: "They have become a burden to me, because having prayed for numerous people they keep coming back to me and refuse to be prayed for [which includes pastoral counselling] by anybody else." These words, which were borne out by facts and devoid of pretence, indicate the success of an innovation which was to a large extent aimed at forging close ties between leader and flock.

In so far as one can speak of a deliberate strategy on the part of Gavure Jr, the preoccupation with a Christological model is largely due to the deceased bishop's influence on his son, as well as Ishmael's many years of experience as a Fambidziano tutor. In the New Testament studies, in particular, the healing ministry of Christ is focal. Then there was also the Fambidziano-inspired ecumenical interaction between prophetic and non-prophetic movements, which over many years had placed Gavure Jr in a position to assess for himself the recruitment value and other advantages derived from the intimate in-group contacts of the Spirit-type healing ministry. It would be quite erroneous, however, to create the impression that the above-mentioned innovation was entirely an implementation of a deliberately planned strategy. Much of it was a spontaneous response to what was believed to be the inspiration of God, the movement of the Holy Spirit. From Ishmael's narration of his experiences following his father's death, it is apparent that his group-consolidation activities were based on a combination of his unusually honest religious fervour, strong faith in God's continual guidance and intervention, as well as careful planning based on the wise counsel of Church elders. It would be impossible to unravel and weigh in isolation these distinct yet intertwined strands of a comprehensive and complex religious process. In part it is an interplay of traditional religious and Christian factors, of old and new. The old manifests itself in the closeness of the deceased bishop to his son and to his Church, which finds expression in visions and dreams. In the pervading presence of the deceased leader the vatojia experience a sense of protection, security and guidance.

Through the narration of directive and guidance dreams - in which Nheya appears in his official attire as if to emphasize that his mystical visitations concern the work of the Church - the young bishop mobilizes the general opinion of his followers. By portraying these dreams as a form of mystical intervention, Ishmael acquires mystical legitimation for his measures against dissent; in other words, dreams become a potent control and group-consolidating
factor, in much the same way as they did in the case of the Mutendi successors and followers.

The Church members, in turn, demonstrate their right-mindedness through the narration of loyalty dreams, the content of which is stereotyped along the lines of the late bishop approaching the dreamer with words of encouragement for intensified spiritual activities, Bible study, various forms of Church activities or obedience to the young bishop's directives. This boosts the morale of the young leader and inspires lax and wavering members to purposeful religious participation.

Significantly, the old (the communication between the living and the dead) does not lead back to traditional religion. The old stimulates preoccupation with the new! The deceased bishop does not require veneration or propitiation in the traditional sense. As in life, he inspires his son to rely on Christ, to be spiritually alert and to pay attention to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Instead of a show of power, which could prove a distraction, the deceased bishop is portrayed in dream narratives as a humble yet firm messenger who with gentle persuasion urges both his son and followers to greater faith and reliance on the Christian God. It is he who, in the Ndanga dream, introduces the heavenly messenger - an angel or Christ - and urges his son to pay attention to the revelation imparted to him. Unlike the dream-image of a Mutendi or a Johane Maranke, where the dominant trend is the splendour and mystical power of the deceased (resulting in a binding or even coercive element between deceased leader and followers), the development in Gavure's Church is a more obvious progression from old to new; from the traditional protective powers of the deceased, ritually safeguarded for the living kin, to the inspirational, Christian view of the deceased believer becoming part of the "cloud of witnesses" who encourage increased Christian commitment (Heb. 12:1).

The following excerpt from a discussion I had with Bishop Gavure Jr about the role of his deceased father illustrates his awareness of the theological problems and pitfalls involved:

Q: Considering your father's dream-visitations, where is he? Is he with God?

Gavure: Well, I say he is in a good place, because it is not only me he visits. He also visits many of the other Church members regularly in dreams, whereby he inspires them to worship faithfully and tells them where to go for help.
Q: Is your father [in his deceased state] the mediator between the waTopia and God?

Gavure: It is not possible for us to know exactly what happens there, but there certainly is a connection [between deceased leader and God].

Q: Do you forward pleas to your father for him to present to God?

Gavure: No, I pray directly to God! If I would do that it is the same as kupira midzimu [to "worship" the ancestors], which is not allowed.

Q: And will your father stand at the gates of heaven to show God who his followers were?

Gavure: Yes, that I think will happen. When I die I expect him to stand at the gates to introduce me. It is merely a matter of a Church leader who fulfils the task he had on earth. He and his followers will probably eventually all be congregated at the gates of heaven. We would like to think that the deceased leader has gone ahead to pave the way, but we realize that there is only one true mediator, one Lord Jesus, who paves the way for us into heaven.

Q: And how do you see Mutendi's Church in this respect?

Gavure: Their approach is quite different. Many people in the ZCC consider Mutendi as the one who places them in heaven.

Q: How would you then qualify the relationship between your deceased father and the entire Topia Church?

Gavure: The Church members honour my father for what he has done. His remembrance inspires them in Church life, but they do not talk about him all the time. When they dream about him, however, they openly talk about it. Right now they are more concerned with what I, as the successor, am doing and whether I will follow in my father's footsteps in leading them as well as he did.

From Gavure's comments it is obvious that the deceased leader occupies a very special place in the thought world of his followers.
and that he is accorded a certain introductory function at the gates of heaven. Yet the young leader is extremely careful to distinguish this role from the exclusive mediatory function of Christ. With the prominence of Christ in his sermons and a growing focus on the revelations of the Holy Spirit in his pastoral healing activities, Gavure Jr creates a balance which is bound to prevent his followers from developing a blind spot in their perception of the salvific work of Christ, due to over-zealous preoccupation with their deceased leader. The young bishop himself displays a balanced approach, in that a certain awareness of and response to the deceased's felt presence do not result in stagnation in the past, but generates religious zeal for the present and the future.

In connection with the *Topia* development towards a more pentecostalist orientation, the following comments were made:

Q: Has the Holy Spirit now also "come out" [taken a central place as in the Spirit-type Churches] in your Church?

Gavure: Although we were recognizing the Holy Spirit in the past, we were suppressing His work. *We did not have the way of receiving Him!* Now that this [my filling with the Holy Spirit] has taken place I am asking God to reveal to me how I can enlighten my followers about the Holy Spirit.

Q: I have heard that you have exorcised many demons during one of your Paschal meetings. Is this so?

Gavure: The Holy Spirit comes out and drives them away. While my father was alive we did not know the difference between possession by the Holy Spirit and by evil spirits. We were wary of any kind of spirit presence. Now I have been given the *power of discernment* so that I can distinguish between demon possession and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Q: Does this mean that the gifts of speaking in tongues and prophecy are now conferred by the Holy Spirit on your Church?

Gavure: Yes, I reckon that is what is happening now. There is, for example, a young man whom I have prayed for in Buhera who witnesses that he is shown things by the Holy Spirit whenever he comes to me. I often pray with him, particularly before Church meetings and he then prophesies what will happen, what is
required, who needs help, etc. I spend time fasting and praying in order to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit for my Church. As a result I notice that the Holy Spirit reveals Himself much more in the Church now than before. The Spirit directs us in both Church organization and healing.

These are the convictions and impressions of a dedicated Christian leader who is steering his Church along pentecostalist lines towards inner renewal, reorganization and expansion. In the process of consolidating his leadership he himself is the central charismatic figure through whom the Holy Spirit’s revelational guidance and healing power manifests itself. However, his reference to the young Topia who assists him in prophetic activities indicates that this is not an exclusive, pneumatological manifestation reserved for the Church’s top office, but a prophetic ministry which could well lead to the gradual integration of the prophetic office in the Topia leadership hierarchy. Typologically the FEC would then virtually fit the Spirit-type ecclesiastical category.

By virtue of his father’s leadership, eccumenical impulses, his own theological training and teaching, as well as the introduction of spiritual renewal and healing through charismatic leadership, Ishmael Gavure has succeeded in establishing the kind of direct rapport with the core of Topia office-bearers and lay members, which make for cohesion and growth instead of schism. In terms of leadership succession, therefore, Topia history thus far represents a success story. Considering the odds favouring fission and fragmentation in the hour of crisis, which sooner or later comes in every Independent Church, this is a remarkable achievement. One can only hope that the positive trends in this Church will continue because the battle for cohesion in the widely-spread Topia congregations is not yet over. Hopefully, too, this example, which has been noted by numerous Independent Churches as a result of Fambidzano’s wide network of inter-Church relations, will inspire future heirs or successors to IC leadership to recognize the “hour of the wolf” and to lead wisely in the face of forces of ecclesial disruption and destruction.

4. COMMON FEATURES

From our review of a number of IC schisms it is apparent that despite essential differences in belief, ritual and organizational systems between the Ethiopian- and Spirit-type Churches, as well as
differential sets of historical and external factors determining the processes of leadership change, one can discern a number of common features which characterize most schisms following the death of a principal leader. In the concluding section of this chapter I briefly mention and discuss a few of the most pertinent features.

1. Inheritance of leadership plays a major role. Prior to his death President Sengwayo of the ACC had publicly ruled that in his Church such inheritance was not allowed. This resulted in part from his ideals for a theologically trained leadership core. In most cases such ideals, if put into practice, would exclude inheritance. He was confronted, moreover, with the stark fact that he had no male heir who could in any way qualify as his successor. Nevertheless, the need for a blood relative who could personify and perpetuate the link between his name and his Church after his death was no doubt a compelling reality in his life and towards the end drove him to introduce a desperate and highly controversial measure: the installation as his successor of a distant "relative" who in Church circles was an outsider - a measure which he must have known could lead to opposition and schism. Behind Sengwayo's move lies the common trend in the ecclesiology of most Independent Churches to which I have repeatedly referred in the above discourse, namely close identification between the founder leader and the Church, whereby the leader for his lifetime physically represents the vital and redeeming link between his followers and God. It is understandable that this ecclesiological characteristic, integrated as it is with customary notions of inheritance, generates a certain anticipation in Church leaders: that of living on in the Church in a leading capacity after death, be it through a son or other kinsman. This anticipation is based on the conviction that such blood-line continuity - blended in the deceased leader's and the succeeding son's on-going controlling authority in Church matters - is a legal right, reinforced by traditional custom and Old Testament evidence. In addition it is seen as the blessing and reward for a lifetime's labours conferred by God on the departing leader. It also ties in with traditional religious notions of well-being in the afterlife. In this regard the ritual installation of the deceased's name-bearer as a key figure maintaining reciprocal ties between the deceased and his/her living kin, and the regular ritual enactment of remembrance of the deceased, play a vital role.
Crisis and schism following a principal leader's death

Mutendi, through a centralized organizational system - contrasting sharply with the Chibarirwe concept of a "floating" Church headquarters - had involved his numerous sons in Church work all along and therefore in a sense had too many prospective "inheritors" towards the end of his life. By contrast Sengwayo, the remote and benevolent "father" with little binding authority over his Church, had none. Yet, their need for ongoing involvement in their Churches, for their individual histories and honour to be preserved and represented after their deaths by legitimate heirs in their "extended kin-groups" (i.e. their Churches) was essentially the same. They took different measures to secure the future - for themselves in death, and for the stability of the Churches they had to "leave" The one tactfully avoided a final choice between several prospective inheritors and the other desperately imposed an "outsider" on his Church. In both cases the end-result, as the implications of leadership succession unfolded, was the same: schism. On the other hand, the leadership succession history of the First Ethiopian Church shows that the divisive forces unleashed by the death of a principal Church leader can be overcome. Factors which in this case contributed towards the effective neutralization of potential schisms were: the inner cohesion in the Topia ranks prior to Bishop Gavure's death, the quality of the latter's leadership, the close ties of loyalty between regional Topia officials and the house of Gavure, forged prior to the bishop's death, and the convincing dedication and tact with which the successor bishop led his flock through the phase of group vulnerability which could have triggered schisms.

2. Whether the deceased principal leader is succeeded by an inheriting son (e.g. Bishops David Masuka, Samuel Mutendi and "High Priest" Johane Maranke) or by a mutorwa ("foreigner") who does not belong to the deceased's agnatic kin (e.g. the Rev Sengwayo), death itself and a change of leadership, which together constitute a brief or protracted period of ecclesial vulnerability, provide the psychological moment for dissent. I have argued in chapter 5 that the defection of individual key figures who gradually build their new movements, is more typical of the wide-ranging phenomenon of fission and the resultant proliferation of Churches, than is the "classic schism" in which entire factions break away from the parent Church en bloc. The death of the founder leader, which brings about the temporary "non-existence" or disjunction of the Church itself, is, however, the...
flashpoint which can trigger a classic schism. For it is at this point that the ambitious regional circuit leader, together with such congregations as he had founded himself, withdraw from the main body, as happened in the ZAC after Bishop Masuka's death; or, as in the case of Muongani of the Chibarirwe, starts developing towards full independence the latent local autonomy which was only partly manifest prior to the death of the principal leader. There can be little doubt that the brooding dissatisfaction of the progressive Chibarirwe congregations in Gutu with Sengwayo's indecisive leadership had been the cause of some preparations for and expectations of possible dissent long before the president's demise. Despite the initial phase of "testing" the new president's mettle, when Sengwayo died, these congregations were already more or less decided in favour of a better known and popular leader.

What motivates the schismatic leader to establish a new autonomous leadership and group at the risk of failure and disrepute when the parent body flounders in its "hour" (be it weeks, months or years) of vulnerability and transitional weakness? In most cases the schismatic leader justifies his actions with reference to the personal failures, doctrinal inconsistencies or whatever fault can be found with the deceased, the successor leader or the system of inherited leadership. About his conflict with and secession from Makaya, Muongani, for instance, stated: "It is the first time I have seen people going to court over Church matters. I had no option but to start operating under a new name, because Makaya had me detained." Such grievances about leadership incompetence and ensuing conflicts which in the oral history of the groups concerned become mythologized truths of validation, are invariably - as in Muongani's case - based on very real experience and should be recognized as such. Yet these often concern secondary issues; the primary, often hidden motives derive from the regional leader's sense of proprietorship and of belonging to the congregations he had built, and his need for full recognition of the imprint, peculiar to his own talents, he had made on these congregations. If the successor to the deceased leader is unaware of this, or through circumstances incapable of accommodating the need of such enterprising regional leaders, his directives are bound to be rejected as an unwanted intrusion on the networks of balanced interrelations between regional leaders and local followers which had grown over a period of time.
At bottom, the ambitious and enterprising regional leader - the potential secessionist - is driven by the same needs as the outgoing principal leader: a need of reward and blessing for a life-task well performed, of widespread recognition beyond the confines of the local Church circuit, of making a creative response to the Gospel. In addition there is a deep-seated need for being identified so closely with the Church as to raise a new monument of ecclesiastic achievement which hopefully, through inheritance (Muongani, for example, quite frankly verbalizes the hope that his oldest son will become his worthy successor as Church leader), will be attached to the family name and, through remembrance and honour in the Church community, will lift that name from the obscurity of the average lineage history to the fame and glory which human nature so ardently pursues.

3. Once a schism has come full circle and the new Church group is generally recognized as yet another autonomous member of the family of Churches, the schismatic leader seeks legitimation through anointment or ordination at the hands of senior Church leaders. The motives of the schismatic leader are: consecration for a divine task, affirmation of his senior position in the new movement in the eyes of his own followers, other Churches and society generally, and Christian authenticity. This last motive reflects the deep-seated need of the schismatic leader not to be considered an "outsider" who leads others astray but a legitimate initiate of the brotherhood, someone integrated into the century-old lineage of Church leaders, the historic line of apostolic succession. The need for this kind of Christian legitimation, which publicly symbolizes and affirms the link with the earliest Church of Christ, is so strong that the authority of the bishop or bishops performing the ordination, and the ritually confirmed integration of the initiate into the leadership lineage associated with the mainstream of Christianity, is more important than the type of Church these leaders represent. That is why Ruben Mutendi, a ZCC leader, accepted a Ndaza bishop, whose hands represented the link with the early Church via South Africa, America and Europe to the holy land, to legitimize his leadership; it is also why Muongani welcomed his consecration at the hands of both Zionist and Ethiopian-type leaders. Gierson, on the other hand, maintained an autonomous stance for many years, but his basic loyalty to the deceased Mutendi and the ZCC was strong enough to prevent him from seeking legitimation for a new movement outside the parent Church. Hence his reconciliation with
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Nehemiah and the ultimate incorporation of his following into the ZCC.

It is of interest to note that Muongani considered the influence of Fambidzano to have been decisive in his arrangements for an ecumenical ordination ceremony. This could create the misleading impression that Fambidzano in a sense constitutes a new legitimizing agency for secessionist leaders. One will have to concede that greatly improved inter-Church contacts and the elimination of many frictions of the past, particularly between Ethiopian- and Spirit-type Churches, could make it easier for secessionists to obtain a wider range of inter-ecclesiastical legitimation for their leadership. The very organization of Fambidzano and the regular meetings of member bishops cause them to be more readily available to all and sundry than in the past. Together they represent an impressive symbol of the apostolic succession - in the eyes of the schismatic leader seeking recognition, a veritable power house of diversified religious authority and ordaining hands!

This somewhat misleading image does not detract from the fact that, policy-wise, Fambidzano promotes union in the face of fission and in practice is known to have drastically curbed secessionist trends in its member Churches. The above example of Fambidzano-inspired participation by quite a number of IC dignitaries in the ordination of Bishop Ishmael Gavure clearly illustrates the contribution of this ecumenical body towards ingroup stability and ecumenical interaction as effective countermeasures to schism.88

4. A leadership succession crisis often creates such tension, bitterness and resentment between the contesting parties that fear of retaliation, even of death, features in the ensuing struggle for power and support. Muongani stated that, in terms of seniority, the Rev Pahla of the Chipinge district should have been Sengwayo's successor Pahla, however, publicly stated that he had no wish to be killed by sorcery in the Church's leadership struggle, thus declaring himself not available for the position. In his opposition to Makaya, Muongani himself suffered considerable anxiety in anticipation of drastic retaliation. Of this period of strife he said: "I knew I had to persevere [when Makaya had me detained], even if it caused my death." Likewise Ruben Mutendi anticipated harmful action by those who opposed his leadership,

88 Forthcoming publication on Fambidzano.
and David Masuka initially kept his anointment of Ruben secret for fear of being killed as he afterwards mentioned in one of his sermons. In anticipation of opposition and possible dissent from the side of Jekera, the newly ordained Topia Bishop, Ishmael Gavure, also recounts an experience of evil forces threatening his existence.

It is possible, even likely, that although the source of anxiety is seldom overtly admitted, the schismatic leader may suffer vague to very real fears of mystical retaliation from the side of the deceased principal leader. In the case of Gierson, his experience of the closeness of the deceased Mutendi through dreams and his fear of forfeiting the deceased leader's protection of his life, together formed a powerful deterrent to his forcing a complete break with the ZCC. I would also not be surprised if some of the anxiety experienced by Muongani stemmed from feelings of guilt at having contributed to the sad failure by the aged President Sengwayo to gain the support of the all important Gutu contingent of his Church for his final leadership arrangements. This could easily have caused Muongani to fear what could have been conceived of as formidable if not lethal opposition by an intruding yet powerful "outsider" (Makaya), backed by the mystical wrath of a leader who had died in a state of alienated frustration.

I suggest therefore that the power struggle and ensuing schisms following the deaths of principal leaders are existentially experienced by the prime movers not only in terms of the realization of leadership ambitions - canvassing of congregational support, consolidation of influence, opposition to rivals, etc., - but as dramatic life and death events implicating a wide range of seen and unseen forces. Participants in the struggle are both the living and the dead, benevolent and evil spirits.

5. In virtually all the schisms we have examined, dreams and visions featured prominently as a recognized form of communication between God, the living dead and the living. As the tensions mount between opposing parties, at the crisis of schisms or in the subsequent process of expansion and consolidation of parent and schismatic bodies, there is an intensification of dream-life - a deliberate turning in on and listening to the guiding messages from God, deceased leaders or other interested parties from Beyond. One of the features is the increased preocc-

89 App. III, p. 469.
cupation of those directly involved with private and public dream narration and interpretation: whether it is the deceased's successor in search of the guidance and support of his father, the schismatic leader seeking justification for his actions, or key figures making use of this medium to demonstrate loyalty and shape group attitudes.

As a western observer, unaccustomed to the deliberate or regular response to dreams, I may have been inclined to concentrate more on the pragmatic use of dreams as a potent tool in the shaping of the destinies of Church leaders and followers, than on the content and symbolism of dreams. In this respect I have done no more than touch on the proverbial tip of the iceberg. This field will have to be probed much more deeply and widely for a proper understanding of the interaction of seen and unseen forces in the dynamics of fission. The empirical evidence convincingly illustrates the immense importance attached by the Independents to dream-directives during periods of crisis and/or religious change.
I have tried to tell the story of leadership and fission in the Shona Independent Churches. At the end of it, which is merely the end of another book, I realize that I have perhaps only succeeded in presenting an outline - and even that incomplete - of the real story. In a sense therefore it is only the beginning of an attempt to understand a very rich and diversified subject. The very nature of the Independent Churches gives rise to this richness and diversity: their lengthy ceremonies of worship, their endless preoccupation with Bible-related themes in their sermons, and the predictable defections of office-bearers followed by the reshuffle of Church affiliations in a process of proliferation, expansion, renewal and consolidation or waning of Church groups. In each group this is accompanied, moreover, by orally projected, group-integrating - if sometimes contradictory - interpretations and re-interpretations of local Church history. A story which attempts to trace and probe the main features of outstanding events in this vast field will of necessity be both long and repetitive. To engage in such a narration is like walking in a thickly wooded forest, enchanted by the variety of trees but lacking the vocabulary to give full expression to the richness of the experience; or like trying to capture in words something of the fascination with which one watches and feels the endless monotony yet utter magic of the rise and fall of the ocean's waves.

Having felt these things and having been part of both forest and ocean, one can impart to others something of what one has experienced. Yet in the final analysis the age-old trees - whose bark, branches and leaves one has described - and the ocean waves - whose pounding one has felt and whose shades of colour were indelibly imprinted on one's perception - retain within themselves an unfathomable mystery which escapes understanding. Likewise, with the Shona Independent Churches, I have described something of their roots and growth in African soil; the dried out branches and new shoots of the age-old Zionist, Apostolic and Ethiopian
trees, the rise and fall of religious fervour which mark the life-tides of leaders and followers in the stabilization and fragmentation of a veritable ocean of Churches. But the story perforce remains incomplete. The rich tapestry of events has a mystery of its own. There are too many hidden motives, undercurrents of varied and unfathomable considerations in the minds and lives of the numerous actors in our story to permit more than a fleeting glimpse of what it is really about.

My emphasis on the incompleteness of our understanding of the phenomena described in this book should not be interpreted as an attempt to disparage the insights achieved. On the contrary, I consider the empirical data presented in this book to contribute to a more comprehensive perception of both leadership and fission dynamics of the Churches concerned. At the same time awareness of the limitations of this study compels me to warn against over-hasty conclusions based on the false assumption that this represents an exhaustive analysis. Too much is still unknown or left unsaid to allow one to cast the descriptive data into the rigid moulds of explanatory models or theories based on clearly conceived hypotheses which the Western academic persuasion so often imposes on us. Admittedly I have not always managed myself to avoid imposing my own bias and my ideals of achieving, if not academic perfection, then at least some sort of Western-style "excellence" by attempting to present the data in an "acceptably" schematized form. This, plus the fact that it is simply impossible to be fully open to or objective towards people and events of another culture, cautions one not to indulge in exclusive and categorical conclusions. The limitations of our knowledge, the recognition of that which remains shrouded in mystery, and the processes of development and change within the phenomena observed require humility in interpretation and evaluation which can at best be provisional.

Having said this, how should one interpret and evaluate the interplay between Old and New, between traditional and Christian tenets in both IC leadership and fission, which is the focal point of this study? Are we faced here with patterns of, in missiological terms, legitimate contextualization, in which the Christian message and Church structure manifest themselves in a sufficiently indigenized shape to be recognizable and meaningful in the Shona context, without becoming "enslaved" by this contextual shape to the point of losing their essential features? Or have the trends of interaction inspired no more than a superficial Christian transformation which has led to syncretism, in which the Old has
engulfed the New to the point that the movements under considera-
tion can no longer be the considered genuinely Christian? And is it
in fact possible to arrive at a conclusive answer (or judgement) to
these questions in a field so rich in often contradictory variety, in
verifiable events and statements deriving from an unknown world
of inner motivations and religious experience, as if one can argue
with certain logic through the jungle of known and unknown fac-
tors to arrive at a single, all-inclusive truth? Strong as the urge may
be to probe for the truth - in this case for the patterns or trends of
religious structure and development which can be considered repre-
sentative of the Churches concerned - and much as I accept the
biblical imperative to "discern the spirits", no easy answers or
judgements can be given.

In an attempt to arrive at a balanced and fair assessment of the
data under consideration, I have refrained from applying strictly
theological criteria to each and every subject. Truthful narration
appears to me to be an elusive art, an exacting exercise which
requires in the first place an honest rendering of the observable
facts and an intuitive feeling for the underlying and hidden forces
conditioning the religious phenomena concerned, so as to avoid
overloading the "story" from the outset with a host of theological
premises and hypotheses. This has not prevented me, however, from
providing a measure of theological interpretation of the descriptive
account of the Shona Independents in this study. As a result
theologians may criticize this work for its theological paucity, while
religious scientists or anthropologists, with ideals of non-partisan
scholarship, may fault it for containing "too much theology"
Nevertheless, I consider this approach, which can best be described
as the erection of a few preliminary theological signposts to act as
guidelines for further theological analysis, a valid one. Its claim to
validity does not include any pretentions to being an exhaustive or
conclusive evaluation. Hopefully, my "theological signposts" will
help to clarify the inevitable process of self-appraisal in which both
the Independent and established Churches of Southern Africa will
increasingly be involved in the future as they are drawn closer in a
variety of ecumenical contexts.

The theological direction indicated in this and the previous two
volumes on the Shona Independents amounts to a positive appraisal
of the identifiable processes of transformation taking place in the
Churches included in the survey, particularly those of the Spirit-
type. Despite numerous misconceptions and flaws which could be
qualified as syncretist, the Christian nature of these movements has
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remained manifest in thoroughly contextualized patterns in which the good news of salvation in Christ and related Christian beliefs have not become overly obscured by or unidentifiably absorbed into their Africanized guise. As I indicated in volume 2,¹ this view hinges to a large extent on the conviction that much of the inspiration in the lives of the IC leaders I have studied, and in the religious practices they have developed, derives from the Holy Spirit who meets these people meaningfully at their point of need.

That the limitations and in some respects incompleteness of the various processes of Christian transformation in the Shona Churches can prompt an essentially negative theological judgement is borne out in the Roman Catholic Bishop Hubert Bucher's approach in his book, *Spirits and power - an analysis of Shona cosmology.*² His response to the above-mentioned question concerning Old and New is in many ways the opposite to mine. In other words, in opposition to my suggestions that theologically acceptable patterns of Christian contextualization are emerging in the Shona Independent Churches, he judges that they (the Shona "Churches of the Spirit") have not really confronted traditional religious assumptions and that the traditional world-view or cosmology has been incorporated into these movements essentially unchanged. As Bucher drew almost exclusively on the material presented in my first two volumes in the series, *Old and New in Southern Shona Independent Churches,* to arrive at what I consider to be misleading generalizations about and a negative theological judgement of the Churches concerned, I consider a brief discussion of his views and working method to be warranted. Bucher's sweeping statements about IC leadership of the Spirit-type, moreover, have a direct bearing on the main subject of this study and therefore deserve some consideration. The following quotation summarizes the essence of Bucher's evaluation:

"In chapters six to eight I show that this traditional Shona view of the world as an enormous field of power [in the first five chapters Bucher sets himself the task of exposing power as the root concept of Shona traditional religion and claims that such

¹ Daneel, 1974, p. 347f.
² Bucher's book deals with Shona cosmology. He sets himself the task of exposing power as the root concept of the traditional religion of the Shona in Zimbabwe. In chapters 6-8 the "Churches of the Spirit" (Zionists and vaPostori) are discussed. On the basis of material presented by myself in the previous two volumes of this series, Bucher argues that these Churches have failed to address and Christianize the traditional religious assumptions of the Shona."
an exposure is the result of culling the essential tenets of traditional religion from their cultural wrappings according to his strictly anthropological method and theory] has entered the doctrine and practice of the 'Churches of the Spirit' essentially unchanged. It is true that in their official doctrine these Churches ascribe to the Holy Spirit all those roles which formerly in the Shona traditional religions were held by different spirits or 'powers' However, in their practice this has not led to a significant difference between their own rites and traditional Shona rituals. In addition, most members of these Churches see the alleged ultra-human powers of their Church founder vested in the latter's own person and not as an outflow of the Holy Spirit, as is their Church's official doctrine.

"There can be no doubt that each encounter of the Christian Gospel with another culture leads to a melange, as Daneel has expressed it very well in his study Old and New in Southern Shona Independent Churches. However, I believe that in the case of the Shona 'Churches of the Spirit', this melange has put the Gospel at a disadvantage and consequently, has led to their "South-Americanization" Putting the argument in Biblical language, one could say that in these Churches far too small a lump of yeast has been smothered by an excessive amount of flour [my italics]."

As I have pointed out in a review of Bucher's study in Missionalia, I consider such a drastic judgemental stance to be the result of oversimplification and schematization which do no justice to the genuine impulses of the gospel in the Shona Churches. Bucher's conclusions appear to be based on a misrepresentation of facts about the "Churches of the Spirit", which leads to caricature. Far from adhering strictly to "anthropological method and theory", Bucher construes a one-sided picture, either ignoring my positive evaluation of the Spirit-type Churches or finding the evidence unconvincing. He does not accept, for instance, the very real changes in the diagnosis and therapy of the Shona prophetic healers as a Christian substitute for the practices of the traditional diviner-

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3 Bucher, 1980, p. 16.
4 Missionalia, Vol. 10, No. 1, April, 1982, pp. 30-32.
5 Bucher, 1980, p. 17.
healer, but insists that the traditional notions of power and powers have remained unchanged in the Zionist and Apostolic prophetic activities. Wherever I indicated weaknesses in the Spirit-type Churches and areas where a complete transformation of old notions has not yet taken place, Bucher draws the argument to what he obviously considers to be its logical conclusion in an effort to prove his basic assumption that Shona prophetic activities merely represent a *continuity* of present and past rather than an intrinsic change. This is particularly evident in his reference to my work as if it would support his mistaken claim that Shona prophets generally recommend the appeasement of irate ancestral spirits as the only solution "exactly as any traditional diviner would do". Far from providing grounds for this equation of nganga and prophetic activities, I in fact made the following distinctions in Volume 2:

"After diagnosis of the illness, the remarkable similarity between the activities of the nganga and the prophet ceases. Both of them find the origin of the disease in the disturbed communal society. Both recognize the bedevilling effect of the powers unleashed in the inter-human relationships and the threatening support of the spirits. But they stave off these powers differently. While the nganga seeks a solution which accedes to the conditions of the spirits, *the prophetic therapy is based on the belief in the power of the Christian God, which surpasses all other powers*. The nganga ... advocates ancestral worship in the case of mudzimu with legitimate claims, and the expulsion of evil wizardry powers or ngozi spirits through rites of a magical nature ... To the Zionist and Apostle the mudzimu's claim to worship is inadmissible on Biblical grounds. A compromise is only reached when non-Christian or non-Zionist relations must be met in the conflict situation."

In the light of my additional observation that compromise solutions hardly ever include prophetic inducement of Church members to participate in traditional rites in order to appease ancestral spirits, it is obvious that there is a vast difference between my distinctions and Bucher's efforts to construe lines of continuity

6 Ibid., p. 160.
7 Ibid., p. 158.
8 Ibid., p. 171.
between *nganga* and prophetic activities. In my presentation both prophetic belief and practice reflect not only *continuity* with those of the *nganga* but very clear trends of *discontinuity*, and this is shown to be a result of prophetic confrontation in the name of the Holy Spirit at the existential core of traditional religion. Bucher's failure to give credence to this theologically significant point speaks for itself.

Possibly the most disturbing thing about Bucher's book is his attempt to justify his conclusions on the basis of my study. Instead of acknowledging the possibility that the Spirit of the Christian God may be moving in the Shona "Churches of the Spirit" - which could mitigate his over-critical assessment of a so-called "South Americanized" phenomenon - he states: "It is hard for one to avoid the impression that Daneel, who is investigating the possibility of opening a theological training centre for the leaders of the Independent Churches in Rhodesia, deliberately refrains from making statements which could be taken amiss by these leaders and jeopardize the implementation of his plans."¹⁰ The bishop is obviously suggesting that had I been as far removed as he from the Shona people I would have come to the same kind of theological conclusions as he did. This is unnecessary and unacademic conjecture!

Had the bishop been sufficiently informed about the Shona "Churches of the Spirit" he would have known that at the time of the publication of his book I was no longer investigating the possibility of theological training, but had at that stage been engaged for nearly a decade in the implementation of TEE programmes for these Churches, working together with the majority of IC leaders mentioned in my study.

If nothing else, Bucher's comment highlights the essential difference between our working methods. On the basis of secondary sources he addresses the phenomenon of Independent Churches in terms of abstract and rationally simplified theories; a position which in all likelihood assumes a Western academic rather than an African Independent readership. Perhaps this then is a "contextualized theology" sufficiently remote from the actors of what in effect becomes a theoretically manipulable, surveyable phenomenon, to permit a seemingly logically argued theological evaluation which allows a final, categorical judgement. As an observer of and a participant in IC life I, on the other hand, am attempting another kind of "contextualized theology" which addresses itself in the first place to the

Shona IC leadership (many of whom are familiar with my publications) and African Independent Churches in general, and which also attempts an interpretation for the sake of interested Western academics. In so far as I am writing about key figures, many of whom have been my hosts during protracted sojourns at their Church centres, friends in everyday life, and fellow workers in ecumenical and theological training projects, I have adopted what I would call an open-ended theological position. This involves the challenge of giving full recognition to the processes of change within the Independent Churches, reserving theological judgement in the face of a field too vast to be fully comprehended, yet not shirking the responsibility of exposing those strengths and weaknesses within these movements which can be observed and described with a reasonable degree of certainty. To what extent one can succeed in such a precarious cross-cultural exercise remains debatable. It is quite possible, for example, that in the final analysis the Independents themselves will judge my analyses to be subject, if perhaps in a more subtle manner, to the same Western bias and judgemental theological framework as I have attributed to Bucher.

Be that as it may, I still contend that Bucher errs in his attempt to rigidly schematize a field which is too rich, too diversified, too elusive and too fluid for the type of either/or approach which will and must rationalize, systematize and ultimately judge. In connection with IC leadership, Bucher's categorical statement that "most members of these Churches see the alleged ultra-human powers or their Church founder vested in the latter's own person and not as an outflow of the Holy Spirit" is simply not true. This is a sweeping generalization which has some relevance to the late Bishop Mutendi's leadership because of the latter's mystical powers, but it certainly does not apply to the large number of Ndaza Zionist Churches. Even in the case of Mutendi, Bucher's observation is debatable. Since all through his life Mutendi was seen by his followers as "messenger" or "man of God", there can be little doubt that the power he personified bore a close relationship to that of the Christian God. If asked about it, many ZCC adherents would qualify Mutendi's power as emanating from the Godhead or Holy Spirit, in sharp contradistinction to the powers traditionally attributed to the nganga or svikiro (spirit medium). It would therefore be more appropriate to speak of Mutendi's iconic leadership, which to his followers mirrors something of the inexplicable power of the almighty God of the Bible, than to liken him to a traditional
spirit-medium and portray his ZCC merely as a counterpart to the traditional territorial cult of Matonjeni, as Bucher does.\(^{11}\)

The one-sidedness of such an interpretation arises from Bucher's attempt to establish lines of continuity between leaders of the "Spirit Churches" and traditional religious authorities, ignoring the distinctly Christian features of such leadership. He says, for instance, that the founders of these Churches have absorbed the traditional sources of power. "Like chiefs they glory in the ownership of representative centres of power and enjoy the support of a large group of followers; like senior mediums of territorial spirits they function as rainmakers, guarantors of fertility, mediators in disputes between chiefs, and they are believed to be able to bring down severe punishment on any deviator; one's membership of the community they have founded ensurs continued health and blessings, and a place in heaven - benefits which were formerly safeguarded by the ancestral spirits."\(^{12}\)

Much as I concede these similarities - for I pointed them out myself in the first place - they represent only part of the picture, and even then not of Spirit-type Churches generally, as Bucher implies, but of Mutendi's ZCC. Here again Bucher presents a somewhat distorted image of Bishop Mutendi (who would in any event have rejected the suggestion that he could "ensure" his followers a place in heaven) as if it were applicable to the entire range of Spirit-type IC leadership.

Finally, having incorrectly generalized Spirit-type leadership from a one-sided interpretation of Mutendi's leadership, and having either ignored or minimized the Christian features of the entire movement, Bucher disparagingly judges that the "Churches of the Spirit" have not only failed to confront the traditional cosmology with the gospel of Jesus Christ but, in contrast to the example of Christ, have focused "their attention on the power which Simon, the 'converted' magician attempted to buy from the Apostles"\(^ {13}\) Much as I share Bucher's concern for the gospel of Christ in Shonaland, I fail to understand the grounds for such a judgement. Perhaps one's person has to be vested with some kind of ecclesial authority if one is to understand.

\(^{11}\) Bucher, 1980, pp. 132, 134.
\(^{12}\) Ibid., p. 146.
\(^{13}\) Ibid., p. 205.
What remains to be said about our widely divergent viewpoints? Have I judged the bishop even more harshly than he has judged the "Churches of the Spirit"? In a rejoinder to my critique, Bishop Bucher graciously pointed out that his viewpoint does not imply a lack of appreciation for my existential involvement with the Shona Independents. Although this was not my main concern, I noted his comment with due respect. "I am also aware," Bucher added, "that the conversion of a culture to Christ is a painfully slow process which is in the best case only achieved by approximation. My point is that at the outset of 'Christianisation' the lump of yeast may be so small that it never stands a chance to penetrate the flour and make the dough rise."

I have little trouble accepting this assertion, because there is a world of difference between the hesitation implied by the "may be" in the above sentence and the intransigence of Bucher's original statement that, in the "Churches of the Spirit", too little yeast was in fact smothered by an excessive amount of flour, to the disadvantage of the Gospel.

Ultimately, I think it appropriate to extend an invitation to Bishop Bucher to join me in the worship and dance of the "Churches of the Spirit". In such celebration, which can - as I have often found - lead to a profound experience of the divine presence, the sharpness of our opposing viewpoints can best be relativized. Under such circumstances we may well find Zionist bishops sitting in judgement on our enslavement to and idolatry of our Western theological constructs, our dogmas and creeds, the "little monuments" of our written books - all those things which prevent the pure yeast of the gospel to act fully on our neatly organized, overfull and therefore often bleak and empty Western lives. Liberation for us lies in the dancing bare feet of Africa! These often speak more loudly about the movement of God's Spirit than our written theories or supposedly unbiased observations.

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Having adopted the somewhat unconventional procedure of moving in an Epilogue from confession (about the unknown) to theological controversy and then to celebration (perhaps a liberating...
sequence to those of us caught up in intellectual pursuits), I still have to make some concluding remarks about the contents of this study. Much of it fluctuates between the two poles of Old and New, which could be confusing to anyone trying to arrive at some sort of comprehensive theological viewpoint. How can one evaluate a wide range of African Churches which incorporate such an abundance of tradition-oriented features that Christian authenticity, at least in some areas of Church life, appears to be questionable? Part of the problem arises from the incompleteness of this study. A penetrating treatise of Church ceremonies, belief systems and doctrine still needs to be attempted before the development of a fair and inclusive theological overview will be possible. Even then some imponderables will remain because of the transience of some of the IC structures and practices described and the elusive multiplicity of both corroborative and contradictory truths confronting any observer of Independentism. In addition, my own fascination with the "Africanness" of the Independent Churches, which on occasion leads to unevenness of presentation - at times focusing more sharply on the Old than on the New - could create the misleading impression that the lines of continuity between Church practices and the traditional customs, beliefs and worldview predominately to the point of obscuring and thereby compromising Christian tenets - as Bucher in fact concluded. In view of this possibility, I wish to highlight a few of the features of IC leadership and fission discussed in this book, to illustrate why I have maintained a consistently positive appraisal of the Christian nature of the Churches under consideration.

1. CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

Among the most prominent features of indigenized leadership which could raise serious questions about its Christian content are the correlation between the structure of IC leadership hierarchies and kinship ties and the related problem of hereditary leadership; the interpretation and practice of the prophetic office; and the posthumous role attributed to some of the principal leaders. This last feature, which has induced observers to distinguish a form of "Messianic leadership", touches upon a wide spectrum of related issues, such as concepts of salvation, heaven, the mediation of Christ and the deceased leader's relationship to Christ. Once again, because of my open-ended theological approach, my concluding comments on this score should not be considered conclusive and definitive but merely
a positive "sign-posting" of empirical trends which could be the focus of a much more elaborate theological analysis than I have attempted.

(a) Kinship and hereditary leadership

A survey of several IC congregations has revealed the significance of kinship in their leadership nucleus. As a result they emerge to some extent as family and extended family concerns, suggesting the qualification "family Churches". Two outstanding characteristics are: (1) the distribution of authority in leadership hierarchies in accordance with the traditional kinship obligations of super- and subordination, and (2) the tendency to perpetuate Church interests within families through hereditary leadership which at the congregational level frequently triggers group segmentation through "double successions" and, in the wider Church context, large-scale schisms when a principal leader dies. These characteristics inevitably raise the question whether kinship, and by implication tribal and other traditional considerations, do not consistently override and supersede the interests and objectives of Christ's ecclesia. Is it not the glorification of the kin-group, the well-being, wealth and fame of the leader or office-bearer which is at stake, rather than Christ or God's kingdom? There can be little doubt that the intimate identification between the body of believers and kinship-based rural communities in some instances leads to religious superficiality or a loss of Christian identity; in short, adaptation to the recognizable traditional patterns of Shona society overpowers and paralyses the impulses of Christian transformation. However, this appears to me to be the exception rather than the rule, for the following reasons:

1 The yeast of the Christian message shows a remarkable resilience in that the gospel keeps functioning as a corrective in the interaction of Old and New. Due to human factors this is not always fully evident. Leadership ambition, the search for social recognition, pride in family tradition, etc. cause variations in the local histories of congregations which could lead to misinterpretation. Spells of leadership conflict, expressed in terms of lineage interests or loyalties, can cause or coincide with a low ebb of spirituality in any congregation. Invariably, however, such phases are temporary and do not of necessity lead to lethargy and disintegration. On the whole I have found the Independents' will to
be Christian, their need to respond genuinely to the gospel and their search for spiritual renewal through the Scriptures to be powerful factors which counteract spells of spiritual apathy or the degeneration of congregational life into mere pseudo-Christian associations of ethnicity. Thus, for all the imperfections, the close identification of family and Church interests, driven to extremes during leadership succession crises, does not as a rule quench the gospel-inspired group-awareness that Church affiliation both incorporates and transcends kinship ties.

2. The reversal of customary roles of super- and subordination in IC leadership hierarchies underscores the uniqueness of a new kind of responsibility which not only adapts itself to the old order but also transforms it into new patterns of authority. Mention was made of senior office-bearers appointing the in-laws of their wife-providing lineage to relatively low offices or to subordinate yet honorary positions, e.g. as "judges" (vatongi). Although this does not affect the customary obligations of the now senior mukuwasha (son-in-law) to his tezvara (father-in-law), in virtually all such "reversals" of authority the directives from the top are respected, responded to and interpreted in terms of the new order, associated as it is with divine inspiration and biblical injunctions.

3. Even where the ecclesial authority patterns match those of the old order, kinship ties in the Church context obtain new content. Often the most senior kinsman at the apex of the local hierarchy "exploits" his natural authority over subordinate kinsmen in junior offices in a positive manner for purposes of spiritual renewal, group expansion or the undertaking of Church projects (e.g. fund-raising or joint agricultural activities). Even though the combination of ecclesial and traditional seniority can lead to abuse, in the sharing of a common purpose in religious life father/son, elder brother/younger brother and other such relations tend to gain in flexibility and quality. The strictures of customary law are not necessarily lifted, but their application within a context of diversified responsibilities - which at least in intent revolves around a message of love, salvation and progress - reflects new traits of bonding, understanding and care.

4. Despite the disadvantages that hereditary leadership have for Church life - such as the possibility of family interests overriding the considerations of the deceased's successor's leadership potential and spiritual maturity, as well as the apparent impact
of this practice on the incidence of schisms - the following positive trends should be kept in mind:

(i) Ordination ceremonies confirming hereditary leadership are quite distinct from the traditional *kugadzira* and *kugova nhaka* (distribution of inheritance) ceremonies, as we have seen in the distinctions made between Sainos's succession to Mutendi's headmanship and Nehemiah's installation as inheriting bishop in the ZCC, as well as Ishmael Gavure's ordination in his late father's place as leader of the Topia Church. These ceremonies in themselves indicate a consensus that although similarities with past practices exist, the responsibilities devolving on the deceased's successor are essentially different from the religious duties accepted by the deceased's name-bearer on behalf of the kin-group during the traditional rituals. Within the contextualization which renders these ceremonies meaningful and understandable the new elements (such as the acceptance of gospel criteria for the kind of leadership required, the acceptance of responsibility for a much wider "kin-group" [the body of believers] based on loyalties quite different from those of blood-ties, the interplay between successor leader and Church council, etc.) are quite distinct.

(ii) The cases of Bishop David Masuka, who coaches one of his sons to become an able successor, Bishop Gavure who had a close link with his son Ishmael in anticipation of the latter's inheritance of leadership, and Peter Makamba who is currently sharing ecclesial duties with his aging father, Bishop Makamba, illustrate the growing trend for a principal leader to prepare for responsible, sound leadership after his death. This shows an awareness that there is much more at stake than blood-ties, family interests and a justification of hereditary leadership on Old Testament grounds. The fact that in an increasing number of cases it is no longer the deceased's eldest son who inherits ecclesial duties, as customary practice prescribes, indicates that priority is given to the successor's dedication, spiritual capacity and experience of Church work. Although the late Bishop Mutendi's preferences regarding possible inheritors appear to have fluctuated somewhat, his concern for sound Church leadership was evident. As a result, notwithstanding the division between them, both
his sons, Ruben and Nehemiah, proceed with their Church duties in a manner which reflects a distinctly Christian sense of responsibility for their followers.

(iii) The inheritor-successor does not act *in vacuo* or merely in response to the dictates of kinsmen, but is responsible to a Church council. This division of power invariably prevents the new leader from exploiting his privileges for purposes of self- or family interest. As Ishmael Gavure's ministry clearly illustrates, it is in the context of the Church council that the challenge arises for the successor-leader and his followers to grow spiritually, to bond and to expand in response to local Church tradition and gospel-inspired evangelistic impulses. Moreover, the effort to correlate the wishes of the deceased leader and that of the Church council (through the ballot) in the appointment of a successor clearly shows an awareness that the future of the Church requires much more than blood ties between successive leaders and the perpetuation of family interests.

(b) The prophetic office

I have not endeavoured to give a comprehensive account of prophetic revelatory and healing activities in this volume because it was done elsewhere.16 As the prophetic office is such a central and all-absorbing aspect of leadership in the Spirit-type Churches, and as they have developed prophetic faith-healing into one of their most significant recruitment techniques, some concluding comments could help to clarify the overall picture. In my view there is no reason to assume with Bucher that through prophetic activities these Churches have absorbed the entire traditional Shona cosmology essentially unchanged. There are admittedly some disturbing features which, if generalized at random, could lead to a distorted overview and far too harsh a judgement in this regard. I mention three such features:

1. The traditional understanding of well-being in life and the threat of destructive forces indeed enhance the tendency in the prophetic movements to develop a one-sided image of God as the all-powerful One, the protector of life against evil forces

16 Daneel, 1974, chapters 3 and 4.
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whose Spirit operates through prophetic healers to preserve and bless the lives of believers in this existence.

2. The concentration by prophetic healers on the traditionally conceived causation of illness or misfortune could, in some instances, lead to a preoccupation with ancestral or other spirits to the point of "enslaving" afflicted individuals to such forces instead of achieving liberation in the saving power of the Christian God in accordance with prophetic objectives.

3. The prophetic use of a wide range of symbols (e.g. staves, water, cords and linen or paper strips, meant to represent the healing powers of God) is not always devoid of magical interpretation of such objects. These features, however, are symptoms of an uneven and incomplete process of transformation. Empiric reality simply does not allow one to elevate them one-sidedly as major characteristics of prophetic practice, as if Christianizing change of a far-reaching nature has not taken place. As indicated in chapter 1, the reasons for a positive theological appraisal are the following:

(i) Prophetic insights are interpreted by the Independents as divinely inspired revelations of an Old Testament nature. These are considered to be directly related to Scripture, but they have no canonical value and are discarded if their implications for practical life are considered to be contrary to the gospel message. The control of prophetic revelations cannot be considered perfect, but a general urge to "discern the spirits" is in evidence and if a prophet is seen to act out of self-interest, he is disciplined or excommunicated. Moreover, although in ceremonies of worship attention may be paid to revelatory prophecies, these are never allowed to override the kerygmatic task of the Church. As a result prophecies are publicly subjected to the authority and proclamation of the gospel. In the minds of Church members this establishes a sound relationship between biblical truth and prophetic Spirit manifestations.

(ii) Through a very broad interpretation of prophetic healing which touches on virtually all aspects of life, this practice incorporates a dimension of understandable and therefore very effective pastoral care. Prophetic revelations about all kinds of ailments or mishaps in life signal to those in need that, through His Spirit, God Himself (unlike the more remote traditional Mwari) is intimately involved in
all of life, and that *He deals directly with all their problems.* In prophetic healing colonies patients are introduced to a wide range of religious and agricultural activities which give them a new sense of belonging and identity - a situation which is conducive to the elimination of the stresses and strains of everyday life, thus creating an ideal framework for pastoral care.

It is in the consultative situation between prophetic healer and patient that *dialogue and confrontation between Christian faith and traditional world-view takes place.* As I have mentioned above the prophetic *diagnosis* corresponds to that of the *nganga* in that the traditional causation of illness is taken seriously. Significantly, however, the prophet seeks a Christian solution to counteract the threat of the abusing spirit or power. Instead, therefore, of prescribing ancestor veneration or traditional rites, a *Christian therapy* of exorcism in the name of the triune God or a variety of other faith-healing activities symbolizing God's liberating power is brought into play. Despite exceptional cases of compromise for the sake of non-Christian relatives, no Shona Zionist or Apostolic prophet considers the therapeutic instructions or liberating activity of the Holy Spirit to be a concession to the claims of the traditionally conceived afflicting spirits. *For a sound evaluation at this point it is of the utmost importance to take seriously the sincere conviction of most Shona prophets that they represent the Holy Spirit of the Bible, whose requirements are essentially different from those of the traditional spirit-world.* They would regard the suggestion that they are merely reproducing *nganga* practices with a thin veneer of Christianity as an arrogant rejection of the very real experience that they and their patients have of the saving and liberating work of the Holy Spirit. In addition, they would be adamant in their rejection of any notion that they are not confronting traditional world-views or cosmologies from an essentially Christian viewpoint. The established Churches will, in all probability, have to admit that, at an existential level and from a psychological point of view, the Shona prophets are implementing a more effective and penetrating pastoral ministry of confrontation with traditional beliefs and world-views than they themselves have ever been.
(iv) Considering the explicit prophetic opposition to ancestor veneration, the intimate relationship between biblically based worship and faith-healing, the repeated prayers during healing sessions and the attitudes of prophets generally which appear to reflect much of the healing ministry of Christ, there is little reason to dispute the convincing claims of prophets that the source of their extra-perception is the Holy Spirit and not the divinatory sources of the nganga. The conviction of numerous patients that they have been healed, blessed or protected by the triune Christian God contradicts the kind of assessment which glibly suggests that in prophetic healing the connection between the Holy Spirit and Scripture is entirely severed. Why should the Holy Spirit not inspire people and provide them with insights and solutions within the cultural framework in which they live and conceptualize things? Why should He not take seriously the traditional cause of the malady, which is a reality to both prophet and patient, and deal with it in a manner which both parties understand? Certainly the Holy Spirit enriches and widens the scope of people’s thought-world, but He does so through a process of transformation and renewal of the known from within, and not through a negation or elimination which would render the "good news" incomprehensible.

(v) In so far as the role of the traditional nganga has provided an original African paradigm for an indigenous Christology, the Independents, with their nganga-related yet decidedly new ministry of healing, have thrown this paradigm into much sharper relief than have the established Churches. In this respect they are making a clear contribution towards a Christian theology in Africa which seeks to live and present Christ incarnate at the existential, acculturated level where it really matters. Nowhere does the prophetic healer personify the attitude of Christ more forcefully than in his confrontation with wizardry. Taking this practice seriously, he/she seeks to cleanse society of such evil; then, instead of ostracizing the accused wizard according to the traditional practice, a

17 See, for example, Oosthuizen, 1968, pp. 126, 129, 132.
message of hope and reconciliation is conveyed by means of concrete attempts to have the suspect or self-confessed wizard pardoned and accepted by Church and society.

(c) Iconic leadership

In chapter 3 I argued that the qualifications "Messianic leadership" and "Black Messiah" are misleading, since they were based on the assumption that the outstanding founder leader usurps the mediatory function of Christ in the afterlife. The supposed involvement of leaders such as Mutendi and Maranke at the gates of heaven represents an introductory function, which is a projection of customary behaviour in the presence of dignitaries rather than a safeguard for the entry of their followers into heaven, as if to relativize the individual's direct responsibility to God. In view of the general tendency to attribute to most IC leaders - and not only to the better-known, powerful and influential ones - an ongoing involvement in Church life in their posthumous state, the close association between leader and Christ which this notion implies, and the common inclination of Independents to treat their leaders as Christ-like figures, Sundkler's distinction of iconic leadership appears to be fair and appropriate. Contrary to disparaging judgements which consider Spirit-type leadership to lead to a nonexistent Christology, a false pneumatology and a one-sided eschatology, the empiric evidence within the Shona Spirit-type Churches points to a presupposed (and currently clearly emergent!) Christology, a prominent, Person-orientated pneumatology and a realized, futurist eschatology.

Owing to the theological inconsistencies within the Independent Churches these positive distinctions cannot be seen as final pronouncements on an intricate transitional situation which still requires sustained research. However, if the introductory sign-posts I have erected should stimulate further enquiry and theological openness in the evaluation of research results, much will have been achieved.

The inconsistencies I am referring to appear in the seeming contradictions between the evidence presented in the first and second sections of this study. Having argued against the usurpation of Christ's mediation in chapter 3 - on the basis of research results from the 1960s - some facts about the dynamics of fission in the 'seventies and 'eighties in the subsequent chapters could be interpreted as supporting the opposite viewpoint. Is it possible, one may
well ask, to disclaim Mutendi's substitution of Christ's mediation if he publicly states - as happened at David Masuka's Church opening ceremony - that he will be the "one witness" representing the Black people of Zimbabwe on the final day of God's judgement? Are the views of Matenda Gierson that Mutendi is God, that he is "the Jesus of the black people" and that he will in fact mediate on behalf of Blacks at the gates of heaven, not prompted by a totally distorted conception of the exclusiveness of Christ's salvific work? Does this not prove that the close identification between Church leader as icon and the anthropomorphic attributes of the triune God leads to syncretic aberrations of a totally un-Christian nature? And is the belief expressed at Bishop Gavure's runyaradzo ceremony that both the late Topia bishop and the aging Bishop Makamba will posthumously be involved in "preparing a place" for their followers, after the fashion of Jesus' promise to His disciples in John 14, not further proof that traditional notions about the relationship between the living and the dead are superseding and distorting biblical concepts of salvation and the afterlife?

A literal interpretation of the data presented in this study would almost certainly lead to an affirmative response to these questions. Yet I must once more sound a warning. In the first place my data on the subject do not warrant final and conclusive generalization. A survey of the conceptual world of Gierson's followers will, for instance, have to be conducted before one can gauge accurately the extent to which this leader's views on Mutendi are representative of those held by the people whom he converted and spiritually nurtured. In the second place, these questions can only receive adequate attention when placed in the wider context of the beliefs and practices of these Churches. The following arguments bear out this point: in the wider spectrum of ZCC activities Mutendi's claim to "mediatorship" at Masuka's Church can be assessed at its real value - as an opportunistic statement in the presence of Ndaza Zionists, intended not as a balanced theological statement about the afterlife, but to impress and draw outsiders by referring to the possible benefits his leadership could have for them. Questionable as this tactic was at the time, it carries less weight than the large number of Mutendi's sermons (many of which I have tape-recorded) directed at ZCC audiences at Church headquarters and in various circuits,

18 Infra, p. 234.
19 Infra, p. 300.
20 Infra, p. 359.
none of which contain similar claims. On the contrary, many of these contained a Christological emphasis in respect of faith-healing and the afterlife, aimed at dispelling the trend among ZCC members - of which Mutendi appeared to have been fully aware - to elevate his stature as "miracle-maker" and "man of God" to a point where it could interfere with a clear perception of Christ's saviourhood. Towards the end of his life the late bishop made promises to his followers about giving them a sign on the third day after his death. This was done to comfort his followers, not to find an African substitute for the death and resurrection of Christ. As I have pointed out before, the need for Christian authenticity leads to the closest possible identification with biblical figures and the re-enactment of biblical events. Far from aiming at substitution or the presentation of an African equivalent of Christ's mediatorialship, we find in the events surrounding Mutendi's death a vivid expression of Christian identity and the final proof of divine sanction of Mutendi's mission in this world. That such an expression contains theological excesses and flaws, a response to a long history of opposition to and rejection of both the ZCC and its leadership by established Churches, seems understandable and calls for restrained evaluation.

Heretical as Gierson's comments may sound, they were in the first place intended to emphasize the uniqueness of an African leader who must indeed have appeared "like God" in his sustained representation of an oppressed colonial people's ideals of liberation. It should be kept in mind, too, that Gierson was making these comments as an uneducated Church leader in the presence of a white observer whom he wanted to convince of the Christian attributes of his Church. Theologically incorrect though his distinction between Christ's and Mutendi's mediation at the gates of heaven may be, his assertion that Mutendi is God in all probability was a statement of analogy (common in the Shona language) connoting likeness rather than total identification in the sense of a deification of the founder leader. This argument appears valid if seen in the wider context of Gierson's ministry: his sermons mostly distinguish quite clearly between Mutendi as a human emissary of God and the God of the Bible; many of the converts in his branch of the ZCC appear to have acquired, through Gierson's influence, a sound understanding and experience of Christ's saviourhood; and in his prophetic activities he does in fact distinguish between the extra-perception

21 Infra, p. 300.
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provided by the Spirit of the Bible and the more general inspiration concerning the planning and control of Church activities emanating from the deceased leader through visions and dreams. In addition, the centrality and corrective influence of Scripture in this wide range of emergent trends and apparently contradictory undercurrents should not be underrated. An example of this is Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi’s switch from a Mutendi-centred to a Christocentric emphasis in the course of two sermons, delivered during the unification ceremony between his and Gierson’s branches of the ZCC.

Finally, the oral formulations (at the late Bishop Gavure’s consolation ceremony) of the involvement of deceased leaders in "preparing a place for their followers in heaven" should not be interpreted as an attempt to introduce a salvific function for the Church leader which could supplement, operate independently of or supersede the final, atoning work of Christ or the judgement of God. Such statements indeed reflect traditional beliefs in the close ties between the living and the dead, but their basic intention is to assert the ongoing close relationship between deceased leader and followers, whereby inspiration can be drawn from the exemplary life of the leader which points the way to heaven. Bishop Makamba’s announcement of "a glorious task in heaven, pleasing to God" combined a show of respect for the late Gavure who had gone before, with the anticipated lifting of the veil of mystery at his own approaching death. It also indicates an urge to comfort his audience in the face of the daunting and rationally undefinable facets of death. Contrived as such an interpretation may seem, it at least captures something of the Christ-like quality of the ministry of men like Gavure and Makamba: true icons, dedicated to the gospel of deliverance in Christ and the ecumenical imperative of loving interaction between their Churches. Even where there is a degree of misunderstanding about the interrelation between Christ, leader and followers, this does not warrant radical, typological distinctions such as "Messianic leadership" or "post-Christianity".

(d) Theological training

Mention was made in chapter 2 of the tendency to emphasize natural traits of character rather than spiritual or scriptural qualifications for Church leadership. This suggests that traditional leadership ideals, attuned as they are to customary laws, are still focal. This applies mainly to the pre-Fambidzano period; for there has been a
considerable change in attitudes to leadership qualifications since the implementation of TEE programmes in 1972. Where principal Church leaders themselves (e.g. Bishops Gavure and Forridge) participated in Fambidzano's theological training programme, the introduction of new criteria was more noticeable. Bishop Gavure, for instance, introduced "test sermons" for prospective office-bearers as a measure to determine their biblical knowledge and preaching talents. Implicit in the introduction of such practices is the recognition that the current system of in-service training should be supplemented by a more sophisticated if Westernized one which includes the formerly despised practice of book-learning. In this blend of standard IC procedure with an essentially new system of leadership training, it is apparent that the New characteristics of the ICs, as opposed to the Old or traditional ones, are not bound to stereotype but are subject to flux and change.

In other words, it is no longer a matter of the gospel being preached and lived according to the recognizable patterns which distinguish the Zionist, Apostolic and "Ethiopian" camps, but of change being precipitated through the introduction, at the level of IC leadership, of a much more comprehensive theology than existed before.

The impact of Fambidzano's TEE courses on IC leadership will be the subject of another study. Suffice it to say at this point that the sermons and interview responses of quite a number of both Spirit- and Ethiopian-type office-bearers who participated in TEE courses reveal shifts of theological emphasis and conceptual change. For instance, the central focus in New and Old Testament studies on, respectively, the life and work of Christ and the role of the Holy Spirit in Church practice, has contributed towards the development of two significant trends:

(i) the emergence of a pronounced Christology in the place of what appeared to be a presupposed Christology, and
(ii) a shift in the prophetic movements from a sometimes one-sided healer/prophet-dominated pneumatology to a comprehensive biblical orientation to the work of the Holy Spirit. As one of the Zionist ministers said: "I have learnt in Fambidzano's New Testament studies that the Holy Spirit operates in all believers. In the past I thought that He only dwells in the

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prophets, without knowing that He directs the preacher, the one who sings, everybody who worships. Now I know that the Spirit works much more widely than I once thought." In the Zionist context this is much more than a simple statement of the obvious. We see here the emergence of a more reflective and self-critical theology which forces a breakthrough in a field where the power of vivid Church practice so easily produces interpretive limitations.

2. FISSION AND ECUMENISM

Our analysis of the processes of Church proliferation has taken us beyond a mere consideration of their dynamics. In a sense I have attempted to update historical perspectives on some of the major movements, complementing the historical outlines in Volume I. Incomplete as they are, the stories of fission and fusion - which form part of the core of Independent Church history! - identified the prime movers currently directing events in the larger movements and provided new insight into their convictions, motives and experiences prior to, during or after the upheavals caused by schismatic events. Hopefully this approach has contributed to greater understanding of what actually happens when defectors try to form new Church groups, or when rifts appear in Churches during protracted periods of leadership strife following a principal leader's death.

What has emerged quite clearly from this study is that the complex patterns of Church fragmentation and proliferation can hardly be captured in a single explanatory model. As I have pointed out, the initial rise of Shona Independentism did not take place through classical schisms. As a result of evangelistic campaigning these Churches grew as "missionary institutions", comprising a membership the majority of whom were not previously affiliated to other Churches. Once established growth patterns emerged which involved the multiplication of congregations along lines similar to the traditional practice of "kraal-splitting" Such multiplication could form part of a healthy process of Church expansion, or lead to the formation of new, mostly small-scale groups whenever the local circuit-wardens or principal leaders failed to arrest the process of alienation in the office-bearers of segmenting congregations. Apart from congregational segmentation, individual leadership ambitions, the need to reform, in-group conflicts and various other forces created a situation of continual flux, of grouping and
regrouping, of fission and fusion, spiritual renewal expressed in Church growth or disappointment and confusion fizzling out in stagnation. Large-scale schisms, by contrast, are sporadic events which mainly threaten the cohesion of the larger movements during periods of ecclesial vulnerability in the aftermath of the founder or principal leader's death.

The interplay of Old and New is in evidence throughout the entire, multiform process of Church proliferation. Theologically one will have to concede that the combination of a limited ecclesiology, which does not always sufficiently emphasize the New Testament unity of the ecclesia as Christ's body, and hereditary leadership which seeks to integrate the leader's blood-line, his achievements and personal history with the authority and future of the Church, can lead to the type of divisions against which Paul warned the Corinthians (1 Cor. 1.10–17; 3:4–9). As the Corinthians, preoccupied with the contrasts in the ministries of the early Apostles (Paul, Apollos and Peter), tended to lose sight of their unity as converted believers in the Christian God, so the tendency of Independents to pay such single-minded attention to the elevated status of their leaders also leads to divided loyalties and distortions in their perception of Christian discipleship which militate against the very core of the gospel of love and reconciliation. In addition, there can be no denying that whatever the nature of fission - be it triggered by individual defections or schismatics withdrawing from the inheriting sons of deceased leaders - at bottom there is always the hubris of man, whose self-interest, misplaced pride of accomplishment and need for individual recognition overrides biblical considerations of God's Kingdom. Hence much of what we have described in section 2 of this study concerns the brokenness and imperfect nature of humanity, illustrated in the Shona context in the specifics of human failure to build and consistently live that elusive unity in Christ which the believer professes. Far from this being an indictment of the Shona Churches, or a reason to question their Christianity, this observation serves to underscore their integral membership of an existentially imperfect universal Church. For regardless of policies, ideals, dogmas and confessions of undivided loyalty to God, all manifestations of the Church in this existence remain subject to the imperfections, conflicts and resultant divisions brought about by man.

At the same time numerous positive features within the proliferation of Churches remind us that we are dealing with much more than the hubris and weakness of man. Within and despite the
ecclesial divisions, God's Spirit remains at work! In the case of Sauro Garanuako's defection from Maranke's vaPostori, for instance, his motives of self-interest and ambition did not prevent an entire series of events with positive religious implications for quite a number of people. *An entire village was spiritually mobilized*, and new responsibilities in the newly introduced ZSC congregation were shared by most of its socially prominent members. Support was given at the inauguration of the new congregation by numerous members of other Churches in a massive demonstration of *ecumenical endeavour* - the sharing of a common Christian purpose and destiny. In addition, the formation of new ZSC congregations stimulated *evangelistic outreach* resulting in genuine conversions and Church growth. It appeared, therefore, as if the neglected and stigmatized "beer-drinking" renegade from the ranks of the vaPostori was instrumental in introducing at least a regional wave of spiritual renewal and growth in his own and the surrounding Spirit-type congregations. Considering Garanuako's eventual return to the vaPostori and his successful ministry as senior leader of the Chingombe contingent (Pendi) of Apostolic congregations, it appears as if his "Zionist interlude" was also a period of personal dedication and spiritual growth towards more mature stature as Church leader.

The ecumenical element in the formation of new Church groups suggests that we are dealing with an extension of and a positive transformation of the traditional notion of the tribal ward (dunhu) as home. The Old (i.e. African) society, with its drive for an intimate sense of belonging in a geographically restricted area, is made *New* in the IC context through the recognition that within the process of fragmentation of Church groups - as with the hiving off of villages - the new "dunhu" (i.e. the "family of Christian Churches" founded in God) remains a constant and stabilizing factor. It is in this sense that I referred to Shona or African society as containing the "seeds of ecumenism". Against this background a balanced and positive appraisal of fission becomes possible. Despite the negative and disruptive aspects of ecclesial fragmentation, it is evident that men like Garanuako and Mutingwende, as well as even more radical schismatic leaders such as those who seceded from the Ndaza Zionist David Masuka, retain a quite profound sense of belonging and loyalty to the family of Churches from which they originate. That is why neither Garanuako nor those Zionist and Apostolic dignitaries who participated in his official send-off as Ndaza Zionist bishop had much difficulty accepting the new role he was to play. True to his religious roots, he could shift allegiance
to another Church leader without betraying his basic loyalty to his "home territory" (i.e. the Churches of the Spirit-type). That, too, is why the members of the schismatic bodies which originated from Masuka's Church still claim to this day that they belong to Masuka's branch of Zionism. They had indeed formed new "villages", new Church groups, for which they take responsibility, but they still belong to the brand of Ndaza Zionism which to them spells home, and in the festive season they still return to the old Masuka headquarters in the Bikita district to celebrate and worship together.

For a sound understanding of the process of ecclesial fragmentation, based as it is on a natural and intuitive sense of ecumenism, one should also consider impulses of an essentially human nature. Man needs change, imaginative improvisation, a new challenge, something exciting which he can dream about and which calls for a reinterpretation of the myths directing his existence. Even well-established patterns of authority require re-assessment and a reshuffling of responsibilities, particularly if authority is exploited by a few at the expense of the majority and if it is used to stifle the initiative and vision of those lower down the hierarchies of control. Small wonder therefore that the need to break the monotony and seasonal rhythm of rural village life finds an outlet in the prospects of religious change as we have seen in the heightened anticipation of villagers and the intensification of religious activity prior to and during the defection from old bodies and the building of new ones by Sauro Garanuako and Elison Mutingwende. Sauro's move, moreover, was a direct reaction against the stagnating entrenchment of authority and related privileges in the Postori leadership hierarchy which inhibited prospects of promotion, progress and growth for himself and other office-bearers. Negative as his defection may have been from a strictly theological point of view, it did create new opportunities of leadership in yet another variation of Zionism introduced in his own and the surrounding villages. At a later stage it also triggered structural change in the Apostolic dispensation in the Chingombe chiefdom, which in turn led to congregational expansion and a breakthrough of the local leadership impasse through the promotion of experienced office-bearers and the creation of new opportunities for junior and prospective Church members.

Part of the human yearning for new challenges and greater meaning in life manifests itself in intensified preoccupation with the experience and interpretation of dreams. The prominence of dreams in the experiences of the key figures in the division and
regrouping of the ZCC factions suggests that an enquiry into the dream life of opposing Church leaders and their followers should provide a crucial perspective, without which the inner and hidden dimensions of fission cannot be unravelled. This is where the close-
ess of successor sons and deceased founder leaders, as well as the nature of deceased leaders' ongoing control in their Churches, becomes apparent. It is in dreams that the mystical justification for the severance of ties and the formation of new groups is found. Through this medium, too, the opinions of those faced with a choice between opposing leaders in a schismatized Church can be swayed. Dream narration according to stereotyped patterns is an all-
important mechanism supporting the processes of group consolida-
tion. At the same time it is open to great variations in its provision of that dimension of mystical involvement which man needs, for in dream narration deceased or living Church leaders are turned without inhibition into the hero-figures which they ideally should be. Here, too, the uncertainty of vacillation between leaders can be overcome through mystical affirmation in the lives of individual Church members. In the dream which confirms group loyalty and confers new responsibilities on those who do not hold office in the Church, the status of even relatively "unimportant" members can be elevated to new levels, which in practical life stimulates religious participation.

In a sense therefore the deliberate tuning in to dreams is a device which enables man to cope with his weakness his inability to maintain the harmony and unity with others which he professes in the name of the Christian God. Through dreams he can come to terms with the tragedy of disunity which tears the Church apart and with his own contribution to such disunity through individual acts of rebellion. Through dreams hope is rekindled for a better future and a more constructive role in securing it from within the existing, transitional or newly schismatized ecclesial context. In dreams the old myths are reinterpreted and a new myth is born! To Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi the new dream-bolstered myth means both the historical extension of the old ZCC order on the lines of a glorious tradition established by his deceased father, and his own unique contribution to innovation through the ZCC's total immersion in post-Independence Zimbabwe's drive for modern education and rural development projects. To Bishop Ruben Mutendi it implies confirmation of his image as the new "man of God" who, on account of his healing miracles and active role during the liberation struggle, is considered to surpass the prophetic office of his
deceased father. To Bishop Masuka it signifies the liberating reversal of discriminatory authority relations between the ZCC and the Ndaza Zionists, giving him a leading instead of a subordinate role in the widest framework of Zimbabwean Zionism. These dream-inspired and praxis-related myths form the pivots around which a new identity and purpose are built both in existing and to-be-reconstructed Churches under the leadership of inheriting successors, and in newly formed schismatic groups.

* * * *

Owing to the kraal-splitting practice inherent in the traditional Shona concept of the dunhu as home, the trends of ecumenism in the Independent Churches deriving from this background contained a certain ambivalence. On the one hand there was an ingrained traditional model for the alleviation of group conflict, a model which permitted the rationalization of congregational segmentation and/or small-scale schisms. On the other hand the more widely encompassing model of dunhu-coherence strengthened the notions of belonging to a "family of Churches" which exacted loyalty, stimulated inter-Church support for the formation of new ecclesial bodies within the broadly conceived framework of Independentism, and prohibited schismatic excesses in the sense of radical isolation of the schismatic unit from the existing body of IC movements. For lack of solid biblical foundation such a "tradition-related ecumenism" could not, for all its theologically positive features, curb Church fragmentation effectively. In a sense it provided the justification for dissent in the absence of an aggressive ecumenical policy and an organizational structure which could combat the splintering process.

With the inception in 1972 of Fambidzano as a wide-reaching ecumenical movement of Shona Independent Churches, a marked change set in. Constitutionally and doctrinally based on John 17:21,23 (a combination of unity in Christ and the missionary witness character of such unity in the world), the new movement adapted itself to the existing patterns of ecumenism in the various clustered "families of Churches" and at the same time revolutionized the old concept and practice of Church unity on a much wider scale than had ever been attempted before. Through affiliation with the established Churches in the National Christian Council, regular contact with Churches overseas and a central organization which finally terminated the relative isolation of a predominantly rural phenomenon, the Independents emerged with a new awareness of
their own identity and of their widely recognized responsibility to serve in full recognition of their relation to the other members of the universal Church.

As this awareness became integral to the affiliated Churches over the years, greater care was taken by many leaders to prevent Church fragmentation. In addition *Fambidzano's* ecumenical TEE programmes were deliberately aimed at the development of a New Testament and historically rooted ecclesiology as a basis for critical reflection by prospective and active office-bearers on the destructive aspects of Church fragmentation. Church history lessons, for instance, included surveys of the early Christian Church, Western Churches and African Independent Churches, focusing on both doctrinal and non-theological causes of schisms. It was hoped that in this way theological training could promote self-interpretation among the IC leadership in the light of world-wide historical perspectives, which in turn could facilitate qualitative progress, Church growth and stability in the face of the forces fostering ecclesial disintegration.

From the results of recent research it appears as if these objectives are to a large extent being realized. *It is no coincidence that hardly any large-scale schisms or destabilizing defections of prominent office-bearers have taken place in Fambidzano-affiliated Churches since the inception of the Conference.* (Note that the large-scale schisms in the ZCC and Chibarirwe described in the previous chapter took place before the Mutendi brothers, Bishop Muongani [Chibarirwe] and the Rev. Marima [ACC] affiliated their respective Church groups with Fambidzano.) Moreover, there is ample evidence that in a number of known cases where there was a likelihood of serious defections and the splintering of congregations, TEE-trained leaders and senior office-bearers played decisive roles in averting such threats. This has been one of the most meaningful contributions of *Fambidzano's* theological training programme.

New patterns of ecumenical endeavour, such as the involvement of both Spirit- and Ethiopian-type Churches in the ordination ceremony of Bishop Ishmael Gavure, are further indications of *Fambidzano*-inspired curbs on potential schisms. If ecumenical support systems can be developed on a permanent basis to assist Churches during their periods of vulnerability and uncertainty following the deaths of principal leaders - on similar lines as in the Topia leadership succession - large-scale schisms could be even more drastically reduced. It seems as if the weight of Conference support for successor leaders, the actual involvement of significant numbers
of united bishops in their ordination ceremonies, the publicly demonstrated common will to provide safeguards against schisms and - most significantly - the wide exposure in the new ecumenical context of the prospective schismatic leader or leaders, throw up a wall of inhibitions for those who contemplate schisms. These ecumenical obstructions obviously cannot provide an absolute safeguard against schism. Yet it is already evident that potential schismatic leaders are under much greater pressure to remain in their increasingly historically established and ecumenically recognized Churches than in the pre-Fambidzano past. These presentday trends which are but the symbols of ecumenical progress in Shonaland, inspire hope for the kind of theological and spiritual growth and stability through which fission will be overwhelmingly transcended by fusion in Christ.
CONFERENCE OF THE ZION SABBATH CHURCH OF BISHOP NEHEMIAH GOTORE, HELD NEAR ZIMBIZI IN CHINGOMBE IN AUGUST 1966

Sermons

1 Zionist Bishop Phillip Pawani (ZSC)

Bishop Pawani.
It was stated that the Word will reach all people, even the black people as well. Peace unto you! Haikona, not only the Jews! So let us rejoice. Jesus was crucified for all people. We are gathered here as people who keep the Sabbath day so that we can distinguish between good and evil.

Reader:
Nehemiah 13:15 "In those days saw I in Judah men treading winepresses on the sabbath, and bringing in heaps of grain and loading them on asses; and also wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day: and I warned them on the day when they sold food."

Bishop Pawani:
It says that Nehemiah set some of the things right that had gone wrong in Jerusalem. Peace be with us! The Jews were picking grapes and putting them in their winepresses without heeding the sabbath day. They were transgressing the law of God by transporting goods with donkeys on the sabbath day. You people who are Sabbatarians [vaSabbata], do not load your donkeys on the sabbath day. If you do so, we of this Church will blame you. You also should not inspan your oxen on the sabbath day. Nehemiah testified against the Jews who disobeyed these rules.
Appendix I

Reader
v.16: "Men of Tyre also, who lived in the city, brought in fish and all kinds of ware, and sold them on the sabbath to the people of Judah, and in Jerusalem."

Bishop Pawani:
It says that there were men of Tyre who brought and sold fish to all tribes. It says that we should keep the sabbath day and make it holy. Our relatives and guests should also be urged to do so. Urge your guests to kneel down and keep the sabbath day You of the Church, don't inspan your oxen because the Book forbids it. This is the law which God gave to Moses and which Nehemiah saw was being disobeyed. So Nehemiah said: "I see them on the mountain, disobeying the sabbath law, which was made by God. I shall go and set right that which is wrong."

Reader:
v.17: "Then I remonstrated with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, 'What is this evil thing which you are doing, profaning the sabbath day?'"

Bishop Pawani:
So Nehemiah spoke and said: "What is this evil business of selling fish and other things on the sabbath day? You are putting your forebears to shame. Such a thing has not happened before. God will bring evil on this city [reference to v 18] because of your deeds. God will bring his wrath over you because you do not keep the sabbath day." That is what Nehemiah says to you.

Reader:
v. 19: "When it began to be dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the sabbath, I commanded that the doors should be shut, and gave instructions that they should not be opened until after the sabbath. And I set some of my servants over the gates, that no burden might be brought in on the sabbath day."

Bishop Pawani.
Nehemiah had the doors closed to prevent trading on the sabbath. The people were disobeying him. That is what I have seen here, too. I do not want to see cattle being brought here to be sold while we keep the sabbath day He who wants to sell an ox [here at the Conference] should do so on the fifth day, so that his business is
completed before the sabbath day. Peace be with us! I do not mean to prevent you from bringing your things [business], but don't do so on the sabbath day, because it is our day of rest. One of the people who came here to sell an ox is a muPostori. He did so in spite of the sabbath being his [rest] day as well.

Reader:
v. 20: "Then the merchants and sellers of all kind of wares lodged outside Jerusalem once or twice."

Bishop Pawani:
Nehemiah saw the disobedience of the people and had the doors of Jerusalem closed. So the merchants had to sleep outside until the doors were opened after the sabbath day. That is why I say that it is our Jerusalem. Guards were placed at the doors to prevent merchants from coming in. It is a warning to us. If any of you trade on the sabbath you are guilty of an offence. Anyone of us guilty of such an offence will be made to sleep outside the "walls" [i.e. wind-shields used during open-air conferences].

2. Bishop Isaiah Mutubuki (ZSC)

Peace be to you! You people must not think that we have come together to play. Observe the things that have been revealed and the progress we have made. The woman who is guilty [of witchcraft] is old with a face full of wrinkles like my own. What we are doing here is of great importance. Peace to you! Let us not be overcome by the dzinza [customary ways; spirits of old] because the old people practised their ways with great determination. Let us also do our work with such determination. You have heard of the law which was given to Moses on Mt Sinai. When this law was given to Moses it was the "beginning of all schooling" [ndiwo musi wavatanga kupiwa chikoro]. So you see, we have likewise been called together to be instructed. Instruction [chikoro: literally "school"] is not given to the ignorant but to those who are capable of understanding and following the law.

Reader
Jeremiah 17:21: "Thus says the Lord: Take heed for the sake of your lives, and do not bear a burden on the sabbath day, or bring it by the gates of Jerusalem."
Bishop Mutubuki:
It says here that those who keep the sabbath day will be blessed and those who do not keep it will be rejected. Do not carry a burden on the sabbath day! Nothing surpasses the keeping of this law. It is wonderful. It is no use to pursue the things of this world. Rather keep the sabbath day! Keep it as a holy day! Is there anybody here who does not understand this law? But which is the real day of rest? Some of our people say they keep the sabbath on this or on that day. Let us read from Mark 16.

Reader
Mark 16: 1, 2: "And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, they went to the tomb when the sun had risen."

Bishop Mutubuki:
The women went to the grave of Jesus after the sabbath day. According to the Bible they went on the morning of Sunday. It is the DRC people who changed the rest day to Sunday. They did so because this day is a sign [of Jesus' resurrection]. It was their decision, not that of the Book. We want to settle this problem between those who honour the sabbath day and those who say it does not exist. My friends, let us not create problems over this issue. You know we are Zionists. You also know that this rule of the sabbath day has been given by Zion. The other one of Sunday is your own rule. Zion said: "Keep this sabbath day!" Peace to you. Let God help me [to keep the sabbath] as well.

3. MuPostori Prophet Amos
Peace be to you! I agree [with all that has been said] and I consider myself a child of God because I am happy with what is being said here. The keeping of the sabbath day is according to the law. I am surprised by many of my relatives who reject the sabbath day, in spite of the law of the Book [Bible] which is quite clear on this issue. Nehemiah warned against trading on the sabbath day as being against the law of God. The [DRC] teachers of Zimbizi told us that God created the world and rested on the seventh, the sabbath day. Now we have just heard that the women went to the grave of Jesus on the day following the sabbath day. Therefore I am surprised to see people inspan their oxen on the sabbath day. It is a grave issue.
to disobey Mwari: it is because of this [disobedience] that illness and hardships come upon us in this world [my italics].

I really honour the gift of prophecy because it greatly strengthens the Church of God. I hear people say: "Don't honour the sabbath day, don't heed prophecies." These two [attitudes] go hand in hand. Those who discard the Spirit [i.e. Spirit-inspired prophecies as understood by Zionists and vaPostori] also discard the sabbath day of God. Have you heard of a Church which prophesies and does not keep the sabbath day? No! Rejection of the one implies rejection of the other. The Spirit and the Sabbath day go together [Mweya ne Sabata hazvisiani.]

It is the same when people dance the shavi dances [tamba mashavi]. When the drums are beaten people sway to the rhythm. They respond to the inner ways of their forefathers which were there from the beginning. Nowadays we respond to the ways of Moses, Elijah, Peter, Paul and others like Nehemiah. Because of this we do not fear. Even when evil is perpetrated against us we know [through the Spirit] what to expect. For God has said that everything should be revealed and people should be instructed. Peace to you!

You have heard the elders preaching from Exodus 20 that we should keep the sabbath as a holy day. On that day we do not buy things, even if honey or other nice things are brought to us. Even if we have to eat dry porridge without meat, we will not buy a thing on this day. When it is five o'clock in the afternoon you can bring these things for us to buy - not before, because we fear God.

When Jesus died and was buried, his followers went with ointment to the grave. But they found the grave empty and only the linen in which Jesus had been wrapped, was left. Peace! Those who follow such things worship on Sundays. Who wants to worship a grave? Jesus has risen and has come out [of the grave]. Those who are afraid of defilement, come and worship on our day! It is the disobedience to this law that has caused conflict amongst people and the increase of disease. We of the Spirit Church were told to go and pray on the mountains, so that this disease of mhezi [scabies] can be overcome. Look at the people who worship in this Church of the Spirit [chikoro choMweya]. Few of them are afflicted by this disease because they are in the truth of God and they confess their sins. Some do not want to leave the beer-pots or discard the shavi garments before Christ comes or before they die.
Reader:

Isaiah 56:2: "Blessed is the man that does this, and the son of man who holds it fast, who keeps the sabbath, not profaning it, and keeps his hand from doing any evil."

Prophet Amos:

Only those who keep the sabbath are to be blessed. When disease comes God will bless [cure] them. Some of the elders of the different Churches in the country warned people of the coming disease and they urged people to go to Hwekwete [principal of DRC school] for medical treatment. But the people refused and now their children are suffering. The vaPostori noticed this and said: "Aimless followers!" [gudza mutungwe], meaning those who put their trust in medicine. There are some of you who have come to kneel and pray but you are simply following aimlessly. I beseech you, the deacons, to keep watch. As surely as God is the god of truth, you will find the one who has come with medicine [magic]. Yet we have our own "magic", because Jesus gave his gift to the house of Israel [reference here to the gift of the Holy Spirit which enables the prophet to detect those dealing in evil medicines]. Peace be with you!

What the Bible teaches us today is: "Seek the salvation of the Lord because it is near" [Isa.56:1].

Reader:

Isaiah 56:3: "Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the Lord say, 'The Lord will surely separate me from his people..."

Prophet Amos:

We were surprised to see this mufundisi [Bishop Nehemiah] who speaks another language coming here. He is the head of this new Church in Chingombe [in spite of his being a stranger]. Even if someone is a stranger to this minister, let him not think of disassociating himself from his kith and kin, saying: "I hate this tribe". The Bible says, If you do not love your own people - those who stay with you - you may come here to pray but you are merely an "aimless follower" [gudza mutungwe] because you have no one at your own place whom you love. Don't be tempted to think that if you hate your own people you will still be called a son of God. Never! If you do not love your own people you are not a son of God. Good relations among the people of the Church are important. When the prophets prophesy some people oppose them and accuse
them of lying. Yet these very prophets are the ones who reveal the bad relations you have with your people back home.

Reader
Isaiah 56:4, 5: "For thus says the Lord: 'To the eunuchs who keep my sabbaths, who choose the things that please me, and hold fast to my covenant, I will give in my house and within my walls a monument and a name better than sons and daughters..."

Prophet Amos:
God promises not to depart from those who keep the sabbath day. Let us observe the sabbath day so that God will honour us. Is it not surprising that even on the Sunday those who gather say: "Oh God! Oh God! You are powerful!" I know of a woman who was expelled from the DRC because she was filled by the Holy Spirit. She is now in the Full Gospel but the Spirit still works through her. So he prophesies to the unbelievers. Although they expelled her the Holy Spirit of God cannot be hidden. She is in union with the Spirit all the time.

Reader:
Isaiah 56:6, 7: "And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord ... will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer..."

Prophet Amos:
It is now clear that if we seek the Lord, He will keep us. You women who put faith in magic, heed these words. Free your hearts of bad thoughts! What do your neighbours say about you? Are they not disappointed in you? Do you take advantage of your husbands because they do not complain? If so, hear the warning of God's Spirit. He says: "Leave your bad ways completely." If any of you men or women are still practising witchcraft, stop doing so immediately. You cannot practise such evil two days in succession. You will encounter God's wrath in due course. My own action does not matter because I am only a servant, a go-between sent by God. He is the One who will ask you: "Is this what you were taught by your parents? Is this the way you wish to behave in My house, the house of My Father? Do not disturb the good relations that we have here!"

We are here to glorify God; not to scold each other. Did you people understand what I have said? Should my brothers or other relatives have heard me they would have encouraged me by saying:
"Carry on with the Lord's work because if you hide it [revelations by the Spirit] God will send you to hell." A prophet should not consider himself God's favourite. He is like a cork on a fishing line. He tells the fisherman when a fish is present, but he does not catch the fish. If the fisherman misses the fish he will say: "Ha! I have missed that fish!" But in reality he has reacted to the cork without seeing the fish. Likewise we, the prophets, detect the hidden magic [and make the congregation aware of it]. We condemn this practice and consider you who do such things to be gudza mutungwe [aimless followers]. The Lord has told us that the devil has spoiled that woman's house [the one whom the prophets had identified earlier as a witch]. I do not say much more because I want to be instructed by the Church. Peace be with you! Amen.

4. The Rev. Jeremiah Chizemah (ZSC)

Peace be with you! We are not rebuking others or fighting, but everyone has been sent here with a purpose. He [Bishop Nehemiah] has been sent to teach and show his people the way they should follow to be saved. We want to hear about the seven days, the six days of work and the seventh day of rest. What do you people call the seventh day?

Congregation:
Sunday!

The Rev. Chizemah.

You are right, gentlemen. That is why you heard Willie [one of the previous preachers] say you are fools. The law says, "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour." Now when this man said, "Peace be with you", you all said: Amen! That means that you agreed that Sunday is the rest-day. But I say: No! We cannot allow him to fool us that Sunday is the seventh day, because it is the beginning of the week. This Church is the one I belong to. If it had belonged to a person I would have been chased away. We have come to teach those who want to be taught. If we do not teach them, what would they go and tell their friends?

Reader

Exodus 20:8: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy."
The Rev. Chizemah.
You also must keep it holy!

Reader
Exodus 20: 9, 10: "Six days you shall labour, and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God ..."

The Rev. Chizemah:
Which is the seventh day?

Congregation:
It is Sunday!

The Rev. Chizemah:
I refer to the [biblical] references. Do not talk nonsense! You rest on the seventh day and do all your work in six days. I give a name to that day on which we rest. I shall write down the name of my sabbath and you people write down yours. You, over there, look in your Bibles, otherwise you may say that we are telling you lies.

Reader:
Exodus 31.14: "You shall keep the sabbath, because it is holy for you; every one who profanes it shall be put to death; whoever does any work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people."

The Rev. Chizemah:
Keep the sabbath! It is the seventh and the holy day Those who disobey shall surely be put to death. We don't want to go further Is there anybody with another name for the seventh day? My sabbath day was mentioned in Exodus 31.14. What does your Bible say? You are dead, you are dead, because you do not keep the sabbath! You want to follow the Bible but you put your own name - that of the Sunday - in the place of the sabbath. I give you another chapter to read.

Reader.
Mark 16: 1. "And when the Sabbath was past ..."

The Rev. Chizemah.
We say Jesus died yesterday [Friday] at sunset. On which day was he raised from the dead? Ah! Ah! Keep quiet! It was only a question. [Congregation was growing restless.] I want to help you. He
was raised from the dead on the first day of the week, which means he was raised on Sunday. Give that man the Book so that he can read for himself ... Sing a song that [afterwards] we can listen to the Word of God clearly.

[At this stage there were several interjections so that the sermon virtually developed into an open debate about which day should be regarded as the sabbath.]

5. Church Elder B (ZSC)

Now my friends we are here to learn from God’s Word. As we have been told by our bishop, we are here to keep the sabbath. One of us stood up and was upset. He accused us of lying. Why do you say that? This man has done wrong before God ...

He wanted to know which is the first day of the week and the Book told him clearly that the first day of the week is Sunday. We want the seven days of the Book and therefore we keep the real sabbath. We say you people honour the first day of the week. You do not believe in the [Bible’s] seven days. Don’t you people worship on the day that Jesus lay buried? If you throw away that day you throw away the real sabbath. Sunday is not the sabbath day, but the beginning of the week. Peace be with you!

Song:
I thank you Jesus, the Lord of Isaiah.

[Prophetic messages follow.]

Elder B.
The Rutsate people [of the local chiefly clan] who stayed at home must make up their own minds. Here we are eating honey. We speak the words we have inherited from our mediator, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. We speak about the inheritance of heaven. We are the true Zionists, like the Zionists of yesterday who were keeping the sabbath. Today we are the Zionists who marry [allow polygamy], drink beer and keep the sabbath.

My friends, we are discussing the real words of the Book. I want to read the words of Luke 24. Don’t waste time. These words are true. They were written in the Book through the Holy Spirit. We teach the entire message of the Book.
Reader:
Luke 24:1. "But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb ..."

Elder B:
It says, they took their spices on the first day of the week. Which is the first day? Tell me, father.

Old man:
It is Sunday.

Elder B:
Yes, my brethren, our words from the Book say the first day of the week is Sunday. Sit down! Sit down! You cannot teach a chauffeur who has spent much money in Salisbury how to drive. They brought their spices to the tomb on a Sunday. People tell us that Sunday is the sabbath but the Book is telling us differently. So, people are lying about the sabbath day. Remember, today [Saturday] is the real sabbath. The first day of the week is Sunday. A good teacher does not lie to his pupils. Peace be with you.

6. Bishop Nehemiah Gotore (ZSC)

We have already defeated that man [the one who insisted that Sunday is the day of rest]. He has committed two wrongs. Back home he fought with his wife, and he came here without God's law. Peace be with you! We are the true Sabbath Zionists. Even if we send this man [referring to Sauro Garanuako as the new leading representative of the ZSC in Chingombe] to preach, we do not fear. We trust him and have faith in him. This European sitting here does not fear when he sees the lion coming. He believes that he will kill it. Now, being a Sabbath Zionist, I have faith in the Sabbath. The first day of the week was Sunday. Therefore tomorrow [Sunday] we shall go to the fields to plough and drink beer. Peace be with you! A person who resists the sabbath will not be blessed before the Lord. I leave everything in the name of Jesus. Peace be with you!

7. Preacher Pawani (son of above-mentioned Bishop Phillip Pawani)

Peace be unto the Zionists! The people are troubled by the fact that Jesus was killed by the Jews. We say, they did not kill Jesus. The ruler who was in Jerusalem at that time was not of the Israelite
tribe. The Jews were under the rule of the Roman Empire. They [the Romans] are the people who asked whether Jesus had to be killed and they [the Jews] said "Yes!" Therefore we say the Romans are the people who killed Jesus Christ and not the Jews. This thing confuses people, because even the sabbath was changed. It is not us [the "Israelites"] who changed it. This is a very complicated issue. In the Book it says: Keep the sabbath as a holy day! But because the Romans ruled Jerusalem they changed the rules. Christ did not change the sabbath. Neither did the Apostles, meaning Peter, Paul and the others. The people themselves tried to change the words of God.

Congregation:
What verse in the Bible says that?

Preacher Pawani:
We shall be told.

Reader (reading from an English text):
The Papas [Popes] wanted this done.

Preacher Pawani:
It says the Roman fathers [priests] did this. Not God! It is the Pope, the head of the priests who changed the sabbath. It happened some years ago. We have got the dates but we do not have the time to read it out.

Congregation:
Read and tell us about the date!

Preacher Pawani:
Why should we waste time with dates? All these dates are written in the Bible [history books]. We shall give you the correct verses. Those of you who are interested should come over here and we shall read the books together Peace be unto you!

[At this point there was a heated debate between representatives of Sabbath-oriented and other Ndaza Zionist groups. Whereas some argued that the commandments of God simply implied keeping the sabbath day as proclaimed by the preachers, others criticized the rigidity of the Sabbatarians' approach.]
8. **Evangelist Jerry Kono** (member of the *Shinga Postora* of Elison Mutingwende)

Peace unto us! I urgently request you to consider the reasons for this conference. I notice a spirit of jealousy and confusion. Don't you see that it does not look as if we have gathered to discuss God's Word at all? Are any of you people who came to Rutsate for this conference disappointed? I am Rutsate! [I am a representative of the chiefly house.] Speak out if you have any complaints. The noise you make in arguing does not frighten us. We like to see all people getting a chance to preach and air their views. Yet we have never seen or heard talk of this kind before. We want to see an orderly attendance of the conference. If anyone has been wronged, you can see Rutsate after the meeting. Those who want to compare Scriptures can do so in the shade over there. Let us then continue with the work of God and fight when the time for fighting comes. Every man must keep the law of God.

**Reader:**

Deuteronomy 28:58, 59: "If you are not careful to do all the words of this law ... then the Lord will bring on you and your offspring extraordinary afflictions, afflictions severe and lasting, and sicknesses grievous and lasting."

**Evangelist Kono:**

We can become poverty-stricken if we play Church like we have been doing. God can punish man and cause prolonged illness if he lacks the knowledge of [i.e. does not follow] the law.

**Reader:**

Matthew 3:1, 2: "And in those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

**Evangelist Kono:**

John moved about Judaea preaching about the kingdom of God.

**Reader:**

Matthew 3:3: "For this is he that was spoken of by Isaiah the prophet, saying, when he said, 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."
Evangelist Kono.
They came to straighten that which is crooked. The people of Rut­sate and others from surrounding places have come with this pur­pose, to straighten the path of the Lord, without strife or trouble. You must repent and be baptized so that you can enter heaven. We want people to go to heaven. Be baptized and receive the law. A man who keeps the law until his death shall surely enter heaven. Don’t just talk about the sabbath. Repent!! John's work drew people from Judaea and Jerusalem to confess their sins and to be baptized. May these words dwell in you...
Since we seem to be abusing each other over the sabbath issue, I now want to read from the Book about love.

Song.
Send the Holy Spirit to cleanse us ...

Reader
1 Corinthians 13:1. "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal."

Evangelist Kono:
The European and all the elders have listened to your arguments about the sabbath and Sunday. Will that make anybody repent? Will anybody be converted because of the differences you emphasize? Don't you say that the women who fight over one husband are jealous? And don’t you consider them wrong to do so? You yourselves are jealous, fighting over the one husband. To whom are the Sab­bath Zionists and the Zionists who worship on Sundays married? Tell me! They are married to one Person. Then why do you bicker? You have spent all this time trying to persuade people to repent. How can they repent after all the fighting? You are like gongs making a lot of noise. Our European knows the gongs they have at Morgenster Mission. Have these got any value? They only remind people to go to Church, but they have no real value. Having made such a noise over the day of worship, do you think those who wanted to repent will do so now? Fellowship alone is important. I invite both those worshipping on the sabbath and Sunday worship­pers into my house because I love the Bible. If I read it, I shall not be cast out. Peace unto us.
1 Corinthians 13:2 "And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing."

Evangelist Kono:
We may boast about having spent the day at this meeting and about detecting that woman as a witch. But will there be any repentance after people have scolded one another? It [the prophecies] is not reliable because of the lack of love. It is love that brought this white man here. For the same reason I came here. For me, to be at the Church is love. It is the love for God which causes me to invite my friends to Church. Do you think anyone will come if you invite him to fight? I would not have come if I knew someone was going to quarrel with me about the day of worship. I came because I believe we all belong to one God. We accept the non-believer and the nganga who have come and we ask him to kneel down in prayer if he submits himself to Jesus.


I am happy to be here. The Church ministers want to hear and see all that is done by those who serve [reference to the prophets]. My message derives from Galatians 3:1 Hurry up [addressing the reader] because I have a number of things to do. Brothers and sisters, we come here clad in garments. One should not boast with one's garments before God. You will not be as clean as your garment when you appear before God. No, it won't be so. Peace unto the people of God! We want to see a person being holy in the heart because it does not help us to look clean on the outside while our hearts are sinful. How can one be clean if there is nothing with which to show one's faith?

Reader
Galatians 3:1: "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?"

Prophet Marima:
The Galatians were foolish because they did not know God who was crucified before their eyes. What causes you people not to know this? Among the people over there are men and women who are Church leaders and who are supposed to preach this word, but
they fail to do so. If possible you people at the far end should come and be baptized in Jordan so that you can have peace. That means real purification that will give you a place in the kingdom of God. Peace amongst the people of God!

Reader:
Galatians 3:2: "Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by hearing with faith?"

Prophet Marima:
My friends, did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing in faith? It is a certainty that we have the Spirit. There is no one amongst us who has no spirit in him. We received it from God, who is waiting for us. We say that a person who is dead and buried is waiting for Jesus. Likewise, he who is alive is also waiting for Jesus. Let us, the living, wait for Jesus, so that we can see Him first, before the dead. Peace unto us! ..

I have a few more things to say:

[Speaking in tongues as prelude to prophecy.]

PROPHECY I

Prophet Marima:
Stand up, you two women and you [husband of one of the women].

The Holy Spirit tells me that there have been three deaths already. You [one of the women] love one of the younger brothers in your family. I have tried to probe this with the Holy Spirit. And I have seen that you have three men in your family. I also see a connection between your husband and a nganga. I see bitter weeping in your family. Because of the weeping I have tried to see if there are Zionists in your family. I see that some are not Zionists. But the Spirit says they are not responsible for the weeping.

[Addressing woman's husband] I see you are the one who brought a nganga into your house.

Accused man.
No, I did not call a nganga to my house.

Prophet Marima:
The Holy Spirit says you did. Recently you also had contact with another nganga, although you are still attending Church. My Spirit
leadership and fission dynamics

says: Ah! Ah! Ah! leave all this so that we may pray together. You, woman, have problems as I have indicated. You have no children, so you have thoughts of letting your brother's daughter stay with you as your husband's [second] wife. With this I disagree because there are certain things to be done. That is what I have for you from the Lord.

[Addressing another woman] You have gone to Buhera for marriage arrangements.

Woman:
That is true.

Prophet Marima:
I see something in your womb. Can it be that you are pregnant?

Woman.
Yes.

Prophet Marima:
I also see a very powerful disease. Together with it I see your former husband.

Woman.
Yes, Amen.

Prophet Marima:
This disease will surely afflict you and come close to destroying you. This man [the enemy causing affliction] is strong, but I shall fight him [promise of protection to the pregnant woman] while I take cover amongst the Church elders. We want to tie down the evil spirit so that it can stop doing evil, in spite of its persistence.

Woman:
Amen.

Prophet Marima:
I also see some persons who are in possession of dangerous magic. That is the magic we want to destroy, so that we can be cleansed. Our Church hates such wrong-doing ... You woman over there, I must still speak to you. Last night I met a certain woman. Do you see how swollen my face [eyes] is? It is because of not sleeping and
talking to that woman. Beware! You may come with your [witchcraft] medicines here, but you will be the ones to suffer ... Peace unto you!

10. Bishop Murambatsvete (Zion Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ of Bishop Kuudzerema)

Today we thank God for His grace which made this meeting possible. It is that grace which brought about the formation of the Zionist Church [as described] in Psalm 102. Hallelujah to all of you! The Lord that built up Zion [Ps. 102:16] was Jesus. In Jeremiah 31 we are told that they will come singing from a very high place called Zion. Through Jesus we get many good things such as crops, wine and thick oil.

We thank you people for your witness at this meeting. You have instructed each other in God's word, in how to go to heaven and about our having Zion and the Holy Spirit. A Church without prophets is a dead one, because it can contain evil medicines, people practising witchcraft and aimless followers [gudza mutungwe] without detection.

We shall talk about the works of Paul. He was the last bishop of heathen background. As a heathen Paul behaved badly in Jerusalem. He hated the words of God and imprisoned God's followers. He wanted money only In Acts 19 we read about Paul's work as a Christian in Ephesus ...

Reader:
Acts 19: 11, 12: "And God did extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were carried away from his body to the sick, and diseases left them, and the evil spirits came out of them."

Bishop Murambatsvete:
These are the words of Paul to you. If you want to come to him you should not have sins such as magic charms, you should not hate each other, you should not practise witchcraft. Paul used to wear garments and cords [ndaza] as "medicine" for those who were sick. He had no tablets, only his blessed hands and garments, because he had faith. So from today we should know that others also did this [i.e. practise faith-healing] elsewhere on this earth. According to Paul the works of the flesh are sinful, like practising adultery and witchcraft. This we find in Galatians 5. Paul says that the only
medicine for those who are sick is prayer to God. *The sick shall only be healed in the name of Jesus Christ.*

Some people tried to claim Paul's healing powers for themselves. They tried to cast out evil spirits by calling the name of Jesus, whom Paul, the son of Kish of the tribe of Benjamin, preached. No miracles happened because they were tempting God and they did not have faith in Jesus. The things of God are *not* mixed with the things of this world. If I sin as a Church leader, I am just wasting time to no purpose [*kupedza nguwa pasina*].

**Reader:**
Acts 19: 13-15: "Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to pronounce the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits ... And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, a chief priest, which did this. But the evil spirit answered them, 'Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?'"

**Bishop Murambatsvete:**
These are the words of the seven sons of Sceva who invoked the name of Jesus in vain, thinking that they could use God's power by merely calling on Jesus whom Paul preached. But the sons of Sceva lied before God. They mixed the things of God and those of the devil. Zion distinguishes clearly between the things of God and those of the devil. This is done through the spirit of prophecy, which is seen [for example] in my father-in-law, sitting over there. Let him that kills be exposed and him that commits adultery be rebuked right here. I don't believe in a prophet who says: "R-r-r-r-r! Jehovah has told me that a certain girl will come with the intention of marrying me." Most people say "Amen" to this kind of prophecy and accept it as the truth. But if a prophet mentions that somebody is a witch he is resented and dismissed as a false prophet, and they forget that they came to the prophet with the intention of solving their problems. In 1 Corinthians 14:5 it says that he who prophesies edifies the Church of God. Now, how can we be edified without the Spirit of God?

**Reader**
Acts 19:16: "And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and mastered all of them ..."
Bishop Murambatsvete:
Imagine the spirit rising and chasing the sons of Sceva naked out of the house. Peace to you! For this reason I am happy to have the opportunity to speak the word of God and not the word of money. May God come and reveal Himself to both Zionists and Apostles [vaZioni and vaPostori], His people. Let us not hate one another. He that hates his fellow Christians also hates the Church. The Church of the Spirit hides nothing! Therefore let us talk to each other in a spirit of understanding. He who hates his brother whom he sees is an enemy of God. If you hate the Spirit of God you also hate the bishop, the minister, and the prophet whom Jesus died for. Peace to you!

PROPHECY II by Prophet who had meanwhile stood up:

[Speaking in tongues: ............]

Prophet.
The Holy Spirit has given me a revelation regarding that woman ...
I see that this mother is greatly troubled.

Woman.
Amen!

Prophet:
She is troubled because she is hated at her husband's home. She suffered much while she was pregnant. She needed the love of those around her but the people did not do what was right.

Woman.
Amen!

Prophet.
Three animals depicting tragedy are revealed. They represent zvidoma which are also referred to as "the things of the night" I see them coming to the woman's house at night from that side. Sometimes they enter the house and mess up everything. When the woman wakes up she wonders who has thrown around her utensils.

Woman.
Amen!
Prophet:
As I continue to pray it is said, "Behold the people at her home intended killing her child." I also see the beasts sucking her breasts at night while she is asleep. Her enemies intend her blood to be sucked until she dies. The enemies are revealed to me. The child will continue to be in danger if she remains at her father's home.

[Prophet turns to another woman.] I have also a few words for you. The words are given to me in relation to the great dreams you had some time ago. These dreams and the worry they caused left you exhausted.

Woman.
Yes, I remember.

Prophet:
I see that there is something in your chest which causes you to gasp for breath. There is also something in your stomach. You need to pray perseveringly! This minister will also pray for you. He will bless the water which you will use to wash both your body and face.

Song:
Jehovah was sent [He says] walk with me.

PROPHECY III

Prophet.
I have also received some revelations about that woman [the one accused of witchcraft] and her child. I have seen a calf driven into a kraal. It remained with its hind legs standing outside the gate. Someone then pulled it out completely and closed the gate. When I asked what this meant, I was told that this child has enemies near her home who want to ride her [make her a witch]. As yet they are only making her practise by taking her out [like the calf] and bringing her back. I have seen that on at least three occasions she was taken out and brought back. Can you answer this question, girl? Is it true that you sometimes feel pains in the side of your body?

Girl:
Yes, it is so.
Prophet:
The cause of it is that you are being used at night. [Addressing woman] I have seen some misunderstanding between this woman and her husband. The cause of the trouble is money and grain. Mother, tell me about your disappointments.

Woman.
My husband borrowed money from me and said he would repay me at a later date. When I told him that I needed the money to go to Church meetings, he refused. So I was disappointed.

Prophet.
I have seen a word which says you must forget your disappointment. God has said to me your child will be ill. I have seen God's people gathering at your home [inference of possible death]. This is the result of the strife between you and your husband. Tell your husband that you want money for buying grain. He will give it to you and no disease will attack your home.

PROPHECY IV

Prophet.
I have asked you people to stand up so that I can tell you what I have seen. About this girl, I have been given [a revelation about] quarrels between her and somebody else. I saw these quarrels ending in adultery. Then about this mother, I am shown death in her house. The death is caused by poison. The poison is from your family. Even your husband ate it and he is not well. He was indeed poisoned.

Woman's husband:
Amen! That's true.

Prophet.
You, man, stand up! There is a threat of death imposed upon you. Some time ago there was death in your family, but they [the enemies] really wanted the father to die. I am given this word from God. Peace be to you! As I keep looking I see the poison right inside his body. Thus the Lord says you must move away from your home and stay somewhere else for a while.
**Womans’s husband.**

But this trouble will always follow me because the enemy is not very far.

**Prophet.**

Are they near? That is indeed the case.

11. *Preacher Albert Madyira (ZSC)*

Peace be unto you, the people of God. I cannot explain how happy I am. I cannot shout aloud because everyone present has already been taught from the Bible. If you people still do not believe, it might help if the prophet again prophesies. I have selected a portion from Acts because I have noticed the disagreements between you from yesterday until today.

**Reader**

Acts 28:27: "For this people’s heart has grown dull, and their ears are heavy of hearing, and their eyes they have closed ..."

**Preacher Madyira.**

Listen carefully. Yesterday you heard the same message and you were being rebuked by the Word of God. This verse repeats the same message. The prophet is still trying to persuade you to throw away your sins, but people do not want to repent. These people do not hear. As you [prophets] say: "This woman committed adultery, this one is practising witchcraft, this one is stealing", they do not respond because their hearts have grown too hard. They don’t listen because their ears are dull of hearing.

If you look into the eyes of a prostitute or of a witch you will detect that the eyes are not looking straight. When you look at her she closes her eyes, but when you look away she is watching you. The word says the eyes of these people are not open. If you tell them they are witches you land in trouble. They don’t want to repent. They don’t want to admit that they have *divisi* or *chitsinga* because they spent much money on these things.

**Reader**

Acts 28:27: "... lest they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and turn for me to heal them."
Preacher Madyira:
God says if they hear and understand properly and turn away from all the evil things they have acquired, they will be healed. In Matthew it says, "These people praise Me only with their mouths but not with their hearts."

Reader:
Acts 28:28: "Let it be known to you then that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen."

Preacher Madyira:
Ha! We stop here. I have heard two words: salvation and Gentiles. It means that salvation is also sent to you people who do not belong to any Church. If you accept that Jesus has died for you and you come to "Jordan" to be baptized, you will be saved. Salvation was also intended for the Gentiles. All the Books [Bibles] were printed far away but the believers carried the Word of God from overseas to make it known amongst the Gentiles [vahedeni: heathens]. Salvation is for everybody. So, my brothers, if anybody wants to acquire membership he should see the bishops. They will lay hands on him and baptize him. If I remember well, Nicodemus was a dignitary who came secretly to Jesus because he wanted to be saved. Chief Chingombe and Chief Gutu saw that they are important men and they said: "We cannot be baptized by this small man" [referring to Sauro Garanuako]. Therefore I tell you [chiefs] to go secretly to the bishops and be baptized as Nicodemus did. Then you will receive the salvation which they brought for you. Amen.

12. The Rev. Peter Shaya (ZSC)
I am greatly rejoicing in my heart, brothers. It was pleasing to hear one of the preachers mention the goodness of love with all the believers dwelling together in peace. Those who love the Lord will enter heaven. They will dance in the new Jerusalem like calves let out of the pens to go to the cows. Have you ever seen the excitement of calves when the cows return from the pasture in the afternoon? This is the kind of joy that the people of God will have on the last day at the end of the world. He who has kept the commandments of God with all his heart, beloved of God, he will go before God like a calf which has been away from the cow for a full day. This is all you people of Rutsate should know. You are blessed in so far as God sent His messengers to preach His Word to you. He
who repents will be baptized and he who believes will have no fear of judgement.

My message comes from 2 Corinthians 2:12. Paul, the man of God, went about the country preaching the gospel to the people. His preaching bore fruit. Here, too, some of the brethren preach the gospel without deceit. They do so with love. They fear God and humble themselves before Him. Thus the gospel they preach will bear fruit.

Reader:
2 Corinthians 2:12: "Now when I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, a door was opened for me in the Lord ...."

The Rev. Shaya:
The door which was closed to me has now opened. For the same reason that Paul went to Troas did I come here, my brethren. As a door opened I stood up to preach, in spite of the setting sun.

Reader:
2 Corinthians 2:13: "But my mind could not rest because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia."

The Rev. Shaya:
Paul had no peace of mind. I also have the desire to take the word of God to them who did not manage to come to this meeting. Let us take the word of God to the areas beyond this place!

Reader
2 Corinthians 2:14: "Thanks be to God..."

The Rev. Shaya:
Thanks be to God who enables us to triumph wherever we go. Thanks be to God because He enables us to triumph in whatever situation or place we find ourselves.

Reader:
2 Corinthians 2:15: "For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing."
The Rev. Shaya.

We shall leave two words [issues] here at Rutsate. We have brought a sweet savour to those who are being saved, but to those who reject God's Word we say, "It is your own fault. If you perish you bring it upon yourselves. Amen."

13. Bishop Nehemiah Gotore (concluding sermon at the close of day):

I am also greatly pleased to be here at this meeting. As the sun is setting I do not have much to say I thank God for gathering us here to discuss the things of life and death. We have gathered here at Rutsate to consider Paul's message. We are a sweet savour to those who are saved. Peace unto you! It is good that we are open about these things because if someone is going to perish [in spite of having heard the good news] we might as well dig his grave right now even though he is still alive. The crown awaits him who is saved. Peace unto you! We will bury the one who perishes now in the grave. It does not matter that he still eats porridge [sadza], drinks water, speaks or walks. That is only a symbol, for he is really dead. Peace unto you! We dig his grave and bury him now on this occasion. What destroys a man is his sins within him. It is mainly the sin of being unable to keep the commandments that the living God gave him. Let us be like the people of Berea and Thessalonica who, after having heard Paul and Silas preaching the Word of God, searched the Scriptures to determine the truth of what Paul and Silas were saying. Men and women of the Greek tribe sat down to examine the message of Paul and Silas. They believed in them and started following Christ. Peace unto you!

Reader:
Jeremiah 3:14: "Return, O faithless children, says the Lord; for I am your master; I will take you, one from a city, and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion."

Bishop Nehemiah.
Jeremiah says, the Lord is calling every man in this world. Now, as the sun goes down, the Lord calls every man to come to Him because He loves everyone in this world. He wants them to become His own. Peace unto you! Come back to God, you children! Come back to God, you children! The Lord is calling every one of you, brothers and sisters, at this time, that you may come to Him. Peace unto you! Jeremiah, the son of Hilkia, challenges people to return to
God. He says: Come back, come back to God! Don't backslide anymore. I have come as a husband and will take one from each city. I shall take them even though they belong to different tribes—be they Shava, Gumbo, Shumba, Moyo or Tembo. I shall take them all into Zion. Peace unto you! You backsliders [of all tribes], come back to Zion!

**Song:**
Mango, Mango Hallelujah!

**Bishop Nehemiah:**
I have come today as your husband. If anyone has backslid, be he of the Moyo, Gumbo or Shava clan, do come back! Peace to you! Peace to you! Come to salvation, come to salvation! Salvation has come! We have brought Zion. Do you let Zion go? Do you let Zion go? Do you let Zion go?

**Reader:**
Isaiah 40:9: "Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, 'Behold your God!'"

**Bishop Nehemiah.**
Get up on the high mountains and shout unto the cities of Judah. Shout and emphasize: We have brought your God! Peace be with you! People of Rutsate, your God has been brought to this place. If you let us go away with Him, you won't see Him any longer. Look, we shall leave your place in ruins. As Jeremiah says: "If you come back, your hearts will rejoice." I shall give you a good shepherd who will lead you with knowledge and wisdom [referring to local official of ZSC, Sauro Garanuako] if you could carry the "ark" This "ark" of the Lord will not be useless because I have already appointed you some good leaders. Peace unto you! The leaders whom I give you are here. Come back to Zion, you people of Rutsate. Come back to Zion and seek salvation! These are our words and our plans for this time ... for tomorrow we die.

Let us now gather before God. Peace be with you! Now, our words are finished. It has all been planned well. We thank this [white] "chief" who has taken [tape-recorded] the proceedings. These things are for the future and shall be seen by our children, perhaps after we have died. I also thank the prophets for their work. Peter
says the prophet is like a lamp which gives light in darkness. Peace be with you! We are happy if the prophets give us light. If they do their work properly we are happy. If they fail they will be judged themselves. If you refuse God's Word you are merely waiting to die. I leave these words in God to bless and strengthen them. Amen.

Concluding Healing Ceremony:

Bishop Nehemiah's prayers as he lays hands on sick people:

Prayer 1
You, good God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, we place all these sick people in Your hands as the sun sets. You are our shepherd, the keeper of our spirit, flesh and blood. You are the One who knows; You are our Nganga. Release this one who is in trouble, You who said, "The healthy do not seek doctors, but the sick ones do." Jesus Christ, Son of God, without You we cannot be saved. Only when You are with us, O Lord, You as the vine and we the branches [can we be saved]. You said, "Every branch which is in Me shall have life." Now the branches should be cleansed by You. Bless them so that they can do your work in the days to come in the knowledge that the trouble [illness] has gone. Jesus, Son of God, doctor of the sick, You spoke and said, "There are no medicine doctors [nganga], no medicine and no witchcraft in Zion." We have faith in You, Jesus Christ. We cannot treat anybody with the herbs of this world. Help those who are in trouble, for ever and ever Amen.

Prayer 2:
You are Jesus who was there yesterday. You are the One about whom we preached today, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. You are the One who changes everything. We, who are in trouble, cry out to You for help - to you the Shepherd, the Keeper of flesh and spirit. You said that the pregnant maiden who is in trouble will give birth normally and be happy with her child. She will forget all her agonies. Now, Lord Jesus, bless this maiden [murandakadzi]. We give her to you with this sunset, so that you may keep her all her life. We ask you to help her remember the things of heaven. Cure her womb, in the name of Jesus Christ for ever and ever Amen. (While praying, a Bible was pressed against the abdomen of the pregnant women concerned).
Prayer 3:
Bishop Nehemiah prayed for a man who had just returned to the Zionist Church after the deaths of two of his children. The general feeling was that destructive witchcraft was a serious threat to this man and his family.

Prayer:
As You spoke and said, the healthy ones do not seek doctors, but the sick ones seek doctors. Jesus Christ, Son of God, You are the tree of life. Outside You nothing can survive. We know as Christians that no herb-medicine must be used. You know the world and its difficulties. There are many enemies waiting to spill the blood of the innocent [this refers to the threat of witchcraft hanging over the man for whom Nehemiah is praying]. We put the matter of the enemy and the powerless [victim] in your hands. You, Jesus, Son of God, strengthen this man. Amen.
APPENDIX II

SERMONS PREACHED DURING OPENING CEREMONY OF BISHOP DAVID MASUKA'S CHURCH BUILDING:
8 and 9 July 1967

Saturday 8 July


Peace be with you. Even the elders say that one should have those who clear the road. But the road-clearer is not the one who has authority. He is simply the one who accompanies [muperekedzi]. The one in charge [mwene veshoko, literally "owner of the word"] is there. Since we now have important visitors we want to be taught, so that we can see where we stand. Because it is said, "the student is not above the teacher" Now that the chief [Mazungunye] has arrived, we assume a waiting attitude so that we can hear properly what is to be said.

Life is dependent on people responding to instruction. If one is not taught how to live one dies. So you see I have stood up. I am being trodden upon. Had I been a mouse, my tail would have broken off. But I refuse to accept the breaking off. I therefore introduce to you those who are here [the Rev Mutendi and Chief Mazungunye]. They will address you and you should pay attention to what is being said. They were greatly surprised when they arrived and found that the elders [Chief Masuka and Bishop Masuka] were absent. This is strange, because Chief Masuka sent for Chief Mazungunye with the message: "Go and call my father and bring him here. I cannot open the church without my father being here." But now that our lord [Mazungunye] has come, Masuka is absent. So you see, we are just saying dziva-dziva, like a chicken standing in the rain [i.e. we are at an impasse]. That is my message today, for ever and ever Amen.
2. Sotho Minister (visitor from South Africa, a member of Lekhanyane's ZCC).

... I inform you today that this man here [Mutendi] is our leader. Peace be to you! I am greatly privileged to arrive here with him, who is also my lord, and to see all the places he visits on his travels. We greatly rejoice at the sight of this new Church [building] and ask Mwari to strengthen the man of this place so that he will persevere in his work. This event fills us with joy. Even God Himself is pleased. We request you people of the Church Council to build and support the man of this place, because it is he who should receive you and give you life. Now you see this man of God [Mutendi] here. He said, "Let us go and uplift him who belongs to us, so that he can proceed in faith." I shall be most thankful if you people can become as free in your hearts as this messenger of God. Then you can respond with truth when you say, Amen! Amen!


Peace be with you! What we are doing now is appropriate because it would be wrong to return [without making some kind of a contribution]. We have a very big meeting at Moriah. If some of you could go there you would see for yourselves. The one who holds authority in this area, Chief Masuka, is not present, is that not so? We came here under the impression that the chief's representative would at least be here. Seeing that we are on our own, we have decided to conduct a short prayer meeting and then to leave you with the task of opening your Church. We say: "He who treads on the wet sand has quenched his thirst" - particularly when I see so many of the elderly people whom I know. We are most thankful, seeing that you have a leader who leads well.

Listen carefully to what I have to say. I believe that all of you support our minister working here like strong walls. I have an illustration for you. Electricity coming from a power-station moves in all directions. This man who is with us today [the Sotho minister from South Africa] comes from our headquarters. It is I who have been commissioned, not I who have founded [the power-station]. As I speak, I feel sorry for those who pretend to fulfil the Scriptures but who have failed to be present. Coming here, we aimed to fulfil the word in Scripture which speaks of the stone which was rejected by the builders. How was that stone rejected? It was rejected and caused many people to go astray. Some of you whom I know have
already gone astray. It is a difficult issue. A bishop who strays loses his followers tomorrow. Does the Word of God not say it clearly? Do you understand me? We began with this Church, which was introduced by Enginasi Lekhanyane, long ago. We worked here in Rhodesia together with Mr Chowe. There were some like Peter Mutema and others in various areas [referring to secessionists]. You all know them. We have also worked with Mr Chakanyuka. I do not know where he is now. So, we have come to your place, but you do not want to visit us in return. If you would only visit us, you would see our activities. Things are to be learnt from others. What we have done in this country, we learnt from other people, like Enginasi Lekhanyane. We co-operated with them [the ZCC of South Africa]. We consider Enginasi, whom they have now appointed as leader, as our son, but then he is also our superior and lord today. If one makes oneself a priest, the office belongs to oneself and one's house. It is one's own and one's grandfather's and one's grandmother's. I have come here, even if you say that this place does not belong to me. You follow what I say. I am really aglow (ndinopenya zvikuru).

We say about the bishop whom you have here: If he was commissioned by God he will stay. If he was not sent by God, you will see the result for yourselves. This man Masuka who has his house here today could not fulfil his own wishes. He was turned back by policemen.

Now I open my little [history] book. I am most thankful. It was difficult for you people to build this Church building and it is fortunate that it can be opened. Those who built it laid the foundation. People wish to have the book of law which we have in Malachi 2:7 which says that men should seek instruction from a priest who will lead them. Don't seek assistance from a junior Church member for he will lead you astray... We hear in Leviticus 27 that if a person dedicates his house to the Lord, the priest shall value it as either good or bad. One most important thing for all you black people in this country, Rhodesia, to take note of, is that when you reach heaven and are judged there, know that I shall be there. I shall be your witness [mufakazi]! None of the other Church leaders in this country belonging to the black people, not even Mai Chaza, witnesses in heaven about the activities of this world. I am the one who witnesses, I see it all happening.

I am grateful to notice that my child [mwana] has achieved much. Your minister Masuka has certainly made a great contribution. If you reject him you fulfil the prophecy which said, "They
will reject him." What matters really is whether one observes the law. Age does not matter. I do not fear those who were baptized while I was still in my teens. For if I abide in the law I shall surely beat them.

On the issue of leadership, the representatives of the various tribes go to the chief to trace the history of their lineages. They want to know where their forefathers came from and whether they are in line for the chieftainship. Relations are important. I cannot ask the son of another man to succeed me. In the Book of Chronicles it says that the Israelites were without the true God. Then why did they accept Him? They did not have a priest, neither a bishop nor a pope amongst them - at any rate, not a bishop appointed by whites! Some of you will accept a bishop appointed by the whites. But that is not the point. Each is concerned with and participates in his own kind of leadership. Chief Mazungunye has his own kingship. We have our own Church leadership. [The point here seems to be that the Israelites accepted the true God through a divinely appointed and inherited kingship - particularly the one which passed from David to Solomon.] In the Bible we read that Solomon, the son of David, built Jehovah's temple. Is it sensible for a MuRozvi to inherit Mazungunye's chieftainship, he being a muRufura? No, the muRozvi is an outsider. If the chief dies, is it not a matter of appointing his own son? Do you follow? Sometimes you understand me and sometimes you don't.

Some of you will remember the time when we, together with Chowe, were arrested and detained at Jakata. Chowe never thought of leaving us in the lurch. This shows that one should stick to the course one has set oneself. Is it not so? Don't compromise your principles! People who are divided into small, separate groups cannot even conduct a proper Sunday service. Their group [identities] won't last. When King Solomon came to the throne, he inherited his father's kingship, not that of an outsider. There were other Zionists who could not be instated because his [David's] son was the legitimate heir.

These Sotho people are very clever. They don't want someone to claim the leadership illegally. The father of this man with us [Sotho preacher who was paying Mutendi a visit] is one of the founders of the Church down there. Therefore he was required to sit on his deceased father's throne. That is what we appreciate. Let's listen to the following passage:
Reader
"And Solomon began to build the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem ..."

Mutendi.
David was not allowed to interfere in this matter. He could not even point out where the foundations for the temple had to be. Why? Because he had blood on his hands. The temple had to be built by his son. He built a temple which is said to have been like this one [of Masuka]. This is the headquarters you sing about, saying "Jerusalem is the dwelling-place of angels." You say you honour angels, but where do you honour them? At your own house? This temple here is the place of angels! It would have been preferable for the Rev. Masuka to be present, but he is at home. As a result we have conducted this meeting in the leader's absence. Even if he should practise witchcraft we do not reject him. If one appoints oneself a Church leader, one should appear in front of others. You who are here, know that this is your headquarters. You should not despise your leader's youth. For you did not join this Church for the sake of leadership recognition, but because the Church as a whole attracted you. When someone gets married he does not decide to have baby girls or boys. It comes naturally. I say this because various people claim to be founders of this Church. This here is the headquarters where you always meet to have Holy Communion under the direction of my official [shefu].

People failed to come here [in large numbers]. I therefore wish that you would come and witness the proceedings at Zion City. If any of you go with us, you will see what a large gathering we have there. The people there are like ants. They are people of intelligence. A number of chiefs are there as well. If one does something and finds that it is not addressed by superiors [chiefs], it reflects the unimportance of such doings. Superiors should approve of one's actions. Even the prophet Isaiah confirms this... It is because of God's Word which calls on us to love each other that we have done all this. We have chased away the demons. We have liberated you from the ancestral spirits, so that you can follow Christ. Listen carefully! Where there is strife because of leadership claims there is no Church. To strive after leadership is not a sign of Christianity, but of Satan. I have built my house [temple]. The person without a [spiritual] home is considered a fool.

Let us look at Ezra 3:10.
Reader
"And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests in their vestments came forward with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals to praise the Lord, according to the directions of David king of Israel."

Mutendi:
Let's praise the Lord with cymbals and flutes! I am the one who started with these cords [ndaza]! We in fact started by beating old tin cans but have now developed to this stage [of using a band with modern instruments]. Solomon and David were also entertained with such instruments. When we started our Jerusalem the people suffered from persecution and arrests. They looked at each other and asked: "Is this [cause of suffering] our Church?" Don't think that all the Rozvi people suffered in this way, for it is only I [of the Rozvi people] who followed the Christian way. The Rozvi people are overly concerned with their monarchy. Yet we gave you a bishop; do you want another one, in addition? The people of God are always opposed by the world!

Our first bishop was Enginasi Lekhanyane. Then there was also Mhlangu. But of these [forerunners of Zion] I am the only one left. All the others have passed away. Tomorrow I may follow them, but up to this time God has spared me. Now then, we are merely going to look at your Church building, and leave you with the task of opening it. This has been our participation in the opening ceremony. We are not to blame. Neither is Chief Mazungunye to blame. It is no good blaming one another. You should obey both your chief and your bishop. For disobeying the one is the same as disobeying the other. Chief Mazungunye and I will now enter the Church. Finally, I want to express my appreciation for the assistance you men have rendered in building this beautiful building, together with your bishop David Masuka. I am full of praise. Even if it should have no value, with no one being allowed to enter it, the one who has built it has completed his task. I honour him with this gift of $1. Take heed! I do not say it is your day [of officially opening the Church]. We simply wanted to make our contribution here and then proceed [to Moriah].

4. Chief Mazungunye:
I have not much to say. It is said, "A young pheasant which climbs right down to the pool has already become meat." When I reached
the Rev Mutendi's place I heard for the first time that a Church is to be opened at Masuka. I said: "Well, even though I have not been informed, let's go anyway." So we came here in this manner I too recognize the work that was done with my "little bull" of $1.

As Bishop Mutendi made additional contributions on behalf of his wives and other ZCC members followed suit, Mutendi said: "You people say that the Church of Mutendi is greedy and takes a lot of money. I tell you, they are people of wisdom. All those vehicles over there belong to members of the Church. What other leader has seen such things?"

After conducting a prayer meeting inside the Church building, Mutendi emerged, saying: "We have entered our home."

Sunday 9 July

5. Bishop David Masuka.

I thank the Lord in heaven who has gathered the people here in the spirit of Christian love. It is Jesus Christ, because of His death for us, who has drawn us here. For his sake we are called the followers of the Lord in heaven. So we start by giving thanks to our Lord Jesus who inspired us with a new spirit, having delivered us from the darkness of this world. The Word of God should be visible in your lives. As we are gathered here, we should be above reproach. We are here to worship God and to be one, because the One in heaven has mercy on us when we sleep, when we are awake and when we pray. He is our keeper under all circumstances!

This meeting was intended to be the official opening of our Church. Do not think that this [the opening ceremony] will never take place because of what you heard yesterday. Once we are finished with the proceedings we will call another meeting to arrange matters. We will then find a suitable time for opening the Church.

Now we will concern ourselves with the teaching of God's Word as found in 1 Kings 5, which deals with the building of God's Temple.

Reader

1 Kings 5:1. "Now Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon, when he heard that they had anointed him king in the place of his father: for Hiram always loved David."
Leadership and Fission Dynamics

Bishop Masuka.
The first verse tells us that there was a certain man called Hiram, who was a friend of David, the son of Jesse. Solomon knew him from long ago when he was still a young boy. He knew him as the king of Tyre. Having loved King David all his life, King Hiram was greatly pleased to learn about Solomon's coronation. So he sent people to Solomon. The good relationship of many years between the two kings was the reason for the co-operation between Hiram and Solomon. Was there any animosity or strife between them? No! We should learn to love one another and work together, according to this example.

Reader
1 Kings 5:2, 3: "And Solomon sent word to Hiram, 'You know that David my father could not build a house for the name of the Lord his God because of the warfare with which his enemies surrounded him, until the Lord put them under the soles of his feet.'"

Bishop Masuka:
Solomon sent his representatives to Hiram to tell him that his father, David, had failed to build a house for God. The reason for this was his prolonged involvement in warfare. Another reason was that David had to struggle hard to persuade the Israelites to accept God's Word.

I am in the same position as Solomon. My father also tried and failed. He only succeeded in building a few places of mud and grass. Now, I say he was too involved in the struggle to make the whole country believe this Word of God [Wedenga: the One in Heaven]. So, like Solomon, I decided to build Jehovah a temple. Solomon told King Hiram, "My father died and I was elected by Jehovah to succeed him. Since I have no enemies I now have the opportunity to build God's temple." Is there anyone here who does not know the son of Jeke? No! You may ask, Who is this? Who is coming here and for what purpose? It is David! Who has converted the world? David, my father, has! Now look, my heart responded by saying that I want to build Jehovah, our God, a temple. Solomon said to Hiram: "I want to build this temple with you, my father's friend, knowing about it." As with Solomon the house was pledged by our fathers to God. There it is! [David points at Church building.] Can't you see it? We here fulfil the law of our fathers. Nothing exists without an inheritance! Solomon built his father's and I have built my father's. Some will build that which is associated with
bad medicine, and others that which relates to witchcraft. But this one [the Church building] is for the Lord, which Solomon, Hiram and David promised Jehovah. Solomon told Hiram that the Lord had sworn to David that his own son would build a dwelling-place for Him. Likewise, I am now sitting on my father's chair There! Over there stands the house I have built on behalf of my father. What for? For Jehovah, so that people can believe in Him. Now tell your people to hew cedar trees and I will pay for it. In verse 14 it says that Hiram's and Solomon's servants worked together to get the desired timber - cedar and fir. Solomon said, "You are my father's friend, let our people come together and co-operate. In your land you have the cedar and fir which I require. Let us build God's temple together." Did the bishop do any of the hewing of timber himself? No. In verse 13 it says that Solomon raised a levy of thirty thousand labourers. Solomon's and Hiram's "forced labour" was not the same as what agricultural demonstrators forced us to perform when they made us dig contour furrows. The purpose was different. The demonstrators yoked people together for digging contour furrows, while Hiram and Solomon did so for the construction of the Lord's house. Any Zionist who refuses to work on the house of the Lord must know that he will be required to work on set days when no one will receive pay for the building of God's house. This is how Solomon and Hiram did it. And yet some of you were complaining and threatening to leave the Zionist Church if you had to work here without pay. Some of you said: "Zion serves no purpose! Zion is useless!" And yet this house of God was completed with "forced labour". Where did the labourers come from? You know the regions called Bikita, Zaka, Gutu and others. We called them and sent them to Lebanon - each for a full month. They took turns, each knowing when he had to come and work. Solomon and Hiram also had the people working in teams of a thousand each month. As Adoniram was over the levy of labourers, we appointed Muchokoto to stay here and be responsible for the construction of the Lord's house. In this manner we succeeded in achieving our aims.

It is now time for our guest to speak. He is a white man. In spite of that we are united in love. He often visits us. Because of our close ties we offer him this ram, which is a gift from the people of Bikita, Zaka, Chipinga and Fort Victoria. He has taken our words [on tape] and will take them to Holland. He has already given his gift for the opening of the Church. We will keep it for the official [future] opening of the Church ...
APPENDIX III

ORDINATION SERVICE OF RUBEN MUTENDI CONDUCTED
BY NDAZA BISHOP DAVID MASUKA IN THE BIKITA
DISTRICT: 26 MARCH 1978

Mufundisi Munyikwa:
Peace to you all! We thank you God in heaven of Moyo [Mutendi],
of David Masuka and of Ruben Mutendi, you who have created the
earth and the oceans, you who have allowed us this sabbath day; we
being alive in body and spirit. We say this because some of us are
alive physically but spiritually dead. Peace to you all!

Congregation: Amen!

Munyikwa:
We have here a man of importance by the name of Ruben, who has
been instated in Church work by his father, Bishop Mutendi. He
was made reponsible for the work here in Bikita even unto death,
because of the thing [war] that chases us all. He went and lived at
Gutu to preach the Word of God, after I had gone there myself.
When Bishop Mutendi reached Gutu, he took Samson Bracho [senior
ZCC minister of Chingombe chiefdom] and Zivengwa to Chief
Chingombe and told him: "I am leaving my son Ruben in this area
so that he can tend my Church." Also at the district office he
notified the officials that Ruben was to be the "keeper of his
Church" in Gutu. He told us Church members: "Respect Ruben
because I have chosen him in the flesh, even though we don't know
whether he was chosen in heaven. I don't want Ruben to lead the Church
[i.e. lead the Church] while I am alive, but only after my death.
Then followed miracles that were seen. For, in those days [after
Mutendi's death] when we reached Fort Victoria the Zionist place of
meeting was flooded with rain. All the Zionists wanted to run
away, saying: "Do you know whose rain that is?" Then the rain
passed on to the town, and the service could proceed. Ruben preached until everything was fine. Yet his brothers fled. Peace to you all!

All of us ministers were told by Bishop Mutendi at the final meeting at Soti: "My time is full, I am awaiting my crown of a righteous judge, and he who follows me [meaning Ruben] will receive his crown." Peace to you all! From there we went to the council meeting where we were given three biblical passages. The one said: "Those who are first will be last, and those who are last will be first." It was a message to the ministers who were to follow Ruben. Then the arrangements were made for the leadership of the congregation of Mashowani. In all this we thank Bishop David Masuka for his assistance in helping the "man of Jehovah" to fulfil the law.

When Samson Bracho was ill and we were having Paschal celebrations here in Gutu, it was Ruben who conducted these ceremonies. Bishop Mutendi actually told us in earlier years: "Work with this youngster of mine. He will stay behind and preach the gospel when I have gone. Look at my son and at his first wife. He did not win her himself, but I found her for him. I chose her for him [with the implication that she would assist him in his Church work]." Since that day we experienced miracles here in Gutu. People dreamt about Moyo [Bishop Mutendi] and about Ruben. Whenever a sick person dreamt of Mutendi we did not even lay on hands, because we knew the person was healed and would survive.

There was one woman who was ill for a year and went to hospitals without being cured. When she came to us we dreamt of Moyo and Ruben, whereafter the prophets prophesied that she should take a hoe and work in the fields because she was already healed. Two days later, having worked in the fields, she was completely healed. This was one of the miracles which convinced me ... So, when the time came to decide about who I am to follow, I decided to follow Bishop Ruben. You, God of the heavens, I thank you. Peace to all of you. I thank you Bishop David Masuka for having come to fulfil your work and to introduce yourself to many of us who have not seen you before ...

Mufundisi Mupanduki:
We have come here for no other reason but for the love of God. We recognize what happened yesterday ... the installation of a leader. If we do not recognize it, having witnessed the event, it would be the same as discounting the Word of Jehovah.
In His word we find something similar. When Jacob was chosen to be the father of Israel, he had an elder brother Esau. When Jacob was given this position it was final and Esau was not given another chance to preach. And Jacob fathered twelve children ... Ruben, Simeon, Levi ... Judah was chosen as king even though he was only the fourth son. We do not find in the Word that more than one son was chosen. When the one was chosen, it was only that one and no other! So that is the word which was sent to us, too, followers of God. Likewise, David [Masuka] and Mutendi were chosen by God, before people knew about it. They were heathen in the world, but God chose them to lead the people of the world. At first they did not know, until they witnessed that Jesus is God. Now they are both asleep [dead]. When David slept, his son came. Peace be to you! And now that Samuel [Mutendi] is asleep, we remember that in the past he had asked us whom we want to lead. We showed him that one over there [i.e. Ruben]. He agreed. So we had confirmation from the father himself. Therefore, followers of God, we are doing today that which has been sanctioned. You people are troubled, saying God is not in all this. Yet God is wise and when He chooses someone to spread the gospel, it will be so. These two men [David Jr and Ruben] have been chosen by God.

King David, too, was chosen by God. His sons Absolom and Adonia were not allowed to have the kingship. This was so because they were not chosen by their father. What we know is in the Book! Peace to you ... Amen! Those who study the Book know its contents. It is not possible to deviate from the Book, for it would mean going in that state to the grave... We came here to see what happens and to hear the spoken word, but ultimately it is only God who really knows; He and nobody else! If these two men work in their Churches with real dedication, that is what God wants. If not, they will not please God. So you people must support them so that there can be progress. That is what their fathers did. They brought the same message. When Bishop Mutendi was at Moriah, the rain fell. It did so because he followed God. These two men died without having failed in their mission and without having broken the ties between them. If their sons follow God, they will do the same. [Note anticipation of continued co-operation between Peresu and Ruben.] You must co-operate ... be united, live together ... we urge you to do so. If you separate, it will be bad. The elders said: "If you beat a child, don't put him outside because he will be taken by a hyena!" [Even if there are squabbles, don't discard each other.]
God Himself will protect and gather His people. If you do what is wrong you'll die, if you do what is right you'll live. Absolom died because he wanted his father dead, so that he could take the kingship. Know that you too will die if you do wrong. Just as in the olden times, when the work of the gospel was done by Paul and Peter, these two men, David and Mutendi, did it here. They were chosen to go out and preach in the world. They were not appointed to their work but they were chosen by God here in this country, when darkness still prevailed. Now that we know these two, David and Ruben, were also chosen, we have come to gadza [arrange the leadership]. It is not just a simple matter to be dealt with lightly. It is like the ancestors. When they possess you, you have been chosen. If you do not respond it will turn against you like a ngozi [vengeful spirit] and kill. Likewise, if someone thinks he can just take the leadership and go with it he will be killed by God. He himself will say: "I have been bewitched," but in reality he dies because he had not kept God's law. Peace to you all! It is a serious issue, and should be well pondered ...

Bishop Ruben Mutendi:
Having welcomed all the guests and representatives of other Churches, Ruben preached as follows:

Today I tell you that this Church of Zion was already led by Moses when he saw the burning bush at Mt Sinai. That was when God's voice addressed him from the bush to take off his shoes because the ground where he was standing was holy. He was fearful of approaching the bush. Peace be to you! Amen! Then he was told to go to Egypt and liberate the people of Israel. After he had received this task he met God at Mt Sinai, together with Aaron. There it was agreed that if a person is given a task such as that of a bishop, he should have hands laid on him; in the same way it is stated in 2 Peter 3:11 that one should be consecrated by laying on of hands. This has been done to Aaron and all the kings, up to the last one. Nothing changed until the world was coming to an end. Then the Son of Man came to change the world. This Church remained, there at Jerusalem. The priest who was in it was called Paul. A man from Greece, by the name of Gamaliel, came to Paul and requested work, so that he could earn some money. So he was made a priest and went back to his country with this new task. While working there he came across a man from America, by the name of John Lee. So this John Lee was appointed bishop and he returned to America in
this capacity. All this was in the hands of the Lord. Then there was Edward of Basutoland, who went to work in America and found this Church there. He liked the Church because great miracles were performed in it. He was baptized and ordained, then returned to Basutoland, where all the Church people were under his authority. Then Enginasi Lekhanyane went to work in Basutoland and was converted in this Church. He was made a priest, then become a bishop and took this task to Johannesburg in South Africa. While he was busy doing God's work there, he met two men, namely David Masuka and Samuel Mutendi. These men were there from Rhodesia searching for work, but they failed to obtain the jobs they were looking for. Then they found this Church, were appointed in it and sent back to this country, Rhodesia. Working in this country, the Word was spread far and wide. Everybody was converted! They did their work without the assistance of Europeans. They simply did God's work until all of you knew the kingdom of God.

In 1949 Josaiah Nebarwe was ill, and he went to Mutendi and to David Masuka, thus being in the Church of Zion. When he died, a certain man arranged the inheritance proceedings and called both Mutendi and David Masuka. This was on 9 September. It was then that Mutendi and Masuka discussed their own inheritance, and said: "Who will arrange it?" [Ingazogadziwa naani?] They said: "Our inheritance will not be arranged by a deacon or Church minister." They made a definite agreement between them. On that day Zion had really come from South Africa to Rhodesia [implication: full autonomy - because leadership no longer depended on SA Churches!] The full agreement was made there where the ruins [of Zion City - in Bikita] still are. Bishop Masuka came with Johane [i.e. Peresu] to Zion City, this same Bishop Masuka we have here today. Machaka and Muzvidzwa were there as well. Each bishop told the other: "If I die, you come and gadza [instal] my son. In this way our descendants will co-operate and arrange matters." They wrote this agreement on paper. Peace be to you!

All.
Amen!

Ruben.
When David died, Mutendi went and buried his elder brother. Subsequently he took Johane, the one you see here today, and ordained him as bishop in his father's place. Now the others [in the opposing camp] are saying he [Masuka Jr] is a fool. Yet he is the principal
leader, installed by Mutendi, the one we honour. We all know that he has received the entire leadership. It was done by Mutendi, and not from within his own Church.

Will we now scold [kutuka] our father, the one who has fathered us, now that he is at rest [in other words: will we ignore what he has arranged]? Will you people proclaim falsehood because Mutendi is at rest? Did he not have an unusual death? Don't you know what he has done for you? Have you forgotten that he brought you the Holy Spirit? Must you lie, now that he rests?

The Holy Spirit came in 1964, as you know, and Bishop Mutendi then said: "I am also now looking for the child of my choice whom I can give the responsibility of my work, the one whom I shall instruct." You surely heard about this yourselves. He told the prophets to seek out a son of appropriate disposition. He said: "Dream and find me the right child!" When the question came: Who is it? the prophets said: "The Spirit has indicated Ruben!" Is the lot to be thrown twice? Is there to be another choice? They clad me then and "threw me" into Gutu and they all said, there at Mutarara, in 1966: "Give him the task!" My father said: "I have given you an area of your own; don't be diverted by the people; work with all your might!" Am I not telling you the truth?

All.
It is the truth!

Ruben.
When my father went away [to Gokwe], we distributed the possessions; we halved it between the two of us. He left me here while he went to a distant land. It therefore makes me sad to think that things should be so troubled after his death. In 1974 we had a meeting with Mutendi and he spoke to Bishop Masuka. He said: "I want that son of mine whom I have chosen to come here to Gokwe. You must ordain him as leader after my death, that one called Ruben." Did my father not say that I should remain steadfast and not be robbed of my responsibilities by the people? Was it not said that the people would refuse to accept the young one, as happened to Lekhanyane when he was young, and when he was rejected after his return from a distant place? Well, I went and worked well with my father, but jealousy entered into things, and that ended. When the time came for the "man of God" to go, he told me: "I am not dying without you being here!" He came and fetched me here in
Bikita and took me to Gokwe. Three days after we reached there he died.

While the sun was setting he said: "Pray, you people, confess your sins and let Ruben sit here close to me!" You who were witnesses will know that I tell you the truth. When he was thus seated, darkness fell. He then said: "All of you, my children and wives, move away and go sit at a distance. Read John 20:19-24!" He chased everybody away and asked for the holy one. They fetched me. As he died I was the only one with him. No child of his was allowed near him. I held him against my breast. He had told Mai Tsungi: "Run, and go and fetch the holy person, so that he can come here." He wanted me to be with him and hold him in his last moments. He had known and had prophesied that his son who lived far off would not be given his possessions. But he had nevertheless given me three staves, some of which are over there in my house. This one which I have here I received from him while he was alive. Peace be to you! Amen! You, people of Gutu, that day when I said: "Come out, you shavi spirits!" - did I not make them to come out with this staff here? Many of you who were demon-possessed, did I not drive out the demons with this staff? Did I not comfort and protect those who were bewitched? Am I telling you lies? Tell me!

Congregation.
No, it is the truth!

Ruben.
When everybody else ran away I remained seated alone amongst the demons. That man Kaunda was ill for three weeks before he healed. I was given this healing power while my father was still alive... [To the reader] Find John 20:19 for me ... Jesus showed himself to the disciples in the absence of Thomas. Mutendi likewise showed himself to me, having called me, and not the others, before he left...

Reader:
John 20:19: "On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.'"

Ruben:
When the time had come, he [Mutendi] arranged for Ruben to come. And the doors were closed. Nobody else was allowed in.
Having closed the doors he spoke to me, saying: "You, Ruben, my son, preach the gospel with strength. Do not be diverted by the people. Obey! I am satisfied that you have good relations with the people and that you love them. That is why I teach you, so that you will not alienate some of your followers. Preach God’s Word in the areas where I have not been. I told you to come here so that I can give you the nyembe [kraalhead’s disc]. But you already have a nyembe. Yours is the one of preaching God’s Word. I don’t want you to inherit the possessions of this world."

He, Mutendi, was also offered a nyembe of headmanship when he came back from Johannesburg. But he told the whites [of the Administration] that his own nyembe [not of headmanship but of the Church] was a real one.

Reader
John 20:20: "When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord."

Ruben.
I then said: "Well, that is how things are." And he, Mutendi, looked at me and said: "Give me porridge to eat." I gave him three portions of porridge and lemon to eat.

Reader:
John 20:21. "Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.’"

Ruben.
Mutendi told me: "As I have sent you to preach in the entire world [nyika dzose], don’t lose heart. Take heart, be courageous; many will hate you. Peace be with you." But, I don’t hate anybody. Even if you should hate me or scold me, I simply carry on.

Reader
John 20:22: "Then he breathed on them and said: ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’"

Ruben.
When my father had finished all that, he raised his hands, like this ... and he spoke words which I could not understand. After that he fell on my breast with his mouth open, and I held him. I closed his eyes while his mouth was still open towards me [as if conveying a
last message and breathing his spirit on me). It was like Jesus who showed himself to his disciples. He had nothing to clothe himself with because his garments [earthly possessions] had been destroyed. But he had the inheritance of the Holy Spirit. That is what I, too, found [on my father's death]. When I reached there [Gokwe], my father's garments [earthly possessions] had been given away to others in my absence. I received nothing and I have not been informed about anything about his possessions to this day. Peace be with you! I wanted to go and fetch my inheritance; but it was of no use, because I have been given the staves [real authority] one after the other. I have not bought anything [i.e. I was not involved in the dispute over inheritance], but what I received was open in public for all to witness and to know.

Reader
John 20:23: "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Ruben.
It says that if you are lifted to the top of the mountain, your sins are forgiven. You have to forgive others and not keep anything against them if they repent. Those who bewitch, throw it away; those who commit adultery, cast it aside; those who live in disunity with others, throw it away; those who cast spells at night, get rid of it, so that you will see heaven, and you'll be made holy! But those of you who persist with evil things, we don't want you here. My father left you in your sin and so will we. Leave sin, throw sin away!

Song
There is a mountain far away.

Ruben.
They sang at the cross, they sang until His time of suffering was fulfilled, they sang while He was hated, they sang while He was humbled; they did not sing to His peace. Peace be to you! Amen! The death of Christ hurts, because in His coming, those who want to enter heaven must be watchful. He said: Don't look for the wide road, but for the narrow passage, because it is with this one that you will enter heaven [Luke 4:17]. There are not two roads leading to heaven. It is not possible for a believer to hate his neighbour. All of you who follow me, you must have love. You bicker amongst
yourselves about leadership, the one wanting to be an evangelist and the other a minister. Meanwhile none of those you have prayed for was healed. You must co-operate! Read to us about the rejection of Jesus at Nazareth.

Reader
Luke 4:17: "He stood up to read the Scriptures and was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. He opened the book and found the place where it was written."

Ruben.
The book was confirming the work Christ was doing; and he said: "What will we do about a priest or bishop?" But the scroll concerned Moses and Aaron, with the message that God's work had to be done in that meeting. Peace be to you! All those who were there saw the Son of God being given his work.

Reader:
Luke 4:18: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind; to set at liberty those who are oppressed."

Ruben.
A person cannot be filled by the Spirit if someone does not lay hands on him, installing him. The people must witness that the Spirit is taking hold of the person and in the process place him in the same clan [line of succession] as Melchizedek [Hebr. 5:4f]. Melchizedek was told by a messenger of God that everything he does will be blessed ... Christ was sent to liberate His people who were possessed by sins. Many were not then in the Church and he therefore struggled in the villages to persuade people. We, too, have such a struggle. We also fight the Pharisees. Those are the ones who have remained, who are opposed to us.

Reader:
Luke 4: 19-20: "...to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." And he closed the book and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him."
Ruben:
Jesus announced that the time had come for the people to be saved. He closed the book and sat down. The people were at loggerheads, each saying he is the bishop, without having been properly appointed. That is the message which had been written at Mt Sinai, that each legitimate leader should have hands laid on him. Without this no-one can be a proper bishop. Even if I have been elected by vote [reference to Nehemiah] or appointed, I cannot be a proper bishop. Anointment is essential. Today my anointer is here. He anointed me on 16 December 1976. Today he will confirm it once more. He, Bishop Masuka, has come. I will sit down because today the leader is here [ushe huripano: the chieftain is here]. If I get lost Masuka will know; if I do wrong, Masuka, his God and the deceased Mutendi will know. Let them all meet there in heaven; they who have given me this position. Let them judge there. I am not to be judged here. The prophets, too, have seen all this ... Peace to you!

Bishop David Masuka:
As I have been instated [as bishop] in these garments of mine you, too, my children, be instated. You, secretary, read out to those who are here so that they can understand what has been arranged. That which we wrote [arranged officially] in Gutu, went to Harare [for legitimation]; that which was written in Bikita also went to Harare, where matters are concluded. Our arrangements were finalized in Harare. Let that secretary over there, my son, give us clarity. In the same way, your son, Ruben, must gadza [instal] my son when I die.

[Secretary reads about the agreement between the two Zionist bishops from the ZCC handbook.]

Masuka.
That is why I say each of us has his own work. This is not a matter to trifle with. We are here because of trouble, not peace. We talk about the troubles of this man [Ruben] whom you disturb, while you do not know that such matters start with a lot of trouble [Masuka was probably referring to the leadership problems he himself had to face after his father's death]. You, too, have been troubled greatly. Is it not so?

You have taken too much of my [preaching] time. There is much in the leadership of Moyo that I wanted to mention and to honour. It has been blessed because God favoured it. I will just refer to
some of the issues. On 17 January I saw that things had stagnated [come to a standstill]. Enginasi had written a letter of many pages which we wanted to have incorporated into this book of agreement of ours. It takes you three days to read such a letter. He [Enginasi] claimed that the Church's kingship is his. Nehemiah, whom I saw in Fort Victoria, had similar claims. But this one here [Ruben] is the one I installed at Copper Queen [Gokwe]. Since Bishop Mutendi died the people could not turn to him for advice any longer. So, they asked me. Shortly before his death I met Mutendi in Que Que. It was God's wish, because the days of Moyo were complete. He wanted me to know which child of his to gadza. On 8 September 1974 I was shown the son who had to be the successor. He scolded me saying: "Ruben ndewe kwaChimumango: Ruben belongs to Chimumango." There I saw that the one who was chosen was Ruben. Stand up, those of you who saw me installing Ruben at Jerusalem! What did you see? Did you not see much rain? On 19 January 1977 much rain fell around the house of Masuka, and David's wives ululated. It was when it rained that I laid hands on Ruben.

Now a question to you, teachers of Moyo. You remember I told you of a dream in which I was thin and frail. When Mutendi's voice asked me why, I said it was because of three people fighting over his Church leadership. I said it was a matter which makes one ashamed. He said: "I have heard you. But leave it alone for a while, then I shall come again." He and another, they being two, then went away. Then I had another dream of Nehemiah coming with three cars. He told me that he was chosen to succeed his father. I asked him whether that was all. He said yes, and departed with his cars. Then, in the same dream, Mutendi came from the east and asked me whom I had spoken with. I told him about Nehemiah with his three cars. He said that if I saw his ushe [leadership] really having problems, I must not act but wait while he considered the issue. Two weeks later he, together with another, again appeared in a dream ... in radiant colour David came from the east and Mutendi from the west. This showed their spirit of co-operation. David asked Mutendi why I had been scolded. There was no reply. He said: "You, Mutendi, your people congregated here, have scolded me and said I am Chimumango. Why did they do that?" Nobody replied. He said: "Mutendi, reply on behalf of your people, why they said your son Ruben was with Chimumango. Which of your sons has the inheritance? Is it the one who threw the Church away to mix with foreigners? Answer me, Moyo!" Moyo answered: "The
one who has inherited [the leadership] is Ruben." Ruben then ran to his father. Thereafter he went to David to receive power [masimba], as David himself had received masimba. David said: "Our unity is breaking up because of your people, Moyo." David said: "Let us go and arrange matters." So they discussed. And it was said that the ministers were responsible for secession - that they have contributed to confusion. You say: Some are of Nehemiah, and others of Ruben, but it was your own kingship which you were dividing. If we want to go to heaven, we must have one Church. This was one Church. It ended like that, with Mutendi saying that Ruben had the following of his choice. They [Ruben and his followers] came again and we held a meeting at the flat rock. It does not mean that I am doing all this because I favour Ruben, but because I do the work of God. If I lie, let me spend the rest of the week as a sick man. If God loves someone, He elects him like a Father, saying, "That is the one I want." Peace to you! The reason why some fail with the nhaka [inherited leadership] is because they do not respect the father, nor God. So, they are hated in return. Then I had a vision of a meeting conducted by Nehemiah with both robed Ndaza Zionists and uniformed Zionists of Mutendi present. David was there in khaki and Mutendi in uniform. Between the two groups were large trees, separating them. David said: "We want the agreement between our groups fulfilled, because if it is not possible here, we will also not unite in heaven. We must also arrange the leadership here and bring it to a conclusion." David was carrying a spear and Mutendi a knobkerrie; both of them were radiant in their faces. Remember, if you bother the spirits of the deceased they will continue to return like this [Masuka and Mutendi] - because you keep bothering them. It is not the time for us to go to heaven with these messengers, but when the Son of Man comes from the east, he comes with the messengers to check the world, to see who does good and who does bad deeds. That is what these messengers are [already] concerned with. David has said, if you people do not honour our agreement of September 1949, I cannot see properly [i.e. rest]. It is because of what you people of Mutendi are doing. Mutendi himself, in this vision, had Ruben and another of his sons standing next to him. Whether it was Enginasi, Nehemiah, Edward or Jethro I couldn't see. So Mutendi said: "What is disturbing you, Johane Masuka?" I said: "It is the same thing I told you before, that your Church is split in three." He said: "You must advise me,
because they are in your hands." [Note: sanction for Masuka's involvement.] I said: "Really, it is beyond me, I do not find a solution. It would be good if you yourself choose someone before the people, for all to see." So he said: "It is fine!" He made Ruben stand up and face the west. Then he said: "Look, there is my choice. He was afraid at first of the people, but now I order him to lead my people."

I had a very good look while all this happened, because I was afraid of being killed. Nevertheless, I then installed Ruben without fear. David was still just standing near these trees. He said, "If you pray, address the God of David [Masuka] and Samuel [Mutendi], who sent the two of us to fetch the gospel from South Africa and to come and perform miracles. Let all the miracles of healing and rainmaking go to the side of Ruben! Then we lay hands on Ruben's head in prayer. David said: "It is finished. I leave you [Peresu] to tell the people about the death of David. Tell my ministers and those of Moyo. Ask all the followers of Moyo on whose breast he died." That is why I asked Ruben to ask which of the ministers were present when Mutendi died. Is Ruben not the only one who was present? If you all know that Mutendi died while he was leaning against the body of Ruben [Mutendi wakafa ari pa muwiri waRubeni] it is clear that Ruben has the leadership of Moyo.

When my father died I was in the hut with him. He then sent me to the Church to conduct the service. I did so in dread that he might die. Meanwhile he had his blankets removed because it was too hot for him. Then he again shivered with cold. His wives picked him up to help him, but did not realize he was already dead. They came with a bicycle to give me the news. I was overcome with grief and said: "My father has died without having given us any instructions. How should the agreement of 1949 between my father and Mutendi be carried out?" As I stood with my tears and sorrow they said: "Come! Your father has arisen!" I went to him and he made the arrangements concerning the nhaka [inheritance].

You must know that this thing - inheritance - is one of the most important in all of life, because it has a direct influence on one's state after death. I received my father's staff and garments. When he died I went and fetched Mutendi. He came to bury my deceased father and brought a blanket to cover the corpse. We then also conducted the meeting at which I was installed as Church leader. So, I say that when a person dies he gives the one he chooses a sign. My sign is the 26 years I co-operated with Mutendi, until we buried him. My father served for 27 years. Now it is Ruben and I who are
left. You see, none of you, my followers, would have been able to install me as leader because you are my children. *Mutendi had the authority to do so.* That is why we made the arrangement that those of the star [ZCC] will instal those of the garments [Ndaza], and those of the garments will instal those of the star. I was *gadzwa'd* [installed] by Samuel Mutendi while he was wearing a star and I, my garments. Now, if you people accuse Ruben of being wrongly installed by Chimumango, whom are you accusing? Are you not blaming the deceased father? I am only completing what was arranged long ago. Even if you should axe me down and kill me for laying hands on Ruben, you may do so. Then I am the sacrificial bull ready to be stabbed and killed. 2 Kings 9:1 f [Jehu's anointment] teaches about Masuka. 1 Samuel 16:1f [David's anointment], Numbers 27:15– all these passages speak about Masuka.

**Reader**

2 Kings 9:1 "Then Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets and said to him, "Gird up your loins, and take this flask of oil in your hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead ... [and secretly anoint Jehu as king of Israel]"

**Masuka:**

The people came to me and suggested that we should instal Ruben secretly because otherwise I may get killed. I said to Ruben: "Let us go to the river at Jerusalem." When we reached there it started to rain and I knew it was a sign [legitimation] of Ruben's kingship [umambo]. Once I had completed the ceremony, I said: "Ruben, I have now completed the task your deceased father had left me. I shall leave you now." You see, Elisha was a priest, but he went to the house of Jehu to anoint the King for Israel. Likewise Moyo and David each have their own Church, but they assist each other with the installation of the "kingship" *it is simply a task their subordinate ministers cannot perform!* The law refuses it!

**Reader**

1 Sam 16: 1–13: [Selects portions from this passage]

**Masuka:**

God sees what lives in the heart of a person. Jesse had many sons, some strong and capable, but God knew they were not suited for His work. David is the one who was chosen, even though he was the *mudoko*, the lastborn. Samuel anointed David - Samuel was both
priest and prophet. Likewise I, Johane Masuka, being priest and prophet, anoint Ruben. Only a priest can *gadza* another priest. A deacon cannot do so. A minister can appoint only an evangelist and a preacher. I, today give you the office of bishop, because I was sent! Anybody who simply takes this position without proper installation by another bishop [reference to Nehemiah], has bewitched our father Samuel Mutendi with the intention of taking his leadership. Those who have done so have worked together to kill Samuel.

*Reader*

1 Samuel 15:1-10: [Saul wins against the Amalekites].

**Masuka.**

As Saul was anointed, now you [Ruben], with such an example, what are you going to do? We have given you the power so that you can go and destroy [*kuparadza*] your opponents [*vavengi*]. You men, strengthen and support this man you have chosen to destroy his opponents, so that it can be seen where Jehovah stands.

*Reader*

Numbers 27:15-20; [Joshua succeeds Moses].

**Masuka.**

No bishop is installed by a child; but a bishop is anointed by a bishop. Nehemiah acts as if he has such responsibility, but he has no real authority because he was *gadzwa'd* by children. He has *not* been truly *gadzwa'd*. Should I now be angered, I'll take my badge and give it to whom I want, because he [Nehemiah] has been *gadzwa'd* by a *nganga*. Peace be to you!

Moses had a similar position to that of Samuel [Mutendi], so when he saw his days were full he took a man by the name of Joshua, the son of Nun, since Jehovah told him to do so. He had to present Joshua before Eleazar, the priest. Now, I am Eleazar! I was told by Mutendi that he gives me his son [Ruben], whom I must ordain, so that he can spread the gospel over the entire country. Am I not saying exactly what stands in the Book? *I have been sent*, so I see clearly in which direction you [ZCC] people are being diverted. I have been instated by Moyo, and so I also instate Moyo's son. He is therefore of David Masuka, as I am of Samuel Mutendi! Peace to you all! Amen.

*Now,* from this day on, your bishop is Ruben. Ruben, there is my son; when I die you will *gadza* him in my place, while he wears
garments [i.e. retains Ndaza identity]. We also want to see the one who will eventually succeed you, Ruben. If you fail in this, you can go. If you want to do well and be successful, follow the law of David and Samuel. Peace be to you! So today I have installed Ruben, whilst I wear garments. So in this respect you scolded me, saying Ruben is with Chimumango. I respond by saying, you have also scolded my father, Samuel. You are my children, because you are followers of Ruben, although he wears a star, while I wear garments. On the 14th Ruben will be at my Jerusalem. What you people wanted to do will only cause shame. So don't do it!

Reader
1 Kings 2:1f: [Death of David]

Masuka:
David was once the boy who was gadzwa'd by Samuel. Was Solomon anointed by his father? No! It was only arranged by David, while he did not know the exact date of his death. Solomon's elder brothers were jealous and took their horses and charriots to try and take the kingship. But they failed and the young one they accused was the one who eventually became king. David himself was anointed by Samuel, because he was priest and prophet. Likewise, I am both priest and prophet. I have told you about my dreams. I was told of Nehemiah's meetings as well, but I did not go there, because he was not given to me in my dreams. [Note absolute guidance of dreams.]

But I will give my sign so that they will all recognize my authority. You must all know that the God Nehemiah is playing with, is the one of David and Samuel [Mutendi]. I did once dream of Nehemiah's messengers coming in a car and asking me to come with, so that I would do the same for Nehemiah as I did for Ruben. I then swore that I would never do it! They wanted to carry me and force me into the car, but I refused and said: "My responsibility ended when I installed Ruben." What surprised me was that their car had its mouth in the sand.. Somehow they did take me to a meeting where Nehemiah's followers were. It was as if I was visited by midzimu [ancestors]. I asked: "Where is Nehemiah, what has happened to him? Is all this delusion? Was I dreaming nonsense?" I said: "If this is the truth, let the rain fall and drive apart the meeting of Nehemiah. Let the people disperse. If the rain does not destroy this meeting I will know that these things they [of Nehemiah] are doing are not of David, Samuel and God." Some
thought I was referring to real rain, but it was something else ... This task of the Church came as a matter of courage. Those who shouldered it [pioneering leaders] were not afraid to be shot or imprisoned. How often were they not detained for spreading the gospel? But they remained steadfast. So you people must also remain steadfast, so that your hopes will be fulfilled. Don't bother to build something that will kill you, but something which will keep you. Stay together you preachers and evangelists, otherwise you'll meet with evil without anticipating it. Because the ancestors are with God, some prophets are of the ancestors and others of the Spirit. If you people do your own thing, leaving God for the ancestors, you will not achieve anything. If God is not in something, it soon becomes apparent. Even the ancestors cannot break down what has been built with God's inspiration.

Real authority of the Bible should be in the hands of the chosen, such as you, Ruben, myself, the RC fathers and the DRC ministers - not just anybody with unfounded claims to leadership! Many people are led astray because they are "bought" by stray leaders.

Today we know, according to the law, that a son is not installed by a father while he is still alive - because then the people will think it is you who killed your father! No, he must be installed by the priest who remained, while all the others witness it. If you are not installed properly before the people, they will accuse you of wizardry. If your father installed you shortly before his death, the people will say you royad' [bewitched] your father, for wanting the leadership. This is actually the way it is with Nehemiah, who claims to have been installed by his father. So we say, perhaps he did kill his father. We are convinced about Ruben, because he was chosen long ago by the deceased for a responsible position, and he was called to be close at the death-bed.

Mutendzi was the one who installed me. It was he who gave me my father's inheritance. Would you now say that his hand turned against me, that he withdrew my leadership? Was I not blessed? Have I not got a house with a zinc roof and a modern Church [signs of blessings]? I only still need a motorcar.

What would you think about a son who receives the kingship from his father, and when the father dies the son leaves and goes into the bush? Would you say then that the son's kingship is of heaven? That is your own stupidity, you ministers of the Church! Did the father not have a village in which he was living? You, ministers, are surely mad. You act as if you are children of God, and meanwhile you are wizards! Is this man Ruben not the one you
loved, the one who holds Moyo's kingship and the one who should live at Jerusalem? Those who refused him live like madmen of this world. They are lost. They lay claim to the deceased's property without proper rights. We may laugh about this now, but I swear that this poses a major problem which will cause much trouble in the future. You must be careful not to sell a person, because if you do you will destroy the Church. I am a bishop and I am also a kraalhead. I could have been a ward headman, but I refused because I did not want to place the Church's work in jeopardy; so I am still doing the work that my father has left me. Thus you, ministers, must be careful not to kill the work of the Church. Whatever the current threats [of war] to me as a kraalhead, I am not greatly afraid of anything. Even if I should be shot it does not matter, because I want you people to do what is right. We have people of many tribes here today Still, it is a matter of your doing what is right. I want to be like Jesus who died so that people can be saved. These days I am saddened by the growing number of graves and the spilling of blood. These are treacherous times and one can easily die. The position of a kraalhead is vulnerable. Nevertheless we as Church people should follow our code and do what is right. We, the people of Moyo, of Masuka and of God should not be found wanting. We should become holy. I am now finishing my task here. Those who stay behind will do their work. Death is inevitable. If a person dies, let it be for the sake of God and not for having taken another man's wife, or other kinds of evil. David, my father, warned that there would be fire if people take each other's wives; a fire not of heaven, but ordinary fire which would destroy the thieves, the wizards and all the perpetrators of evil. Even Mutendi preached that all the evil-doers would be destroyed. So in these days we see such fire...

_Hymn._

"When Jesus returns."

**HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE**

*Evening sermon, by Ruben Mutendi:*

I thank God this evening that we have the chance of meeting with the blood of Christ and partaking of [kudyə; lit. eating] His body - the symbol of overcoming sin in this world. It reminds us of one heart [union], to work together in Christ, with Him. Tonight we do
not commemorate His death or burial but that He is alive. Peace...! Tonight we gather here with Him. Each of us must remember that we meet Him as we are, with our intentions and prayers, being one in God and Christ, who is the holiest of the holy. We must remember how great our sins are so that we do not eat His body and drink His blood without having confessed all our sins. Those who have jealousy and anger in their hearts must have it removed, because they are not acceptable to God. It is their own responsibility.

You men, women and children of Showani, we are here to remember everything from January 1978 up to this day. Some of you are transgressing the law of the Church. If you are wise, "jump over" [avoid] those deeds which you know bring darkness instead of light. We must make progress in the Lord instead of moving backwards. A person only matures by going forward, not backward.

You men have been in the Church a long time. Keep watch all the time, mornings and evenings! We and our families must work for the Lord, we must praise Him and honour Him all the time. All of us have an investment which is our shadow at the grave-site. We all have to die. Even if you are a clever person of great learning or a man of great authority, be wise and know that the investment for your grave is there. Beware lest you be accused when you get there [heaven] that you did not want to do God's work. Listen to your leaders who remind you to follow God's way, so that you can go to heaven. Why then did you split up in following God? You will be asked that question when your time comes ... Verily, verily I say unto you, the servant is not above his master, the one sent not above the one who sends. Peace to you! Amen.

As I have now been ordained by Bishop Masuka, and Masuka by Mutendi, I am Masuka's child, as Masuka is Mutendi's child. If you people say I have been ordained by the people of David, you are cursing Mutendi; you are cursing him while he rests [implication: you'll provoke him into action]. Don't curse him as if he will not rise because he is dead. You show fear and respect him, because when he was alive he was your life ... so don't curse [and therefore disturb] him. Peace be to you!

I cannot be the one above Mwari! We are looking for the Spirit which will rejoice tomorrow; we look for a crown. If you follow me, just carrying all your sins without discarding them, we will not find a place in heaven. When I go to heaven, I may have to go to my place with only a handful of faithful followers. Many will go to the pit of fire. If we could only be united here in this world, drinking from one cup [Holy Communion], working towards the same
end as one unit, we could go and live together in heaven, while we
honour the name of Moyo who has gone before us. We are the
headmen, but Moyo is the bishop, who has gone ahead of us. If you
know this you are blessed; if not, you are dead....
APPENDIX IV

ZCC PASCHAL MEETING AT RUBEN MUTENDI'S CHURCH HEADQUARTERS IN BIKITA - 25 APRIL 1984

ZCC Mufundisi Muroyi of Zaka:
Nothing is as nice as this meeting. Let those who stayed at home be troubled because of their absence. We thank you, God of David and of Moyo [Mutendi] ... What Bishop David did [ordination of Ruben] was quite an outstanding thing. In him we have been given a real father. It is a miracle surpassing all other miracles. Look at all the visitors we have here today ...

ZCC Mufundisi Mugadza of Buhera:
We thank you, God of David and God of Moyo [Mutendi], we thank you greatly ... I want to start by mentioning the power of this man [Ruben] you have given us, Bishop David. The power of this man you have given us is most amazing. You will notice that we refer to him as "man of God." He did not ask us to call him "man of God" but we did so of our own accord. His powerful actions caused us to do so. Some people accuse us that we are giving praise to a mere human being instead of preaching the Bible. No! we are merely preaching the truth. Even those who were with Jesus did not have a Bible which had come in written form from heaven. The New Testament actually relates what happened - the acts of Jesus and His followers. Likewise, we today cannot remain quiet about the works we have seen, even if people say we are merely preaching Ruben. Know, Bishop David that this "man of God" you have given us is leading and teaching us, for he is doing real works. The outstanding message he gave us about the end of this world is a message of life. In the war he told us: "None of my followers will be killed by the war!" He said: "If you people follow my works you will not die!" I thought to myself: "What is wrong with this man, is he mad?" Until we saw in amazement that all of us who followed his ways survived the war. Peace to you!...
**ZCC Mufundisi Mupangani of Harare:**

I stand up while I thank you, Jesus of Samuel [Mutendi], Lord Jesus of David Masuka, and of Enginasi [Lekhanyane]. On this day we thank you, Bishop Masuka that you have given us a hive full of honey! The honey is tasty! The previous preacher spoke the truth. One day we went to the place of Mberengwa and we thought we may be killed by the bushfighters. We asked Ruben whether we had travelled all the way from Bikita to die at this place of Mberengwa. What have we done wrong? But he, the "man of God" said: "Be quiet. Nothing will happen." He prayed as follows: "God of my father, if you have left me this task, for me to fulfil with all my heart, reveal your power to us." In a short while those magandanga [bushfighters] who confronted us decided not to kill us. They said: "You may go, but don't come back into this area." So we saw that this man [Ruben] performs most unusual deeds....

One day while we travelled in Gutu the "man of God" suddenly took a side road. He was told by God that the main road had a landmine planted in it. When we reached our destination the people asked where we had come from. When we told them they said that either our ancestors or God must have protected us, and that we should continue worshipping as we were doing. Soon afterwards we heard the landmine explode on the main road. Then only did we realize that the "man of God" had successfully avoided the landmine. How can we now refrain from honouring such power?

**Bishop Paul Chuto of Chiredzi (second-in-command of Masuka's ZAC):**

We thank the God of our fathers, of David and Samuel and of Andreas [Shoko], while we remind each other of the inherited pot in which food was cooked for everyone, so that they could find life. I want to tell you what I have heard, what I have been told. I knew nothing about the problems in Mutendi's Church until I had a dream. A voice asked me whether I knew the son of Mutendi who will take his position. When I said "no", the voice said: "The one who is chosen for this task is Ruben Mutendi." When this message came to me Enginasi Mutendi had not yet died. But I did not know Mutendi's people at that time as I do now I am most thankful. For the guidance I received in my dream, even though Mutendi's Church broke up into three divisions. That does not matter so much because our father Masuka came and told us about it. He was told in a dream that he had delayed the ordination too long. As a result the Church of Mutendi would split into three groups. Mutendi said
in the dream that two of the groups would be controlled by his sons and the third by an unrelated person [mutorwa]. And that is how it happened. I want to tell you what Bishop Masuka told me about his dreams because those dreams concerning the ordination of your leader proved to be true. He told me about a dream he had in 1976 when the war became really hot. In his dream he was told that those still governing the country would be in power only for a short time. Those of the bush [freedom fighters] would reign the country for a long time. He was also told that the war would stop on the 18th, but he was not told the month or year. Then one of Masuka's ministers dreamt a similar dream. This time it was revealed that the end of war would be on 18 January, without the actual year being revealed. So we waited until 18 January 1977, then 1978, then 1979 passed without the war stopping. Then in 1980 the war did stop on the date as revealed in dreams. This indicated to us that this man's [Masuka's] dreams are real prophecies of truth ...

In conclusion I ask God to bless His messenger, Ruben Mutendi, so that he can lead the Church towards continual progress and towards unification of the entire Church, so that the problems Bishop Mutendi and Bishop Masuka encountered can be resolved.

_Bishop David Masuka:_

I thank the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who was the Lord of Israel. Today we, too, thank the God of David and of Samuel, the One who gathered us here today ... I let you know that we will not act as if Bishop Mutendi is dead. No, he is alive because what he has requested of me I have done. I have come to honour his name, even if we know that today there are two names [two Church groups led by Mutendi's sons]. I say only one person can properly own the inheritance of a deceased person. When a person dies his choice determines that there is only one inheritor. No person produces two inheritances. This second one of Mutendi ... we don't know whom it belongs to. We say it belongs to the one who was ordained [i.e.Ruben]. The second inheritance is the invention of the one who has brought it about [Champion], but he cannot belong to the clan of Moyo. We of Moyo sort out our own inheritance, and a mutorwa cannot be allowed to do so. I say the real Zionist I have ordained is Moyo [meaning Ruben]. He is the man of God whom you have been given, the one shown to me so that today I can confirm this chair [leadership] of Moyo. _There he is_ [Masuka was pointing at Ruben]! I have come today to make known once more to the entire country and the people overseas that he is the true leader.
of Zion. Our kinsman, Dr Daneel, can do what we cannot do ourselves, and that is to make all this known overseas. God be praised! All our names will be entered into the books and we shall be known...

In connection with Moyo's ordination, I have come to inspire him once again... It is my duty as I have been instructed by [the deceased] Moyo and David, even at the expense of my life. I have said that I shall proceed at all cost, even if there is strife unto death, because I have to respond to what I was told. If therefore somebody else has arranged a second leadership, I say that it does not belong to Moyo. You people will say that I am not a real son of Moyo, but I am in reality his son. So there [pointing at Ruben] is my younger brother [mununguna]. We represent the one Gospel brought by David and Moyo. People want to turn it all into the leadership of this world. Pray that Ruben and I stay alive, for perhaps the Gospel [our Churches] will become defunct after our deaths because you people have become too clever for your own good. Nevertheless God has given me a talented son who will succeed me, as well as my younger brother [Ruben]. It seldom happens that someone elevates his younger brother so that they can co-operate closely in doing their father's work - that of spreading the Gospel. It also seldom happens that a father raises his son to an elevated status for everybody to see. Yet we work with our sons so that the things belonging to our blood-line will not be lost. If I had given Mutendi's leadership to an outsider it would have been destroyed. If I had ordained one of you so-called clever people you would have caused the chair to disintegrate. Verily, none of you will take the leadership while we are alive. Right now we know where we stand with each other. Even if there is death now I shall take care of the next ordination in accordance with my relative's wish. So there you have the child of God whom you must follow and whom the entire world, from all four corners, must recognize as Mutendi's successor. Is it then possible that there should be two successors to Moyo? Today I have come to show you that the real Moyo is the one we have here... I have come to confirm who the real "man of God" is, in all truth. Even the heathen know that the son who is chosen by the deceased father is the one who takes the chair, even if he is not the oldest son. Even when one has been chosen, as Solomon was chosen by David, it may happen that the other sons make an attempt to grab the kingship, as Adonia and Absolom did. They were impatient but did not succeed. So today I show you the real "man of God" as I was instructed by his father. In the same manner Moyo
ordained me according to my father's wish. If you people do other things which are not according to Moyo's wishes, the results will be your own responsibility.

You of Ruben Mutendi and you of Nehemiah, if any of you are here, co-operate and build one thing! Be united because the inheritance of a man is one thing not two! Remember too that one minister has not got the power to ordain another minister [condemning Nehemiah's appointment]. I am the one who was left with the task of ordaining Mutendi's successor, and this power derives from the hand of Moyo which installed me. You, Moyo [Ruben], let us praise God who has chosen us as the inheritors of our deceased fathers. We also thank all you office-bearers for the Church work you are doing. I say, be sure to honour the origins of this leadership [i.e. the first leaders and their rules], then you will also honour us [Ruben and myself].

I know you now have two Church groups. However whatever happens and wherever you go you will and should co-operate and build one thing. Even if it takes years and you get despondent, saying that the division will never end, the ancestors [deceased Zionist leaders] are down here fighting [for unity]. You will work together! You will work together! That and nothing else! [Muchabatana! Muchabatana chete!] I accept Ruben, I also accept Nehemiah. But, even if Nehemiah's followers are here to observe our proceedings and whatever their plans are, I pronounce clearly that your principal leader [ishe] is this man [pointing at Ruben]. Since I have told you I am a child of Moyo, you here are the children [followers] of Moyo even more than Nehemiah, because what has been arranged over there is subordinate to Ruben's ordination. I am number one, because the hands [of Mutendi] which came from the Union of South Africa, are the hands that ordained me. So I am not half [in terms of my authority] but complete, and the power has been handed down so that there can be legitimate ordination of leaders. Thus today the second authority is that of my hands with which I ordained Ruben; hands which derive their strength from the strength which Moyo brought from the Union of South Africa. Hence, he [Ruben] is also born of David and Moyo, and we both follow the ways of our forebears as they commanded us and are observing our work. That is why I said to all of you priests [officials], if you want to obey the God of David and Samuel, be steadfast in supporting this man [Ruben], so that you will live together with him.
I don't want to cause any confusion or problems; I don't want to cause blood to flow. I merely represent the ancestors, and the names of the two I represent are Moyo and David. Let it be known to everybody that these are the two names to be recognized. Whence will another name come to usurp our leadership [Ruben's and mine] and our children's? We do not know which of the two groups is the most numerous. Perhaps Dr.Daneel can assess that for us. Nevertheless, I have accompanied this man [Ruben] all over, also to Harare, to have him officially recognized as Mutendi. Those who oppose him should be ashamed. He himself has not been angered despite opposition, because he knows that he is the legitimate heir of his father. To this the world is witness. I, too, am a witness, having ordained him to be your leader. So, there is your Bishop, the king of kings of Zion! Amen.

Bishop Ruben Mutendi:
I praise, first of all, God. Then I praise David and Moyo who have brought this [Church]. I did not anticipate such a thing to happen to me. I simply found it to be like that. I did not know that I would have such a position, but God wanted it and made it known. You people who have come here should be motivated and know what you came for. Because God loved His Son He sent Him, Jesus Christ, with a specific purpose. Christ was born, a single person. He came with the specific task of carrying the problems of this world. He did so in total humility. He brought good news, He brought salvation into this world. He did not hide anything but revealed everything to us. He left His Word for us, so that we can find life. He said: "I am going to arrange a place for you to live, I am revealing to you what is above; stay and tell the prophets what I have given you. Tell the prophets that I have not gone away for good. I return to be present amongst some of you. You will see them according to their works. These will reflect divinity [umwari]." You know that that is where I [Ruben] am myself, with them [Father and Son], talking to them. I shall lead the singers, I shall control the prophets, I shall keep the preachers, I shall control all your ways and show you where I am, as Christ in between [presumably: between his followers and God]. We can see from the work of Christ that He has not departed; the works of Moyo indicate that he has not departed; the works of David indicate that he has not gone; the works of the [DRC] ministers, of the Rev. Louw, show that they have not gone. The work of God was not diverted. It was revealed amongst the black people, amongst the whites, amongst all
the nations, so that when people die they will find life ... when they have true faith, they will be the people of God. From a person's works it is quite evident whether he is inspired by Satan or God. If it is by Satan he returns after death and inspires others to do evil. You people must ask yourselves whom you are inspired by, because those leaders of ours, David and Moyo, chose the Word of God.

They humbled themselves, knowing that a clever person does not go to heaven. The humble go to heaven. Those who love themselves do not go to heaven ... those who are inspired by Christ and live accordingly go to heaven.

I am very happy today, because we have Dr. Daneel and Bishop Masuka with us. The ancestor [mudzimu] of Moyo is present today. So you all must live! I said in the war that I do not want any of my followers to die, thus you are all alive today. I lost two sons: one of them went to war, and the other simply died after his conversion. Apart from these there is only the Rev Chigweremba and Stephen who died since I took over my father's leadership. I prevented death, so that the world can know I am working together with my father. The world knows I am in my father, following his ways, not having any additional rules of my own. You people have not supported me, you have not voted for me. Neither did I look for you, but God himself placed you here, and He gave you life here, which you still have today.

Remember our law of love! Do not be disturbed if the world hates you. I myself, as your bishop, am not happy if I am not opposed, because if I am opposed I know I am in Christ. Because the world belongs to the people of the world, you will always be hated. The people wanted to hate my younger brother, Nehemiah, but I told them I do not want to see a single person who hates Nehemiah. If you see someone hating Nehemiah, know that he is the younger son of my mother and that we eat porridge together. We will never separate. Even where we sleep, we sleep together, sharing the same blanket. Can you do that? You people have tried to make us hate each other, but I told him: "Don't do that, because if you succumb to that temptation I shall beat you up!" Because he is walking straight down the road [following the rules of the Church], you people will not overcome him. Are you not ashamed of all the stories you spread? Throw away the rumours and worship God! Don't interfere with Mutendi's inheritance! Have you in fact sorted out your own inheritance problems at home? You will all be "eaten" by the sword, it says. No flesh will be saved. We will all die at some stage. Nevertheless it says: "My life will be there eternally;
it will exist for all nations. Life will seek out those who seek it; those who pay it serious attention. Life will be found amongst you, Israelites. It will not be found amongst those who do not seek God ..."

[This was merely the introduction to a lengthy sermon on a variety of subjects related to the Paschal celebration which was to take place that evening.]
APPENDIX V

RECONCILIATION CEREMONY BETWEEN BISHOP NEHEMIAH MUTENDI’S ZCC AND GIERSON’S SCHISMATIC CHURCH GROUP, CONDUCTED AT GIERSON’S HEADQUARTERS AT NYAMHONDO (CHIBI SOUTH) IN JANUARY 1985

PUBLIC DECLARATIONS OF LOYALTY TO BISHOP NEHEMIAH BY GIERSON’S MINISTERS:

The Rev. (also Kraalhead) S. Muparanga:
"Forward Zion!" I hear the sweet things that are being said. This man Gierson, when he came did not take charge of things but simply preached the message. He said that he had come to cleanse the nyika [country] of sin, by making people confess. He stated that he was simply the chikonzi [messenger] of Moyo, as you have heard everybody say. This man was courageous beyond words. You people know that it is not easy to make people repent and confess. Some other preachers came as well, but they failed to fight the chikara chomweya [wild beast of a spirit]. They failed and left. But this man succeeded, in his own particular way, which we still respect to this day. That one way was to bring people to confess their sins [kudurisa zvivi] - particularly those sins which gripped many in this land. The messenger came and caused a great stir because the people were confessing sins of witchcraft. That conquered the evil spirits of the land. Those who failed before did not make people confess. But the "messenger" confronted the evil spirits and made them flee to the wards without water [matunhu asina mvura]. That is the proof of "the messenger of Mutendi" [chikonzi chaMoyo]. He did not come claiming to be a bishop, as you hear some people say. Ha! that is not true. It is we, the people, impressed by his deeds, who wanted him to be a bishop. I myself was a heathen, worshipping the ancestors. I was found drunk with the spirits of evil. Gierson came and did great deeds which held us spell-bound. He said that he was
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sent, whereupon people mocked saying: "He is mad. He is mad. Who would have sent him?" He answered: "I was sent by Moyo to remove sins." When they heard this some people ran away ... Yet we could simply see that he was really sent. We were also convinced by his deeds. Mad people were brought to him, some of them with their legs tied. He unfastened them and healed them. Blind people could see again. He was sent with the power of Jesus. The soldiers were sent by those who tried to tengesa [sell; betray] Gierson, but they were surprised to see his deeds, and they ultimately agreed that it must be the work of the God of Mutendi. Many people were mad in this area, but the messenger, Gierson, fought with the evil spirit until it departed totally.

The Rev. Muzanago Nyoni:

Forward with Zion! At the union of Zion! [Famba Zion! Pajoin eZion!] I just want to support all that has been said about this man, Gierson. I was one of his first followers. My house is near here ... just over there ...

When he came, he said that he was sent and that he had no other task but to make people confess their sins ... One by one we were to confess our sins, starting with the small ones. So we did. Everything that was done was in the hands of Jehovah, until we were convinced that this man's work was the same as we witnessed with Father Samuel [Mutendi]. So we asked him whether it would not be a good thing for him to be the leader [ishe]. But he refused this, insisting that he could only be the messenger [chikonzi]. He was consistent in his refusal to be the bishop, and he did this of his own accord because of his convictions. We were indeed his prophets, but he only guided us without pretending to claim full authority. His role as messenger was the same as rounding up cattle for their owner. He told us that when the time was ripe he would take us to the principal leader.

One day while we were driving by car to Masvingo a voice spoke to me about going to a kingship [vushe] which was above that which we have become used to. It was a clear directive which made us travel to Mbungo [Nehemiah's headquarters]. There we were received well and had to answer many questions. We told him [Bishop Nehemiah] that we have been spiritually kept and we have worked with Gierson. He asked how we worked with Gierson. I replied that Gierson had acted as a true messenger and that he had said that when the time came he would bring us to the bishop. I also said that we were very happy with the great work Gierson had
done. He had taken care of us, like St John did when he preached about the One much greater than himself whose shoe-strings he could not fasten. Eventually we asked his lordship [Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi] whether he was going to accept us. He said: "My children, since you have come I accept you!"

I was very happy with this outcome, with the fact that the messenger and us were received without any conflicts arising. I am happy because we have ultimately arrived at the bumbiro [Church constitution] of Mutendi.

The Rev. Samson Hove:
I am of the congregation of Mazvihwa. Forward with Zion! I am happy to follow Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi, whom we have met here today.

The Rev. Champion (first Minister of ZCC, introducing induction ceremony of Gierson's ministers):
Right now, having listened to all the ministers I am happy to tell you what the agreement is between Matenda Gierson and his lordship [Mutendi]. When Matenda came I said: "Lord [Mutendi], there is nothing we can really say to Matenda, because he is like the lost son who had gone to a foreign country where he squandered all his money. Now that he has come back to our house, we can only say: 'Matenda has returned. We are happy with his return.'" Famba Zion! It was agreed that in order to show that we accepted his return we would lay hands on him. Therefore, Matenda, we laid hands on you! Just to demonstrate to everybody that this really transpired we placed hands on him, much later, for a second time. Now, we will lay hands on all his ministers as well, as we did to him. This will be the sign that this man has really returned to our Zion.

Amen.

Line up now, you ministers, so that we can lay hands on you, one after the other

Address of Boas (Bishop Nehemiah’s brother) to Gierson's ministers before laying on of hands:
We are very happy because we did not know that Gierson accomplished such a great task. A job of this nature astounds one [lit. "causes one to fear"]. Let us clap our hands in recognition. [Applause.] We have heard of people on the point of dying being
brought here by the comrades, who then forced you leaders to heal them at gunpoint. That was indeed a terrible situation and you showed great faith in God.

The stumbling-block to us is that all you ministers recognized Gierson. We recognize that you have really been working well together. It was like playing rugby, when a ball is put into the scrum and the players push against each other. You have been pushing for a long time without the ball coming out. If it had come out, "it would have been drinking" [i.e. something would have been accomplished].

The ministers you have given us will be made to work - but we do not at this stage reveal in which way this will be done. It will not be in the same way as you worked with Gierson. We will make you work really hard, in the manner of Moyo, which you know People know that Moyo [Mutendi] had a way of achieving things through intensive worship. We are not saying that you did not worship, but now things have changed. Peace to Zion! Forward with Zion! At the union of Zion! ...

Some of you must be careful lest you be diverted by the spirit of wizardry, the one Gierson was referring to. You will backslide because you will once more follow the ways of the nganga, and you will fail in the task of your ordination, through worship of a human being, which will result in madness. Because some of you who were ordained by Gierson turned against Nehemiah, you revealed that the destructive spirit of earlier days has not been completely removed.

In the light of all this, turn your hearts to the dry-cleaning shop where there is Surf [detergent powder] and soap for a proper cleaning operation. Having been with Gierson for eight years without a proper [dry-cleaning] service, you are now receiving the real service. Those of you who do not receive such service, know that you are raising a ngozi [vengeful] spirit. But if you have yielded your hearts properly, you are the shepherds of the people.

Let us lay on hands! Some people say we have taken hold of your Church, but you know that we were simply waiting for you, as a woman waits for her husband who has gone on a journey. Thank you! Let the choir now sing for us.
SATURDAY AND SUNDAY SERVICES:

Gierson:

Sermon I (Saturday evening)

We thank you, God of Engenasi, of Samuel and of Nehemiah. You, Bishop Nehemiah, are the leader whom we have invited to visit us here. I want to explain to all of you that I have been working in the past together with this man's father, prior to my coming to Nyamhondo. This man [Nehemiah] was a teacher at the time. After his father's death he called me and asked whether I wanted to be chairman. I said: "No! I don't know that kind of work; you must choose one yourself."

I want to explain to you how I came to be sent here. Some of you thought that I may have been sent by the [deceased] father. That is not the case! I was sent by him [Nehemiah]. I attended the meeting at Sote when, before his death, the bishop [Mutendi] told us that his time had come, and when he made arrangements for the future. On the way back he was simply praying while many of us wept, wishing him to live. At one of the offices a District Commissioner asked him who his successor would be. He said: "I don't know. God will reveal it when the time comes ..."

After Mutendi's death we spent three months and three weeks guarding the place at Defe [Gokwe]. It was a time of great tribulation, in which many directives were received about what we had to do and where we had to live. The Spirit came with great power. It simply took hold of me ... Then this man [Bishop Nehemiah] told me to go to Nyamhondo to preach and make the people confess their sins. Jeftah and I responded by coming here to Nyamhondo. We were told that we would be called after some time, once we had arranged matters out here. Do you hear me? Now, whom do you think were we called by?

I am giving you this history so that you can once more take note of who the real owner [of the Church] is, the one who sent me here. It was a matter of the ZCC lacking someone [a leader] in this area, and then sending me.

Out here I enjoyed the new situation. Hence I told Gwande [the Rev Champion]: "Wait a bit! I first want to finish building this house. When I have completed the roof I shall visit you, if I want to, but don't hurry me ..." Gwande indicated that I was required to go [to Church headquarters] but I again refused because of the
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house. So he visited me again in a dream and said that I should not keep postponing my return. He said that should I return after four months or even two years it would no longer be possible to cooperate. I kept postponing the visit, and the more the months went by, the more difficult it became. I was wondering where I would find an elder who could make amends to our leader for my procrastination.

I was thinking of travelling by car and actually set out to go to Gokwe, but the car gave trouble and we ran out of petrol. After my return home I realized that I could not tell anybody where I was going; even my wife I could not tell. So I pretended to make a trip to Triangle. On the road I changed direction and went to Ngundu halt. There I said: "Let us visit our members in Masvingo." My fellow travellers agreed. The tall one who is a prophet said we would encounter greater blessings than we had ever had before. Having slept in Masvingo I said we should just travel and see the Church elders. When they asked what our destination was, I said: "Here and there." The tall one simply said: "Hmmm." I said to him: "You are the one who spoke about great blessings and who inspired me. Why are you now silent?" But we knew and headed in that direction until we were at the gate with the ZCC signpost. There was a wind blowing at the gate. Those who travelled with me said excitedly: "Father, where have you brought us?" My heart was beating faster with anxiety as I wondered who would act as conciliator and enable me to join [Nehemiah's group). I was hoping to find a proper go-between while we were waiting for him [Nehemiah], because we heard that he was out for a while. Some of my people thought that the bishop and I would never come to an agreement.

Eventually I was called. I was told that Mapanzure, Mpofu and Gwande [the Rev Champion] were also present. I was relieved because this was the solution. I decided to present my request for reunion by discussing it first with the others and asking them to present it to vaShe [the Lord]. I was really worried that he would scold me, yet I was received in a friendly manner. When I wanted to introduce the matter of reunion, he said: "Let that rest for a while. I know about it."

Listen well, you people of Nyamhondo. Upon my arrival God simply chose to forgive; that same Father whom I have sinned against. The whole issue was then discussed after it was properly introduced by Mpofu and Gwande. They could have turned upon me with the accusation that I have been eating other people's flesh. Instead they said: "This person has returned. Although he has killed
the Church for many years, it does not matter because he has come back." I was asked whether I would be fully able to meet the conditions for reunion. I replied: "Well, if a person comes to his own court of his own accord he would be a fool if he goes back on the new agreement. If we make an agreement in heaven, with your God confirming it, we, too, will witness in front of God that we have truly come back ... our intentions are steadfast."

It is a silly child who enters into marital arrangements and then backs out after one week. Do you call that an agreement? No! Here where we are now, let us be aware that we have united according to our wish, that we are the children of our father [Nehemiah]. Let us consider his place! Do you know, people of Nyamhondo, that he has built a very impressive school for all the Zionist children at Mbungo? Go to Mbungo and see for yourselves! I have also asked for forms so that we can complete them and send our children to Mbungo for education. The law comes from our father at Mbungo. He loves people and gives the law. He wants to see and speak to all of you. Even if you go to see him in the middle of the night, he will still see you. He is the Lord who is not ashamed or too proud to see you. Like Jehovah he pays attention even to the little ones. There was a man who went and wasted the possessions of his father but who returned and said: "Father, I am your son!" He came back with nothing, but his father received him, gave him what he needed and advised him properly ... Amen.

Gierson:

Sermon II (Sunday-service: official union of the two Churches; Gierson "surrenders" his Church to Nehemiah through symbolic handover of orchestral instruments)

I am happy to acknowledge the grace of Father Samuel Mutendi. We praise Father Samuel who sent Father Nehemiah in the midst of the Israelites, where he established his kingship - that kingship which is now held by Nehemiah, the one you see today. I show you, people of Maranda, who Father Nehemiah is, so that you can know him. I shall show you who all the ministers are with whom we started to work, as well as their wives. It is important that the wives of the ministers should also be seen. Stand up, all of you so that you can be seen. If you wives of the ministers are not seen you will say: "They have not recognized us and they are not happy with us."
So, Gwande [the Rev. Champion], there are the ministers and their wives. If some of them eventually stay behind, it will be their own decision. We want them all to be part of the union. These are the band instruments with which we celebrated. They are to be taken away in the [Mutendi's] lorry. We do not know what is in our lord's mind and when he will visit us again. Therefore I want each of you to know that you should constantly have your hearts directed towards Mbungo. One cannot expect our bishop to go away and visit us again the following day.

Now, your lordship [addressing Bishop Nehemiah], we have prepared for this occasion long ago. This is Madzingira [pointing at one of the ministers], who started to convert people one after another at Makambe's place. He is the messenger in that area, and whenever we camp in Triangle we go to his place to notify people of what we intend doing. There are a lot of Shangaan followers at Makambe's place. This is Mr. Shoko of the Mbire Shoko tribe. He is a humble man but very active and determined in service. Makuwerere, over there, is the one who is in charge of all the people at Chikoma. He and his wife work very hard together ... etc. [Gierson introduced most of his senior office-bearers.]

Now you, my fellow workers, do you see him over there? [Gierson was pointing at Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi.] He has come to "carry" the prayers [i.e. take charge of worship]. From now on he will let you know when and where holy communion will take place. Let your spirit be directed to Mbungo! When you are ill you can come here, to see if he has appointed someone here to pray for you. I here do not think he will go away without leaving someone here to pray for you.

You may now sit down [ministers and wives]. The lord has seen you. From now on your Church centre is at Mbungo. I have handed over everything. Look at all these plates that we were using for holy communion. I am handing them over, to be taken to Mbungo. I am giving everything [mainly band instruments] to our leader. Whatever happens and whether we like everything or not, there can be no reversal of decisions [hapana "reverse"]. We ourselves have decided on this "marriage" I have been your messenger and you will follow me to Mbungo. I will know through my dreams when any of you are not following properly ... when you backslide. Let it be known that I am responsible for joining our hearts. Can you walk in truth if you stay behind after I have shown you that which gives life, that which carries the spirit, so that there will be no more death out in the wilderness? I have prayed that God will open a
way for us. Today we have found the way - the correct one - because it is he [Mutendi] who has sent me. Things are complete. Everything is handed over, even if it cost more than $1,000. I have gone ahead of you to arrange the union. In the meantime you people kept coming here to me and I kept praying for you ... until at last I drew him [Mutendi] here. With all of you here as well we have great joy. Let us all join! Nobody stays behind!

We want our lord to give us strength, we want him to come and remove the evil spirits, the one of procrastination which says: "I must think again." What is it you want to think about? You are just deceiving yourself if you think there could be another bishop. Where will you again find a bishop who writes his own minutes and "newspaper"? Our bishop has the truth. He writes everything down himself. I have asked him to take care of me, of us. I am below him. Let him take care of me, whether I have sinned or whichever way I have been. He will support me in the way he is capable of doing, and I shall have no other considerations [of leadership] again...

You men who have left your wives at home, do not be sidetracked. Go and tell them immediately what has happened, that you have seen the bishop and that you now belong to him. Otherwise you will postpone telling them and you will backslide ... I have said, finally we go ... who stays behind stays behind ... who stays behind stays, and will be lost ... Come, let's go! Forward with Zion! Today the miracle of God - the God of Enginasi, of Samuel and of Nehemiah - is with us!

Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi:

Sermon I (Saturday evening)

When Dr Daneel and I went overseas last year we found the Dutch people very considerate and willing to support the work of Churches in [Third World] countries like these. Amongst other things we also told them of this group at Nyamhondo, which broke away from my Church for some eight years. They were very happy to hear that we were planning to unite.

Some of my people were sceptical about Gierson. They thought he was a complete backslider. But I said: "No! This is not the way a backslider acts." Gierson over a long period co-operated with my father and vaGwande [the Rev. Champion]. He had his own office, which my father gave him [i.e. prophet-evangelist and driver].
From now on we don't want to hear anybody say: "That person belongs to Gierson or to so-and-so." Whoever does that, stays behind. This Church simply means: "You go to God; that alone!" Many of you will stay on the other side, satisfying yourselves only with this work of introduction [to Church union]. You will keep saying: "This man belonged here and that one there," or "This one makes progress and that one stays behind." You have referred to the prodigal son. There were two brothers, the one who left and the one who stayed with his father Which of the two made progress? The one who was lost and returned, of course! The one who was there moved backwards, backwards ... not in terms of the house or the garden, but because of anger ... while the other was clad in garments. Peace to you!

This is not just a test for Gierson and his followers. This is indeed a great test to both Gierson and ourselves. Many will be lost. They will be angry and will therefore take their hoes and go to the fields when the celebration starts. Do you think this is just a little backsliding, to take the hoe to the fields while the others go to worship? Do you think it a small matter if a person goes in anger with his hoe to the fields on a Sunday? Beware of such backsliding [i.e. beware of resentment about Gierson's return and his acceptance in the fold]! The talk of the backslider is self-justification. He will say, I have been like this, I have been like that - all of it talk about yesterday. There is lostness in such harking back! It is a way of putting off the real issue. Gierson, for example, said: "I think it will ripen, and then when things are ready I shall go [to Zion City] with the people." Take care! That kind of thing does not just disappear. Watch! Tomorrow it starts again.

This is a great task, of drawing people together. Even if there was great delay in Gierson's case, it is obvious that he has been hard at work in the meantime! Read me Matthew 5:17! I am happy with what the Rev Champion told me, that the people over here confess their sins. I told him that we want such confessions. Gierson would once more be required to make the people confess. We all need to confess. Right now we are about to use the sacraments. It is a bad man who does not, in preparation, confess his sins. How can a defiled person enter the temple to take holy communion? It is like a woman wanting to use the sacraments during her menstrual period, or like a man receiving "the gourd [or calabash, i.e. traditional container of wine] of Christ" while harbouring unconfessed sins....
Reader:
Matthew 5:17: "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them."

Bishop N:
Peace to you! This is exactly what some people think in their hearts, that I have come to make drastic changes. That is a lie! That is not the purpose of our visit. We did not come to break up that which goes [that which is meaningful]. What goes, goes; they who work, let them work... for God. We did not come to destroy; we did not come to prevent prophecies from being prophesied. Let those who preach, preach! We have come to see and to strengthen. We also observe procrastination. That is dangerous. Where Gierson is, that will be found. We have come to bomb that attitude, to come to grips with it, to bring it out into the open. It is no good if you reserve it for discussions in the wind-shields or for the women’s committees.

Reader:
Matthew 5:18: "For truly I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished."

Bishop N.
Not one iota or one inch of the law should be abused, whether by a single person, two people, or three or ten. We do things, according to the law, together! There are those here who were converted recently, and others a long time ago. In the past there were bad and good deeds. Whatever they were, let us forget the past and let us build afresh. Let us do new deeds! You don't survive on what you did yesterday, but according to your deeds of today. Peace! We did not come to destroy either the Ruwadzano [Women's Association], or the Men's Association. We came to build one thing. Like the army – which formerly consisted of the black soldiers, the white soldiers, the soldiers of Smith and the bushfighters. Eventually they said: "Must we have two wars?" They said: "No! We'll build one army." Now the sergeant-major of the one camp is a former RAR man and he can visit the sergeant-major of another camp, who was purely a bushfighter. The Europeans call such union "integration" or "reconciliation". That is the kind of integration in which you are now involved, Gierson. You have some juries of your own in there
and so has Gwande [the Rev. Champion] and Mushonga [secretary of ZCC]. You will arrange matters together

As you arrange matters together you will create a new order ... putting things in a new time. You will tell so-and-so to worship like this and that. You will observe things as they develop, like making popcorn ... this one has popped, that one must still pop ... and so on. The real test is still to come. Peace to you! I have promised, in addition, Gierson, that I shall return and that I shall then be shown the different centres of your Church. We will have to make the time for such an exercise - so that we can help those "dissidents" [i.e. those office-bearers who were reluctant to accept Gierson’s union with Nehemiah]. We must tend to those who change to reverse gear I will give you time, like the father did when the prodigal son returned home. He did not allow himself to be diverted by the anger of the son who had stayed with him because at that point it was important to welcome back the lost son.

Reader:
Revelation 3:4: "If you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments with the world’s filth, they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy."

Bishop N:
Peace! As regards the confession of sins, there are some here who are worthy of following the laws of Samuel [Mutendi], because they are wearing white garments. They have confessed their sins, they have ripened and they are ready. With those we will go to Mbungo. Some of them will even proceed to Defe in Gokwe. But the procrastinators will not be found worthy and will not reach there.

Reader
Revelation 3:5: "He who conquers shall be clad thus in white garments, and I will not blot his name out of the book of life; I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels."

Bishop N
Peace! It remains to be seen who conquers. Who fails, fails, who conquers, conquers. With those who conquer we shall proceed. Those who fail will stay behind with soiled garments. We will take those who are without complaints, with their white garments. We will even present them to Samuel [chero pana Samere titondovareverera]. They will not act like people who have
procrastinated but like ones who arrived yesterday. If you are presented [to Mutendi, i.e. mediation is taking place on your behalf] there should be no question about your willingness to come.

_Reader_

Revelation 3:6, 7: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches ... ‘The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one shall shut, who shuts and no one opens.’"

_Bishop N_

Hesitation is hesitation; those who hear, listen. Peace to you! The key of David is not the same as other keys. You can have a key to a telephone which if it is stolen can lead to problems of people using your phone all the time. In the case of David there is only one key; no spare keys that can be misused. Likewise with Mutendi. _There is only one key which opens and closes everything._ [Bishop Nehemiah probably wanted to dispel any uncertainty which could arise about the existence of two ZCC factions - his and Ruben’s.] If this place has been unlocked, God will be worshipped here. We have not come to take your Gierson away. Why should we do that after we found him working well in this area? We go with him to Mbungo to celebrate, but not to make him stay there permanently. We will allow him to come back. We want the work of the Church here to continue expanding, all the way to Beit Bridge. Let the work flourish! Together we’ll make new centres where we can celebrate holy communion. Once the key of David has unlocked a place, it remains unlocked, so that God will be worshipped here. We have already spoken to Gierson about opening a school for your children’s education here. That is in fact the key of David which we are using here. It unlocks jail. We have the means whereby you people can work and build. So I am telling you, we’ll build a Zionist school here. We have also brought you a mill. Gierson has built the foundation; we have brought the mill.

_Reader_

Revelation 3:8: "I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut; I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name."
Bishop N.
It is not possible for an impostor to come and lock the door which has been opened with David's key. We have not come to upset things, but to fight hesitation [procrastination]. We have not come to take your people. We only want the ministers and not all the young-sters to visit Mbungo. We will tell the bishop [Gierson] with whom to come.

You have to be very careful. For, as Prof. Daneel said in his sermon, a person who is honoured runs the risk of becoming conceited. If this happens, you will refute the name of Samuel [Mutendi]. Those here who are good [lit: have good blood] recognize the name of Samuel. Those who don't are bad...

Reader
Revelation 3:9: "Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie - behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and learn that I have loved you."

Bishop N
Some will come here from Mbungo and from Defe. They will claim to be Zionists but they are not. They are the sons of Diabolos [Satan]. Now we are looking solely at the synagogue of Samuel. It is our only expectation. But we also have here the synagogue of Satan. You will see it. It does not take long to emerge. It will emerge from my own and Gierson's house. You must help me, so that we can see it quickly. It comes in the form of uncertainty. It arises at the point of our integration. You act as if you are catching a mouse, catching fish, without taking it seriously. You will try to make progress, seek new positions as if these give life. But you must remember that those who are ahead will go backwards, while those behind will make progress. Christ has said that those who are prepared to be the least amongst you will be elevated to be the highest... Therefore, be prepared to be behind the others, so that you can be promoted to prominence when the time comes.

Reader
Deuteronomy 11.13: "And if you will obey all my commandments which I command you this day, to love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul ..."
Bishop N:
Peace! Some say God! God! with their mouths while their hearts are far from God. Moses said to the Israelites: "If you want to follow God, do so from this day on, if you follow the laws I give you." It means that you people, if you want to follow the God of Enginasi and Samuel, you must love God with your entire heart, and with your entire spirit. Your thoughts should be focused on God; with no thoughts about leadership promotion or thoughts about the past. All you people who have come here ... love your God!

Reader
Deuteronomy 11.14: "... he will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, that you may gather in your grain and your wine and your oil."

Bishop N
Peace! Jehovah says, you have agreed on all this. If you are found with an attitude of hesitation it presents God with lies. You cannot take the God of Zion lightly, for it is He, Jehovah, who talks to the people. He is not just something. When you therefore approach him, you do so with your whole heart and entire mind. Then there can be no deception. We test you, because God Himself tests you. I am giving you the water you have been missing for many years, that which you have been thirsting for. Come back not only with your hands and feet but with all of your hearts - you the ministers and evangelists, the men of the men's associations and the women of the women's associations. When I say ministers I am not implying that you are all real ministers. As you have heard, some of those who are ahead now, will be last. [Not all Gierson's arrangements will necessarily be endorsed!] We want to please the true God of Zion. Turn your hearts to God. We are preparing for the holy communion. We do not allow those who have not confessed their sins. Gierson will remember how we did it at Moyo's place. He will know about the people being troubled by the prophets [varoyi]. It is not a cheap issue, of just allowing everybody to participate. The gates of the wizards cannot simply be opened for them to come and participate. That would be the same as if a shop-owner were to allow people to come into his shop for the purpose of giving away his goods as gifts without profit. As the "shop-owner" Samuel [Mutendi] is in a position to allow wizards to participate in holy communion. But we have no permission to do so. Therefore the gate of the wizards is
kept closed. If you are prevented by the prophets to participate in holy communion, that is final. Confess your sins and prepare properly! We have not seen your band with the traditional drums yet. Do not be intimidated by our band, with its modern instruments. We want to listen to your band and we shall appreciate it. You, who are converts without baptism, go to Jordan and be baptized. You will then still be allowed to participate in holy communion. You who want to participate but have not yet received the Zionist baptism, you are welcome to enter Jordan and become Zionists. Amen.

Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi:

Sermon II (Sunday morning: official union of the two Churches)

Forward Zion! Forward Zion! We have great joy in hearing the gospel message that is being preached here. I was impressed by the message of the Ndebele preacher. He prepared his sermon well, and must have spent a wakeful evening in anticipation of what was coming. It is like a man who refuses to eat because he knows a chicken has been set aside to be killed the following day.

In the history of biblical characters there were always those with hardened hearts. Pharaoh did not want the Israelites to be liberated and Herod wanted Jesus killed. Amongst the disciples of Jesus Christ there was Judas Iscariot who caused trouble through his own selfish wishes. There will always be a Judas Iscariot. If there is going to be such deception here I doubt if I will return. If all of you, having been drawn by Gerson, came to join I would be inclined to say: "It is not true!" The truth is seldom like that. There are always Judas Iscariots; people who act as if they understand, while they do not understand at all. The problems arose when Gerson came here and encountered the resistance of some members, which was here all along. It was here in the time of Samuel [Mutendi], and it caused us great concern because it influenced many new converts. Those who stayed away on this occasion are the ones who will come and confuse those who have already decided to join. Some of those who have already been confused have gone to beer parties. They delay their arrival here and do what they want. Such a person is a Judas. In coming to join you must leave him behind. Such a Judas is worse than a dog. No! don't say the bishop falsely accuses people, for it is the Bible that compares a traitorous person with a dog. Therefore, when you come [to Mbungo] leave the dogs behind, because a dog embarrasses one. It vomits and then
remains standing where it has vomited. According to Jesus a wise man stays for three days with his wife. You [Judas] will spend three days, returning to eat your own vomit. These things do not have meaning when they are only discussed in private, but when they are publicly stated in front of Jehovah. Compare it with your saying: *Famba Zion!* You say it in front of Jehovah your God. That is what a dog [traitor] actually refuses to do. I have asked Gierson to make the ministers sit over here so that I can see them properly. Some may be angry with this arrangement, and ask, "Why does he want to see us?" This arrangement was not made in anger, but simply because I felt in my heart it was necessary.

Do you people see the ministers sitting over here? Amongst them there is a Judas. We don't want to persuade him in any way. His behaviour will automatically betray him. This matter will have emerged already by April when the real "introduction" of your Church takes place at Mbungo. Perhaps this Judas comes from Chiredzi. He will show his colours by refusing to partake in the union, together with the others. You people who have said that Gierson is a "messenger" [chikonzi], heed his actions, if you were taking him seriously at all. Who are you to refuse the real "injection" [Gierson's decision to unite] when it comes? The one who steps out of pace is a fool. Be like a team of oxen which pulls together - in the front and at the back. Longing [for the old ways) brings no progress. We want to see each and every one of you, followers of Gierson, pulling together. You too, Gierson, observe the way in which your people are pulling and measure it for its quality. Then I shall be satisfied.

In what way does Gierson resemble Samuel? How can you follow him and have a beard? [The inference is that Gierson is not as consistent as Samuel Mutendi was in the application of Church laws - beards not being allowed!] Don't think, Gierson, that everybody will follow your initiative! Some will refuse.

Be careful when you come for Easter at Mbungo. For if you read Revelation 22:15 you will note that the dogs and the wizards are outside the city. They are not allowed in ... a heathen cannot come in on account of a Christian friend in Zion. Even the Europeans are amazed at our refusal as Zionists to admit dogs. In Zion we simply beat dogs when we see them because we don't want them. God, too, does not want them. Therefore, when you come with Gierson, both the dogs and the wizards will not enter our city. They will simply remain outside. The dogs will return to their
vomit when the sun goes down. Don’t chain them down and increase their suffering. They chain themselves down.

Is it not true that you have separate kraals for cattle, for goats and for donkeys? These animals simply go into their kraals when they come in at sundown, and you only have to close the gates. But the dogs have no kraals. They have no real place, and are only allowed to stay outside.

Sing the song: "Who did not go to Jordan, enter the Church, enter!" God says: "You are my people." It is He who chooses; not as if the people belong to this or to that leader. So, come in, before we close the door. Come in and do not stay outside. Enter, enter Jordan, people of God ... and see who enters! Those who are wizards or dogs will not enter anyway. Even if you drum and play for them they will not enter. It is so because they have arranged their own business outside, so that they do not stay amongst the others.

We are happy with the work and the sermons of the ministers out here. It reflects the truth and shows that you are now in Form I, having progressed from Grade 7. You begged Gierson not to bring in Form I, because you were satisfied with Grade B, but now one can detect the progress from your sermons. You are like a herd of cattle, some turning around and not entering the kraal, others just going in because they belong. There is no compulsion in this respect. You will know in your hearts, as if you were born in Zion, and you will respond to the call: "Enter!"

The war of Nebuchadnezzar split the Israelites into two groups. It remained like that until the time of Jesus' birth. The one group called themselves the people of Judah and the others were of Samaria. The one group had gone with Nebuchadnezzar and the other had stayed. They discriminated against each other, as if the one was better than the other, but they were really one nation, worshiping the one God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So it became a matter of Jews versus Samaritans. When Jesus asked the Samaritan woman for water she told him he was speaking like a Jew, while she was a Samaritan. The difference was clear in their way of speaking. Jesus' message made the difference. Only when there is love can the differences between the Jews and the Samaritans be settled. Likewise, the differences amongst us must be settled from this day on. Let there no longer be Jews and Samaritans in our camp. I have asked you, ministers, to sit as a group over there, as a sign of this change. Love [of Christ] makes the difference.
Someone told Mugabe, the prime minister, that he had won the war of the rifle, and for that he was respected. But now there remained the other war which still had to be fought. Mugabe wanted to know what war this was. The man said, "It is the war of love, to unite people." So this is the real war which is currently being fought. It can be seen in the ZANU PF amongst the district and provincial chairmen. I have seen it myself on TV. They are concerned about the unity of ZANU. Likewise you have been concerned about unity and have fought courageously the great war of love. It is now a matter of the in-laws fraternizing with their sons-in-law...

One of our great opponents tried to disrupt our work. He indicated that at Beit Bridge there was a great snake which prevented the "man of God" from passing there. If the snake remains there, it is like the snake of our fathers [wizardry]. We don't want such a snake at Beit Bridge here in Zimbabwe. If it persists it will be trodden by a train and be cut in two pieces. You people bicker amongst yourselves, saying this or that miracle performed by Gierson is the greatest. I tell you, the greatest miracle occurs when [in Christ] the duiker [small antelope] and the lion live side by side or when a child puts his hand in the hole of an adder without being bitten.

In April we shall see. Prof Daneel's book will then not yet be complete. When we then detect the Judas he can write about it. Everything will be seen clearly - who has turned back, who has joined, and so on. Everything will be written down. We can learn from it and say we live according to the book. You will then be able to identify the Judas before it is even written down, because you will no longer be happy with his presence. You will then see the movement of the snake. Capture it immediately and kill it. Otherwise you will have no joy. I myself have joy, but it is mixed with fear because I want the Judas to be revealed as soon as possible. Even Jesus, when he saw the delay in Judas' actions, urged him on to do what he had to do quickly. As Jesus waited for Judas to come out into the open, so we too are waiting until April. It will actually be a good thing ultimately to know that so-and-so who had been present at this meeting turned out to be a Judas. It will enable us to deal with the matter, to put the snake aside, and to proceed without fear.

Right now there is a lot of suspicion. The one thinks of the other as the snake, saying to himself: "It is him, i-i-i, because he said such a thing ... because he simply sits like that, thinking about his meeting with the snake [witch familiar] ... I can see it in his
eyes that he is a Judas. The one will question the other, and he will say: "I think I'll join" and this attitude, too, will raise a question. It will carry on like this, with many people being deceived, until Judas is found and cornered. Then many of you will be liberated. Remember what Gierson said about perseverance; that you will proceed with this union, even if things prove difficult. I cannot tell you it will be easy. Difficult it will be!

You heard last night that we'll be given those of the synagogue of Satan. They are the ones who will falsely claim to be Jews [vaJudah]. They are the ones who will complicate things out here, by asking where you have been [questioning the union of Churches]. These people of the synagogue of Satan are not only here, but also at Mbungo. Make sure that you don't err in distinguishing between those of the synagogue of Satan and those of Christ. There are difficult times ahead of us, but we will be undaunted and courageous about it. The people of Satan are all over - in our choir, in our band, amongst our ministers, in the Women's and Men's Associations. They are Satan's CID which he has cleverly clad in the uniforms of the Church. You have to assess this for yourselves. Your "ruler" for measurement is Jesus Christ! You can also take Gierson as an example. He was the one who led you, did he not? If he therefore has passed the test, so must you!

What we are aiming at is simply co-operation and in that co-operation to serve each other with love, and with love! Work and pray together in your houses! God Himself will reveal what is hidden. In the Bible it says that nothing in this world is as deceptive as the human heart. The heart is like a milling machine. What is it milling? I can only hear it milling gu-u, gu-u, gu-u. What does it bring forth? The heart of a human being brings forth what is rotten and stinks. Who will assess it? Nevertheless, tomorrow it shall be revealed. We will find you [Judas]. Where the water stops running it stagnates for all to see. God says: "You are not ripe because you choose in terms of what men consider wisdom, but I test the heart and the kidneys, whereby I know the ways of man." God's ways are different from ours. We are inclined to suspect a man when he goes on his own to the river, whereas his only motive may be that of being alone to pray. It is only God who can assess the heart and the kidneys. Dr. Barnard of South Africa can take a person's heart out and discern whether it can still pump. He can even repair or replace it, but he cannot judge whether it is good or bad, whether it is holy or not. Only God can do that. Only God can
discern the attitude with which each of us approaches this agree­
ment of union of ours.

God gives to each person according to his abilities. If a person
refuses to be united with others, he refuses according to his wishes.
A person who is humble receives in terms of his humility. He who
forgives receives in terms of his forgiveness of others.

My father, Samuel Mutendi, did not want to pray the Lord’s
prayer. When I asked him why he was opposed to this prayer which
was recommended by Jesus Christ himself he said he could not
agree with the words: "Forgive us our sins as we forgive them who
sin against us." Yes, he [Samuel] died without praying that prayer.
He said: Whom do we really forgive? As you people today confess
your sins to participate in holy communion, you want to be for­
given, but whom do you really forgive yourselves? How can we ask
for forgiveness if we fail to forgive those who have done us wrong?

We now give an opportunity for those who want to go to Jordan
to be baptized. You know that outside, over there, is the place that
has been arranged for the dogs, the wizards and the adulterers. I say
that I who have come here am not a dog nor a wizard, nor an
adulterer You hear the band playing. What it is saying is: "Don’t
stay outside; come into the house; the house has been prepared for
God ..." Amen.
APPENDIX VI


Excerpts from Sermons

Saturday evening service

Evangelist Elias:
First of all I want to say how much I yearn for the things we require to function effectively as a Church. We need, for example, a calendar which indicates accurately the Church's programme for the year - e.g. the death of Jesus, His ascension, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, each event according to its date. These days it is the time of Pentecost. We will have to find a calendar so that we can have some order in our [religious] programme! We shall read from Acts 2.

Reader.
Acts 2:1-6

Evangelist E:
[Prayer] Lord, You have allowed us to read your word; open the ears of our heart and teach us what we have to discuss with you, what we have to say about the disciples you left behind when you, Lord Jesus, ascended into heaven, until you gave them the Holy Spirit. Lord, bless us this evening so that your message will penetrate our ears and stay with us. We place everything in the hands of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

We will pay attention to the disciples whom Jesus left behind when he went to heaven. He told His disciples: "Stay here and be
together as you wait, until I send you the Comforter, the Holy Spirit." Ever since He [Jesus] gave this instruction, the kind of meeting that we are having here tonight has taken place.

On the day of Pentecost, when the outpouring of the Holy Spirit took place, the disciples of Christ were gathered in the upper storey of the house they used in those days. They had spent ten days together, being of one heart, in anticipation of the gift they were promised. Being thus together, they heard the sound of lightning and of a strong wind from heaven, which heralded the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Then all the people in that house were filled with the Holy Spirit. Each of the disciples spoke in his own language, the language of his own house. The onlookers were surprised and asked: "Why does everyone speak in the language of his own tribe?" Peter was completely filled with the Spirit, and stood up to address a large gathering of people. He said that the words he spoke to them were not his own words [but inspired by the Holy Spirit] ...

Thus we see that the people received that which they have faithfully waited for. Why did the Holy Spirit come to fulfil His work amongst those people? Because these people waited faithfully in perfect unity, they being one thing! The people spoke in tongues. The young ones prophesied and the elderly ones had wonderful dreams, as predicted before ... all this because of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Now, this evening, what are we to learn from this waiting on the Holy Spirit, this experience of the disciples? I shall single out the unity of the disciples. They were one of heart, knowing that they would receive that which they had been promised, if they stuck together as they were told. The disciples did not disband! They were of one mind and heart, convinced that they would receive ... If they had dispersed, they would not have received ... But they knew that in unity they would receive the Spirit, the Comforter.

When the Spirit fills a person, he becomes like a possessed being. We know, according to our Karanga customs, that if a person is possessed he speaks in another tongue. Perhaps it is the voice of the deceased [who possesses the living] which speaks in that manner. Well, that is the manner of speech of the possessed's deceased father or senior ancestral spirits ... talking like this or like that... The person is possessed!

My brothers and sisters, when you are possessed by the Holy Spirit, by the Spirit of God, what language do you speak, what do you say? Is it the language of your home or your ancestors? If the traditionally possessed speaks in the voice of the ancestor, do you
not then speak in the voice of God, when you are possessed by the Holy Spirit? Does it not mean that you should preach His message, obey His laws and preach His word amongst people?

Have you forgotten the message, the tongue from within your heart, caused by the Spirit possessing you? Speak understandably in your own language, in the language of your home, for it is the language of God. When Peter was possessed he addressed the meeting in his mother tongue, so that the people could understand. Nevertheless, it was the message of God, spoken clearly amongst the people, so that they could understand God’s word.

Be careful not to take the tongue of another, to prophesy in a language which is not of your home!

Tonight I remind you, my brothers and sisters, that the disciples were not disunited. Therefore they received that which they waited for. We, too, when we became converted believed that we would receive the good Spirit. Some of us did not sleep for a few nights. We waited and prayed night and day so that we, too, would receive what we were expecting from the Holy Spirit [i.e. progress through initiation into the Rev. Mugero’s movement]. Be on your guard against bad spirits when you leave here; that which diverts you from what you have received here which is the word of God, to be preached amongst your fellow tribesmen; that which disrupts our unity. Preach, until your people acknowledge that you really belong to God.

When Peter preached the people said he was mad, but he was Spirit-possessed. We will be only too happy if we hear people say that father or mother so-and-so has become possessed and has preached to his/her relatives in the villages. I have never seen a shavi spirit possessing a person being afraid to speak. The person who is shavi possessed does not hesitate to talk, because of the courage and strength of the invading shavi-spirit. Likewise Peter, when possessed by the Holy Spirit, had the courage to address the people.

Don’t try to change your language! If you are a muNdau you do not speak Karanga. It is like speaking the language of Satan while you are of God. We have to be careful to distinguish the Spirit that fills us here. Some of us will be cast out if we are not careful. Such a person will say: "I was in the Church" or "I have preached". No, that person will have spoken in a foreign language; he was possessed by a spirit of madness and not by a good spirit (the Holy Spirit). Let us go from here, possessed by the Holy Spirit, fearless to preach God’s Word, because the possessed one fears nobody and
speaks the truth - as long as you speak in your own tongue. If you are filled by the Holy Spirit, you speak God's language and no other. Do not be diverted by any other language. If you are a Christian you will preach God's Word and no other to your relatives.

...Perhaps our leader will not reach this place tonight. In that event let us use the time to strengthen each other with our sermons. Those who want to witness, men and women, may do so....

I leave everything in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Mrs. Gono:
You, fathers and mothers, I stand up to remind you that Jesus did not fill with the Holy Spirit only His disciples who were awaiting Him. We are now those disciples awaiting that which we expect, the Holy Spirit, blessed as we are. While we are all gathered here, let us be mindful of our purpose; determined that we shall receive in accordance with our expectations [e.g. holy communion]. Even if our father [the Rev Mugero] fails to put in an appearance, let us not lose heart; let us be like the disciples of whom we have heard, persevering in our expectations. Let us wait in concentrated silence.

My fathers and mothers, we are blessed to have this time for contemplation. Let us make use of it, mindful of respecting his [Mugero's] leadership. Let us know that it involves a real journey for him, that he nonetheless cares about us; let us therefore await him with [the yearning of] all our hearts.

Tonight we await the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, brought down to us by Jesus. Let us not go back to our villages to disturb the peace of those who were not here, but let us honour the kingship of Jesus. Jesus is here with us. He came to this earth after he had agreed with his Father that he would come to bring salvation to humanity through his death. Yet we forget this because we are addicted to the nice things of the world. When we were coming here some people asked us: "Why do you kill yourselves? Where are you going, leaving the joy of this world behind you?" But such joy is temporal. Eventually we shall have to leave it all down here anyway! Amen.

Evangelist Makekerere.
Before his death and ascension to heaven Jesus spoke to his disciples. He said to them: "Stay here. I shall send you the Comforter who will stay with you." Jesus told them quite clearly to go and wait in the upper storey of a particular house. They had to be
united of one heart, living in harmony. After Jesus' death they followed his instructions and went to live in Jerusalem, in unity with each other. We want to concentrate on the actual outpouring of the Holy Spirit. You African people know what it means when a substance is poured (*kudururwa*) into a container (*drum*). I shall explain to you the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

There were many people at the time of the outpouring of the Spirit. They heard it coming like a wind, like the crackling of an approaching fire. There was speaking in tongues, but it was only the select disciples of Jesus who were really filled with the Holy Spirit. The other people just stayed behind like open tents, without anything in them. They wished that they were also the followers of Christ, so that they too could receive the Holy Spirit. Let us consider our own filling with the Holy Spirit. If we should take a container which is open on both sides we could pour all the water of the sea into it, but it will never fill up. When the Spirit was poured into the disciples they were sealed containers which did not leak. Now that we expect the Holy Spirit, will I or you, men, women and children, fill up properly? Can I maintain that God pours out the Spirit into my heart, if I am a leaking container? If I leak I cannot contain the message of the One in heaven. Jesus' disciples were containers sealed with proper sealer which did not leak. Hence the Holy Spirit filled them completely and they spoke in strength, in unknown tongues. Is this what we will be doing? The first preacher challenged you to go and preach in the villages; to do so in strength in new tongues. Let us be careful not to go from here without having received new tongues [the message and inspiration of God]; let us not go away with the Word of God leaking out of us.

The disciples of Jesus awaited the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, knowing that their hearts were clean. Now that God's Word is being preached here, in what state are your own hearts? Are they leaking or have you sealed them off as Noah sealed all the holes in the ark to prevent it from leaking? My brothers and sisters, let us tonight seal our hearts so that we can be filled by and properly contain the Holy Spirit! Jesus wants to pour the Holy Spirit into us, into me too, so that I can leave here inspired by what I have learnt, speaking the truth and not misbehaving because of being possessed by the ancestral spirit of my home. When our leader (*mutungamiriri*, i.e. Evangelist Elias) said that we should be possessed by the "ancestor" of our home, he meant God, our Creator, the One whom we are waiting for, having left our homes. Yes, having left our children and grandchildren behind, we came here to be possessed
by the message of God; the message which inspires and builds. God bless this message He has given us today; the message of going forth from here in a state of Spirit possession, as did the disciples of Jesus when they went forth speaking in tongues. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

Mrs. Elias:
What we have heard fills us with joy. If the people open their hearts, as one opens a house and sweeps it with a broom, then God and Jesus find a clean place to stay. Those who are filled today by the Holy Spirit, who are united with Jesus and His disciples, are blessed. We are called upon day and night, because we simply observe that Jesus is down here on earth. The illustrations that he has "written" in heaven and down here are clearly to be seen. Those who close their eyes and ears to these signs will be thrown into the pit of fire because they are blind. Those who have eyes and ears will know that they will be sent promptly by Jesus. It says that today Jesus comes to pour out the Holy Spirit into those who love and believe in him. But some are like us, containers that only contain stinking water. Such water cannot be drunk. It is because they did not prepare [for holy communion]. Those who eat [celebrate holy communion] today in the presence of God, are the ones who have been preparing since early this week to welcome the Holy Spirit. They are the ones who today have great joy, knowing that they shall be fulfilled while we simply stand by, not knowing that it takes effort to prepare for Jesus. Jesus does not shout: "I am here!" because he wants to be recognized and worshipped every day ...

Those who are blessed and do good are the ones to receive the Holy Spirit. But will those who swear at the Holy Spirit or ignore Him find a place [in heaven]? Jesus said: "Truly I grieve for my temple which you have turned into a house of robbers." You believers who come here and pretend that you belong to God, while in reality you only intend to turn to Him towards the end, you cause grief to the heart of Christ ...

You fathers and mothers, we must not concern ourselves unduly with the chair [of leadership]; we must not aspire to have the chair with the pretence that we can keep it clean [i.e. lead properly]. God says: No! Leave everything and follow me. Now I have said enough. In the name of Jesus, Amen.
Mrs. Zirima:

[Prayer] We call You, Jehovah, You who are silent up there as if You don't see; yet You see everything here on earth. Right now as we stand up to sing songs of praise, we ask You, Jehovah, to wrench out and sever our tongues which are incapable of speech [witness]. This evening while we are waiting for our father [the Rev Mugero] who is to come and give us your body and your blood [holy communion], keep him and let him travel safely until he reaches us here. Even if there should be an obstacle preventing him from coming, let us persevere in worship. Jehovah, be with us and with him until we meet once more on a day of your choice. We have everything in the name of Jesus. Amen.

[Sermon] ... We have come to participate in the race to enter heaven. Let each of us examine our inner lives to see if we have brought with us worthy containers which will contain the good news we hear without leaking ... I know that my own container is not perfect. Even if the Holy Spirit should come tonight He will not find a place in me to stay. This is a very important matter which has been brought to our notice. It needs to be "chewed" [pondered]. Once more we hear about the disciples of Jesus being filled with the Holy Spirit because of their obedience and appropriate preparation. They had abandoned their evil ways. What benefit do we derive from Church attendance, if we come with our bad deeds, with a leaking drum? Why do we play with our time, our opportunities, my brothers and sisters? Come and repent, you who have been invited here. Reject all your bad deeds. To accept God, to throw away evil deeds, is not as difficult as it appears. It is not a matter of carrying a heavy weight, but simply of yielding and believing in God.

Be fully aware, brothers and sisters, what it is you represent. Now that the Churches are attractive you say: Let us play with rattles; let us dance to the drums. Know that if you attend for the sake of the drums and not to hear God's Word, you are indeed leaking containers. It appears as if we are competing with each other in our efforts to stand up one after another to talk about the might of God, without really living according to His laws. If then God ultimately comes to fetch us, what will we have to say for ourselves and what will be written about us?

Each of us is responsible for his or her own deeds. We come to Church to confess our own deeds. God knows all about them. Don't be ashamed to witness publicly because Jesus will disown us if we
deliberately ignore him. There is a reward in heaven for those who pray. He keeps a record up there in a book of those who pray ...

Be Christian, whereby you will cause others to live. Instruct others in the ways of righteousness. If your deeds are bad others will not follow you. Do not be misled by the numbers attending this meeting. It makes the yard of this place look small. But just now when the meeting is over you will find only three people attending Church, and you will ask: "Where have all the others gone?" Let us know what we are expecting. It is important, being a long distance [for Mugero] to travel from the farms over there. Yet you come as leaking containers. How will you store the [spiritual] food for the journey ahead of you, and how will you contain the holy communion you "drink"? That blood of Jesus which we drink, how can we keep it inside us for it to purify our hearts? Even if I work all the time or keep a regular vigil, it is all to no avail if I do not have love. Without love I am only like a hollow calabash swaying in the wind. That now is enough; in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Mrs. Chuma:

... Let us know exactly what we are expecting, what we have come here for. We must worship and pray perseveringly, every day. Let us determine whether we have found the correct sealer to seal our leaking hearts so that we can be possessed by and contain the Holy Spirit. Subsequently we will be inspired to go out into the villages to preach, speak in tongues and convert the people. Verily, if we merely say: "Jesus, come and live in my heart, mine alone," we do not contribute anything; our hearts are merely leaking containers. We will have to preach to others so that they, too, can accept Jesus in their hearts. Let us fetch the others, let our numbers grow! This we can achieve only if Jesus is constantly in our midst, in our hearts, He being one with the Holy Spirit. So we shall not be separated in any way from Jesus. In the name of the Lord Jesus, Amen.

Evangelist Elias (conclusion of evening service):

I am uncertain of the procedure [because of Mugero’s absence], so we have to decide together how to proceed. I thank you all, nonetheless, because you have performed a great task. Even if we have no mother [i.e. senior leader] we do the best we can, knowing that God hears us if we do it with all our hearts, if we seal our hearts [the containers of the Holy Spirit] with durable sealer.

We shall now go and sleep for the few hours that are left. I thought it a good idea to wait for his [Mugero’s] arrival, but now he
has failed us. Tomorrow we will attend a brief morning service as usual, followed by a break, until we attend the full Sunday service in the afternoon. If by that time our visitor has not arrived, we shall disperse.

Now bring the sick woman so that we can form a circle around her and pray for her.

Prayer for sick woman (Mrs. Javangwe):
Tonight, Father, we put this woman into your hands - You, who are way up there in heaven. Stretch out your hand and heal this woman - You who said: "Knock and the door will be opened; ask and you will receive" ... Father, we approach you with the voice of fear. We appeal to your power. If there is a muvengi [one who hates, i.e. enemy], a satan, responsible for this illness, put him to shame. We know that whenever your people gather like this, an enemy comes along to fight, to see if we are strong. Nevertheless, we persevere in your strength and therefore appeal to you ... Select the sinew in this woman's body which has been displaced and which causes the pain, and put it in its proper place. You, Creator, straighten out that which is bent. Give this one the faith in her heart to believe that she will be healed ... We place everything in the hands of our Lord Jesus, the One who died for us. Amen.

Sunday morning service

Evangelist Zirima:
[Prayer] Lord, we thank You this morning for a new day. We have been waiting for your messenger, the one who has to give us [holy communion] as your representative. We remember [identify with] the plight of the Israelites when they were in Egypt. They were led by Moses and Aaron, which enabled them to overcome that plight. Even now they lead us by coming to us and causing us to appear before you and to greet you, forever, Amen.

Sunday afternoon, main service

Evangelist Makekerere.
Please read for me Acts 2:1-6 ... We have listened to God's Word and as you listen now to the sermon, be alert, do not allow your minds to stray. We show our respect by listening carefully to what is being said...
I shall not depart from the message preached last night. It is pointless to preach on many different subjects. The main theme is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit! That theme has cooled our hearts [i.e. brought us peace]. When Jesus came from heaven he did not pour out the Spirit into everybody on earth. He poured out the Spirit into those he knew, his disciples. The conditions for them were clear: they had to be united, to wait perseveringly and share with each other in love. Today we remember the tenth day. It is the final day on which the promise of Jesus went into fulfilment. It is the day on which his disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit. They, the elect, then went forth into the world to preach, witness in tongues and convert people.

How is it that only some were chosen for this task? Likewise, today, why are many people not filled with the Spirit? Is it their money, their fancy clothes or their motorcars that divert them from such a privilege? What do we learn from this? We should be alerted to examine ourselves as containers, and see if we are properly sealed, to contain the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. If we find leaking containers, how do we seal them? Through persistent prayer to God, through just sitting, through robbery? The disciples of Jesus had no other means but to sit and wait faithfully for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Today is our last day, as it was theirs, and we will not gather here [in the same state] again! Are we [the containers] properly sealed? Have we repaired the broken calabash? Have I removed those bad deeds of mine? The time is now fulfilled. Some of us will go forth and speak in tongues at Mugabe [Morgenster mission], at Masvingo, Zaka or Zimuto, so that the country will be receptive to our preaching. If we are not leaking containers the people will follow our example, and many of them will be converted. If we are leaking vessels we are useless.

We can also be sealed up totally so that we are not receptive at all. It is like a man sealing a bottle, throwing it into the ocean for three months and then retrieving it, only to find that it contains none of the ocean’s water. That, too, is worthless. I can cheat myself in this way by saying that I have been for many years in the Dutch Reformed Church and then for many years in this African Church where I have grown old. Being satisfied with this state of affairs, I may well find that inside this "bottle" [inside me] there is no water, no Holy Spirit. I can so easily deceive myself with the thought of having been baptized in the DRC and having been involved in Church life so long, while [in reality] I have become
empty Beware, my brothers and sisters, of being found to be bottles without any water.

You, my fathers and mothers, you, my children, have you been opened up to be filled like bottles with water [the Holy Spirit]? Do not deceive yourselves with your position of responsibility in the Church, with your uniforms or whatever. You can spend a lifetime in the Church without being touched by God, without containing any "water" Know that as you return to your villages, it may be your last journey Is the container, drum of bottle, to be found empty? Do we return to our people empty-handed and self-satisfied, without something really significant to give them?

Remember the song I have sung:

Come to Jesus, to Jesus, to Jesus
Come to Jesus ....
Open your heart, open your heart.....

Have you done that? Have you removed the obstacles so that the water [Holy Spirit] can flow freely into your heart?

May God strengthen His message. Amen.

Witness of Mrs Javangwe (who was prayed for the previous evening:)

I did not think that I would be capable of standing and preaching today, because yesterday Satan visited me, for what reason I do not know. Now I am thankful, people of God, you who are blessed with the filling of the Holy Spirit, because I am also filled with the Spirit. Through your prayers God has overpowered Satan.

I sat down and listened to all your sermons about Jesus going to heaven, His disciples waiting for the Comforter, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit... We are privileged, fathers and mothers, in so far as we can go about in the world once more. Graves contain deceased people, but many people are dead in spirit and are awaiting a renewal of life through the inpouring of the Holy Spirit. Therefore those who go from here without being used by the Spirit [to bring the others to life] have got bad blood. I have been in this Church for many years. I have borne children in this Church, and they too have borne children. Will I be found wanting once more while others are filled with the Spirit? If I have a drum full of evil, would I be able to go and inspire [bring to life] others in the villages? No, it would be impossible!
I sat listening to the message of the containers, feeling ill last night. Brothers and sisters, let us be struck in our hearts by this message; also the illustration of the impenetrable bottle ... The Holy Spirit is not only seeking us here in the Church. He is looking for us over there in our homesteads in the villages. Yet he remains outside if I act like a common woman, quarrelling with and scolding my husband for being the leaking container...

Last night I was greatly moved by the proclaimed message. But I failed to stand up, because each time I tried, I suffered great pain. I then thought that things would be in order if I could only seal this little container of mine. I ignored the seriousness of the matter. Let us be aware of this danger, you mothers, because we, the women, are the sinners, the threat to our families. The Holy Spirit will not enter me, because I am a witch; He will not come to me because I am a prostitute; He cannot come to me because I am a thief. In such a state you would say I would at least allow the yearning for improvement, but even that I refuse. We, the womenfolk, are the ones who cause confusion at home. You may find the angels fluttering around the house in an attempt to settle, but because we do not support our men there is no peace. Do you think that the angels can settle under such circumstances?

We who put up a pretence of being worthy should be on our guard. Because we have hardly left [Church] when we commit adultery, we have hardly left when we steal, we have hardly left when we practise witchcraft. We came thus, unprepared, unworthy. Now then, fathers and mothers, let all those things come to an end amongst us. We do not know when we will be reached [i.e. confronted by God]. Today I have opened myself to be filled with the Holy Spirit. If I keep the bottle closed or have a leaking container, I shall arrive at home and die, I shall be cast away.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Closing speech of Evangelist Elias

Although I am aware of your enthusiasm to continue, I have to bring the proceedings to a close. We intended this meeting to include holy communion, but our elders [vakuru] failed to arrive. I am not sure, but perhaps they [i.e. Mugero] will send a messenger with a letter. There are those amongst us who have prepared themselves for baptism. That, too, has failed. If I go home now I do not know whether I can maintain the same spirit as I had today. If I do
I shall come back. These are some issues ... that have remained incomplete.

Some of you, I note, have no lids [with which to seal the containers]. When you leave you will go for keeps and not return. Such people will never know where the door of the Church is. A good lover will always stay in regular touch with the beloved. Otherwise, if there is neglect, others will influence the beloved and the lover, upon his or her return, will find the beloved gone. The same applies to the Church. If you are baptized and go away without maintaining regular contact, you will return to find the house locked and the people [the beloved] gone.

Important matters for your consideration are the following. First, the great conference which we have all wanted and agreed upon [our very own] will take place in August. Second, the annual Church fees we have agreed upon - as an example to those coming from far and near to see [test] our Church - are $20 per adult man and $10 per woman. Some have completed paying these subscription fees, others are still in the process of paying. Be determined, those of you who are still earning these fees through the moulding of bricks or other jobs. We must be consistent with our fees and in this way improve our purse [financial position]. Let us be vigilant, let us persevere within the limits imposed on us, little by little, without losing sight of our objectives.

You must be active in the Church. You cannot just sit and do nothing. Even Judas, who was in control of the purse, collected money and provided food for the disciples. Nowadays money is required for everything we do!

Last Sunday we agreed to gather the few followers we still have in anticipation of the arrival of the ministers [Mugero and senior officers]. Let us not be disheartened by their failure to arrive, but proceed with our gatherings, modest as they may be, until the major conference in August!

That is all!
EXCERPTS OF SERMONS PREACHED DURING ECUMENICAL CONSOlATION CEREMONY ON BEHALF OF THE DECEASED BISHOP NHEYA GAVURE, AND THE ORDINATION OF HIS SUCCESSOR, BISHOP ISHMAEL GAVURE, AT THE TOPIA HEADQUARTERS IN BIKITA - 8-10 SEPTEMBER 1984.

Mrs Agnes Rabson (former Fambidzano student and leader of Topia Ruwadzano).

I am greatly disturbed because we had our shadow [Bishop Gavure presented as a protective tree, the shade of which provides peace and wellbeing for his followers], which has been chopped down. Now we are exposed, out in the open. What has lifted me up, however, is that we as women were preaching in his presence while he was alive and we were found capable of doing so. Now that we, the women, are downcast as if we are bereft of something which will not be found again, let us take courage, because death is unavoidable. Will we find another like him? Through the will of God and the message we have heard [sermons from John 14] we can be sure that if we believe and behave properly, a Comforter like him [the deceased bishop identified with Christ’s promise of the Comforter] will be sent to us. Peace to you!

If we all believe and remain steadfast in the law of our father, Bishop Gavure, he will intercede on our behalf with Mwari, because right now he is with God.

I shall preach from Luke 8:1 where it says that the women who followed Jesus did so perseveringly We do not read that they ever backslided.

Reader
Luke 8: 1,2: "... Jesus travelled through cities and villages ... And the twelve were with him, and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities ..."
Mrs. Rabson:

Jesus went round the villages and preached to people like us. He preached the gospel of God. Likewise our father, Gavure, travelled to the cities, preaching God's gospel. Like Jesus' twelve disciples, twelve leaders were also chosen here today to proceed with the work of Father Gavure. Jesus drove evil spirits from many suffering women. He expelled seven demons from Mary Magdalene. Those women really suffered, but Christ healed them. Some of us women who came to this Church suffered in a similar manner. But we found succour and had all evil spirits removed, as did those women in Christ's time. Now we are left behind, orphans and widows. Be not discouraged if you believe in the name of God in heaven. We have our Bishop Gavure whom we saw with our own eyes [reference to recent experiences of "seeing" the deceased bishop in dreams and visions].

Because Jesus Christ, the Son of God, now says: "This Church of Bishop Gavure belongs to me", we are God's children. Rejoice, because Christ is our Saviour. Jesus Christ, see our plight as orphans and have mercy on us! We know that Jesus, with whom those women associated, also died. Peace to you! We, in similar fashion, said that we have our father, he is alive. But God knew that He would take him away and leave us orphans. Nevertheless, the Son of God promised us the Spirit Comforter, who will enable us to persevere. Those who leave this work [Church] now will be faced with hardship.

Let us be very strong and persevere in good works. Was what we heard before a prophecy? We have our concern, called Fambidzano. This body safeguards our theological education. It keeps our books - many of them. The bishop told me: "Mother this [Fambidzano and its training programme] is my inheritance. At my death I shall not have thrown away a single page of this institution, and all those who stay behind will see them."

So we have all these theological training books, some of which are so deep that even our schoolchildren cannot comprehend their full meaning. They differ from the ordinary rules of education.

Yet I am distressed because the one who protected us has gone ... Don't say we have no father and mother - because we have the Church and it is God Himself who confirms that He is our Father. If we continue to follow the example of Father Gavure, God will keep us all until we die. Even though we shall no longer see our bishop in the flesh on Sundays, we honour him in the spirit and in this way we persevere spiritually. You women, did we not hear that
there is death and that there is resurrection? If a person is resurrected he knows all things. Did the resurrected Christ not tell the women to go and call His followers for a meeting at Galilee? He knew that his disciples would be depressed about the thought that He had died and gone forever. Peace, in the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

Muongamiri Chapinga (former Fambidzano student and seniormost Topia warden):

[Prayer] This is the time for us to be carried by You, Lord Jesus. We cannot preach Your Word all by ourselves. We ask of You on behalf of our father [Daneel] who differs from us only in skin colour. This man has come to this country with love. He made Fambidzano in this country where he became one with us black people, where he sat on our chairs and ate from our pots - things which the kinsmen of his tribe did not do. We do not have the means to keep him here, but we know that You care for him and his family in the southern country. Keep our father and our grandfather - this one. Let us love him as he loves us in giving us our own Fambidzano in this country.

I also ask You, Lord, for this Church of ours which we have built, together with your messenger [Bishop] Gavure. It has never been so full, with people not finding space to sit down. I say this believing that Gavure is alive and that he sees what is happening here. His being alive and his presence does not fill us with fear. I thank Your name, dear Lord Jesus, for this. Enter into the men amassed here. Enter, Lord Jesus, into the women, the young ones and us elderly people who are present here. Remove our hatred because we are people of ignorance. Forgive all of us our sins, Lord. We are incapable of anything, my Lord Jesus. I thank You for having kept our grave [no interference from wizards]. Now I conclude by placing everything in Your name, Father, Son and Holy Spirit ... Amen

[Prayer] Our Father ...

Discussion of God's law: Matthew 22:34-40

Now we have reached the great moment of ordaining the deceased’s son, for which purpose we have invited Bishop Makamba and the other Church leaders. He will be received from the hands of Chapinga and Madondo [Musasikwa] for him to be gadzwa’d [set
right: ordained]. He will be my leg, because even if I had to receive the leadership all on my own, I would be incapable [because of old age] to visit the people. We will therefore co-operate and he will be my father in spirit. So we have called the bishops to strengthen [consecrate] this one to that end. If anyone does wrong to this young one, he crosses two people - him and his father. For many years father and son co-operated, with me as follower. Now that the bishop has died, his son Ishmael will be my leg [representative].

So, Father Daneel, I ask you to intercede on our behalf. You who brought the relish which we call *Fambidzano* into this country, you who brought unity when we were disunited, I tell you that we ordain this young one in your hands, Amen.

*Muongamiri Guruveti* (former *Fambidzano* student and senior warden of Bishop Makamba's Zionist Apostolic Church):

*I Ordination ceremony:*

First of all I am thankful for the work of hands [ordination, or legitimation of leadership] which is being conducted here; because it is not an incidental event conducted by us Zionists or by all of us here today. We are following the example of those who knew God many years ago. Peace be with you! Those people who knew God had their own customs. So I refer to that ancient laying on of hands by a "bishop" [in the sense of a royal leader] as found in 1 Kings 2:1. It was the time B.C. - when Jesus was not yet born - with the death of King David of Israel approaching when he called Solomon, his son, to give him instructions. Hence, today the successor son of a human being, who came into this world through birth, is being instructed. In the same way as the deceased instructed his son prior to his death we instruct him so that the important office he receives may be kept well. Peace to us!

David spoke to his son, Solomon, saying: "I am following the way of all flesh; that means that I am departing, as all of us in this world - yes, *all of us* - have to do. We all have to die! You see, my son Solomon, all these people surrounding us have to die ... But you, be strong, clad yourself with strength! Be a man in the responsibilities which you receive today."

No, this is not me [Guruveti] speaking, but the message of this Bible book. Be strong, be a man, you [Ishmael Gavure], and keep that in which your Lord God has instructed you and follow His ways. Keep His laws as he has instructed you. Keep His witness
according to the laws of Moses so that you will prosper in every-
thing you do [1 Kings 2:3].

I have merely spoken this message by way of introduction so
that the bishops can now enter to ordain the person who has been
elected for ordination. Amen.

II Consolation ceremony:
Peace to you! I accept that you all know God. To know God means
to co-operate in God's work, to do God's work together right here.
Many people were unified and prepared to work together in the
Churches. But because of numerous divisions and the confusing
names of many of the Churches sent here, disparities grew. Each
division had its God and the people became satisfied within their
own groups. Thus it came about that the people worshipped as
vaTopia and as Zionists here in Zimbabwe.

Our congregations have become numerous because the gospel
message was preached all over and the people were made aware of
the fact that God does not hide. He is one! The problem of disunity
came about because of the numerous names and divisions of Chur-
ches - each building in its own name and confusing the people.
Some people joined as youngsters in their Churches and now that
they are old they are still to be found in their Church offices. Now
the time has come to rethink and to question the existence of all
these Church groups. Is it right, considering that God is one? There
was no unity in the past. It did not happen that a member of one
Church would go and participate in another. Whenever we did meet
we fought each other, accusing each other and burning each other's
books. All of us had the same Bible, but in addition we cherished
our own little book of history [of our separate Churches], forgetting
that there are not two types of Christians, for Christ is one!

The sins attributed to the Ethiopians are the same as those ack-
nowledged by the Roman Catholics, the Reformed Churches and
the Zionists. The people of all these groups confess the same sins
which Christ has placed under judgement ...

We shall now concern ourselves with John 14, the Bible chapter
we have concentrated on all along during this meeting. It concerns
the episode where Jesus comforted His disciples. Let us pay atten-
tion to this message as converts, as people of the Church - not as
office-bearers and ordinary members, because Jesus is concerned
with all people created by God. To each and every human being He
says: "I am the way!"
Reader

John 14:3: "And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, that where I am you may be also."

Guruveti.

If a killer kills a person down here before the builder has completed his building up there, where will the deceased go? So Jesus stated that He would go and prepare a place for you and when He had prepared it He would come back and fetch you, so that you can go and dwell where He is. He says: "I shall take you with me if you keep my law, so that you can stay with me; but if you do not keep my law you'll die again [eternally]." ...

Reader

John 14:4: "And you know the way where I am going."

Guruveti.

God has made us all, like Adam, out of dust. For a while we live, some tilling the lands, other keeping animals or whatever we do for a livelihood. But we do not stay here permanently. We return to dust. God creates us out of dust and places a spirit in us for us to become human beings. When the clay disintegrates God, the owner of the spirit, claims it back. The spirit of each person, upon death, is claimed back by the owner. However much a person may be loved, when God decides to claim back the spirit of that person, nothing can prevent it [death] from taking place.

As everything is in God's hands we should be at peace. Verily, I see today that God's Spirit is present amongst us. For that reason we - your and my Church - are alert and active. In some Churches you find only women attending because their men are drinking beer or are busy with divination. You find the women active in their Ruwadzano meetings and they are the ones receiving visions from heaven. We [men] are easily tempted and misled ...

Therefore I am thankful that with the bishop's burial we were present; today, with the consolation ceremony, once again we were present. You will have to ask yourselves. "What causes such participation?" But we were concerned and felt grief when Bishop Gavure died. We co-operated closely with him. He knew many of our Zionist houses intimately - even better than some of us Zionists know each other. He knew [loved] us!
Now I leave everything in the hands of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Bishop Makamba:
This task we are performing here today is not really our own doing, for it belongs to Him [God], the owner of it. We have got no say in this matter because He Himself has said that whenever anything is amiss, we should deal with it in His name. This work did not start today, but long ago. Peace to you! When we came into this world it was already there, implemented by its owner; our Father has spoken the word. He said: "There will be death. Everybody departs, the good ones and the bad." So all we can really do is elaborate a little on what He, our Lord, said in John 14.

Reader
John 14:1, 2: "Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. There are many rooms in my Father’s house; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?"

Bishop Makamba.
It says that Jesus is comforting His disciples. Our great ancestor [Jesus] spoke and comforted His followers; as a result we too are comforted here. Our great ancestor comforted His disciples by telling them to believe in God and not to be disturbed. Likewise He comforts us. This is no hollow promise, but a reality with much evidence in the Bible. It is God Himself who started here on earth and who has gone to prepare a place for us to live [after death] ...

Reader
v.6: "Jesus said to him [Thomas], ‘I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me.’"

Bishop Makamba:
It says quite clearly that Jesus is the way to God. There is no other way, no other elusive route or wisdom. It is inevitable that a person comes and fetches you, as was promised. How can you refuse if it is your time which has come? Peace to you! Now he, who was one of us [Bishop Gavure], went to prepare a place for us to dwell. For me too, as I stand here, the time has come to go. It is the most splendid task, one that surpasses all others. Peace to you! It is a joyous task which pleases the Lord, but it is incomprehensibly dif-
difficult for us human beings. The Son of God said that unless the seed is buried in the soil and dies, it will bear no fruit. To us of the flesh this is difficult to comprehend. So we place it in the Lord's hands - he being the owner who has made it thus, the priest of all people.

We come and go, like Jesus did. We are the grain in God's fields. He prepares the fields and we, the seed, are sown. We germinate and grow. Then we are removed [reaped]. So we go away; then we come back again. That is it! Peace to you ... I do not sidestep the issue. There is nowhere else to go. We all await that time [of death], we anticipate the promise of Him who said that He goes to prepare a place, and will return to fetch us. Let us all know that we will be fetched, by the one who said: "I shall come and fetch you." There is no other way! I leave everything in the power of the Lord. Amen.

Bishop Moyana of the Seventh Church

I Ordination ceremony

I am Bishop Moyana of the Seventh Church. This Church grew from the Topia and acknowledges it as father. I remember well that our Church was "opened" by the deceased Topia bishop. As Joseph heard that his father Jacob had died, I heard that our father has died. As Joseph took some of his people to go and grieve for his father, I have come with my followers to grieve and to console.

This gospel of ours has caused us, the black Church leaders, much suffering. It troubled David Masuka, Makamba, Mutendi and myself. I say this, not having died yet. If you people should now reject this gospel [which was brought to you with such hardship] it will be your own fault. You were bound in love. Beware of being caught up in a spirit of laziness. Even now there is still a spirit of racial discrimination [lit. "to elect the skin colour"] and tribal prejudice in our Churches. My followers know about it. Yet this is no reason for you to sit down submissively as if you have a plate and a basket [i.e. a Church] which will break. Of which Topia will I be the son if you allow [the Church] to disintegrate? Should you [successor bishop] observe anything bad [signs of dissent] amongst the Topia members, you must call me. If I notice anything working to the detriment of your "child" [your new leader], I shall call him. Is it not you who have opened the Seventh Church? Indeed, it is
you! There is nothing which will deprive us of our victory over the spirit of disunity. That is all. Amen.

II Consolation ceremony

I stand here before you as a child of the Topia Church. I worked together with Chari Chidembo, Luke and the deceased leader. It is he [Bishop Gavure] who came and worked at Mutiza and who later opened our Church there. I am a child of the law; I no longer discriminate on the basis of skin colour; that is, I am born of the Spirit, amongst the vaTopia. My rebirth took place in Johannesburg, where the Seventh Church was built in 7th Avenue and the Ethiopian Church in 27th Avenue. Back here in Zimbabwe our link was reaffirmed when the Topia came to open our Church. I am Joseph; my father Jacob [Gavure] has died, and I have come from Egypt to grieve for him. In addition I am the lastborn child. The one who bears the deceased’s name is sitting over there [pointing at Ishmael Gavure, in an act of recognizing the successor’s leadership]. There is no other truth which will emerge [i.e. no other leader; no dissent] in the future. It is the same as when Jesus said: "I am the beginning and the end.” So my heart is no longer troubled. I congratulate you, Gavure [addressing the deceased]; you departed while serving the gospel, while I still do not know whether I shall depart serving or not serving the gospel. Peace to you!

I thank the Spirit of God for having entered Bishop Makamba. Bishop Makamba did not decide on this task [of ordination and consolation] himself, for he was chosen by God to do so. Before Gavure’s death one of the Zionist women told me that someone would die soon, that it would be a death of God and that Bishop Makamba would be called to conduct the ceremony. In thanking you, Bishop Makamba, I thank God, because He sent you for this task. God knows no boundaries. If you see someone propagating divisions [in an exclusivist sense], saying I belong to so-and-so, know that such a person is outside Christianity. May God give you strength, Bishop Makamba, may He guide you and bless you for the love you have shown towards the [deceased] man of God...

I give you your task, Bishop [Ishmael Gavure], the task for which you were chosen by God. You have laboured with great effort. You have gone away at night, dodging the demands of your relatives, and you have returned to bury a person here. Peace to you.
For now, I leave things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Rev. Zimuto of the Seventh Church

Peace! I am filled with joy as we complete our task. We are reaping the field. This task is coming to fulfilment right here. You yourselves have witnessed that you dreamt of Bishop Gavure, clad in white garments and facing the east. We responded: "We have him here with us, because today we have removed the grief and he himself will take the first step of progress." If one forces matters they will come to nought. Today you have seen a great task performed here. He himself has diverted that which was not according to his wishes. All the unwanted things were broken off, while that which he chose remained intact. So I am thankful that what Gavure has arranged for his son was confirmed by the Church council. The council approved the arrangements [for leadership] of the deceased when it said: "Yes, this is law." Even God has approved that. Although He has chopped out the tree, the living shoots must proceed. He allows the shoot [new leader] to grow as a new tree. So we acknowledge that in the place of the old tree which was removed, a new one is growing. Today, therefore, we have the new Gavure, he being at the same time the Gavure we had yesterday.

[The Rev Zimuto then preached at length from 2 Kings 4:1-7 about the prophet Elisha helping a widow to pay her debts by multiplying a jar of olive oil for her to sell. He contextualized the story as follows.]

What I am telling you today, you women of Gavure's house, is that you have been given a person whom you can approach with your problems. If you have debts, take them to this man. Today Elisha has arisen and he will take care of all your troubles. He will deliver you as he delivered the widow of old. Go to Elisha with your problems! He will not fail you. Peace to you.

I am filled with joy because we are uplifting this homestead for it to become a new homestead. Because our eyes were filled with tears we shall console the people of this homestead. My joy also derives from the anticipation that the new Bishop Gavure will visit me like the old one who has done. Because we love him, we trust that he will come to all our places [congregations] to worship with us, because we are one body!
You, Bishop Gavure, be as steadfast in your difficult task as was the prophet Elisha. Remember all of us who were congregated here today. Pray to God that the spirit of unity which ties us will prevail. We will pray for you, the budding new tree of Gavure, for strength in all your new responsibilities. All the Churches are filled with the wish to come and see and co-operate with you, Gavure. 

*Pray for them all to remain united as they were united when your father was alive.* You know the ways of Elisha. He wanted his people to be courageous. He prayed for the people and helped them when they were in need. Do you likewise. Lay hands on the sick and heal them. Go on the road when you're needed and sing praises as Elisha did. When you arrive you'll be filled with power, because God will answer you!

In the name of Jesus. Amen.
GLOSSARY OF SHONA TERMS AND PHRASES

baba father; babamukuru, father's elder brother; babamunini, father's younger brother.
bumbiro constitution (of Church or Conference).
Chibarirwe derived from kubara or kubereka, "to give birth"—that which was born for us; in the Independent Church context it means "heritage of our fathers, that which has not been derived from others, our very own", and as such is the popular designation of the African Congregational Church.
chibereko "fruit", child or child-bearing power (from kubereka, to bear offspring).
chidoma witch's familiar; animal of psychic nature, conceived of as smaller than a polecat.
chikara wild animal or beast; chikara chomweya, lit. "beast of a spirit", i.e. fierce, evil spirit.
chikonzi messenger of court.
chikoro school, sometimes as syn. for Church.
chiposo an act of sorcery in which the malignant substance or particles are believed to be "thrown at" (kuposha) the victim.
chirairo lit. "evening meal"—in the Mission Church and Ethiopian-type Independent Church context this term refers to holy communion; kudya chirairo, to participate in ("eat") the Lord's Supper.
chizvarwa segment of patrilineage; descendants of one man over several generations.
dare meeting place; tribal court; dare rekereke, Church "court" or council.
dunhu  tribal ward; matunhu asina mvura: wards without water, i.e. traditionally the dwelling-place of evil spirits.

dura  granary


gomba romwoto  pit of fire, hell.
gona  horn; gona rouroyi, horn of wizardry; container of malignant medicine.
gota  councillor of headman or chief

imba  hut, house; group of descendants of one person, male or female.
ishe  chief.

kereke  Church, kereke yoMweya, Church of the (Holy) Spirit; popular designation of the Zionist and Apostolic Independent Churches.
kudarika uta  "to cross (a deceased person's) bow", a method of finding out during the kugadzira procedure if a widow has remained chaste after her husband's death.
kududzira  to explain.
kugadza ufundisi  to ordain to the ministry.
kugadzira  to settle the spirit of a deceased person; this term indicates the traditional induction rite through which the spirit of a deceased relative is "brought back home" and simultaneously elevated to the status of ancestorhood; also referred to as bona, "to give or sustain life" and kurova guva, lit. "to hit the grave".
kugara nhaka  to inherit, or succeed to, a deceased person's estate and/or position; kugarwa nhaka, to become an inherited wife of one of the deceased's agnatic kinsmen.
Glossary of Shona terms and phrases

kugova nhaka: to distribute a deceased's inheritable estate.
kuheduka: to backslide.
kukanda zvipo: to "throw" (give, provide) gifts.
kuona: to see.
kuparadza: to destroy.
kuparidza: to preach.
kuperekedza: to accompany; to "escort" the spirit of the deceased person to heaven, during the runyaradzo (consolation) ceremony.
kupfekedza: to clothe; clothing ceremony when new office-bearer is draped in official attire during ordination procedure.
kupira: to offer for, propitiate (from kupa: to give); kupira midzimu, to venerate the ancestors.
kuprofita: to prophesy.
kupuwa shamhu: "to receive the whip"; to be disciplined in the Church.
kureverera: to speak on behalf of; to mediate.
kurota: to dream.
kusumungura: lit. "to unfasten"; to pardon or free.
kusutswa: to be possessed (by a spirit).
kutevera ropa: "to follow the blood", i.e. the blood (of the late Church leader) succeeds.
kutonga mhosva: to judge a judicial case.
kuvenekerja: to enlighten.

mai: mother.
mambo: king, chief; in the past this term was used for the Rozvi rulers.
mangisi: sweet, unmalted beer.
mbeu: seed; ungado yembeu: "seed conference" held in October by most of the Independent Churches to obtain God's blessing on the coming season.
mhezi: scabies.
mhondoro: tribal spirit; often associated with or manifesting itself in the form of a lion.
mhuri: family, multi-lineal group of kinsmen living in the same locality, or "kindred".
moyo: heart; moyo munyoro: kind heart.
mubapatidzi: baptist.
mubishopi: bishop.
mudeakoni — deacon.
muduku — young one, junior.
mudzimu — ancestral spirit.
mufambiri — representative.
mufundisi — minister of religion.
muhakirosi — chorister.
mujiba — youth volunteer (in Zimbabwe's liberation struggle).
mukarabga — brother-in-law.
mukoma — a man's elder brother or a woman's elder sister.
mukomana — boy; term used for bushfighter in liberation struggle.
mukuru — elder, dignitary.
mukuwasha — son-in-law.
mukwerere — rain-making ritual during which the senior ancestral spirits are propitiated at their graves or under a muchakata (cork tree); these rituals are conducted at the commencement of each rainy season or if rains have failed.
mumiriri — mediator.
munhu vaMwari — man of God.
munyori — secretary.
muongamiri — warden; IC official of senior rank whose task it is "to call others together", i.e. to lead the members of his congregation(s), from kuunganidza: to gather, call together.
muPostori — an Apostle; follower of Johane Maranke or Johane Masowe.
mupristi — priest.
murandakadzi — maiden.
murapi — healer.
muridzi — owner or guardian; varidzi veimba: guardians of the house (family); varidzi venyika: guardians of the land.
muroyi — wizard (sorcerer or witch).
musasa — wind-shield.
mushumairi — preacher; from kushumaira: to preach.
Musikavanhu — creator of people; praise name of traditional high god.
mutariri — overseer.
mutongi: judge, councillor, e.g. chief or headman in the tribal court; "judge" in the IC council.
muTopia: member of the First Ethiopian Church.
mutorwa: foreigner; a person who does not belong to one's own lineage.
muvangeri: evangelist.
uuZioni: a Zionist.
muzukuru: "grandchild"; nephew, niece.
wana: child.
Mwari: God (most common name of Shona High God).
mwene: owner; mwene wevatezvo: owner of the (Church) members.
mweya: spirit; Mweya mutsvene: Holy Spirit; mweya wakaipa: evil spirit.
ndari: work party.
ndaza: cord; vaZioni VeNdaza: Zionists of the (holy) cord.
nganga: diviner-herbalist.
ngozi: avenging spirit; harmful or dangerous influence of any kind.
nhaka: inheritance; see kugara nhaka.
nyika: land, tribal territory, country, or world.
pamberi neZioni: forward with Zion.
Paseka: Paschal ("Passover") celebration; popular name of annual festivals conducted at the Church headquarters (or in outlying congregations) of the Spirit-type Churches.
Pendi: "Pentecost"; popular name for the major July gathering of the vaPostori at their Church headquarters.
rabaumah: senior Apostolic office-bearer of the AACJM.
Rabinoni: Lebanon; as designation of Zionist Church headquarters.
rungano: tale, history.
runyaradzo: consolation ceremony conducted on behalf of the relatives of the recently deceased.
rupasa: reed mat.
Ruwadzano  Womens' Association.

sabbata  sabbath day, or AACJM congregation.
sadunhu  headman of tribal ward.
sekuru  grandfather or mother's brother
shamhu  thin stick, whip or cane; syn. for Dutch Reformed Church discipline.
shavi  alien spirit which does not belong to the lineage of the host whom it possesses; the various types of shavi spirits impart a variety of skills, e.g. healing, dancing, hunting, etc. to their hosts. For detailed description, see Vol. I.

Shinga Postora  "Courageous Apostles" (schismatic group with its roots in Johane Masowe's Apostolic movement); kushinga, to be diligent or brave.

Shonganiso  union; from kusongana: to unite; popular designation of the Rev Zvobgo's ARC.
simba  strength, power; simba guru, great power spirit medium.
svikiro  father-in-law; vatezvara, general term of reference to a man's in-laws.
tsika  custom, convention; tsika dzakanaka, good manners, exemplary life.

ukuru  leadership, ukuru wekereke, Church leadership.
uroyi  wizardry.
vakomana  pl. of mukomana.
vaongamiri  pl. of muongamiri.
zvidoma  pl. of chidoma.
zviposo  pl. of chiposo.
## ABBREVIATIONS

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AACJM</td>
<td>African Apostolic Church of Johane Maranke</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>African Congregational Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AICC</td>
<td>African Independent Churches' Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>APE</td>
<td>Apostolic evangelist</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARC</td>
<td>African Reformed Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSR</td>
<td>Casual Sample, &quot;Reserves&quot; (rural areas)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>District Commissioner</td>
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<td>DRC</td>
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<td>IC</td>
<td>Independent Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>MRP</td>
<td>Murapi, i.e. Healer</td>
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INDEPENDENT CHURCH HEADQUARTERS

1. ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH; headquarters and burial place of the late Bishop Samuel Mutendi, at Defel Gokwe.
2. ZCC centre of Rev Gierson at Nyamhondo/Mwenczi.
3. ZCC headquarters of Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi at Mbungo Estates.
4. Original ZCC headquarters at Mutarara.
5. ZCC headquarters of Bishop Ruben Mutendi at Mandadzaka.
6. AFRICAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF JOHANE MARANKE; original headquarters of the founder leader in the Maranke district.
7. AACJM headquarters of High-Priest Abero Maranke at Machake.
8. ZION APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA of Bishop David Masuka.
9. ZION APOSTOLIC CHURCH of Bishop Moses Makamba.
10. ZION APOSTOLIC FAITH MISSION of Bishop Andreas Shoko.
11. ZION SABBATH CHURCH of Bishop Timithia Horn.
12. ZION APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST — original headquarters of Bishop Krinos Kuudzerema.
13. ZION APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST — current headquarters of Bishop Krinos Kuudzerema, near Mvuma.
14. ZION APOSTOLIC CHURCH/ ZION PROTESTANT CHURCH of Bishop Zachoe.
15. ZION APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST of Bishop Raimon Kuudzerema.
16. ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH of Bishop Matthew Forridge.
17. ZION SABBATH CHURCH of Bishop Nehemiah Gotore.
18. ZION APOSTOLIC CHURCH of Bishop Nehemiah Chengerai.
19. Residence of the late Rev Sengwwe, founder leader of the AFRICAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, at Chibunji/Chipinge.
22. FIRST ETHIOPIAN CHURCH of Bishop Nheya Gavure at Norumedzo/Bikita.
25. Residence of the late Rev. Kumani Sibambo of the AFRICAN REFORMED CHURCH (Shonganiso).
CHINGOMBE CHIEFDOM
DISTRIBUTION OF VILLAGES AND DENOMINATIONS

- Village
- Villages included in random sample survey
- Township
- Author's temporary residence
- Roads
- Unofficial ward boundary

DENOMINATIONS

▲ D.R.C
○ R.C.
▼ Full Gospel
■ Church of Christ
★ Z.C.C.
□ Ndeza Zionist
★ Maranke Apostle
▼ First Ethiopian
□ Chibarirwe