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The African Struggle for Independent Education: A History of Wilberforce Institute, Evaton 1905 to 1950s

by

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Doctors of Philosophy

in the

Department of History

University of the Witwatersrand

Supervisor: Prof Clive Glaser

March 2018

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis titled

is my own work, and that all the resources used or quoted have been duly acknowledged by means of in-text citations and complete references, and that I have not previously submitted the dissertation for a degree at any other university.

…….

Vusumuzi Khumalo

January 2018

Johannesburg

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PHOTOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION

1. Fanny Coppin Hall.
2. Mrs Vernon and her South African pupils.
3. Mrs Vernon and and the Zulu Girls.
4. Bishop Vernon and his family.
5. James Dwane and Bishop shaking hands with Bishop Turner in America.
6. The erection of the AME church, this church was also used as a school in Basutoland.
7. The Gow Family.
8. Dr F H Gow in Military uniform.
9. Eliza Gregg Hall.
10. Eva Morake the first female principal of Wilberforce.
11. The ruins of the Industrial Department.
12. Dr Xuma,
13. Bishop R.R. Wright and Mrs Wright and Bethel Memorial Church in Cape Town.
14. Dr R. R. Wright.
15. Dr R. R. Wright.
16. Dr Jacob Mfaniselwa Nhlapo, the new principal who succeeded Dr Amos White in 1940.
17. Dr Josephus Coan, an African American who spent nine years working at Wilberforce Institute.
18. Dr Nhlapo's House outside Wilberforce. This house is not part of AME property.
19. The 1941 Balance Sheet Coan.
20. The stone at Bonner Hall laid by Bishop I. H. Bonner in 1952.
21. Bonner Hall.

LIST OF ABREVIATION

AMEC African Methodist Episcopal Church

APO African Political Organisation

CS Clapham Sect

ANC African National Congress

APO African Peoples Organisation

DBE Department of Bantu Education

GMS Glasgow Missionary Society

ICY Institute for Coloured Youth

MMS Moravian Missionary Society

LMS London Missionary Society

NEA Native Educational Association

NASA National Archive of South Africa

PO Pass Officer

Stuart A Rose Archive

SANAC South African Native Affairs Commission

TED Transvaal Department of Education

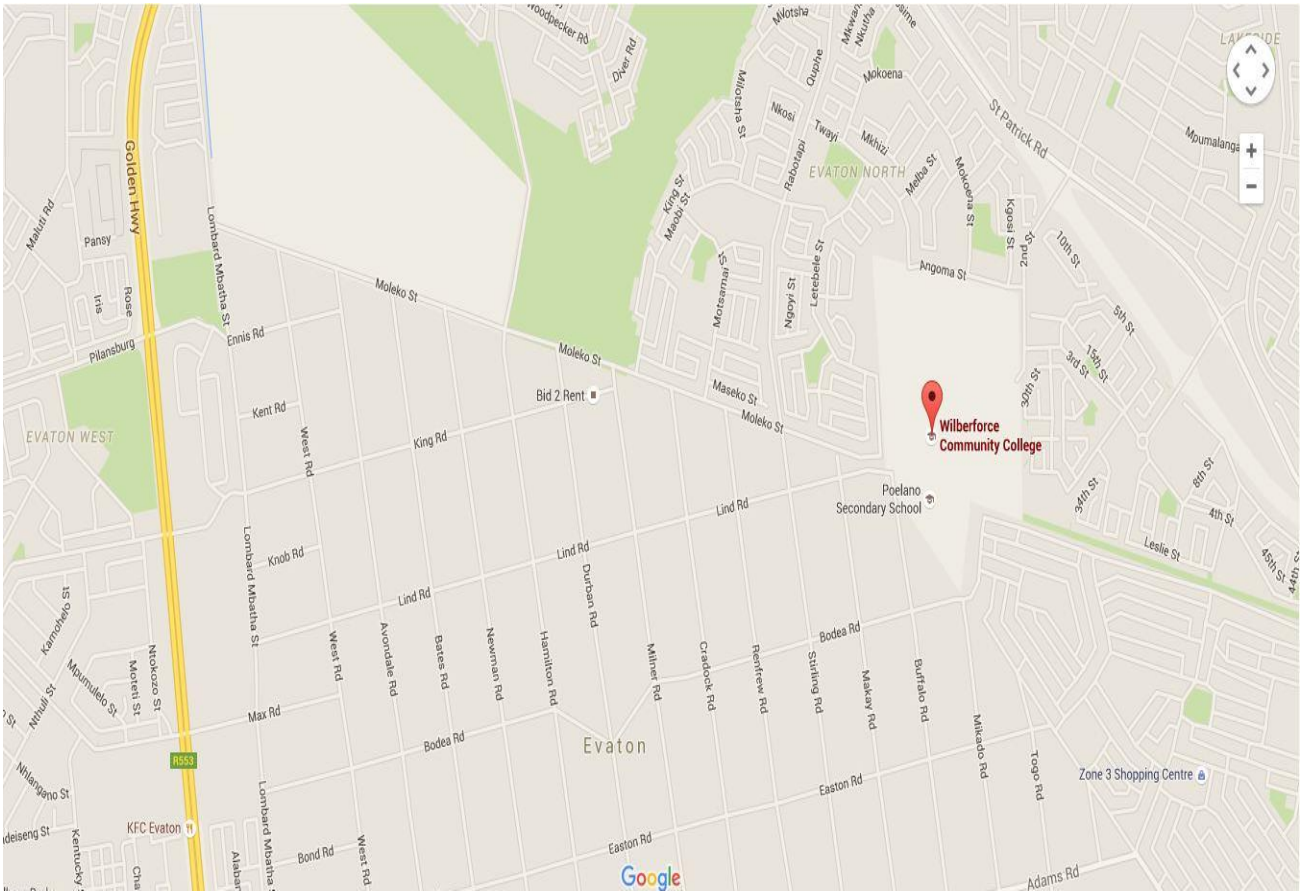
TPEO Transvaal Public Education Ordinance

WMS Wesleyan Missionary Society

ABSTRACT

From its earliest days, Wilberforce Institute had a unique place in the history of African education in the Transvaal. The school was founded by the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1905 as an independent educational institution, marking African reaction to mainstream missionary education that had been tainted by some second-generation evangelist missionaries and colonial bureaucrats. This faction condemned liberal education as too literary for Africans, seeing it as incompatible to the needs of the colonial cultural and economic development and fearing that it might produce men and women who would refuse to accept the colonial values inculcated in the classroom. In this crucial period, African dissatisfaction and grievances about education began to feature in African controlled newspapers, particularly *Imvo Zabantsundu.* This marked the beginning of a complex process of Africans searching for alternative independent education while rejecting mainstream missionary education.

Several African independent schools were established throughout South Africa; Wilberforce was the prominent school in the Transvaal. From very small beginnings, Wilberforce Institute strove not simply to bolster academic skills of the African youth but also to embody the principles of self-determination, self-sufficiency and a proud African identity. The school was embraced by its founders as a symbol of a new phase of struggle, a crusade rooted in the renascent idea that Africans were a conquered nation that needed to claim intellectual and cultural autonomy before achieving political independence. As the school advanced, many of the changes took place in response to altered government attitudes and new directions in education. This study presents the neglected aspects of education in the historiography of missionary education in South Africa. It demonstrates how the long history of formal schooling in South Africa, extending back to the nineteenth century, became a contested terrain. It tracks why and how Wilberforce Institute was founded, concentrating on the period between Wilberforce's founding in 1905 and the early 1950s when the Bantu Education Department took control of most aspects of the institute. It was a period of terrible financial constraint, but also of unique independence and experimentation.



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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1. 1 Introduction

The introduction of colonial education in the Cape Colony was well received by African Christian converts who placed a high value on education in general and schooling in particular. For this group, education became valuable not only in their pursuit of enlightenment and western civilization but also for social or economic advancement. Most Africans came to believe that, although they might enhance their social status, money, private property and civil rights, once they acquired an education it could not be taken away. At the same time, Africans who acquired literacy or advanced training often recognized an obligation to pass that knowledge on to others within their family, community and cultural groups. However, the introduction of an industrial education programme by Sir George Grey was considered as inadequate and inappropriate for African needs from the 1850s onwards, and condemned as preparing young Africans for lives of marginality and servitude on the fringes of an opulent society.

As white opposition to liberal education for Africans intensified in the 1890s, Africans began to express their educational dissatisfaction in African-controlled newspapers, such as *Imvo Zabantsundu*, whose editor was the eminent John Tengo Jabavu. In this crucial period, the Cape Education Department curtailed spending on African education to boost subsidies to white education. These problems deepened with virulent white opposition to racial intermingling in some missionary schools. All these new developments sparked controversy. Although profoundly appreciative of the education introduced, this marked the beginning of a complex process that involved the searching for an alternative independent education while rejecting mainstream missionary education. 'Consequently', Andrew Paterson argues, 'African independent church communities were preoccupied with the politics of access and control in the schools.'[1] On the Rand, the breakthrough year for independent schools was 1903, the year after the Anglo-Boer (South African) War. By 1904 the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church,

1 A. Paterson, 'Contest and Co-option: The struggle for schooling in the African Independent churches of the Cape Colony,' (PhD Thesis, University of Cape Town, 1992), p. ii.

which later founded Wilberforce Institute, operated thirty-eight schools in the Transvaal. Though these schools were mostly short-lived, they became a point of controversy. James Campbell has shown how missionaries and the Reconstruction government fretted that they 'served as clearinghouses of Ethiopian propaganda'.[2]

Founded by the AME church in Evaton, Transvaal, in 1905, the Wilberforce Institute strove not simply to bolster academic skills of the African youth, but also to embody the principles of self-determination, self-sufficiency and a proud African identity. The school was embraced by its founders as a symbol of a new phase of struggle, or a crusade rooted in the revived idea that Africans were a conquered nation that needed to claim intellectual and cultural autonomy before achieving political independence. While many more Africans actively supported this new educational venture as a 'liberated zone' built on a critique of white cultural hegemony, the government and some missionaries dismissed the school as a 'site of sedition'[3]. As a result, the school was not subsidized. It subsisted on donations from the AME church, particularly in the United States (US), the local community, and to a lesser extent from fees. The growth of the school signalled a strategic and philosophical shift from colonial dependence to independence.

This thesis aims to describe why and how Wilberforce Institute was founded. I concentrate the research between 1905, which is the year when Wilberforce Institute was founded, to the early 1950s, when the Bantu Education Department took control of most aspects of the institute. This was a period of terrible financial constraint, but at the same time a period of unique independence and experimentation. To fully comprehend the story of Wilberforce Institute and the historical dynamics of African independent schools, this thesis tries to establish whether the range of problems which the independent church schools experienced was characteristic of independent church schools only, or whether it was common to the whole 'system' of mission schooling at the time. The first part of this thesis traces the genealogy of missionary education and the contestation over schooling in South Africa. This section also explores how independent African institutions illuminate larger transformations. This research further focuses on the struggle for African independent education on the Rand. It demonstrates how difficult it was for the AME church to purchase pieces of land where the church could build schools for the children of Africans who settled permanently on the Rand. The final part of this study chronicles the evolution of Wilberforce Institute and the challenges that the school experienced.

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2 J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa*, (Oxford, 1995), p.154.

[3] Ibid, pp. 153-154.

As I will explain throughout the thesis, there are many aspects that made Wilberforce Institute stand apart from other African independent schools and mainstream missionary schools. Wilberforce could be considered the first educational institution created by and for Africans in the Transvaal. As an independent school, Wilberforce was initiated to meet a range of educational needs articulated by numbers of urban Africans who were denied access to education by various mainstream churches on the Rand. This is what inspired me to pursue this project. It is important to note that the organisational structure of Wilberforce was not different from the mainstream mission schools. In order to establish itself as 'legitimate' school, the institute reproduced a model provided by the parent mission schools. The school created similar educational facilities and adopted an administrative approach that was heavily influenced by parent mission schools. What made Wilberforce different from the mainstream mission schools was the question of resistance to mission control, independence and flexibility when it comes to admission of non-Christian learners. In the context of educational control, the word 'independent' has a much more specific place in South African educational history, and is used to identify those schools deliberately established by African communities under their own control and consequently completely independent of any European form of management or supervision.

Although it does not bear directly on the concerns of this thesis, there were independent schools that emphasised political and protest dimensions in education (such as the school led by the charismatic Wellington Buthelezi in the Transkei[4]). Additionally, there is a vast literature that examines mainstream denominational missionary schools as spaces of social change, contestation, assimilation, divide and rule, as well as spaces where cultural, racial and religious superiority was ingrained in the minds of the African learner.[5] This literature provides insights

4 See for example, R. Edgar, 'African Educational Protest in South Africa: The American School Movement in the Transkei in the 1920s' In: Kallaway, P. (ed), *Apartheid and Education* (Johannesburg, 1984) pp.184-191; R. Edgar, 'Garveyism in Africa: Dr. Wellington and the American Movement in the Transkei' *Ufahamu* 6(3), 1976 pp.31-57.

5 See for example, C. Kros, 'They Wanted Dancing and not Merely the Lambeth Walk: A Reassessment of the 1940s School Disturbances with Particular Reference to Lovedale,' (a paper presented to the Wits African Studies Seminar 1992) J. Hyslop, 'Food, Authority and Politics: Student Riots in South African Schools 1945-1976'. in S. Clingman (ed), *Regions and Repertoires: Topics in South African Politics and Culture* (Johannesburg,1991), J. Hyslop,'Food, Authority and Politics Student Riots in South African Schools 1945-1976, *Africa Perspective: New Series*. J, Bolnick, 'Double Cross: Potlako Leballo and the 1946 Riots at Lovedale Missionary Institution,' (a paper presented to the African Studies Seminar, Wits, 1990.) A sampling of such scholars would be E. H. Berman, 'African Response to Christian Education,' *African Studies Review*. Vol. 17. 1974 J. Ball, Imperialism, Social Control and Colonial Curriculum in Africa, *Curriculum Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 3 pp 237-263, J van der Poel, Native Education in South Africa, *Journal of the Royal South African Society*, Vol. 34. No 136, 1935 M. Cross, The Foundation of Segregated Schools in the Transvaal 1902-1924 *History of Education* 16,4 1987 J. Shingler,

into the African struggle for access to education in general and explains why mission-educated Africans promoted their own educational agendas even while they remained 'dependent' on colonial education. Although this literature does not explore African independent schooling, it establishes a more grounded historical understanding of African education.

The writing on African missionary education in South African over the last five decades has included a number of important works concerning the development of different missionary schools in colonial Natal and the Cape. This literature captures how different mainstream missionary schools took shape, how they were structured, who defined the content and the direction of African education, and how it changed over time. This body of knowledge further shows how education was recognised as a valuable tool in state building and in the consolidation of royalty in African society.[6] Nevertheless, they offer little on the rise of African independent schools. A rich literature subsequently followed. A major contribution was made by Shingler who criticised missions in colonial territories for their unscientific, old-fashioned and inefficient approach to African education, particularly in terms of its 'bookish' Eurocentric nature, which

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'Education and the Political Order in South Africa, 1902-1961' (PhD Thesis Yale University, 1973). 169, 184 A. Ashforth, *The Politics of Official Discourse in Twentieth Century South Africa* (Oxford, 1990), E.H. Berman, American Influence on African Education: The Role of the Phelps-Stokes Fund's Education. *Comparative Education Review*, 1983; R. Hunt Davis, C. T. Loram and an American Model for African Education in *South Africa, African Studies Review*. 1982. W.G. Mills, The Role of African Clergy in the Reorientation of Xhosa Society in the Cape Colony 1850-1915, (PhD Thesis University of California, 1975).

6 L.A. Hewson, 'Healdtown: A Study of a Methodist Experiment in African Education'(Ph.D. Thesis Rhodes University,1959); E. Hodne, *Missionary Enterprise in African Education: The Co-operating Lutheran Mission in Natal 1912-1955* (Stavanger, 1997); J. Hodgson, 'A History of Zonneblom College, 1858 to 1870: A Church and Society' (MA Thesis, University of Cape Town 1975); R. Hunt Davis, 'Nineteenth Century African Education in the Cape Colony: A Historical Analysis' (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1969). S. M. Brock, James Steward and Lovedale, A Reprisal of Missionary Attitude and African Reponse in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. (PhD Thesis University of Edinbugh no date); O.E. Emanuelson, 'A History of Native Education in Natal between 1835 and 1927' (MA Thesis, University of Natal, 1927), G.C. Grant, 'Educational Institutions: Adams College,' *Native Teachers 'Journal* (July 1951); M. Burchell, 'Adams College, Natal, 1920-1956: A Critical Assessment', *The Journal of the University of Durban-Westville, New Series* 1, 1984. O.D. Dhlomo, 'A Survey of Some aspects of the Educational Activities of the American Board of Commissioners for foreign Missions in Natal as reflected in the history of Amanzimtoti Institute 1835-1956' (Master Thesis, University of Zululand, 1975); R. H.W. Shepherd, *Lovedale South Africa. The Story of A Century 1841-1941* (Lovedale, 1940). L.E. Switzer, 'The Problems of an African Mission in a White-dominated, Multi-racial Society: The American Zulu Mission in South Africa 1885-1910' (PhD. Thesis, University of Natal, 1971); T. White, 'Lovedale 1930-1955: The study of a Missionary Institution in its social educational and political context' (MA Thesis, Rhodes University, 1987); P. Rich, The appeals of Tuskegee: James Henderson, Lovedale, and the fortunes of South African Liberalism, 1906-1930', *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 20.2 (1987). F. Molteno, 'The Historical Foundations of the Schooling of Black South Africans', in P, Kallaway (ed), *Apartheid and Education*. (Johannesburg, 1984); C.Z. Nwandula, The Swiss Mission in South Africa: A critical review of its educational practices among the Tsonga people of the North-Eastern Transvaal 1899-1954. (MA Thesis University of the Witwatersrand, 1987); P.M. Fihla, 'The development of Bantu Education at the St. Mathew's Mission Station, Keiskama Hoek, 1853-1952.' (MA Thesis University of South Africa 1962). M. Mphahlele, The Methodist venture in education at Kilnerton, 1886-1962. (MA Thesis University of the North, 1972).

encouraged.[7] This literature also connects African education to capitalist labour needs. Cross, for instance, claims that attempts to reform mission education were designed to meet the labour needs of racial capitalism.[8] In another publication, both Cross and Chisholm argue that the 'adapted' or practical nature of African education inculcated 'habits of industry' and subservient social attitudes in African agricultural or urban 'workers-to-be' who did go to school.[9] Molteno echoes this in his study of educational policy. Ndwandula further observed this in his work on Swiss Mission Education in Lemana.[10] However, this literature hardly mentions African independent schooling and its historical dynamics.

In his work, Ball offers an alternative interpretation: he warns against an approach, which 'both overestimates the economic, and concomitantly, underestimates the political functions of the colonial school'[11]. Arguing on behalf of British colonial education in general, the academic education provided by the missions for the elite was seen as having an overtly political consequence; it was 'associated with political unrest' and 'social disorder.'[12] These points have also been made by Sivonen in his survey of British colonial education[13] In a similar vein, Ashforth argues that the 'educated native' posed 'a special threat to the order of the state' by virtue of his desire for and, in the case of the Cape, access to white political structure. [14] From a totally different angle, Krige draws attention to the relationship between the mission churches and the newly formed provincial governments after the formation of the Union government. She describes how 'the missions were party to reform and policy-making varied considerably from region to region, and that there were struggles over who could claim the right to define the content and direction of African education.'[15] In another publication, Krige shows how newly emerging secular experts attempted to silence the missions and educated African elite as

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[7] J. Shingler, 'Education and the Political Order in South Africa, 1902-1961' (DPhil thesis, Yale University, 1973)

[8] M. Cross, 'The Foundations of Segregated Schooling in the Transvaal 1902-1924'. *History of Education*, 16, 1987.

[9] Cross and Chisholm. 'The Roots of Segregated Schooling', pp. 43-9.

[10] ; F. Molteno, 'The Historical Foundations of the Schooling of Black South Africans', in P. Kallaway, ed., *Apartheid and Education: The Education of Black South Africans* (Johannesburg, 1984), 72; C. Ndwandula, 'The Head of the Native" Swiss Mission Education at Lemana, 1899-1955: *Perspectives in Education*, 10, I (June 1988), 43-52.

[10] Ibid.

[11] S. Ball, 'Imperialism, Social Control and the Colonial Curriculum in Africa'. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, Vol 15, 1983

[12] S. Ball, 'Imperialism, Social Control and the Colonial Curriculum in Africa'

[13] S. Sivonen, *White Collar or Hoe Handle? African Education under British Colonial Policy 1920-45* (Helsinki, 1995).

[14] A. Ashforth, *The Politics of Official Discourse in Twentieth Century South Africa* (Oxford, 1990), 34.

[15] S Krige, Trustees and Agents of the State'? Missions and the Formation of Policy towards African Education, 1910–1920, *South African Historical Journal*, Vol 40, 1999.

illegitimate amateurs who were no longer supposed to speak with authority on African education.[16] In this work, Krige shows the way in which new sciences like anthropology and psychology were used to bolster and hone earlier notions of 'adapted education' and how the missions were completely excluded. In spite of its major contribution in the historiography of African education, particularly on the notions of struggle over control and political consciousness, the struggle for independent schooling is only implicit in this literature.[17]

Another set of writers, notably Deborah Gaitskell, focus on the gender dynamics of missionary education. This literature looks at how missionary education subjected African women to domesticity; how women were charged with providing a haven for their husbands from the stresses of the outside world These studies also highlight the complex nature of African motherhood. In her study of Inanda Seminary, Healy-Clancy explores how African girls got access to missionary schooling and, increasingly over the twentieth century, how women took up posts as teachers. However, this feminist literature tends to overlook issues of African control of education and omit the struggle for independent education. In a detailed book on the Hermannsburg Missionary Society and its education, Chisholm raises challenging questions about the legacy of mission education, focusing particularly on the transition to Bantu Education. She describes how missionaries complied with the new state dictates while struggling to secure their own role in education. She explores how power relations shifted between the mission, the state, and communities and how the mission's influence was gradually and differentially eroded in Natal and the Transvaal. She examines the politics of curricula, medium of instruction and textbooks in schools and teacher training. Although Chisholm hints at how some African converts established independent schools in opposition to those controlled by the mission, she does not develop the story of these independent schools. She does not explore the complexities associated with African independent schooling and the growing politicisation of education among Africans before the First World War.

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[16] S Krige, Segregation, Science and Commission of Inquiry: The Contestation over Native Education Policy in South African 1930-36, *Journal of South African History*. Vol. 23, 1997

[17] M. Labode, From Heathen Kraal to Christian Home: Anglican Mission Education and African Christian Girls, 1850-1900. *Women and Missions: Past and Present*, Providence. (Berg, 1993); D Gaitskell, 'At Home with Hegemony? Coercion and Consent in African Girls' Education for Domesticity in South Africa before 1910', in D. Engels and S. Marks (eds.), *Contesting Colonial Hegemony: State and Society in Africa and India*, (London, 1994); D Gaitskell, 'Race, Gender and Imperialism: A Century of Black Girls' Education in South Africa,' in J Mangan, (ed.) *Benefit Bestowed? Education and Brtish Imperialism* (Manchester 1988). N. Erlank, 'Raising Up the Degraded Daughters of Africa: The Provision of Education for Xhosa Women in the Nineteenth Century' *South African Historical Journal*, Vol 43. 2000

One writer who has made and important contribution to the literature on independent schools in South Africa is Paterson. In his Doctoral thesis, he explores the African independent school movement in relation to African independent churches and as a creative response to discriminatory mission church politics.[18] Paterson offers a comprehensive history of how independent schools were initiated to meet a range of educational needs in the Cape between 1895 and 1920. He further explores how African independent churches struggled for access and control of independent schools, but the focus is how competition over access to schooling gave rise to serious conflict between African independent church adherents and groups that remained loyal to the mainstream mission churches.

While there has been some impressive work on the AME in South Africa and abroad, perhaps most notably by James Campbell, these works have not explored the discourse underlying the creation of independent schools. In this literature, church education is given relatively little attention.[19] There is, as far as I am aware, no comprehensive study on African self-governing schools by someone not affiliated with the institute or the AME church itself. In the case of the Wilberforce Institute, the only school history available is a short in-house publication written by Dr Jacob Nhlapo, the institute's principal in the 1940s.[20]

Literature on Christian independency in southern Africa began with Sundkler's, *Bantu Prophets*.[21] Sundkler distinguishes between two main categories; the Ethiopian and the Zionist independent churches. According to him, the Ethiopian category comprises those independent churches, which first seceded from mainstream mission churches together with the next generation, which in turn broke away from the original Ethiopian independent churches.[22] Because of their immediate and direct line connecting them to the mainstream mission churches,

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18 A. Paterson, 'Contest and Co-option: The Struggle for Schooling in the African Independent Churches of the Cape Colony 1895 - 1920.' (PhD Thesis), University of Cape Town, 1992.

19 S. W. Angell and A. B. Pinn, (eds), *Social Protest Thought in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1862-1939* (Knoxville, 2000); James T. Campbell, *Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa* (North Carolina, 1998); L. Little, *Disciples of Liberty: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Age of Imperialism*,1884-1916 (Knoxville, 2000); and C. E. Walker, *A Rock in a Weary Land: The African Methodist Episcopal Church during the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Louisiana, 1982). H. Hughes, 'Religion and Education in the AME Church in South Africa 1892-1953', (BA Hons. Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand), 1976. S.M. Burns-Ncamashe, 'An Investigation into the Provision of Education in the Order of Ethiopia to Africans in the Cape Province between 1900 and 1952 (B. Ed Thesis, University of Cape Town 1954).

20 J. M. Nhlapo, *Wilberforce Institute*, (Boitshoko, 1949).

21 Sundkler,B.G.M. Bantu Prophets in South Africa (London, 1961). p. 53-56

22 Ibid

the 'Ethiopian' group generally replicated the older mission bodies in respect of religious interpretation, observation of church rituals and church organisational structures, such as schools. Historical studies on independent churches seldom make more than passing reference to the establishment of schools.

It is important to note that there is a series of publications in other parts of Africa that seeks to establish a connection between African independent churches and educational history. This literature provides some valuable comparative insight into the setting up of independent education in South Africa and deals with independent church schools as one possible African response to Christian mission control.[23] The geographical location and the level of generality in these reviews inhibits them from addressing the concerns of this thesis in sufficient depth, but this study does bring some of these insights to a South African setting. The story of Wilberforce Institute, I will argue, is particularly significant because it represents the most important attempt to establish African independent schooling as a means of promoting racial upliftment and self-determination in the Transvaal in the first half of the twentieth century.

1.2 Methods and Sources

While there are some books that have been written about the AME in South African and abroad, there have not been any studies conducted on the discourse underlying the creation of Wilberforce Institute.[24] In order to gain insight into the history of Wilberforce Institute, I realised that I would need to draw a great deal of background material from primary sources. I identified

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23 G. Shepperson, and T Price, Independent African: *John Chilembwe and the Origins, Setting and Significance of the Nyasaland Native Rising 1915* (Edinburgh, 1958); R. Rotberg, 'Psychological Stress and the Question of Identity: Chilembwe's Revolt Reconsidered' In: R. Rotberg, and A. Mazrui, (eds), *Protest and Power in Black Africa* (New York, 1970); R.D. Heyman, 'Pre Independence African Demands for Educational Reform: Kenya'In: R.D. Heyman, R.F. Lawson, and R.M. Stamp,(eds.) *Studies in Educational Change* (Toronto, 1972) pp.107-134; F.B. Welbourne, *East African Rebels* (London, 1961). I. D.Barnett and L Karari Njama, *Mau-Mau from Within* (London,1966); A.S Adebola, 'The Kikuyu Independent Schools Movement and the Mau-Mau Uprising' *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 10,1981 pp.53-73;C.G. Rosberg, and J Nottingham, *The Myth of Mau-Mau Nationalism in Kenya* (London, 1966); H.W. Turner, 'African Independent Churches and Education' *Journal of Modern African Studies* 13, 1975, pp.293-308. E.H. Berman, 'African Responses to Christian Mission Education' *African Studies Review* 17, 1974 pp.527-541; E.H. Berman, (ed.), *African Reactions to Missionary Education* (New York, 1975); T.O. Ranger,' African Attempts to Control Education in East and Central Africa' *Past and Present* 32,(1965) pp.57-85;T.O. Ranger, 'The 'Ethiopian' Episode in Barotseland 19001905' *Rhodes Livingstone Journal* ·37, (1965) pp.26-41; N. Parsons, 'Khama III, the Bamangwato and; the British: With Special Reference to 189S-1923', (Ph.D. thesis), University of Edinburgh, 1973.

24 S. W. Angell and A B. Pinn, (eds), *Social Protest Thought in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1862-1939* (Knoxville, 2000) J. T. Campbell, *Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa* (North Carolina, 1998); L. Little ,*Disciples of Liberty: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Age of Imperialism,1884-1916* (Knoxville, Press, 2000); and C. E. Walker, *A Rock in a Weary Land: The African Methodist Episcopal Church during the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Louisiana State,1982).

rich documentation scattered across Africa and North America and I visited archives in both continents.

I made the first of a series of archival visits at the National Archive of South Africa (NASA), Pretoria. This was followed by my stopover in KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Archives, Pietermaritzburg, as well as in the Cape Provincial Archives. I also visited the University of Cape Town and the University of Western Cape to search for different archived collections. While this thesis asserts that the establishment of Wilberforce by the AME church was positive, there is no shortage of opponents of the school and many of those opposing voices were found in the government archival database and the South African Native Affairs Commission (SANAC) report.[25] It is important to note that the government did not view African independent education favourably; African independent schools were mocked and criticised by government officials as a potentially dangerous threat to the social order.[26]

The government officials who created these records did not capture the type of teaching and learning that was valued within African independent schools, which remains unsynthesised and largely unknown. They focused only on the negative part of the schools, ignoring the caring behaviours of teachers and principals, the support of parents, the forms of institutional support for students, and the high expectations placed upon students by the school and community. If I limited my analysis to this archived documentation, the story of African independent schools as merely 'seditious' might seem reasonable - a viewpoint that unfortunately persists today. The historical significance and constructiveness of African independent schools would simply disappear from our view of the past. Besides, the government records limit periods to an era that precedes the maturity of Wilberforce Institute.

25 Evidence of Revs. M.M.Mokone, J. Z.Tantsi and S.J .Mabote (Native Ministers, A.M.E. Church) South African Native Affairs Commission 1903-1905, Report of, Minutes of Evidence with written replies to questions and supplementary memoranda,(Cape Town,1905), 4, p.473[40274-40304].

26 The attitude and policy of colonial authorities throughout Sub-Saharan Africa towards the independent churches was strongly influenced by their fears of African insurrection. Such trepidation was reinforced at intervals by the eruption of anti-colonial struggles in various regions: the Rhodesian Rebellions in the 1890s; the Nama Revolts in German South West Africa in 1904; the Maji-Maji Rebellion of 1905 in Tanganyika; the so-called Bambatha Rebellion in Natal 1906; disturbances in Rwanda in 1912; and the Nyasaland Uprising in 1915. See for example, P. Hassing, 'German Missionaries and the Maji-Maji Rising' *African Historical Studies* 3.2,1970 pp.373-390; G. Shepperson, and T. Price,(1958); I.C Lamba, 'Problem of Non-African Education in Colonial Malawi: A Historical Study in Priorities and Dynamics in policy Making up to 1939' *Zambia Educational Review* 2.2 1981 p. 36; T.O. Ranger, The People in African Resistance: A review' *Journal of Southern African Studies* 4.1,1977 pp.125-146; R. Rotberg, and A. Mazrui, *Protest and Power in Black Africa* (New York, 1970); S. Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion: The 1906-8 Disturbances,* (Oxford, 1970).

In addition to these limitations, official creators of these sources lacked any internal familiarity with the schools beyond cursory visits and surveys. It is unsurprising, then, that their conclusions tend to overlook the positive objectives of the school. Nevertheless, I have attempted cautiously to use these government records to enhance understanding of African independent schools and comprehensively document the ways in which these institutions held meaning for their participants. While similar approaches merit further exploration, the broader analysis of these records by future historians will better facilitate understanding of unknown schools in a particular geographical region during a defined historical period.

The negative attitude of government officials influenced the preservation of records and the degree of conservation of the African independent school records in the government archives is poor. This limitation stems from the fact that African independent schools were not registered and subsidised by the Transvaal Education Department (TED), so the government never kept official records of these schools. Despite these challenges, the government sources assisted in establishing how the Transvaal state regulations and its racist attitudes prevented the AME church from purchasing the land needed to build churches and schools for several decades.

For the exploration of the documents produced by the AME church and its ministry, as well as the analysis of articles written by the church authorities in various church newsletters, I visited the following archives: the Pitts Theology Library and Digital Image Archives, and the Stuart A Rose Archive, both at Emory University, Atlanta. In the same city, I also found some records at Auburn Research Library. I also sourced some papers from Kenneth Spencer Research Library at the University of Kansas. In South Africa, I accessed the church collection from the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of the Western Cape. The documents from these archives assisted in uncovering how the patriarchs of the AME church discussed issues related to education, self-help and self-determination, as well as 'racial upliftment'. These documents included the AME General Conference minutes, budget reports, annual reports, articles, letters quantitative records, memoirs, and other miscellaneous documents. I was also able to find some sermons, unpublished pamphlets and reports that gave additional insight into the educational philosophy of the church. These documents enabled me to reconstruct the context in which Wilberforce Institute developed. The AME church collection also portrays how the church embraced a self-help philosophy and how this attitude was embedded in the realities of the era.[27]

27 The church members had to provide for their own, education was the responsibility of the church. This was fueled by the fact that Africans refused to accept an industrial curriculum for their schools, continuing to focus

In addition, the church archive communicates how African-Americans became a source of inspiration and the focus of unity, as well as the living reminder of a powerful and independent African past. These documents reveal how Africans both in Africa and across the Atlantic faced unprecedented historical problems in politics, economics, and education. The point to emphasise from these sources is that both the US and South Africa can learn by sharing the lessons of their experiences. In other words, the struggle for independent education was not limited to South Africa and Africa, but was part of an African-American struggle directly linked to the early development of Pan Africanism and African nationalism in the modern sense. Yet, despite this, the church records provided a limited broader political context of these independent schools.

For the identification and description of the changing attitude towards mainstream missionary education among African converts, I relied on evidence sourced from the Cape African controlled newspaper, *Imvo Zabantsundu*. This source reveals that independent schools that mushroomed in the first decade of the twentieth century were, to a large extent, a product of discrimination entrenched in a colonial society. It is important to note that at the turn of the nineteenth century Africans adapted, inverted and subverted imperial discourse in their press, speeches and praise poetry, eulogising past African empires and criticising, even condemning, Boer and British imperialism.[28] This is evident in articles published by *Imvo*, which helped paint a picture of African dissatisfaction with colonial education in the Cape. In addition, other African secular newspapers, such as *Umteteleli Wabantu*, and the *Bantu World* provided insight into different aspects of Wilberforce Institute.[29] As indicated, the period under review experienced close interaction between Africans in South Africa and African-Americans in the US and stories of the AME and its educational accomplishments are recorded in various US newspapers, such as the *Chicago Defender*.

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instead on liberal training. This training, they believed, would provide access to equality they sought through education because it gave them access to the 'the best intellectual traditions'.

28 P. Limb, 'The Empire Writes Back: 'African Challenges to the British (South African) Empire in the Early 20th Century,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 41.3, pp. 599-616, 2015.

29 'The African Christian community in Southern Africa has had a press of its own for more than a hundred and fifty years. Controlled initially by white missionaries but written and later edited largely by black converts, the mission press was dominant from the I830s to the 1880s. Thereafter, the black press began to develop a more independent political and secular image. Between the 1880s and I920s the mission-educated Christian community linked principally to the first black political, religious and educational organizations more or less controlled its own press.' See L. Switzer, 'The African Christian Community and Its Press in Victorian South Africa' (*La communauté chrétienne africaine et sa presse dans l'Afrique du Sud victorienne*) *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 24. 96, 1984, pp. 455-476.

The fact that highly personal sources, such as diaries, memoirs and letters, can rarely be checked by an independent source poses a serious problem when it comes to interpretation. As E.H. Carr has warned:

> no document can tell us more than what the author of the document thought - what he thought happen, or would happen, or perhaps only what he wanted others to think he thought, or even thought he thought.[30]

Apart from Dr. Alfred Xuma's papers housed at the University of the Witwatersrand, a substantial number of records which helped to fill the gap found in the government records, particularly from the 1930s to 1940s, were created by the AME church-educated elites: Dr Amos White and his wife Leulla, Dr Josephus Coan, Charlotte Wright (the wife of Bishop Wright) and other African-American priests and bishops.[31] These sources are highly personal and, therefore, often idiosyncratic, reflecting a peculiarity of personalities and quirks of the authors. They also mirror personality differences and parochial factors that were eventually linked with religious and educational issues, such as the question of positions and status in the church. Although these records provide a useful point for analysing the history of Wilberforce Institute, they create a historical bias in favour of individuals who maintained records of major events of the institute and those individuals whose lives were considered important enough to document. These individuals would comprise of a group that played a leading role in the running of the school, namely teachers, treasures, administrators, inspectors, bishops and priests. The records have little to say about students, their families and communities, or school support. The same could be said for the minutes and other documents of the AME church conference that reflect the shared norms, ethos and moral behaviour of senior church members.

In an attempt to avoid bias produced by the differential power associated with the creation of the church records, it is important to try, as far as possible, to hear the voices that have traditionally been overlooked and poorly served by the archival records, namely students, parents and the local community There are no records, for example, of what happened to students at the critical stages between school entry and graduation; we do not know how many students dropped out. The most common way of documenting school success is to list graduates and accomplishments along with their post school occupation. The surviving church records lack this important data.

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30 E.H. Carr, *What is History* (Cambridge, 1961).

31 Dr. Coan was President and Superintendent of the Wilberforce Institute. He also served as Acting Bishop, however, his primary vocation was teaching. For more than nine years, Dr. Coan resided and served in Southern and Central Africa as an overseas Missionary of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. In the 1940s, developing on an idea of Bishop Wright's, he founded the R. R. Wright School of Religion in Evaton. Thanks to Prof Robert Vinson, a professor of History at the College of William and Mary in Virginia (the author of the *Americans are Coming*) who made me aware of Dr Coan's Papers stored at Stuart A Rose Library at Emory University.

We also lack information on how Wilberforce students differed from students from the mainstream missionary schools. There is almost nothing recorded on factors such as gender, social class, and occupational goals that influenced students' success. The surviving sources are unable to assist in establishing whether the larger proportion of parents whose children attended Wilberforce were urbanites or rural residents and we have no idea what types of jobs they held. Although scanty, one of the in-house school publications recorded the visible form of community and parental support in the school's self-help programme indicating that, during the humble beginnings of Wilberforce Institute, parents and the local community contributed their labour and equipment towards the infrastructural development of the school. Due to a philosophy of self-help, the church records do not provide us with the list of equipment that was donated by parents and it is unclear whether all or only some community members contributed to the development of the school.[32] It is also not clear whether parents also participated in the complementary reinforcement of community values or taught respect for teachers by providing a second disciplinary action at home if students disobeyed the teacher. What is clear, however, is that students, families and communities were the peacemakers and important stakeholders of Wilberforce Institute.

1.3 Chapter outline

The thesis is divided into seven chapters, including this introduction which forms chapter one. Chapter two is a historical overview of African missionary education. This section carefully examines the role that missionaries and the colonial government played in shaping educational measures that had far-reaching consequences for the foundation of African controlled schools, such as Wilberforce Institute, and many others. Much of this chapter investigates the missionary ideology and attitudes that provoked African discontent with the mainstream missionary education.

32 Although this study mainly relied on archival sources, during my informal discussion with one Evaton resident I was informed that some local residents donated cattle to the school for subsistence purpose. This, however, does not reflect in the records. Perhaps it is important to say something about the limitations on oral sources for this study. Oral history in historical studies emerged from a recognition that traditional sources have often neglected the lives of ordinary people who are often excluded by the creators of the official records. Understanding why and how this class explained, rationalised and made sense of their past, how their role offers insight into the social and material framework under which Wilberforce operated, and how their perceived choices and challenges confronted them, as well as the complex relationship between them and the school elites could have put student and parent voices at the centre of Wilberforce's history. Most unfortunately, this was not possible as the parents, teachers, students and community members who could have talked to these questions have all died.

Chapter three provides historical background on the Africans' struggle for access to independent education on the Rand that later culminated in the foundation of Wilberforce Institute. This includes a number of complex processes, such African land ownership that hindered the development of African independent education on the Rand. Chapter four reconstructs the evolution of Wilberforce Institute from 1905 until the outbreak of the World War I, when the war forced the school to suspend its service.

Chapter five examines how the institute expanded its service after the war and how the school succeeded in dealing with challenges that confronted it. The first part of this chapter focuses on the factors that attracted new students to Wilberforce and the role of the church leaders in the operation of the school. The second part explores the challenges that confronted the school for its teacher-training course to be recognised.

Chapter six deals with the problems of the Great Depression, especially financial difficulties. This section further investigates how the school grew and survived during this turbulent period while not receiving any government subsidy. Chapter seven focuses on a period of consolidation and expansion from 1937 to the 1950s. The most interesting aspect about this period is the role that Bishop Wright played in resuscitating the school, later recognised and subsidised by the government. In the concluding section, I briefly discuss the absorption of the school into the Bantu Education system.

CHAPTER 2

The genesis of missionary education and African discontent in the Cape Colony

2.1 Introduction

Much of the research work on the history of missionary education between 1860 and 1920 has judged the progressive growth of schooling provision as a 'good thing'.[33] A substantial number of these institutional historical studies mainly focus on the role that missionaries played and lack critical analysis of the provision of schooling and its contentious aspects. In an attempt to consolidate colonial hegemony, they overlook the contradictory role that schooling played and the negative impact of curriculum change that edged out African educational advancement.[34] In this chapter I carefully examine the role that missionaries and the colonial government played in shaping educational measures that had far-reaching consequences for the foundation of African-controlled independent schools, such as Wilberforce Institute. Much of this chapter will survey the missionary ideology and attitudes that provoked African discontent about colonial education in the last decades of the nineteenth century. It will explore the kind of knowledge or skills that were passed onto African students and will examine how Africans responded. The first part of

33 A. Paterson, 'A Contest and Co-option: The struggle for schooling in the African independent churches of the Cape Colony 1895-1920,' (PhD Thesis, University of Cape Town, 1992), p. 59.

34 E.G. Pells, 300 *Years 'of Education in South Africa* (Cape Town, 1938); J.C. Coetzee, Onderwys *in Suid-Afrika* 1652-1960 (Pretoria, 1963); E.G. Malherbe, *Education in South Africa* 1652-1922 (Cape Town, 1925); E.G.Malherbe, *Education in South Africa* 1923-1975 Volume II (Cape Town, 1976). M. Horrell, *Bantu Education to 1968* (Johannesburg, , 1968); M. Horrell, *The Education of the Coloured Community in South Africa* 1652-1970 (Johannesburg,, 1970); Molteno, F'. 'The Historical Foundations of the Schooling of Black South Africans' in P. Kallaway,(ed), *Apartheid and Education: The Education of Black South Africans* (Johannesburg, 1984); M.S.B. Beyers, 'Onderwys in die Kaapprovinsie Gedurende die Eerste Sewe Jaar van die Bestuur van Dr.Thomas Muir as Superintendent-Generaal van Onderwys,1892-1899', (Master, ThesisUniversity of Pretoria1936); H.M. Daleboudt, 'Sir Thomas Muir en die Onderwys in die Kaapland Tydens sy Bestuur as Superintendent-Generaal van Onderwys 1892-1915,' (PhD Thesis University of Stellenbosch, 1984). P. M. Fihla, 'The Development of Bantu Education at the St. Matthews Mission, Keiskarnma Hoek 1853-'1959 An Historical Survey,' (Master Thesis, University of South Africa, 1963 A. Hewson, 'Healdtown: A Study of a Methodist Experiment in African Education,' (PhD Thesis, Rhodes University, 1959); D.E. Burchell,'A History of the Lovedale Missionary Institution 1890-1930,' (Masters Thesis, University of Natal Pietermaritzburg, 1979).

the chapter will describe the general background of African education between the 1660s and 1850s. The second part will focus on curriculum changes that the colonial government introduced under the official proclamation of Sir George Grey in the 1850s. It will also discuss how racial segregation was introduced into colonial schooling. The final part of the chapter will explore the African response to segregated schooling, as well as to the government educational initiatives that impacted negatively on the old classical liberal education. This section will also argue that the behaviour of a younger generation of missionaries intensified African educational disappointment in the 1880s. Africans were not passive recipients of missionary education; rather they took an active role in providing an alternative to the mainstream missionary education. Their call for educational independence raised a number of issues: access to schools, racial segregation, curtailed expenditure on schooling, erratic attendance patterns, high resignation rates of trained teachers, financial insecurity of teachers, poor classroom conditions, authoritarian pedagogical styles, and limited curricula.

2.2 The genesis of African Education

The European model of schooling for Africans was introduced into Southern Africa in the early part of the nineteenth century. The pioneer missionary agencies in the Cape from 1656 established the first school in Cape Town[35] for the instruction of slave children from the West Coast of Africa. At first, the Coloured children were taught together with slaves and Europeans.[36] Unfortunately, little is known about the school: 'being opened in 1663 the school had 17 children, of whom 4 were slave children, 1 a Hottentot, and 12 European.'[37] The educational effort of the Dutch government set a precedent for future African schooling and was directed towards the establishment of the 'Latin and Dutch Schools' in Cape Town.[38] Slaves were in relatively free supply at low prices in the Dutch Cape colony, especially until 1795, encouraging the widespread use of slaves. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the slave population

35 J.A. Hodgson, 'A history of Zonneblom College, 1858-1870: A study in church and society,' (Master Thesis, University of Cape Town, 1975).

36 In the context of the earlier Cape history, the term 'Coloured' might be confusing. Up until the 1920s, in some government records Africans and Coloured people were referred to as Coloureds. In the Department of Education records in particular this was the case, even some newspapers and periodicals used the term Coloured when referring to Africans. In some instances, they were referred separately as 'Natives' and 'Coloureds.' In this regard, it is not clear whether the Cape officials were referring to Coloureds or to African people when they say 'Coloureds were taught together with slaves and Europeans'. In 1910, the Acting under Secretary of Education stated that the word Coloured included all non-Europeans, but this was not consistently applied. See Paterson, Protest and Co-option and Government Publication. PAE 227 All Acting Under-Secretary 1912 for Education to Secretary, 12 November 1912.

37 Special Report on Educational Subjects, Board of Education, London based. Quoted in Loram, *Education of the South African Native,* (London 1927), p. 47.

38 C.T. Loram, *Education of the South African Native*, (London 1927), p. 47.

exceeded the European colonists, and they continued to outnumber colonists for about a hundred years, up to about 1807, when the slave trade in the British Empire was terminated.[39] As the pioneering educational establishment, this first school formed the basis of the educational system that continues to the present. By 1714, an educational Ordinance was published by Pasques de Chavonnes, the Governor of the Cape that stated:

> … for the prosperity of the colony and welfare of the land it is not of slight importance that the young from their childhood be well instructed in the fear and knowledge of God and be taught all good arts and morals from their youth, and thereto it is above all necessary that they should be provided with competent and God-fearing teachers, and that those should be prohibited who should desire to teach otherwise than is practiced in the Reformed Churches, it is by these present ordained that from this date the following points should be exactly be followed and observed in the holding of schools … in this Government no man shall be received or tolerated in the school service except such as having first been examined by the Governor Council as to doctrine and life shall be judged to be there and fit shall be willing to be subject to the following points and article, and promises well and faithfully to keep them … the schoolmaster shall be bound to teach the children … ten commandments, the article of the Christian faith, the evening and the morning prayer, prayer before and after meat.[40]

This legal directive reveals that religious instruction was an important part of the Dutch Cape education and also ensured that the state had the power to decide on the spirit and direction of the school. It included the regulation of teacher training and the type of content that should be taught at schools. Before 1799, a considerable number of missionary schools were opened, initiated by the Moravian Missionary Society (MMS) and later taken up by the London Missionary Society (LMS).[41] Little is known about the Moravian missionary education activities in the Cape. The literature on Moravian education indicates that the majority of scholarly attention has been placed upon the eighteenth century, with a particular emphasis on the Moravian's education of Europeans or people of European heritage in Germany, such as in Herrnhut, Königsfeld and Neuwied, as well as in Fairfield, England.[42] The first school opened by the LMS pioneer missionaries under the religious leadership of Dr. Johannes Theodorus. van der Kemp was established in 1799, near King William's Town. Very little is recorded about the history of the school.[43] As a Christian school, however, learners were to be 'Imbued with the

39 A. L. Muller, 'Slavery and the Development of South Africa,' *South African Journal of Economics*, 49, (1981)

40 B. Rose and R. Tunmer, *Documents in South African Education*, (Johannesburg, 1975).

41 Ibid.

42 M. Doerfel, 'Die Brüderischen Schulen in Neuwied,' *Unitas Fratrum*, 57/58, (2006), p. 81-168; K. Künzel, 'Die Brüdergemeine Neuwied in Siedlungsgeschichtlicher Sicht,' *Unitas Fratrum*, 12, (1982), p. 89-102, here 93-94; Hans-Jürgen Kunick, 'Die Königsfelder Zinzendorfschulen in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus: Geschichte der Schulen 1933/1944,' special issue, *Unitas Fratrum*, . 43, (1998),p. 15-22, B. Uher, 'Schulwesen und Erziehung in den Anfängen Herrnhuts,' *Unitas Fratrum*, . 16, (1984),p. 14-29.

13 W. T. Waugh, *A History of Fulneck School* (Leeds, 1909).

43 B. Hirson, *Years of Fire, Years of Ash: The Soweto Revolt: Roots of a Revolution*, (London, 1979).

principles of the Christian religion, that, through the Divine blessing, they may not only retain them in their memories, but feel and enjoy them in their hearts.'[44]

The period between 1799 and the 1830s was the pioneer phase of African schooling in the Cape. By 1799 missionaries who were at work among Africans maintained small struggling schools and they were few in numbers and unimportant in impact. Missionary efforts were met with a host of difficulties including settling relations with local chiefs, the recruitment of students, the establishment of harmonious relations with the colonial government officials, and perhaps more seriously the shortage of funds, facilities and African staff. Van der Kemp experienced tensions and conflicts, first with the colonists and later also with the government, and the squabble between himself and Ngqika, the chief of amaXhosa, strained the growth of African schools [45] Van der Kemp was forced to abandon his mission and the school closed down in 1800.[46] He returned to the Cape Colony and worked at Graaff Reinet before continuing his work among the 'Hottentot' people at Bethelsdorp Mission.[47] Before the 1820s Bethelsdorp became active in teaching a few members of the amaXhosa, among them Jan Tshatshu,[48] but the policy of the government and other factors restricted the further development of the school.[49] The role of the pioneer converts, such as Tshatshu, was important in helping to spread the Christian message in the local vernacular.

It is important to look briefly at the historical journey of African schooling as constitutive of systems of governance and incubators of social and political processes that created communities. The Bethel station became unpopular among the Cape administrators after James Read of the

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44 F. Jenzt, 'Moravian Mission Education in the Nineteenth Century: Global Patterns and Local Manifestations at New Fairfield, Upper Canada,' *Journal of Moravian History*, 11, 2011, p. 11.

45 In literature, as well as in the government documents, many historians and government officials use the term 'Xhosa' when referring to the amaXhosa group. Linguistically, this is not a correct orthography. This African group is called amaXhosa, when you refer to one person that belong to this group is umXhosa and when you refer to more than one person is amaXhosa. With an attempt to be linguistically correct the word amaXhosa will be used.

46 G.A. Duncan, 'The origins and early development of Scottish Presbyterian Mission in South Africa 1824-1864,' *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticea, 39, 2013.*

47 R. Hunt Davis, 'Nineteenth Century African Education in the Cape Colony: A Historical Analysis,' (PhD, Thesis University of Wisconsin, 1969).

48 Jan Tzatzoe, or Tshatshu, became the first member of the educated among the Africans in the eastern Cape. By his early twenties he was initiated formally both into isiXhosa manhood and into European ways as a Christian convert. On 1 April 1816, dressed in a special tailored suit, he set out with the first party of missionaries allowed by the colonial government to travel beyond the Fish River, across which some 20 000 of the amaXhosa people were driven by wars. Here he preached to one thousand people. See, A. Odendaal, *The Founders: The Origins of the ANC and the Struggle for Democracy in South*(Johannesburg, 2012) S. Levine, A *Living Man from Africa: Jan Tzatzoe, Xhosa Chief and Missionary, an Africa, d the Making of Nineteenth Century South Africa. New Directions in Narrative History*, (New Haven, 2011).

49 Ibid.

LMS wrote famous letters in 1808 and 1811 publicising the ill-treatment of the Khoi people by white farmers and officials. This prompted Caledon to institute circuit courts, which brought about the famous confrontations between Bethelsdorp and the government of the Cape.[50] This type of humanitarian activism frustrated settlers who were experiencing a shortage of labour and needed Khoi people to work on their farms, without interference from the state.

From this background, it is clear that it took some few decades after 1799 for African schooling to achieve a firmer footing. Apart from these challenges, the inter-missionary tension also restrained the process. In Natal, for instance, the progress of Endaleni missionary school was held back when Rev. James Allison, a missionary that dedicated his effort to the development of the school, was transferred to the Transorangia mission following internal tensions.[51]

Lack of funding also presented a serious challenge. In Bechuanaland, for example, there were no brick and mortar classrooms; learning activities were conducted in mud buildings constructed by the chief's public works department. Some classes were held in wagons, under the trees, and in the chief's court. With the lack of financial support from the government and proper educational physical structure some wives of missionaries conducted sewing lessons in their homes.[52] This pioneering stage was also characterised by the dearth of reading material in vernacular languages such as isiXhosa. Subsequently the different mission societies cooperated in the publication of various periodicals and vernacular religious literature. Missionary publications in isiXhosa were devotional, evangelical and educational in content. The missionaries concentrated on producing translations of the Gospels and other portions of the Bible, catechisms, prayer books, religious homilies, hymns and primary school instructional materials in addition to dictionaries and other works concerned with the language.[53]

In the early days of African schooling, school attendance was irregular largely because the learning process was not in line with government support structures, let alone in harmony with the indigenous pastoral and agricultural pursuits.[54] Missionary educational work relied on the cooperation of local chiefs and the willingness of parents to send their children to mission

50 C. Saunders, C James Read towards a Reassessment, *http://sas-space.sas.ac.uk/4036/1/Christopher_Saunders_-_James_Read,_Towards_a_reassessment.pdf*. p. 20.
51 S. Meintjes, 'Edendale, 1851-1930: A Case Study of Rural Transformation and Class Formation in an African Mission in Natal' (PhD Thesis, University of London, 1990).
52 L.P. Elizabeth, *The Journals of Elizabeth Lees Price*, (London, 1956), pp. 145, 155.
53 Ibid.
54 M. Chirenje, 'Church, State and Education in Bechuanaland in the Nineteenth Century,' The *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 9, (1976), pp. 401-418.

schools. Missionaries had to find various ways both to encourage children to attend schools and to gain the consent of their parents and communities;[55] African children were often kept out of school by local economic activities. In 1833, Robert Moffat described the problem as follows:

> The school is getting on well but the numbers who attend is not as great as we should expect. Scarcity of food, watching corn eaten in the ear by the birds are sad barriers to regular attendance at school.[56]

2.3 African education and its foothold

It was more than two decades later that African education gained its foothold. Different missionary societies established permanent schools, such as Zonneblom, Lovedale, Healtown and Blythswood. Many others were built further inland throughout South Africa between the 1850s and 1900s. Zonneblom was established for the training of the sons of African monarchs and notables, as well as the sons of senior administration officials. One of the earliest missionary schools in Natal was the Amanzimtoti Institute, later renamed Adams College. The school was established by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in 1853.[57] In 1869, Mary Edwards founded Inanda Seminary, a school for African girls. These schools were followed by Marianhill, a Catholic school set up in 1882. In 1884, Revd Charles Jolivet and Revd Delalle of the Catholic Church expanded the school and it became a boarding school where 100 Africans and about 50 white boys lived. In these schools, educational work could not be homogenised; there were interdenominational differences between Catholic and Protestant missionary organisations, all of which influenced how schooling was both presented and received. Catholic and Protestant missionaries competed for followers by expanding and improving their educational institutions. Such culturally varied backgrounds obviously had ramifications. The evangelical Protestants, for example, came from Great Britain; their educational approach promoted imperial power, the English language and British attitudes and culture.

The situation in the Boer Republics was completely different.[58] The Boer trekkers had few resources even for the education of their own children. As a result, African schools in the

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55 G.Mackenzie, 'Demythologising the Missionaries: A Reassessment of the Functions and Relationships of Christian Missionary Education under Colonialism', *Comparative Education*, 29. 1 (1993), p. 45–66.

56 Ibid, p. 409.

57 N. Etherington, 'Missions *and Empire*', in R. Winks (ed.), *Oxford History of the British Empire*, Volume 5: *Historiography*, (Oxford, 1989); N. Etherington *Preachers Peasant and Politics in Southern East 1835-1889: African Christian Communities in Natal, Pondoland and Zululand, (*London, 1978).

58 B. Holmes (ed), *Educational Policy and the Mission Schools: Case Studies from the British Empire*, (London, 2007).

Transvaal were only built in the late 1880s. Kilnerton Missionary School, for instance, was opened in 1885, Lemana Training Institute in 1906. From 1835, missionary societies had been at work in the Orange Free State, but it was only in 1878 that the government of the Republic recognised missionary educational efforts by giving a grant of £45 per annum to a school conducted by the Dutch Reformed Church at Witzie's Hoek. In the 1890s, schools received grants of £50 and £30 from the government. These schools trained a small-educated class from which teachers, interpreters and evangelists were selected. It is interesting to note that some of these schools were conducted along non-denominational lines. An example of this is Lovedale, the Scottish missionary school and training college, where a high percentage of pupils came from other churches and missionary societies in the 1840s.[59] In addition, there was no racial distinction made between Africans, Europeans and other racial groups. By 1841, there were nine white boys, seven of whom were the sons of the missionaries and eleven Africans and coloured boys at Lovedale. They shared every school facility ranging from the classroom to the dining hall. They also participated in literacy societies and sports. However, they ate at separate tables.[60]

As indicated, these schools belonged to different missionary societies that prioritised educational ideas over evangelical awakening. These non-conformist missionary bodies were the London Missionary Society (LMS),[61] the Wesleyan Missionary Society (WMS) and the Glasgow Missionary Society (GMS). The Church of England and the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society also played a very important educational role in Southern Africa.[62] The Dutch Reformed Church, however, played a negligible role among the Africans. As the dominant colonial power in the region, the British was heavily represented group.[63] However, the American Board Mission, the Swiss and the French, and many other missionaries also played a significant role in African schooling. Geographically, each missionary society had its own point of concentration. The WMS, for instance, became the largest, strongest and most influential missionary body in the eastern Cape Colony. This suggests that missionaries competed for followers by expanding and improving their educational institutions in the colony.

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59 D. Burchell, D.E 'A History of the Lovedale.'

60 Ibid, p. 3.

61 For the history of the London Missionary Society, See R. Lovett, *The history of the London Missionary Society* (London, 1899); N. Goodall, *A history of the London Missionary Society, 1895-1945* (London, 1954); A.J. Ilaile, *A Brief Historical Survey of the London Missionary Society in Southern Africa* (Basutoland, 1951).

62 R. Hunt-Davis 'Nineteenth Century.'

63 Ibid.

All the missionary schools were managed by priests and they were conveniently situated far away from one another but were brought together by common interests of proselytising the 'natives' and bringing a higher view of life to enlighten savages. Some missionaries were given land by chiefs or by the government and they provided buildings, academic staff and funding.[64] In the case of the BaTlaping, the LMS acquired land through promising the Thlaping chief Mothibi Molehabangwe 'plenty of articles to make him and his people happy'. During this venture, missionary Read distributed gifts `to Mothibi, his wife Mahuto and his headmen in order to secure permission to outspan in December 1816.'[65] Missionaries provided different chiefs various secular favours that led to the acquisition of land. At the same time, the life of these missionaries was not easy. Various missionary societies, who were responsible for the well-being of missionaries, did not always provide adequate funds, living allowances and supplies for these men. Thus, in order for them to survive in the isolated surroundings of the Cape Colony, they had to be economically innovative. As a result, bartering became their primary means for making up the difference, and they took with them a supply of European goods to encourage conversion as payment for services, and as presents for African leaders.[66] For some missionaries, this strategy was worthwhile. For instance, the Glasgow Missionary Society managed to gain control of 1,400 acres of land where the Lovedale school complex was built.[67] This infiltration strategy, however, sometimes divided the indigenous people and created barriers between chiefs and their subjects.

In the various mission stations, chapel and schools stood side by side, for learning was universally regarded by evangelists 'as the door to the church.'[68] The missionaries were perhaps the most significant agents of Western education in colonial Africa. During the 1800s, almost all of the formal education for Africans was provided by mission schools. By the end of the nineteenth century, South Africa was to have a missionary population greater than almost anywhere else in the world.[69] The missionaries had two main goals: firstly, to spread Christianity and a Western way of life among 'heathen' Africans; secondly, to establish schools so that African people would be educated enough to understand and appreciate church activities, as well as to claim their status in the colony.

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64 A. J. Dachs, 'Missionary Imperialism-The Case of Bechuanaland,' *The Journal of African History*, 13, (1972), p. 647.

65 Ibid, p. 647.

66 R.B. Beck, 'Bibles and Beads: Missionaries as Traders in Southern Africa in the Early Nineteenth Century,' *The Journal of African History*, 30, (1989), pp. 211-225.

67 B. Hirson, *B Years of Fire, Years of Ash: The Soweto Revolt*,(London, 1979) p.14.

68 N. Etherington, *Preachers, Peasants,* p. 40.

69 S.M. Du Rand 'From Mission Schools to Bantu Education,' (Master Thesis, University of Natal, 1990).

By 1845, the number of mission stations built by the WMS had increased to 23 in the eastern Cape.[70] The LMS pushed northwards towards the Orange River and beyond. Other missionaries, such as the American Board, concentrated in Natal. The Transvaal, on other hand, was dominated by the Swiss Mission in South Africa and the German Lutherans missionaries. The expansion of the missionary activities, however, proved controversial. The arrival of the German missionaries, for instance, spurred their British counterparts to expand more vigorously into northern Tswana chiefdoms. The arrival of German Lutherans among the baTswana infuriated British missionaries, who no doubt viewed them as a threat to their religious and colonial ambitions. Not surprisingly, Robert Moffat was the first to express his displeasure at the Lutheran presence.[71] The attitude seems to have been inspired as much by colonial considerations as by religious motives; most of the British missionaries in Bechuanaland, especially Robert Moffat and John Mackenzie, reflected on loyalty to the Imperial government and were strongly committed to extending the British Empire. In Bechuanaland, they suffocated the missionary activities of the Germans.[72] They persuaded Sechele not to accept German Lutheran missionary activities in their land, subsequently Sechele pronounced:

> We... Sechele and Kosidintsi and Basiamang, being the chiefs of the country of the Bakwena, in the presence of the teachers Bakeburg and Price make it known to them that we do not desire the teaching of the Germans and will receive the teaching of the English alone. It is we who speak this and they, Bakeburg and Price, have heard how we have spoken.[73]

Between 1865 and 1875, the Lutherans established fourteen mission stations in the Transvaal, where the British, especially the LMS, were refused entry by the Afrikaner Republics.[74] Perhaps the Lutherans managed to establish themselves in the Transvaal because of their common heritage with the Dutch Reformed Church that dominated the Boer Republic. The Lutherans and the Presbyterian churches are Reformed churches: Calvinist in doctrine and Presbyterian in policy. All these churches have fellowship with the larger world community through the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.[75] The Swiss missionaries founded their station in Valdezia in the Northern Transvaal in 1875. Each of these missions had its own religious philosophy, all

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70 Ibid.

71 M. Chirenje, 'Church, State and Education in Bechuanaland in the Nineteenth Century,' *The International Journal of African Historical Studies,* .9, 3 1976, pp. 401-418.

72 For the political role of LMS agents in Bechuanaland, see J.A. Dachs, A.J 'Missionary Imperialism-The Case of Bechuanaland,' *Journal of African History,* XIII, (1972), pp. 647-658. M.Chirenje, 'Church, State'.

73 Ibid, p. 408.

74 J. De Gruchy, *Christianity and the Modernization of South Africa 1867-1936 (Pretoria, 2009), p. 1.*

75 A. Ravhubdzulo, 'The Educational Endeavour of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in South African in Historical Perspective' (PhD Thesis, University of South Africa, 1999) p. 14.

considerably different from one another. Evidence abounds in the historical literature to show that wherever the Protestant and Catholic missionaries met in Africa, opposition, antagonism, and rivalry flared between them. For instance, the Lutherans were expelled from Abyssinia (now Ethiopia) in 1832 because of Jesuit interventions.[76]

All missionaries, however, irrespective of denominational difference, shared the same educational agenda for Africans. They all directed effort towards using education as an instrument for converting Africans. Some of the missionary societies had a greater impact on certain societies than others; some were richer with more adherents than others. The Scottish missionaries, for instance, who began work in South Africa in 1821, were leading proponents of African education and their school, Lovedale, educated a significant proportion of the African middle class.[77] The general approach of all missionaries towards African education was similar but their specific attitude towards Africans varied. The Scots tended to take a more tolerant view towards African customs. The Wesleyans, on the other hand, placed harsh moral judgment on the people of the eastern province where their missions were based.[78]

2.4 The state and education

The British colonial government was unwilling to involve itself directly in the promotion of secondary education in the region. Before the mid-1850s, it was difficult for the Imperial government to administer educational matters of the indigenous people of widely varying race, culture and religion across the different colonies. As the largest colonial power, the British Empire controlled a myriad of relatively small crown colonies, protectorates and mandated territories scattered across the globe from the New World of the West Indies and South America, through the Mediterranean, to the Middle East, the Far East and the Pacific.[79] Besides, colonial education had its own financial implications and

> the British taxpayer was undoubtedly not so wildly enthusiastic about the civilization of the 'Kaffiras' to see with equanimity the large sums of money which were being spent for that purpose; and the Government feared the dissatisfaction which was likely to be expressed in Parliament, when

76 M. O. Bassey, 'Missionary Rivalry and Educational Expansion in Southern Nigeria, 1885-1932,' *The Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 60, (1991), pp. 36-46.

77 R. Hunt Davis, 'Nineteenth Century' p. 159.

78 Ibid, p. 166.

79 C. Whitehead, 'The historiography of British Imperial education policy, Part II: Africa and the rest of the colonial empire, History of Education' *Journal of the History of Education Society*, 2005, 34:4, 441

> for an object in which the country was not greatly interested, these large sums were asked for year after year.[80]

As a result, education was generally left to local initiative and voluntary effort.[81] It was the same with white settlers. They showed no interest in the education of any children, be they European or non-European, other than religious training. Consequently, the task of providing education for the colonial children fell into the hands of the missionaries, who used education as part of their method of African Christianisation.[82] This was clearly expressed under Dutch rule where formal education was synonymous with the doctrine of the Dutch Reformed Church.[83] In the 1840s, the British officials recognised that, following the establishment of colonial rule and the subsequent increase in the demand for labour, it became imperative to support educational initiatives. In 1841, the schools only received subsidy in a form of salary grants which did not apply to capital expenditure in the Cape, received after Sir John Herschel proposed a reorganisation of colonial schooling in 1838. The aided mission schools served Coloured and white children, and a few Africans, while the public schools and established Schools were almost exclusively for whites.[84]

The period 1854 to 1861 was the turning point in the history of education in the Cape'. This was the era when the British colonial officials began to have direct influence in both the kind of knowledge purveyed in the schools and the standardisation of such prescriptions. New schools were opened and existing facilities, such as Lovedale, were improved, increasing educational opportunities for Africans.[85] Sir George Grey became the Governor of the Cape colony in 1854 and brought with him the ideas on education then prevalent in Great Britain. He believed that missionaries could provide the type of education he envisaged for African people. It could be argued that his involvement in African education was a watershed moment; it was the first time in the history of the Cape that a Governor supported missionary schools financially. This period also characterised the beginning of racialisation and class stratification in South African schooling and marked a division between religious and secular subjects.

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80 Quoted in G. Hodgson, 'A History of Zonneblom College 1858-1870.'

81 C. Whitehead, 'The historiography of British Imperial education policy, Part II: Africa and the rest of the colonial empire,' *History of Education* July, 2005, 34, pp 441–454.

82 E. F. Dube, 'The Relationship between Racism and Education in South Africa,' *Harvard Educational Review, 55, (1985)*

83 E.G. Pells, *Three hundred years of education in South Africa*. (Johannesburg, 1956).

84 Ibid.

85 M.Wilson, and L. Thompson, *A History of South Africa to 1870* (Cape Town, 1980).

Unlike his predecessors, such as Lord Charles Somerset who neglected African education and refused to collaborate with missionaries, Sir Grey had no quarrel with the missionaries. He certainly believed that missionary education would make a major contribution to the growth of capitalism, and that it could be used as a tool to convert Africans. 'After visiting the frontier and making himself familiar with the facts he resolved upon a plan of peaceful subjugation in which education was to play an important part.'[86] Grey was determined to promote African education as widely as possible aiming to create a class of disciplined Africans who would become an orderly workforce. He was driven by a vision that the Cape missionary schools would function more effectively if they were efficiently managed and supported financially.

Grey's role as a Governor had a significant influence in curriculum design and preparation; he dictated the teaching and learning process. His educational policy is important as it helps us understand why Africans decided to open up independent schools, such as the Wilberforce Institute in Evaton. Grey's educational policy set in place the inherent contradictions of colonial missionary education that flowed not from the idiosyncratic intentions of the African educated class but from the manner in which the colonial educational system was designed to subjugate Africans.

It is essential to point out that Grey was dedicated to advancing British trading interests in southern Africa. In order to achieve his goal he worked very closely with missionaries. Some historians see him as the direct inheritor of Dr. John Philip's scheme[87] to expand the British

86 Quoted in Loram, C.T. *Education for South.* p.14.

87 Dr. John Philip played an important role in emancipating the Khoikhoi people from the Dutch slave masters. He was one of the missionaries who made himself "unpopular by his battle with the white settlers when he fought for the establishment of the legal rights for the Khoikhoi people.A battle which culminated in the passing of Ordinance50 in 1828" Ordinance 50 gave equal rights to all British subjects in South Africa, regardless of their colour. He challenged an autocratic Governor Lord Charles Somerset who supported the quasi-military operations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that succeeded largely in destroying the Khoikhoi people and breaking their political cohesion. The opening years of the nineteenth century saw these Africans a subject people, landless and despised by the white settlers who had claimed their land. Under Charles Somerset, slavery was entrenched. This presented a complicated political pattern and it led to the subsidiary conflict between the two sections of the British colonists within the colony, the liberals and the autocrats.Subsequently, Somerset administration was attacked by Phillip as despotic and old-fashioned; his main concern was to oppose legalised restrictions which suppressed the Khoi people. With the support of Wilberforce and Buxton, the members of the CS, and influential members of the House of Commons, Phillip and other missionaries. Philip maintained that the Khoikhoi and the amaXhosa people at the missionary stations were taught the value of their labour and that the elevation of these Africans would create an extensive market for British. He urged colonists to allow Africans to have a fair price for their labour, to settle as free labourers in any part of the colony. To realize his visionary scheme of the 'natives' carrying their free labor to the best markets, Philip boldly urged the extension of British institutions 'over such provinces as Caffraria [Kaffirland]' so that British rule might became a blessing to this ill-fated continent. In this respect, Dr Phillip played a vital part in the more general process of colonization. The work of Philip was followed by missionaries, such as David Livingston, whose missionary activities converted some the baTswana people under chief Sechele. In his own

Empire.[88] Unlike his predecessors, Sir George Grey was not a military man, but a liberal leader. His predecessors in the Cape had little in common with liberal humanitarians.[89]

Grey's administrative style ensured that different communities in the colony had to be put under British rule. Africans chiefdoms in particular had to be appropriately 'civilized' and be assimilable within the British frame of reference. As a prominent colonial policy-maker, it was not easy for Grey to undertake the mammoth task of both colonial territorial expansion and assimilation and he saw industrial education as the key. It is difficult to comprehend the philosophy of this curriculum without understanding the context under which it was implemented, as well as the underlying factors that urged him to adopt the type of educational method that found a ready constituency among European missionaries. In doing so, the chapter will contextualise and explore educational discourse, its underpinning purpose and its relationship with the colonial policy of assimilation and territorial expansion.

The period under Grey's Governorship witnessed the rise of free-labour, partly as a result of the amaXhosa Cattle Killing and land dispossession.[90] There was also the rise in the acceptance of education, particularly among the amaMfengu people that succumbed to the colonial economy. This group of assimilated Africans perceived education to be an alternative source of economic security in a time of land dispossession. This was evident when Grey summoned chief Sandile, the chief of amaMfengu to Cape Town.[91] During the meeting in parliament, Grey observed that Sandile was impressed by the European way of life. In this meeting, Sandile was shown European printing material and cash. In his own words the chief said, 'these things of the English

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words Livingston indicated 'in our effort to evangelise we shall put a stop to the slave trade in a large region and by means of the highway into the north which we have discovered bring unknown nations under the sympathies of the Christian world.' See for example Quoted in Porter, A. Commerce and Christianity': The Rise and Fall of a Nineteenth-Century Missionary, Boas, J and Weiskopf, M. The Activities of the London Missionary Society in South Africa, 1806-1836:

88 N. Majeke, The Role of the Missionaries in Conquest (Cumberwood,1952).

89 A. Ross, *John Philip (1775-1851): Missions, race and politic s in South Africa*,(Aberdeen, 1986).

[90] In South Africa's Eastern Cape frontier zone, a millenarian movement known as the Xhosa Cattle-Killing (1856–1857) devastated local populations and stunned observers. After the prophecy of Nongqawuse, Mhlakaza, Nongqawuse's uncle led the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of cattle, to the death of tens of thousands of people, and to the amaXhosa were finally subjugated.

91 Fingoes was the term that the white colonists used who could not pronounce 'Mfengu', the correct term that the amaXhosa and the other people of abeNguni used when referring to 'Fingoes' was amaMfengu. Amamfengu were refugees from the devastating series of wars resulting from the expansion of the Zulu Kingdom in southern Africa in the early nineteenth century – the *mfecane* – were particularly susceptible to missionary influence. The amaMfengu fled from Natal to the Cape Colony in 1835, allied themselves with the British in subsequent wars with the amaXhosa in the Eastern Cape and were eventually awarded a substantial grant of land. See, for example C. Bundy, The *Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry* (Cape Town, 1988).

made me to think that it was through education that they do such great wonders'.[92] The visit of Sandile inspired this group to demand educational skills that could provide for successful entry into the labour market with the prospects of obtaining work opportunities rather than insecure manual labour.[93] By the 1870s *amaMfengu* were labelled by other Africans, particularly the amaXhosa, as *abantu basesikolwen*i (school people). Generally, they regarded themselves as progressives; they 'had deliberately and willingly changed their behaviour patterns and learned a new life style. Commitment to education, which also reflected involvement in the cash economy, was the most distinguishing mark of the school people.'[94] It is from this group where African organisations were established to protect African rights in the encroaching colonial order.[95] At about the same time, there were ongoing conflicts between the settlers and the Africans over land and cattle on the frontier. As a result, Grey had to devise a strategy that would stop these wars. Moreover, he was aware that it was not easy to draw Africans into wage labour. He was cautious in recognising that Africans were social beings, and that their relationships and attitudes formed among themselves helped to determine how efficiently they might work or not, and how much danger they may pose to colonial commerce.

As a supporter of capitalism and free labour, he considered slavery outdated, and it was vigorously opposed in his humanitarian upbringing, as well as by his seniors in the Colonial Office in England. It should be noted that, after emancipation, the Colonial Office called for the expansion of the colonial land, as well as the tight control of colonies. As a leading colonial official noted in the 1830s:

> The colonial secretary, three years after emancipation, took this argument one step further: kept from straying in search of land, ex-slaves would be more open to civilizing influences, more directly under the control of Government, more full of the activity which is inspired by common wants, and the strength which is derived from the division of labour; and altogether ... in a sound state, morally, politically and economically, than if left to pursue its natural course.[96]

92 A.Odendaal, *The Founders: The Origins of the ANC and the struggle for Democracy in South Africa*,(Kentucky, 2013), p.23.

93 See for example, R. Davis Hunt , 'Nineteenth Century.'

94 R.Davis- Hunt, 'The School vs Blanket and the Settler; Elijah Makiwane and the Leadership of the Cape School Community' *African Affairs*, 78,(1979), pp. 12-31.

95 See for example, Ibid, A.Odendaal, *The Founders.*

96 This passage is from leading Colonial Office official, Henry Taylor (1833), quoted in Davis J, *Slavery and Human Progress*. (New York, 1984), p.218.

2.5 The impact of the Clapham Sect in Grey's policy[97]

During his youth, the young George Grey was befriended by a number of prominent older men, including Bishop Whately of Dublin, the author of influential books on rhetoric and logic, and James Stephen, a member of the Clapham Sect (CS) of Nonconformist Quakers. These liberals were dedicated to the reform of English society and to the abolition of slavery in the Americas, the Caribbean sugar plantations, as well as in other parts of the globe.[98] Prominent members of the CS included William Wilberforce, Granville Sharp and Zachary Macaulay. They believed in vigorously transforming the economic system from feudalism to capitalism in England. The emergence of the new economic system had altered the character of traders and revolutionised the structure of economic relationships in the British Empire. This revolution prompted members of the CS to collaborate with the Colonial Office and devise a strategy that would incorporate and assimilate the indigenous people of different colonies without coercion.

Certainly, the context under which Grey operated encouraged him to promote the British interest. His mind was filled with questions about how to make unconquered African chiefdoms into colonial subjects: How should they be ruled? Might they eventually have the same rights as British subjects? At the time, the empire was primarily about trade and the governance of territories and peoples. Grey was highly influenced by CS, particularly Zachary and Thomas Macaulay's ideas of liberal reform, evangelicalism, and the relationship to British colonial expansion.[99] By this time, the CS ideology was driven by liberal theory linked to the early development of capitalism and the rise of the bourgeoisie. The objective and strategy of Grey,

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97 The Clapham Sect was a group of social reformers that belonged to the Church of England based in Clapham, London, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The group was active from 1790 to 1830. Some historians described the sect as a network of friends and families in England, with William Wilberforce as its centre of gravity, who were powerfully bound together by their shared moral and spiritual values, by their religious mission and social activism, by their love for each other, and by marriage. The group published a journal, the *Christian Observer*, edited by Zachary Macaulay and were also credited with the foundation of several missionary and tract societies, including the British and Foreign Bible Society and the Church Missionary Society. They founded Freetown in Sierra Leone, the first major British colony in Africa, whose purpose in Thomas Clarkson's words was "the abolition of the slave trade, the civilisation of Africa, and the introduction of the gospel there" See, Davis J, *Slavery and Human Progress*. After many decades of work both in British society and in Parliament, the group saw their efforts rewarded with the final passage of the Slave Trade Act in 1807, banning the trade throughout the British Empire and, after many further years of campaigning, the total emancipation of British slaves with the passing of the Slavery Abolition Act in 1833. They also campaigned vigorously for Britain to use its influence to eradicate slavery throughout the world.

98 See for example, R. Thornton, 'Elusive Unity of Sir George Grey,' *African Studies*, 42, (1983), pp. 79-89, J. Milne, The *Romance of a Proconsul*, (London, 1991) N. Annan, *'The Intellectual Aristocracy'*, in J. H. Plumb, *Studies in Social History*, (London, 1955); D.Forbes, *The Liberal Anglican Idea of History*, (Cambridge, 1952).

99 See for example, S. Hall, 'History of Education,' *Journal of the History of Education Society*, 37, (2008).

known among historians as the 'Grey Plan,' was determined by his enthusiasm to push on at full speed and expand colonial enterprise in southern Africa.

The CS believed that the precepts of Christianity would furnish a complete moral machinery for carrying forward all the great processes that lay at the root of civilization[100] 'To bring to the heathen the gospel of the cross of Christ was to open before them not only the prospect of eternal life but also the road to unlimited social and economic development.'[101] In order to implement their mission, in 1799 these liberals formed the Church Missionary Society (CMS) as an evangelical arm of the church that worked very closely with the British government. Through this society, the CS ideas spread to the different parts of the British colony. In the Cape, Dr. Phillip, the successor of van der Kemp, implemented the sect's ideas and advocated the emancipation of the Khoi people. In the case of British India, for instance, the CS leadership encouraged the Evangelicals to stand in opposition to the traditional attitude of the East India Company: far from respecting the old Hindu society, the CS (with Charles Grant and Wilberforce at the head) found Hindu society utterly distasteful, an unclean thing best quickly removed. Accordingly, they proposed the complete assimilation of India's traditional society, in the name of Christianity, trade, and empire.[102] It was the same in Africa, where missionaries assimilated Africans and incorporated their political structures under colonial indirect rule. Citing from Bishop Wilberforce's theological teachings:

> the effect of training the human race to a degree of excellence which it could never attain in non-Christian countries, giving 'value to life', 'dignity to labour' and 'security to possession', with the result that a Christian people would tend to be 'a wealth-producing people, an exporting people and so a commercial people'[103]

The gist of missionary initiative meant that colonies were to be transformed into reservoirs of cheap labour, supply raw material, and become fresh outlets for investment.[104] Above all, for the CS missionary settlement meant imperial security and commercial gain. Part of the CS strategy was to adopt the humanitarian approach and emancipate enslaved Africans in the colonies so as to win their trust, as well as to use missionaries to lead the process of annexation. This was the case with the earlier LMS missionaries. The legacy of the founders of the CS and the pioneer

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100 D. Coates J. Beecham, and W. Ellis, *Christianity the means of civilization: shown in the evidence given before a committee of the House of Commons, on aborigines* (London, I837), p. I75.

101 N. Gunson, *Messengers of grace: evangelical missionaries in the South 1797-1860* (Melbourne, I 978), pp. 267-79.

102 D. Spring, 'The Clapham Sect: Some Social and A. Commerce and Christianity': The Rise and Fall of a Nineteenth-Century Missionary Political Aspects,' *Victorian Studies*, 5, (1961), p. 44.

103 Quoted in A. Porter, 'Commerce and Christianity': The Rise and Fall of a Nineteenth-Century Missionary' *The Historical Journal*, 28, (1985), p.598.

104 W. M. McMillan, *Africa Emergent* (Middlesex, 1949).

LMS missionaries can be seen as central in shaping events, which lead to the expansion of the colony.[105] Some historians argue that Grey's governorship benefitted the empire; it represented the period during which the ideals of the missionaries and philanthropists were translated into reality by a massive injection of Government support.[106]

The spirit of commerce, education and Christianity were not peculiar to Grey but rather encapsulated a widespread set of assumptions about the nature of Britain's civilizing mission. The industrial education that Grey adopted was based on the precepts of Christianity, civilization and commerce, integral to the early Victorian understanding of Britain's world mission. As a subject of the British Empire, Grey believed that the combination of Christianity and industrial education would bring Christianity to the 'heathen' and open before them not only the prospect of eternal life but also the road to unlimited social and economic development.[107] His strategy was multilayered and complex, its vested interest coalesced around the increasing importance of the commercial expansion of capitalism primarily concerned with the supply and cost of labour. In the history of British governors in the Cape, Grey could be regarded as the first Governor who carried out the vision of Samuel Wilberforce who expressed that:

> There is a great connection between them. In the first place, there is little hope of promoting commerce in Africa, unless Christianity is planted in it; and, in the next place, there is very little ground for hoping that Christianity will be able to make its proper way unless we can establish a lawful commerce in the country'. Britain's part in forging the connexion was abundantly clear.[108]

The principal theme underlying Wilberforce's words was the need for the expansion of the British colonies and its economic interest. In other words, Christianity, civilization and commerce had a natural and harmonious alliance, an attitude that was integral to the early Victorian understanding under which George Grey was groomed. In line with the ambition of the CS, 'the cornerstone of his policy was to break the power of the chiefs and destroy the tribal system, a task for which he had received ample training, for he had recently been involved in the subjugation of the Maori of New Zealand by methods that were to become familiar in his new

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105 See P. McKenzie, 'Public Christianity and Te Tiriti o Waitangi: How the 'Clapham Sect' Reached Down under Stimulus' *The New Zealand Journal of Christian Thought and Practice*, 18, (2010).

106 J. Pieres, 'Sir George Grey versus the Kaffir Relief Committee,' *Journal of Southern African Studies,*. 10, (1984), pp. 145-169.

107 B. Stanley, 'Commerce and Christianity: Providence Theory, The Missionary Movement and the Imperialism of Free' *Trade***,** *The Historical Journal,* 26, (I983), pp. 7I-94.

108 Wilberforce quoted in A. Porter, 'Commerce and Christianity': The Rise and Fall of a Nineteenth-Century Missionary' p. 597 *The Historical Journal,* 28,(1985), pp. 597-621.

sphere of colonial activity.'[109] This implies that the colonists had to dismantle the local tradition, including its traditional communal economy, and set in motion the process which was to reduce the vast majority of Africans to a subordinate and exploited status in the colonial economy. This explains why they wanted to integrate Africans into the economic system of the colonisers. In order to achieve this, Grey depended on missionaries as the political arm of the colony. His aim was to establish a viable political and economic empire, as desired by the British colonisers.

2.6 Government backing

In 1855, Grey toured the eastern Cape. After his visit, he made himself thoroughly familiar with the process of peaceful subjugation in which education was to play an important role.[110] He then decided to source financial support from the imperial government to support missionaries and the educational workers of Lovedale; the same support was given to Zonneblom, Healdtown and other schools in the colonial province of Natal. The total expenditure varied from year to year, but in the year 1857, it reached £10 000. He encouraged schools to teach industrial education and adapt the education curriculum of colonised peoples to the 'realities' of the labour market by abandoning an academic curriculum in favour of 'practical arts'.[111]

Grey's educational reform left many missionaries and their schools with no option but to accept the state funding and incorporate industrial education. Missionaries began to rely upon government support to cover educational expenses, while the government exercised its growing influence and reinforced all aspects of industrial education through the training of teachers and the inspection of schools. The state became responsible for setting examinations; it also prescribed teachers' condition of service, established codes for building and equipment, and appointed school superintendents and teachers subject to approval of the provincial education departments.[112] Those missionaries who resisted government intervention had to discontinue their missions or were forced to look for other forms of financial support. For instance, in the areas north of the Cape Colony that remained largely under the BaTswana chief's rule until the late nineteenth century, *dikgosi tsa Batswana* (the Tswana chiefs) enjoyed the power of controlling schools. 'When the British colonial government investigated the possibility of providing support for mission schools in 1877, they judged the older Tswana-led schools to be too rudimentary to

109 N. Majeke, *The Role of the Missionaries.*

110 C.T. Loram, *Education of the South African Native*, (New York, 1927).

111 P. Kallaway, 'Colonial Education .in Natal: The Zwaartkop Government Native School, 1888-1892', *Perspectives in Education* 10, (1988), p. 17.

112 R. Elphick,The Equality of Believers: Protestant Missionaries and the Racial Politics of South Africa (London, 2012) p. 181.

deserve funding and instead focused on European-run schools in urban areas.'[113] The government action withdrew support from the old missionaries working in the region who wanted the African Christian schools to remain unchanged.[114] It is clear that the more money governments gave, the more they wished to determine the methods and curriculum of these schools.[115] These reforms implied that education should no longer be dominated by religion. In principle, the secular education in these schools was designed to 'give higher education to a portion of the native youths, to raise up among them what might be called an educated class, from which might be selected teachers of the young, catechists, evangelists, and ultimately fully-qualified preachers of the gospel.'[116]

Grey's educational policy spilled over into the province of Natal, which formed part of the British colony. In solidarity with Grey, Shepstone, the Governor of Natal, developed the first legislation regarding 'native education' in the late 1850s. According to this legislation, most African schools were placed under the supervision and management of the missionaries, but were to be inspected and reported on by a government inspector of schools.[117] Like Grey, Shepstone saw 'industrial' training as an ideal method for educating Africans. We should note, however, that Shepstone did not try to force Christianity on indigenous people; he wanted to give them as much cultural autonomy as possible so as to avoid rebellion.[118]

Some scholars assert that the industrial and agricultural curriculum referred essentially to low skilled forms of education for Africans to participate in a segregated colonial society; their roles were defined for them in a largely rural environment.[119] Nevertheless, it is clear that notions of 'moral fabric' and 'character forming' were also incorporated into this curriculum. Similar to the United States of America (USA), the morality of industrial education was not urged for white children, but it was thought particularly suitable for the allegedly more unruly and emotional

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113 S. Volz, 'The Rise and Fall of the Moffat Institution: Mission Education in a Colonial Borderline' *South African Historical Journal* , 66, (2014) p. 483.

114 Ibid, p. 483-4.

115 N. Etherington, '*Missionaries, Africans and the State in the Development of Education in Colonial Natal 1836-1910',* in P. Grinshaw and A May, (eds), *Missionaries, Indigenous People and Cultural Exchange*, (Sussex, 2010), p 133.

116 Quoted in Hirson, *B Years of Fire, Years of Ash: The Soweto Revolt: Roots of a Revolution (*London, 1979).

117 D.E. Burchell, 'Adams College'

118 P. Kallaway, 'The Zwaartkops Government Industrial *Native* School in Natal,' p, 19.

119 A. Paterson, 'A The Gospel of Work Does Not Save Souls": Conceptions of Industrial and Agricultural Education for Africans in the Cape Colony, 1890-1930,' *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 45, No. 3 (Fall, 2005), pp. 377-404, Z. Booth, 'Settler, missionary, and the State: contradictions in the formulation of educational policy in colonial Swaziland,' *History of Education* 32. (2003).

nature of emancipated slaves and 'natives.'[120] In other words, the structure, content and ideology of industrial education developed within the context of colonial political and economic subjugation. It aimed to trap Africans in an agricultural economy that rested heavily on coercive control and allocation of labour.[121] In the eyes of the colonists, this initiative was seen as placing Africans in positions of real responsibility in their own affairs, as uncivilised rural people whose brighter future lay in the countryside. 'This premise,' argues Hunt-Davis, 'rested on several assumptions: agriculture was a natural way of life for Africans; social adjustment or the avoidance of race friction between blacks and whites demanded that most Africans remain in the rural areas.'[122]

The primary weakness of this colonial educational approach lay in the failure of the colonists to take into account that urban settlements became attractive and schools were often seen by educated indigenous people as 'a route of escape from agricultural work altogether.'[123] This explains why in the last decades of the nineteenth century a large number of educated Africans moved away from the Cape mission stations or migrated to the urban centres of the Witwatersrand, where they worked in mines and other industries. In the following chapters, we shall see how this class built churches and schools without the help of any white missionaries. It is where they advocated equality based upon the values, ideals and notions of the idea of progress, democracy, opportunity and equal education. The new consciousness that developed on the Rand became a vehicle for two things: the protest against the laws that discriminated against Africans, and reconciliation among the different African ethnic groups who were increasingly fighting one another. As we shall see, the common urban atrocities that were committed by whites on the Rand brought together 'heathens', Christians and members of chiefdoms who were once at war with one another.

The primary concern of Grey as a colonial governor was to avoid the creation of an intellectual proletariat or '*babu*' class, a class that was well developed before the British rule in India.[124] Unlike in Africa, in India 'the missionaries never enjoyed a sustained and close working relationship with the British government officials because the latter were forever fearful that the

120 J. K. King, Pan Africanism and Education: *A Study of Race Philanthropy and Education in the Southern States of America* (Oxford, 1971), p.36.
121 A.Paterson, 'The Gospel of Work Does Not Save Souls'
122 R. Hunt-Davis, 'Charles t. Loram and an American Model for African Education in South Africa,' *African Studies Review. 19.* (1976) p. 91.
123 S. J. Ball, 'Imperialism, Social Control and the Colonial Curriculum in Africa,' *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 15, (1983), p. 244.
124 C. Whitehead, *The historiography of British Imperial education policy*

proselytising activities of the missionaries would provoke adverse Hindu and/or Muslim reactions.'[125] By the 1870s, there was also widespread agreement both in Whitehall[126] and amongst colonial officials serving in the colonies on the need to adapt the curriculum in African schools to bring it into line with the local economic needs, environment and culture.[127] This differentiated African education from white education, which appeared to cover broader educational issues. African education, on the other hand, was not seen as something that could advance beyond the pace and the geographical location of the African community. As we shall see, Africans seemed to have more interest in the broader forms of education than industrial education and were driven by the spirit of advancement through higher education. In 1889, a special report was issued by Sir Langham Dale, the Superintendent General of Education to the Cape House. It reported:

> If the European race is to hold its supremacy the school instruction of its children must only be best and most advanced…but must be followed by a systematic training of the young colonists in … intelligence to be brought to bear on all the industrial arts. As the future employers of labour, they need themselves to have practical experience in the productive interests as well as in the mechanical arts, which if supplemented by a good commercial education will enable them to take places as superintendents, foreman, and ultimately as masters in trade, agriculture, manufacturers and constructive branches of the arts. The majority of the natives may be, at the best, qualified to do the rough work of artisans.[128]

It is clear that educational policy in the 1850s had far-reaching consequences, culminating in segregation that was directly linked to both labour policy and white supremacy.[129] The call for segregated education was perhaps driven by the fear that classical or liberal education might transform African people into successful competitors with white counterparts.

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125 Ibid, p. 442.

126 Unlike India, the crown colonies were all administered as separate units each with its own governor, but all were ultimately under the control of the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Colonial Office located in Whitehall.

127 Whitehead, C The historiography of British Imperial education policy, p, 442.

128 Quoted in C.T. Loram. *Education of the South African Native.*

129 By 1850s, the colony expanded and its economic interest compelled the colonial government to further penetrate inland. One of the most challenging aspects was the development of infrastructure. There was a need for publicly-funded public works projects that would typically include some type of structure that will demands local communities labour that was to be instrumental for the construction of dams, roads, bridges, schools, and government buildings. This imposed a unique and inflexible labour requirement that was successfully resisted by Africans. Despite repeated attempts on the part of the colonial state to confront and destroy the relative economic independence of Africans, a viable subsistence economy frustrated the colonist efforts. As a result, land developers, road and railway builders to fail to secure enough labour for their endeavours. In colonial Natal, for instance, the white attempt to coerce young males into wage labour, even if on a temporary basis, was not successful.

2.7 Industrial education and African frustration

Sir George Grey could be interpreted by Africans as 'the enemy of progressive native education.' He introduced the concept of industrial education that originated in Great Britain during the 1830s. In England, this system of education was designed for the lower classes; hence it seemed applicable to the supposed natural lower classes of the colonies, the non-white population.[130] After emancipation, the British officials saw industrial education as a suitable educational method that could be used to incorporate the former slaves into free labour capitalist system. In the USA, industrial education was used as a means to adjust the life of the African-Americans that had been carved out for them within an oppressive social order, designed to avoid the inherent confrontations that emerged from slavery and to maintain social consensus.[131] The man behind the industrial education scheme that worked successfully in the West Indies was Earl Grey,[132] Secretary of State for the Colonies (1846-1852). His ostensible purpose was to provide for the welfare of the labouring population and produce more efficient workers in the colonies. In order to formalise his programme, the Secretary also solicited suggestions on industrial education from the Committee Privy Council on Education. In 1847, the idea of industrial education was communicated to the colonial governors, including Sir George Grey who systematically implemented the programme in the Cape Colony.[133] After his arrival at the Cape, on December 22, 1854, the plan he proposed to pursue was:

> to attempt to gain an influence over all the Tribes included between the present North Eastern boundary of this Colony and Natal, by employing them upon public works which will tend to open up their country, by establishing Institutions for the education of their children, and the relief of their sick, by introducing among them institutions of a civil character suited to their present condition, and by these and other like means to attempt gradually to win them to civilisation and Christianity, and thus to change by degrees our present unconquered and apparently unreclaimable foes, into friends who may have common interests with ourselves[134]

Grey estimated that the cost of his proposed projects - that included public works, the construction of schools, hospitals and civil institutions - would amount to £45 000 a year. He argued that it would be cheaper to civilise the amaXhosa than to eliminate them. His policy was in line with Dr. John Phillip of the CS who mentioned in his statement that 'By adopting a more liberal system of policy towards this interesting class of subjects, they will be more productive, there will be an increased consumption of British manufacturers, taxes will be paid and farmers

130 Ibid, pp. 220-223.
131 J. Anderson *The Education of Blacks in the South 1860-1935*, (North Caroline, 1988).
132 It is not clear whether Earl was related to George Grey but they certainly shared many ideas about colonial administration.
133 Ibid, p.222.
134 Quoted in J .Hodgson 'Zonneblom,' p. 122.

will have no cause to complain of lack of labour.'[135] This viewpoint was shared by the frontier officials. As Warner, the Tambookie agent, said:

> The sword must first - not exterminate them, but break them up as tribes, and destroy their political existence; after which, when thus set free from the shackles by which they are bound, civilization and Christianity will no doubt make rapid progress among them; for they are a noble race, no wise deficient in mental capacity, and well worthy of all the labour and expense which the Imperial Government is bestowing upon them.[136]

It is important to note that before Grey's governorship some schools, such as Zonneblom and Lovedale, offered liberal education, classics and mathematics at higher level, and a command of English language on a par with the best schools for whites.[137] These subjects were, however, seen by Grey as impractical, unsuited for the mental energies of African people, and not suitable for Anglicising colonial African citizens.[138] For him, the schools were to internalise the African dependency on the 'mother-country.' Grey's ideas dove-tailed with the ideas of some missionaries, such as John Ayliff, a Wesleyan missionary, who noted that 'it was vital that the young Africans should be taught useful trades and employment to enable them to support themselves …without having recourse to cattle.'[139] Other missionaries, such as Rev Gottlieb Schreiner, who emphasised the significance of manual education, supported Ayliff's recommendation

> not, however, because the native have not the capability of acquiring an amount of knowledge equal to the majority of European children, but because it has been deemed advisable not to give them such an education as will unfit them for, and be inconsistent with, their future positions in life, but such as will be useful to themselves and society at large.[140]

It is worth remembering that before Grey came to office, missionaries enjoyed the freedom to shape educational goals, which they later lost because of accepting government aid.[141] They also relieved colonial government of a significant financial and administrative burden and, in return, gained a powerful voice in educational policy.[142] Like Grey, the white conservative colonists and some missionaries saw liberal education as a tool that would enable Africans to act as 'spies,'

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135 N. Majeke, *The Role of the Missionaries.*

136 Quoted in Hodgson, Zonneblom.

137 R. Elphick, *The Equality of Believers: Protestant Missionaries and the Racial Politics of South Africa.* (Charlottesville, 2012), p.182.

138 Ibid.

139 Quoted in R. Hunt Davis, 'Nineteenth Century Education.'

140 Ibid, p. 223.

141 Ibid, p. 238.

142 Cape Printed Publication, South African Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education Report 1935-1936, p.68.

and 'listen to dinner conversations.'[143] Throughout the nineteenth century, colonial education was in the hands of a wide variety of American and European missionary organisations.

As far as the curriculum of the colonial school was concerned, each missionary grouping had its own invested interest. The Church Missionary Society (CMS), for instance, was reluctant 'to teach secular skills to Africans because some feared to teach such skills would be to teach the wrong aspects of the world.'[144] This was in contrast to the Glasgow Missionary Society, which promoted liberal education among the indigenous converts. The educational philosophy of the CMS was clear: it rejected the materialism of the capitalist industrial society of Britain and associated the industrial advancement witnessed in Europe with the corruption and denigration of basic Christian values.[145] Like the CMS, the LMS was worried about the secularisation of education. As one of the LMS members wrote, 'to allow native education to be in any way secularised would result within a certain time, in destroying it altogether … the experience of the last ten years verifies this.'[146]

Grey's introduction of industrial education was not well received by some missionaries, such as William Govan, Lovedale's first principal from 1841 to 1870. Govan believed that natives should be enabled to take their place alongside of Europeans, not only in the office of the ministry, but also in the various positions of society, secular as well as ecclesiastical.[147] This triggered debate within missionary circles, illustrated by the dispute between James Stewart, a young missionary and a teacher at Lovedale, and Govan. Stewart told the Scotland Missionary Society that Govan's curriculum and educational policy was too elitist and unsympathetic to the education of the African masses. He pressured for the termination of Greek, Latin and other modern European languages to Lovedale African students, 'who as future 'groom and labourers' had a more pressing need to master English.' Govan replied that Stewart's policies would lower standards and dilute the principle of racial equality. The Mission Committee overruled him and Govan resigned, to be succeeded by Stewart.'[148]

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143 Ibid.

144 T. O Beidelman, 'Contradictions between the sacred and the secular life: the Church Missionary Society in Ukaguru, Tanzania, East Africa 1876-1914.' *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* 23. 1981.

145 S. J. Ball 'Imperialism, Social Control and the Colonial Curriculum in Africa,' *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 15:3, (1983).pp. 237 263.

146 University of Cape Town, James Stewart Papers, (UCT, JSP) BC 106, C 160.86, A letter addressed to Dr. Moir, 26 July 1894.

147 R. Sheperd, *Lovedale South Africa: The Story of the Century*, 1841-1941, (Lovedale, 1940) p.152-162, S. Brock 'James Stewart and Lovedale: A Reappraisal of Missionary Attitudes and African response in the Eastern Cape.' (PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh 1974) p.145; D Burchell, 'A History of the Lovedale' p.123.

148 R. Elphick, *The Equality of Believers*, p.182.

This chapter, therefore, argues that both the official implementation of industrial education and the lowering of the educational standards in schools, such as Lovedale, explains the steady growth of disparities that led to African dissatisfaction and the emergence of African independent schools that mushroomed after the 1880s. As we shall see below, this educational reform triggered an outcry from educated indigenous people. Like Stewart, some missionaries, such as Rev Schreiner, appeared to be closely tied to religious and political ambitions. They supported the idea of industrial education that undermined African intellectual achievement. This camp of missionaries was perhaps under the influence of Social Darwinism,[149] perhaps also influenced by the economic and political aims of the colonial state that linked education to colonial economic expansion. It is also possible they were influenced by the economic transformation that resulted from mineral discovery in the 1860s.

By its nature, the introduction of industrial education was an attempt to overthrow the old classical curriculum, the primary aim of which was to provide an inexpensive way for colonial staffing. It was seen by Africans as reducing them to a servile class, as an obstacle towards African access to advanced educational opportunities and equality.[150] It did not present African learners with vocational skills that had real market value for personal advancement; it left them with only their labour to sell.[151] It should be noted that from the 1840s to 1880s, the colonists experienced a serious problem with the small proportion of Africans who joined the colonial labour market. African labour was not easily manageable, for example, conveyed by Robert Babbs the director of the giant Umlaas Plantation in the 1850s, who wrote

> It is generally known that the Kafir looks to the sun to regulate his hours of labor… It is difficult either to induce or compel him to work either before or after those periods of the day which have received his arbitrary definitions on sunrise and sunset.[152]

In a similar vein, Rev W.A Goodwin reported that Africans did 'not understand what people call 'the dignity of labour' until they became Christianised.'[153] In fact, the heart of the manual labour programme was closely associated with habits, character and consciousness. Schools, it was believed, were the best institutions to socialise and mould Africans to be productive agents of the

149 The theory that individuals, groups, and peoples are subject to the same Darwinian laws of natural selection as plants and animals. Now largely discredited, social Darwinism was advocated by Herbert Spencer and others in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and was used to justify political conservatism, imperialism, and racism and to discourage intervention and reform.

150 A. Paterson, 'A contest and co-option.'

151 A. Paterson, A Gospel of Work Does Not Save Souls, p.381.

152 Ibid, p. 25.

153 South African Native Affairs Commission (SANAC) Minutes quoted in De Gruchy, *Christianity and the Modernisation of South Africa, 1867-1936: A Documentary History,* (Pretoria, 2012).

emerging colonial economy. This was evident in St Mathews, the school that was under the administration of Charles Taberer, who became the headmaster in the 1862. The school provided industrial education, reinforced by a strong apprenticeship programme that tended to neglect classroom instruction. In this school, few learners went beyond Standard III, implying that very few Africans reached matric and thus limit African progress.[154] In 1862, Dr. Langham Dale reported that only 5 per cent of pupils in these schools could read, and few of the teachers had passed Standard IV. The issue of African labour policy, class and subordination, as well as its logical relationship with industrial education, became evident when 'Europeans began to seek ways of making Africans "useful" rather than making them safe neighbours.' Among whites, hardened racist attitudes heightened fears of being overwhelmed by the Colony's black majority.'[155]

Under this background, it is clear that this curriculum was not designed to produce independent entrepreneurial Africans who would compete in the colonial markets. It never propelled Africans toward the notion of professional life of higher status. At no time did this educational system encourage Africans to do applied science and technology, so they were not trained to become engineers, architects, chemists or other professionals. Instead, Africans were given a third class education that imparted manual instruction to promoted habits of industry, thrift and morality. In many schools, manual exercise would, for instance, be carried out in the morning and in the afternoon pupils would learn practical skills. The practical skills training involved labour activities, such as working in the field, building houses, digging ditches, cutting wood and fetching water. This was done by boys. Girls were taught 'wifely skills;' they would sew, cook and do laundry.[156] A small number of qualified European women, largely the wives of the priests, and a large number of unqualified African female teacher-trainees met the supply of teachers for girls.

The emphasis of this system of education was to enlighten 'both men and women as to the "proper" relationship of the sexes to work, women to cook, and manage the household, men to do productive labour.'[157] In other words, they were taught values appropriate to the nuclear family structure of pre-industrial England. The issue of class stratification that industrial education instigated was confirmed by James Stewart, the principal of Lovedale, who adopted

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[154] Unfortunately the sources do not indicate the age groups of different standards in schools

155 R. Hunt-Davis, 'Nineteenth Century.'

156 See for example, J. Hodgson, 'A History of Zonneblom College'.

157 S. Meintjes, 'Edendale,' p, 134.

'the two stream approach whereby masses would receive a basic education preparing them for industrial work and the minority would have a higher education equipping them to become leaders within the community.[158] Dale who considered Africans as members of the lower classes supported this idea. He warned that too much schooling might place Africans in a position, which was supposedly 'both singular and dangerous.'[159] Like Dale, many whites saw liberal education not doing 'special good but to produce special evil.'[160] This urged the educated natives to question the principal of Lovedale, 'what positive evil have classics produced to natives trained in Lovedale. We desire information and light on this subject.'[161]

For African intellectuals, industrial education was directly linked to the colonial system of control. The critical view of this system of education took place alongside the emergence of new organisations, the rise of African interest in parliamentary politics, and the growth of critical attitudes towards the role of the church and education.[162] By the 1880s, young educated Africans began to question the role of industrial education. They saw this as a programme that seriously undermined their ability to access the political right to vote, and they began to seek independent education as an alternative. They believed that education would help to achieve liberty and equality. Increasingly, Africans saw the industrial educational programme as stultifying, marginalising them from the higher-level career opportunities that whites occupied. John Tengo Jabavu expressed this:

> In our schools 'manual labour' consists of sweeping yards, repairing roads, cracking stones and so on, and is done by boys only… under threat of punishment. It is defended because 'it makes for character training' the invariable result is that the boys grow to hate all manual work as humiliating …agriculture, where all attempted at our schools, has suffered too, from being a motiveless task. It is the most important thing in native life, and therefore deserves a place in the school career of our boys, as it practiced in … native school …[163]

Jabavu's observation was supported by the student criticism at the Moffat Institute:

> although the first students helped with the construction and upkeep of the school premises, they were more interested in studying than 'industrial pursuits', and manual labour became relegated more to the Boys' School branch of the Moffat Institution. That practice, however, soon provoked criticism

158 J.W. De Cruchy *Christian and Modernisation.*
159 Quoted in R. Hunt-Davis, Nineteenth Century.
160 *Christian Express,* 1 April 1885.
161 *Imvo Zabantsundu,* 4 May 1885.
162 See for example, A. Odendaal, *The Founders.*
163 D.D.T Jabavu, '*Native Education need,' included in The Problem Problem: Papers and Addresses on Various Native Problems* (Lovedale,1920) p.94.

> that 'there is no school, there is only manual labour', obliging missionaries to publicly defend their teaching methods and exhort parents to support their efforts.[164]

It is interesting to note how Jabavu interpreted industrial education and its complex moral, political and educational overtone. As an alumnus who practically observed the transformation of the curriculum and implementation of technical education, he noted that the manner in which this curriculum was implemented promoted Christian morality and the steady supply of labour. There is no doubt that this type of education was imposed upon unwilling recipients. In some missionary schools, this curriculum contributed to the institutional collapse. For instance, 'Moffat Institution experienced a number of curricular and administrative challenges, such as debate over the role of vocational training,'[165] forcing the school to close its doors in 1897. It is clear that the revolt against the industrial education had grown much more articulate in the 1880s. African protest did not, however, prevent the curriculum from being applied increasingly over the next decades to the subjects of the colony. It did begin, however, to draw Africans towards new independent schools in the 1890s. These schools were initiated to meet a range of educational needs articulated by numerous urban and rural Africans.[166]

Apart from industrial education, there were criticisms of the kind of history taught in the curriculum. In the 1880s Kokela, a correspondent for *Isigidimi* newspaper from the region of amaGcaleka, criticised the missionaries for teaching English, Roman and Greek history at the expense of African history. He appealed to all Africans who could read and write to preserve African history in isiXhosa.[167] This was a reaction to missionary education's continued fore fronting of European interests in school curriculum.

Kokela's statement reveals that colonial conditions had thrown Africans into socio-cultural ambiguity. Some educated Africans aspired to be like Europeans, while others wanted to use western education for the preservation of their languages and history, as well as part of their traditions, such as *lobola* and circumcision. This is illustrated by the contesting voice of Kokela, and supported by the bilingual production of African presses, such as *Imvo Zabantsundu*, and literature that was published by writers, such as Isaac Wauchope in isiXhosa. For the purpose of advancement, they appreciated the significance of colonial education, but they wanted a

164 B. Wookey, editorial published in Mahoko a Becwana, 11 (November, 1883), 4 quoted in S. Volz S ' The Rise and Fall of the Moffat Institution: Mission Education in a Colonial Borderline' *South African Historical Journal* .66, 2014 p. 481.

165 Ibid, p. 485.

166 See A. Paterson, Contest and Co-option.

167 A.Odendaal, The *Founders.*

curriculum that would help progress within the colonial economy. Africans were increasingly losing their economic and political independence. African polities were more and more disrupted and administratively dismantled. As a result, educated Africans saw higher education as the only channel to improve their status. African demand for higher education became a strong feature after the 1870s, especially among the graduates of institutions like Lovedale and Zonneblom. For them, 'higher education' meant matriculation or university education.[168] This was, however, not possible because there were no universities that catered for Africans in South Africa, yet there were universities for whites, such as the Cape of Good Hope University in Cape Town. This encouraged students to travel overseas, chiefly to the United States and England, to attend schools and colleges there.[169] Much concern was shown over this issue, especially in the case of students being sent to the African American colleges where, according to the Native Affairs Commission,

> The character of education…with the accompanying grant of degree on low qualification and the atmosphere of racial animosity in which the education is acquired, render an extension of this practice undesirable.[170]

The 'Cape natives,' in particular, needed the type of education that would make them suitable voters, and to fit well into Cape politics. Through their voting power, Africans were able to influence legislation through their elected representatives as constituents inside the parliamentary system in the colonial Cape. Besides, they needed education that would provide them with sufficient knowledge to adjust to the changing economic and social environment. Despite the implementation of industrial education, unequal funding of schools and the lack of facilities in some schools became the major obstacle. In spite of this hindrance Rev Elijah Makiwane, the president of the Native Educational Association (NEA), encouraged Africans to further their studies. '[171] In his presidential speech, Makiwane wrote,

> Some of you are not satisfied with the possession of a teacher's certificate. You would like at least to pass the matriculation examination. An impression has existed that such a desire was not encouraged and that there were no facilities for having it carried out. Now with regard to this

168 A. Patterson, 'Contest and Co-option.'

169 H. Hughes, 'Black Missions in South Africa: Religion and Education in the African Methodist Episcopal Church in South Africa 1892-1953,' (Honours Research Report, University of the Witwatersrand, 1976).

170 Government Publications, South African Native Commission Report, 1920 p 66.

171 The Native Educational Association (NEA) was formed in 1879. Its aim was to "improve and elevate native races." In addition the NEA sought to promote "social morality and general welfare of the natives." The association made resolutions, sent deputations and petitions to authorities. Amongst its membership were some of the founders of the SANNC such as John Tengo Jabavu, Rev Walter Benson Rubusana and Elijah Makiwane. For the details about Makiwane see, R. Hunt Davis, 'School vs Blanket and Settler: Elijah Makiwane and the leadership of the Cape School Community,' *Journal of Southern African Studies,*78 (1979), pp. 12-31.

> point, I wish to say that I rejoice to see such a desire and hope that the number of those who will have it increase every year.[172]

From this background, it is obvious that the majority of missionary schools did not meet the varying needs of Africans, including access to higher education that Africans demanded.

2.8 Missionary education and African dissatisfaction

Segregation was evident in the unequal funding of the 'native' and 'European' schools, lack of educational infrastructure, inadequate number of schools and curriculum changes.[173] After the 1860s money was not distributed equally between white and African schools. The grant-in aid of African education was meagre and it was with a great deal of reluctance that so-called public funds were spent on what was regarded as essentially a private enterprise.

> By 1885, the gross annual expenditure on the education of aborigines in the Colonial and Transkei territories amounts only to twenty-one thousand pounds. This would give proportion to the number attending school about fifteen shillings per head for native, while the same proportion gives over three pounds for Europeans who both directly and indirectly pay their share of taxes.[174]

After the promulgation of the 1865 Education Act, the scale of government grants for Africans and Coloured education remained static for the rest of the century and militated against progress.[175] White education, on the other hand, contrasted sharply. 'The Act's aid provision was a major advance over previous government support and after 1865 the government steadily increased both the categories and the scale of appropriations.'[176]

As indicated earlier, in the early days of missionary-sponsored education schools, such as Lovedale and Zonneblom were not racially segregated; all racial groups attended the same missionary schools. It was only the dormitories and eating facilities that were segregated. [177] Unlike Lovedale, Healdtown:

> [was] a racist place …outside their department there was no mixing between black and white teachers. At girls' school, two matrons-both white-ate alone in their dining-room, while African women teachers ate with the students in their dining hall. At the boys' school, the white unmarried teachers ate with other staff in the Governor living quarters, while the African staff ate with boys in the boys' dining-hall. Most of the staff played tennis but they never played together … At least at Lovedale there was some semblance of inter-racial living among the staff members.[178]

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172 *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 2 February 1885.
173 A. Paterson, Contest and Co-option, p. 61; R. Hunt Davis, 'Nineteenth Century African Education'
174 *Christian Express,* 1 May 1885.
175 G.B. Board of Education, Special Report quoted in Davis Hunt, Nineteenth Century, p. 241.
176 Ibid, p. 214.
177 E. Dube, 'The Relationship between Racism and Education in South Africa' *Harvard Education Review*, 55, (1985), pp. 86-101.
178 P. Ntantala, *A Life's Mosaic: The autobiography of Phyllis Ntatala*, (California, 1992), p.73.

The aim of the liberal system of education that existed in the Cape Colony was to improve all the children of the colony. Among important white students who attended the same school with African students, such as Elijah Makiwane, was the eldest son of Saul Solomon, an influential liberal politician of the Cape Colony. Solomon junior later became a respected barrister at the Supreme Court in Cape Town. Other students included the son of James Rose Innes, the former school inspector in the colony.[179] Lovedale claimed all these students. The missionary educational programme was indistinguishable as both Africans and Europeans were given the same education. This was even acknowledged by Elijah Makiwane:

> At Lovedale, where they study with European young men, they stand remarkably well, when their late start in the race is considered; and in some cases they stand well, even when no such allowance is made. After leaving school, however, the native is left behind until he is not even within sight.[180]

Indeed, after graduation Africans became frustrated by the fact that those who did well at school did not seem to make way in real life.[181] Even those who later qualified with industrial education did not succeed. Opportunities for African brick-makers, plasterers, carpenters, plumbers and other artisans were extremely limited. There were few real job opportunities. Above all, white attitudes were against the advancement of Africans.[182] Although the government sponsored technical education, many white South Africans considered African industrial education as a threat to social order.[183] This was evident from the 1890s to 1920s when whites fought for the reservation of skilled job occupation. These historical developments took place in the context of the growing complexities of job reservation for whites within the colonial labour market. Although liberal education was suffocated by Grey's educational reforms, in some schools it continued to thrive until the 1880s. According to *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 'native scholars were doing so well [and were] placed according to merit.'[184] This impressed the examiner who marked Geography and History examination scripts in 1884. In a letter addressed to James Stewart, the examiner wrote: 'I have been employed in reading and marking papers on history and geography set at the recent examination for elementary teachers candidates [and] none gave me so much satisfaction as those from Lovedale.'[185] In 1885, *Christian Express*, the newspaper that was produced monthly by Lovedale, published the educational achievements of African students. The

179 *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 23 February 1887.
180 *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 27 January 1885.
181 Ibid.
182 H. Hughes, 'Black Mission in South Africa.'
183 L. Harlan, '*Booker T Washington and the white man's burden*;' in Smock, R.W. ed *Booker Washington in Perspective*, (Mississippi, 1988).
184 *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 12 January 1888.
185 UCT, JSP BC 160 C160, 70-C251, A letter from John Samuel to James Stewart, 30 October 1884,

following students from Lovedale passed with first class for their examination assessed by the Cape of Good Hope University.

William Govan Bennie

Martha Clack

Samuel Maqula

Joseph D Mtombeni

Those who passed with second class were

Neptalli Kumalo

John P McGillivway

Bernard Metete

Annie Makunga

Catherine Dick

Matilda Sobikwa

Total from Lovedale 12, Passed 11, failed 1.[186]

The published results for the school certificate demonstrate that African ethnic background and upbringing did not hinder their educational performance. Considering the difficulty that Africans experienced in their second language, these results were remarkable. To some extent, African educational progress provoked a backlash from conservative whites, such as Rev John Don Clerk. In the minute of the Presbytery of Kaffraria, Don Clerk wrote, 'we cannot afford to act upon the assumption that the native is equal to the European.'[187] This statement was supported by Dale's special report to the House of Assembly of the Cape Colony in 1889:

> The first duty of the Government has been assumed to be to recognise the position of the European colonists as holding the paramount influence, social and political; and to see that the sons and daughters of the colonists, and of those who come hither to throw in their lot with them, should have at least such an education as their peers in Europe enjoy, with such local modifications as will fit them to maintain their unquestioned superiority and supremacy in this land. Tradition, religion, custom, all

186 *Christian Express,* 1 May 1885.

187 Quoted in A. Duncan 'Pull up a good tree and push it outside'? The Rev Edward Tsewu's dispute with the Free Church of Scotland Mission, *http.journal.za.ac/pub/article/view/114 (last accessed 18 June 2016) p.59.*

> demand this as essential to the stability of the Government and the material progress of this colony and the neighbouring states.[188]

Statements of this nature, combined with other educational issues, frustrated educated Africans and caused a serious outcry among this group that was 'beginning to wake up out of their age long slumber.'[189] Consequently, this group organised themselves formidably under the NEA, a group of educated Africans under the leadership of Elijah Makiwane in 1879.[190] The voice of this association responded to unequal colonial educational practises by publishing articles in *Imvo Zabantsundu.* In one of the articles Elijah Makiwane, the president of the NEA, explains why many educated Africans in the colony felt discriminatory measures:

> We shall sincerely regret if anything now said shall be regarded as arising from unwillingness to see native enjoying the same privilege as those of the white race. We shall be extremely sorry to say anything, which may charge the editor of the *Christian Express* with hostility and unfairness to natives.[191]

In the 1880s, African education rapidly became a dominant issue in the colonial politics of the Cape colony and the battleground for African progress. There is little doubt that colonial education grew increasingly complex as African school attendance grew. The gap in quality between African and white schooling became more apparent as the nineteenth century progressed. White settlers were to have a very different education as compared to Africans. Dale who reported in the 1890s, officially expressed this:

> [T]he desire to rise in the social scale is natural, and the lower grades of employment in handicrafts and menial offices must be constantly recruited from below. And this is just the channel for employment which should be kept open for the coloured races. For social order, as well as for their own elevation from savageism, these races should get elementary instruction and be trained to the manual industries of civilised life. Society, indeed, puts a marked line of demarcation between the two great groups European and African aborigines. No legislation, no opinions about identity of origin, no religious sentiment about the effacement of the distinctions of white and black, can delete the line.[192]

Like Grey, Dale related the education of the Cape's African population directly to the colonial state's labour needs. He was responsible for creating a system that classified schools. At the top of the ladder was the University of the Cape of Good Hope, an examining university which from

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188 Quoted in D. Johnson, Aspects of a Liberal Education: Late Nineteenth-Century Attitudes to Race, from Cambridge to the Cape Colony, *History Workshop,*36 . (1993), p. 167.

189 D.D. T Jabavu, *The Black Problem: papers and addresses on various native problems* (Lovedale, 1920).

190 The Native Educational Association was the semi-political organisation formed in 1879; it was followed by *Imbumba Yaba Nyama* (1882) in Port Elizabeth, concerned with damping down interdenominational church conflict. Other organisations that were formed were the Transkeian Mutual Improvement Society, plus various local groups such as the Thembu Association in the Glen Grey district, where the Thembu resisted forcible resettlement. On the African Political Organisation (APO), founded in 1902 in Cape Town. See A. Odendaal *Vukani Bantu! The Beginnings of Black Protest Politics in South Africa to 1912* (Cape Town, 1984).

191 *Imvo Zabantsundu,* 4. May 1885.

192 Quoted in The *Muir Report*, p. 71.

1873 to 1918 awarded degrees in literature and science; next, there were colleges preparing students for university examinations. First Class schools were for the children of the wealthy, and taught a predominately-classical curriculum; the Second Class schools catered for 'the superior ranks', and taught a more modern curriculum. Finally, catering for the poor of both races, were the Third Class mission schools, which provided an imperfect elementary education. In these schools, very few learners reached the highest levels.[193] It is worth adding that after Dale retired from the office, his successor, Sir Thomas Muir, who became Superintended-General of Education in 1892, made immediate efforts to rationalise education by lowering educational standards for African children. Muir justified this rationalisation as follows:

> Care must be taken lest in attempting to raise too much the standard of education the country might defeat the object for which education was given, namely, that manual labour in which so many children must be occupied afterwards[194]

One could argue that Muir's educational report of the 1890s was tightly linked to the need for cheap labour that the mineral discoveries in Kimberley and on the Rand demanded. In hindsight, it might seem contradictory that the missionary educated Africans challenged curriculum changes introduced within 'native education'. Missionary schools appeared to produce 'rebels' who found themselves at the centre of all kinds of colonial debates, whether on education, taxation, land or religion. Above all, education became one of the most contentious political subjects of the late nineteenth century. For the missionary-educated Africans, western formal education was important; education was regarded as the foundation of new skills, new adaptability and new values. As 'educated natives' they were clear about the type of education they sought. They had clear ideas about what and how children should learn at school. The main question that seems to have influenced the debates of the time was how far the system of education should go to provide learners a good quality education. To what extent should the education system provide equal education for all? How could schools inculcate certain virtues that would equip students to service their communities, be innovative leaders and become self-reliant? As we shall see later, many of these educational debates hinged not only on the practicality of education, but on the underlying social order. All of this was expressed through the African press, which served as a crucial forum for discussion. It is evident that by the 1880s some graduates of missionary schools demanded more say in the making of educational policy.

193 Government Publication, Inspector-General of Colleges and Schools (The Ross Report), and the *British Board of Education Special Report on Educational Subjects,* vol. 5 compiled by G. B. Muir and M. E. Sadler 1901.
194 Quoted in D. Shayer in *The Teaching of English in Schools 1900-1970,* (Oxford, 1972,) p. 94.

In the eastern Cape particularly, where segregated education policy began, *Imvo Zabantsundu* became the most outspoken means used by Africans to voice their criticism. As the only mouthpiece for Africans, *Imvo* was coldly received by some missionaries and colonists; it was seen as the 'organ of lawless spirits who will not be controlled by missionaries or European influence.'[195] This newspaper was guided by the belief that Africans 'required [a] professedly political paper, which the *isigidimi*[196]… [was] not'[197] The formation of *Imvo* as a forum and a mouthpiece where Africans could air their views was symbolically powerful. It served as the seed for breaking away from the mainstream missionary publication, spilled over to the formation of African independent churches and schools and, later, to African nationalism. It helped to connect all schooled Africans in the colony and beyond its borders. It was asserted that 'those who are concerned in it will be found leading a rebellion very quickly.'[198] In the 1880s, segregation began to be felt by Africans from different spheres of missionary activities. The spirit of resistance that was clearly and vigorously voiced in *Imvo Zabantsundu* indicated that educated Africans, or perhaps a small section of them, were not satisfied with what was being done to them.[199] There were internal church disputes, for example, that resulted from '[t]he …subordination of the ordained clergy, in particular, [became part of the] major factor in the schisms.'[200]

Educated Africans became conscious more than ever that the future of African education would be dark unless some solution could be found. Their discontent was intensified by Cape electoral politics of the 1880s, with its inherent conflict between the liberals who called themselves 'friends of the native,' and the anti-African followers of the Cape Prime Minister, Sir Gordon Sprigg. This conservative group influenced Sprigg to promulgate various laws that were against African interests, especially the Disarmament Act of 1878 and the Voters Registration Act of 1887. The voters' law raised the qualified franchise but did not remove the African franchise.[201] In addition, Africans were frustrated by the actions of the Afrikaner Bond, which attacked African education. This was reported in *Christian Express* as follows:

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195 *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 2 February 1885.

196 *Isigidimi samaXhosa* was a vernacular newspaper that was published and sponsored by Lovedale Press. This paper reported local news and developments in isiXhosa language.

197 Ibid.

198 *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 2 February 1885.

199 Ibid.

200 Ibid.

201 A. Odendal, The Founders, p, 149.

> an attempt was made to pledge the Bond to use its influence to obtain the withdrawal of all Government Grants in aid, whether to school for Europeans under the guise of preference for the Voluntary System. Although this motion was defeated by those who saw that the voluntary principles meant plainly enough at having no education at all, yet the resolution finally carried by nearly two votes to one, affirmed that 'too much money is being expended on schools for natives.[202]

White liberals also expressed their displeasure with the Afrikaner Bond:

> bad as natives may be thought to be by some, and unworthy of even the very simplest element of education, it would be sorry business if they were to be allowed to acquire all the vices of our civilization, without the slightest effort being made for their mental or moral improvement. We have to care for them and it [is]solely a question of whether we shall do so by the school master and the missionary, or by the judge and the jailor.[203]

During this period, there were many social issues that concerned Africans, among them was the ill-treatment of Africans in workplaces, churches and other institutions where Europeans interacted with 'natives.' The situation was deepened by the unreasonable killing of Africans by individual whites recorded in the African newspapers,[204] unfair taxations and land dispossession that was increasingly felt in the 1880s. Although all these issues were equally immediate causes of African dissatisfaction, educational matters appeared to be the most widely reported in the press. By 1886, for instance, the Department of Education proposed the reduction of 'native teachers' salaries' by twenty percent; those who received £20 to £30 per annum were to be paid £16 to £24 per annum. This was opposed by African teachers and other members of NEA who saw it as retarding African education.[205] *Imvo* commented, 'now we have all along been under the impression that Government Grant to Native Teachers so low that to reduce them was as impossible as to skin a flea'[206] At the same time, teachers also complained about the issue of inspectors who by 1880s, were viewed with suspicion by African educators because of impolite behaviour when addressing or reporting about African teachers. This was reported on by the Port Elizabeth *Imvo* correspondent:

> I wish to call attention to one fact. In perusing the reports of school inspectors one must be forcibly struck by the absence of untitled names of qualified head teachers of schools, and infer that either through want of etiquette, hostility, or some other mysticism that one termed Tom, and the second Dick and third Harry while on the other hand there is a plenty of Revd, Mr, Mrs, and Miss. I should like to solve this problem some whites will not use above handles to Africans or coloureds, and their contention *because they are servants* … I think they have a just right to be treated with equal civility as whites, as they are of the same profession under the same obligation to Education

202 *Christian Express, 1 May 1885.*
203 Ibid.
204 *Imvo Zabantsundu 27 May 1890.*
205 *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 29 January 1886.
206 Ibid.

> Department. It is a dirty pride in school inspector to avoid the courteous manner of honouring a coloured teacher in his report.[207]

It is clear from the sources that African teachers were not treated equally with their white counterparts. In schools such as Lovedale, where the staff included 'native and European teachers' who shared similar professional responsibility and academic qualifications, the treatment of African and white teachers was not the same.

It is interesting to note that by the 1880s educated Africans were status conscious and used their educational occupation to construct higher status in the colony. Both as individuals and members of 'schooled people's' associations, Africans created institutions and identities that made them respectable. Their influence and power was rooted in the very same segregationist institutions that limited their horizons. [208] Thus, for them, acquisition of education was part of life that made them proud and respectable; it was humiliating for them not to be addressed by their titles. Generally speaking, teachers in the Cape Colony were unhappy about inspectors' inability to manage both their paperwork and sustain an extensive programme of school inspection.[209] There was a rising tide of misunderstanding and distrust between Africans and colonial administrators in the late 1880s. From this historical background, Africans education appeared to be a very political issue.

2.9 Other sources of disappointment

One of the main causes of frustration was the manner in which white ministers administered schools and educational matters. This was reported on by an *Imvo* correspondent from the Transkei:

> I am thankful to have an opportunity of acquainting the public with the state of the native schools and churches in this territory. There exist in this country three Christian churches viz: the Church of England, the Free Church of Scotland and the Wesleyan Church, of these the latter predominates in the number of schools, chapel and church members. This is due to the energy of its ministers. In almost every district in the Transkei there is a European missionary who supervises both the school and the church work. These missionaries I am forced to admit have performed their duties with excellence with very few exceptions. They preach on Sundays and during the week sometimes visit that day school and encourage the teachers. Among the natives there is a complaint that the missionaries of these days are not as kind as those of early days. The[y] never go to native huts nor they visit the sick… the chapels are in a dilapidated state in this country…In this territory the evening services have been abolished for the alleged reason that natives go to commit sin or it encourages their filthy habits. [210]

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207 *Imvo Zabantsundu* 16 February 1887.

208 C. Summers, *Colonial Lessons: Africans Education in Southern Rhodesia 1918-1940*,(Portsmouth 2002).

209 H. Ludlow, Government Schooling and teachers identity: The exertions of the first class teacher at Worcester, Cape of Good Hope, *New Contree*, No 73 Special Issue, 2015.

210 *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 5 October 1885.

By the 1880s, Africans from this region had well-defined ideas concerning the economic usefulness of missionaries and missionary education. By then, missionaries had already established internal cohesion within these Christianised communities. The role that pioneer missionaries, such as William Shaw and Robert Moffat, had played in these communities was generally seen as positive. They would, for instance, visit the sick, conduct evening services, and 'preach on Sundays and during the week and sometimes visit that day school and encourage the teachers.' They performed these duties with love and commitment. Sadly, this changed when the younger generation of missionaries took over in the late 1870s, introducing new ideas into the missionary project.[211] 'Symbolic of this change', De Gruchy argues, 'was the replacement in 1869 of William Govan, the founding principal at Lovedale Institute, by James Stewart, who soon became the dominant missionary figure in the region.'[212] From the perspective of the missionary trained Africans, these priests came with 'trouble' that spilled over into the religious and educational sector. This anxiety led to non-violent anti-colonial political resistance merging with other social issues, such as schooling and religious conviction. By this time, there were signs that support for liberal, assimilationist policies among the British colonisers was declining. The relations between the white missionaries and educated Africans deteriorated.[213] As Christians, the spirit of equality, justice, the Protestant work ethic and a strong belief in law and order, as well as the avoidance of violence drove the missionary-educated Africans. Their Christian belief appeared to be in conflict with the manner in which the new generation, who happened to be supervisors of education, operated. In turn, this created a hostile relationship between the missionaries and African Christians, particularly the educated ones who expressed their dissatisfaction in the isiXhosa newspaper:

> *Kukufika kwendodana entsha evele phesheya… kolwandle. Elinene ngu Mr T Webster…. UMr Kakaza unika inkoliseko kuyindawo ayibambileyo indawana engaqondwa kahle ngabantsundu kukusuka kwenkonzo zecawe zangokuhlwa zenziwe mbini ibeyodwa yamaboyisi nempinzana zama Ngesi, ze abantu base location babe neyabo. Lento iwugxekile umsebenziwomfundisi omtsha, ukucula ke ikudungile.*[214]
>
> It is the arrival of the new young priest who comes from overseas. This man is Mr T Webster. Mr Kakaza's evidence about the role of Webster does not satisfy Africans ranging from the Sunday congregations and the night prayers that are now divided into two. This made the work of the new priest to be criticised.

The wider criticism from the newspaper articles attracted broader support from other frustrated Africans who reacted angrily against all elements of discrimination. This group began to feel the

211 J. De Gruchy, *Christianity and the Modernization of South Africa*, p. 1.
212 Ibid, p. 1.
213 See, for example A. Odendaal *The Founders.*
214 *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 2 September 1885.

burden of restrictive settler and missionary practices.[215] In addition to other prejudices that confronted Africans in and outside schools and churches, the younger white missionaries were unwilling to ordain African clergymen and give them the independent Christian authority they deserved after receiving their theological certificates. As a result, Rev Nehemiah Tile and his followers from Thembuland broke away from the white controlled Wesleyan Church in 1884. At the same time, a section of the white settler population was viewed by Africans as peculiarly hostile to their rights, and they began to organise themselves in an effort to exert more influence in the Cape parliament.[216]

Above all, what frustrated the 'mission educated natives' was the failure of African education resulting from the constant changing of teachers. This was vigorously expressed by one of the correspondents in *Imvo,* who reported, 'I can only account for failure in the constant changing of the teachers by ministers for no cause.'[217] Some of these schools were compelled to ask for qualified teachers from other better missionary schools, as observed by Canon Farmer of the Anglican Church who reported, 'a man had come to him from Sekukuni asking the church to lend them teachers.'[218]

In addition to the shortage of teachers, many school buildings were in poor shape: most of the classes were held in dilapidated church buildings, classes were inadequately furnished, and as the number of students grew, they became overcrowded. For example, an *Imvo* correspondent from the Transkei wrote: 'At Idutywa the Free Church has zinc building, an attempt was made to build with bricks inside but was not finish, it must be very cold in winter and tormentingly hot in summer.'[219] Unlike the older missionaries who diligently built these churches, younger missionaries did not initiate any effort to refurbish these churches. Apart from the discriminatory attitude of the new missionaries, by 1883, the Cape parliament reduced the salaries of African teachers and some schools were closed down. This caused an outcry among the educated natives who wrote in the vernacular. For example:

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215 See for example P. Walshe, *The Origins of African Political Consciousness in South Africa.*

216 M. Wilson, and L. Thompson, *Oxford History of South Africa*, Vol. 2 (Oxford, 1971), The increasing discrimination against the African clergy led to the birth of Ethiopianism and independent churches and schools such as the African Methodist Episcopal Church and its school Wilberforce institute that will be broadly addressed in the following chapters.

217 *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 2 September 1885.

218 University of the Witwatersrand Historical Papers, (WHP) AD 768, Anglican Collection, The minutes of the meeting of the Diocese Board of Missions held on Friday June 1905 at Pretoria.

219 *Imvo Zabanstundu*, 2 September 1885.

> *U Mr Brown (umnyulwa waswe Dikeni) ute makuvunyelwane ngale nteto-yimvo yePalamende ukuba iziqamo zemfundoyabamnyama, eyamshisshini, neyencwadi azenelisi, nokuba indimbane yemali yakomkulu ekutshelwa ukuncedisa indawo yokufundisela abamnyama ingagcinakala icitelwe kweminye imicimbi. Ukuba kusuka namhla makungahlaulwa mali komkulu yokuncedisa yokuncedisa ukuxaswa kwenani elitile elifunda ezikolweni, de ibe abahlaulelwa abo bahlaulwa imali elingana ekwalinga naleyo orolwa komkulu. Mayibe kwa yilonto kotishala abafundisa kwizikolo zabamyama*[220]
>
> Mr Brown (the delegate from Alice) [he] said we should agree about this parliamentary debate that the result of the African education, of the businesses and the books is not satisfactory. Even the money for educational space for African may end up being used in other departments. From today, there should be no money that is paid to the government that helps to pay education till the money that is paid to those in parliament is equal to the money that is paid to teachers.

In any educational environment, the endless changing of teachers affects the teaching and learning process. Initially, local African schools received good teachers who were regarded as 'good men,' mostly 'Fingoes from the Colony bringing with advanced children in the standard of attainment.'[221] The discriminatory measures that younger missionaries introduced disappointed African converts who regarded missionaries as 'fathers',[222] and it was unacceptable for Africans to see such important figures who preached equality and the word of God discriminating against them. The missionary discrimination also reflected in a letter that was written to Rev. Dr. James Stewart by an unknown missionary in reaction to an article by Stewart published in the *Fort Beaufort Advocate.* This letter raised concerns about the 'collapse of native education':

> Mr Moir sent me a paper containing a paper on 'The Collapse in Native Education' with the note of his address to you … Some missionaries criticised James Stewart who was worried about the collapse of native education wrote an article entitled 'collapse of native education'. In response Stewart was criticised by one of the unnamed missionar[ies] who wrote "In it you may say that the paper contain your views. By this time possibly you may have seen the un-wisdom of publishing such a paper now…when so many are ready to perverse uses any statement against native education whether well founded or not. I do not mean to argue the question as put by you, except to say that there is hardly an opinion advanced in that paper, that may not be controverted, and that while admitting the need for improvement, the way you take is the wrong one. If you are a friend of the education of the native and as missionary of Lovedale you are supposed to be that – the right state to bring about that better state we all desire would be in conjunction with your colleagues to take the practical end towards that end.
>
> No one outside of missionary circle who reads that paper will take one single step towards that object and therefore I think the paper is fitted only to do mischief by supplying the enemies of the native education with arguments. I want to be perfectly plain and friendly with you. And what I chiefly to say in this letter is that in no service, on land or sea or in civic commercial employed in such service to write publicly as you have done. I put it thus, because your colleagues could not be expected publicly to discredit their work, and the committee would be pleased in choosing between you and the rest of the staff.
>
> These educational results may be less satisfactory than any of us wish but you forget altogether that whatever they may be, they are to be measured by the interval between them and the absolute non-existence of education. You forget also that the higher education and the teaching

220 Ibid.
221 Ibid.
222 *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 27 January 1885

> of science to natives has been steadily opposed and scouted by public opinion in the colony, that opinion desires a low elementary education as good enough for Kaffirs who should mainly or taught to work… I have mentioned…for the reason that the 'house divided against itself cannot stand.[223]

This resulted in contestation within the missionary and colonist circles. There were, however, some missionaries who stood firm to protect the good quality of African education, confirmed by Pambani Mzimba, a cleric employed by the United Free Church of Scotland at Lovedale. In 1886, he advised students at Lovedale that some liberals were better suited to represent African interests in the Cape legislature. Elijah Makiwane, who asserted that white liberal persuasion could be trusted to serve African interest, supported Mzimba's argument.[224] Among the progressive liberal missionaries who believed in meritocracy, as well as in human equality, was Rev Canon Peters. Peters openly supported the pre-industrial education traditional syllabus and protested against the conservative notion that the African intellect was not equal to that of whites. In an address to other missionaries, he said:

> our system of instruction is based on the time honoured theory that Classics and Mathematics are best instruments of training the mind … the objection which is often felt and expressed to person who … occupy the lower position of life engaging in these studies which are commonly looked at as heritage of the wealthier classes seems to be founded at the wrong conception of the education and of the duty of the educator.'[225]

Along with his peers who shared the similar belief, Peters' objective was to provide African students with educational knowledge that would benefit them within the colonial economic context, an effective education that would assist Africans in meeting their future needs.[226]

Another new administrative measure that the younger generation of missionaries introduced was the use of a baptismal certificate as a requirement for admission to missionary schools. As more and more Africans increasingly demanded education, it became increasingly difficult for Africans to access education after the 1880s. In reaction to this practice, African Christians pledged solidarity with non-Christian groups and exerted pressure on the different churches, particularly the Anglican Church, to admit non-Christian children. This was evident in the Anglican Church Native Conference held in Pretoria in 1907, when 'natives' priests' appealed to the church management that 'children of heathen parents should be encouraged to come to

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223 University of Cape Town, James Steward Papers, BC 106, C219. 1, A letter to James Stewart sent by an unnamed missionary, dated 7 March 1896.

224 It is out of the scope of this chapter to discuss the debates surrounding Mzimba's assertion, however, his thesis was relevant for the liberal protection of 'native education'. For further debates see M. Chirenje, 'Afro-American Factor in Southern African Ethiopianism 1890-1906,' A paper read at the second African Diaspora Studies Institute Conference held in Nairobi, Kenya 24-26 August 1981.

225 Ibid.

226 Ibid.

school.[227] The church agreed but stipulated that, 'if such children are withdrawn in order that they may attend circumcision school they should not be allowed to return.'[228]

In the first decade of the twentieth century, segregation intensified and it became difficult for missionaries to build schools anywhere, as was evident during the expansion of missionary activities into urban Johannesburg. In the minutes of the meeting of the Diocese Board of Missions held in 1905, it was reported that 'the action of the owners of Yeoville stands who were exchanging stands bought by the church … were proposing to insert a new clause to make it a condition of the sale that no Kafir Church be built on them. It was suggested that a good reply to the owners of the estate would be that … no intention of erecting any Native Church or School on the said stands.'[229] As we shall see, in the following chapter, the issue of landownership and African schools intensified in the urban Transvaal. It later culminated in the legal protest that Rev. Edward Tsewu and his Ethiopianist colleagues mounted in 1905.

The manner in which missionaries handled the issue of circumcision also became problematic in the nineteenth century; missionary opposition to circumcision was strong. According to Wallace, 'many missionaries testifying before the 1884 Native Laws Commission had even advocated that it be made illegal ... Generally, boys who went through the rite were expelled from school and disciplined in the church.'[230] Among others, circumcision was one of the factors that led to the high dropout rates. In the 1890s, many learners left school for short periods to undergo circumcision processes and, as codified by Rule 5.2 of the Anglican Church, they were not allowed to return after circumcision and were expelled or severely disciplined. The rule clearly stated that '[if they] attend circumcision school they should not be allowed to return.'[231] Certainly, circumcision was disliked by missionaries, expressed by Rev Tapsfield in 1916 who proposed that:

> the so called heathen or circumcision schools are as they are now carried on, a serious hindrance to the native people of this country – that steps be taken to approach the government with a view to

227 WHP, AD 768, Anglican Church Collection, Minutes of the Anglican Church Native Conference held in Pretoria 1907.
228 Ibid.
229 WHP, AD 768, Anglican Church Collection, The minutes of the meeting of the Diocese Board of Missions held on Friday June 1905 at Pretoria.
230 M. Wallace, 'Missionaries, Xhosa clergy and the suppression of traditional customs,' *Missions and Christianity in South African History*, (1995), pp. 153-171.
231 WHP Historical Papers, AD 768, Minutes of the Anglican Church Native Conference held in Pretoria 1907, Anglican Church Collection.

> procuring the abolition of these schools or failing that to stricter supervision should be exercised over the manner in which they are conducted.[232]

Because of industrialisation on the Rand, the African educated elite on the Rand grew rapidly after the Anglo-Boer (South African) War. The circumcision rule was opposed by Africans within Johannesburg's Anglican Church circles. In the Anglican Church Native Conference held in Pretoria in 1916,[233] these elites presented the traditional value of circumcision school as one of the fundamental institution in African identity. As we shall see, this was one of the factors that motivated Africans to set up their own independent schools such as Wilberforce Institute, to create an educational space outside of white control or oversight.

Conclusion

The good educational work of the old missionaries and their schools was torpedoed by state intervention and its educational philosophy of industrial education. An indication of the success of these older institutions can be seen in the number of graduates who became teachers, priests and other professionals including prominent graduates such as Tiyo Soga, and Jabavu. Many other prominent Africans qualified from Lovedale, making it legendary among the 'meritocracy'. Because Africans valued classical liberal education, schools such as Lovedale and Zonneblom were regarded by its graduates as the spearhead of social mobility. As has been shown, Africans did not oppose missionary education but were against the type of education imposed on them by the Cape government from the 1850s, leading to the founding of various independent schools all over the country in the early twentieth century. The missionary-educated Africans were able to articulate and provide channels for the expression of deep-felt grievances of the African people; they too were gradually attracted to separatist movements.

232 Historical Papers, AD 768. Anglican Church Collection, Minutes of the Anglican Church Native Conference held in Pretoria 1916.

233 Ibid.

CHAPTER 3

The foundation of Wilberforce Institute on the Rand 1903 –1909

3. 1 Introduction

Shortly after the mineral revolution on the Witwatersrand,[1] the white system of administration that incorporated African chiefdoms into colonial political structures solidified. Conquered and colonised, Africans experienced changes; their communally owned land was subdivided into magisterially controlled districts, limiting their access to land use and ownership.[2] The authority of the traditional chiefs was undermined by transforming them into minor officials. At the same time, new taxation laws pressured Africans into the labour market. All these changes were followed by the renewed assertion of British supremacy in the interior of South Africa, culminating in the Jameson Raid and South African (Anglo-Boer) War. The broad economic developments that resulted from mineral discoveries drew Africans into the urban centres. After the Anglo-Boer War, these key developments triggered a number of social and administrative problems in the Witwatersrand.

As a core metropolitan area, Johannesburg has undoubtedly attracted a rich scholarship. This scholarly investigation has examined social, economic, and political problems that were created by the concentration of a large African population in the urban centre of the Witwatersrand. The

1 'The Witwatersrand is a 56-kilometre-long north-facing escarpment in the former Transvaal province of South Africa, now called Gauteng. Geologically, this area consists of a hard, erosion-resistant quartzite sedimentary rock, over which several north-flowing rivers form waterfalls, which account for the name "Witwatersrand", meaning the 'ridge of white waters' in Afrikaans. It is where gold was discovered in the mid-1800s. Although gold had been discovered in various locations in South Africa, such as Barberton and Pilgrim's Rest, as well as at several sites near the Witwatersrand, these were alluvial concentrates in contemporary rivers, or in quartz veins, in the form that gold had always been found elsewhere on earth. What made the Witwatersrand unique was the extent of the Reef that stretches from Randfontein to Springs. The geological nature of the gold fields required the abandonment of the exhausted outcrop grounds. Instead, deep-level mining was required, which in turn needed supplementary investment of capital and a higher degree of mechanisation and skilled and unskilled labour. This attracted people from all over the world to come and make a living in the Witwatersrand. In this chapter Witwatersrand will be referred to as the Rand. See for example, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Witwatersrand'

2 M. Wilson and L. Thompson. (eds.), *The Oxford History of South Africa* II (Oxford, 1971), pp. 257-274 Chapter V of this work provides a detailed narrative of the subjection of the various African chiefdoms between 1870 and 1898. P. Delius, The *Land Belong to Us: the Pedi Polity, the Boers and the British in the Nineteenth Century Transvaal*, (Johannesburg, 1983), A. Duminy and B. Guest (eds.), *Natal and Zululand from earliest times to 1910: A New History* (Pietermaritzburg, 1989), J.B. Pieres, *The House of Phalo: A History of the Xhosa People in the Days of their Independence* (Johannesburg, 1981).

depth and richness of these studies are really quite impressive.[3] The literature, however, understates the role of mission-educated Africans.[4] This group of urban Africans effectively organised deputations and mass meetings that increasingly placed education within the broader issue of their socio-economic plight on the Rand.[5] The same can be said of the literature on the roots of segregated schooling: the struggle of the educated Africans is hardly mentioned.[6] The mission-educated Africans participated in a range of the city's struggles but their core struggle, I will argue, was against white paternalism in education. This effort may perhaps be interpreted as a battle for greater control over educational institutions, the institutions that were central in shaping their lives in the urban space. Many of the mission-educated Africans, in turn, began a struggle for independent schooling on the Witwatersrand. This struggle later gave birth to a number of small Ethiopianist church-controlled schools that were scattered all over the Rand, and eventually the formation of the first significant independent African college in the

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3 S. Marks and R. Rathbone. (eds.), Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa: African class formation, culture and consciousness 1870-1930, (London, 1982); E. Brookes *White Rule in South Africa, 1830-1910 Varieties in Governmental Policies Affecting Africans* (Pietermaritzburg, 1974); B. Bozzoli, *Class, Community and Conflict: South African Perspective*, (Johannesburg, 1987); C. Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past; Major Historians on Race and Class*, (Cape Town, 1988.); K. Smith's *The Changing Past; Trends in South African Historical Writing,* D. Welch, "The Growth of Towns" in M. Wilson & L. Thompson. (eds.), *Oxford History of South Africa* II, (London , 1971); M.W. Swanson, 'The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plague and Native Urban Policy in the Cape Colony 1900-09' in Beinart & Dubow (eds.), *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth Century South Africa*, (London, 1995); C. van Onselen, *New Babylon, New Nineveh; Studies in the Economic and Social History of the Witwatersrand 1886-1914*, (London, 1982); K. Atkins, The *Moon is Dead! Give Us our Money*, (Oxford 1995); J. Kirk, *Making a Voice; African Resistance to Segregation in South Africa,* (Westview, 2000).

4 Depending on the school of thought, the naming of the missionary-educated Africans that began to emerge in the late nineteenth century has been problematic. In literature this group of Africans has been called the 'educated elite,' 'petty bourgeoisie' 'educated Africans' and 'African middle class.' In the literature that explores Natal they are often referred to as *amakholwa,* whereas in the Cape Colony they are known as *Abantu besikole.* In this thesis, the author will prefer the term missionary-educated Africans.

5 The most important point to note is that these mission-educated Africans were exemplary Protestant preachers, teachers and intellectuals. They were true Christian believers that internalised the nineteenth century European missionaries' cultural chauvinism, pseudoscientific racism and belief in the redemption and perfectibility of the noble savage. For the details on Christian influence see J.A. Chalmers, *Tiyo Soga: A Page of South African Missionary Work* (London, 1877); H.T. Cousins, *From Kafir Kraal to Pulpit* (London, 1899); R. Sherpered, *Lovedale, South Africa: The Story of the Century 1841-1941* (Lovedale, 1945); D. Chanaiwa, 'African Humanism in Southern Africa: The Utopian, Traditionalist and Colonialist World of Mission Educated Elites' in A. T. Mugomba and M.Nyaggah, (eds.), *Independent without Freedom: Political Economy of Colonial Education in Southern Africa,* (Oxford, 1980).

6 M. Cross and L. Chisholm, 'Origins of Segregated Education in South Africa', in M. Nkomo, (eds.), *Pedagogy of Dominarion* (New Jersey, *1990).* 47; M. Cross, 'The Foundations of Segregated Schooling in the Transvaal 1902-1924'. *History of Education,* 16, 4 (1987), pp. 268-72; K**.** Hartshorne, *Crisis and Challenge: Black Education 1900-1990* (Cape Town, 1992) E. Levin, E. 'Black Education, Class Struggle and the Dynamics of Change in South Africa since 1946', *Africa Perspective*. 17, (1980); F. Molteno, 'Historical Foundations of the Schooling of Black South Africans', in P. Kallaway (eds.), *Apartheid and Education*. (Johannesburg, 1984) L. Chisholm, 'Class Practice, Racial Control: Education of the White working class on the Witwatersrand, 1886-1913'. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, July (mimeographed).

Transvaal,[7] the Wilberforce Institute. The establishment of this school represented significant progress. It was celebrated immediately after Revd Edward Tsewu and several other key figures won a crucial legal victory on the African right to land ownership in 1905.

Before the establishment of Wilberforce, there were a number of complex processes that this chapter will explore. In order to understand these processes, this chapter will focus on how the new post-war administration neglected African education in the Transvaal and how the state encouraged the segregation of schools by focusing on white education, while marginalising African education. What was the response of missionary-educated Africans? To what extent did the missionary school admission criteria, as well as the scarcity of these schools on the Rand, contribute to the rise of Ethiopianist-controlled schools? To what extent did the acceptance of some African traditional practices in Ethiopianist churches attract non-Christian urban children to Ethiopianist schools? By answering these questions, I hope to add a new dimension to the history of education on the Rand.

3.2 Post-war[8] African schooling

Between 1902 and 1909, the question of African schooling was neglected by the new administration in the Transvaal;[9] African educational matters of the province were left in the hands of the missionaries. In the six years between the Treaty of Vereeniging and the first Convention that discussed the issue of Union in 1908, the government educational policy was preoccupied by the 'language question,' a dispute between two white ethnic groups: the Dutch-

7 The Basotho, the BaTswana, the BaVenda and the BaTsonga people occupied the different geographical parts of the area that was later called Transvaal. This area was bordered by Vaal River on the south and Limpopo River on the north and comprises 111,196 square miles. The first Europeans in the Transvaal were emigrant farmers; the first group of these settlers left the Cape in the 1830s. In 1852, under the Sand River Convention, the independence of these settlers was recognised. Up to 1885 there was no special law in the Transvaal for regulating 'native administration'. In the later years, it recognised the existing Natives Laws and customs not 'repugnant' to the general principles of civilization. Officers were appointed to exercise the authority that chiefs formerly exercised. In this province there was no equality between white (Boers) and the Africans in the church or in the state.

8 Many factors contributed to the conflagration of the biggest military confrontation in the history of South Africa, the South African War, traditionally known as the Anglo-Boer War. Among these are: the insecurity of Britain over the gold reserve; the squeeze on British manufacturing markets and the insecurity over the future of the subcontinent; the 'inefficiency' of the South African Republican regime in promoting interests of the mining industry in the Transvaal; the commitment to the Cecil Rhodes' idea of a large colonial empire from Southern to Northern Africa. See, for example S. Marks, and S. Trapido, 'Lord Milner and the South African State', *History Workshop Journal*, No. 8 , (1979), p. 53.

9 It should be noted that there was only direct British administration from 1900-1906 before the British handed government back to 'home rule' under the former Boer generals.

and English-speaking people.[10] With all the divisions that the war had created, one thing that all Afrikaners had in common was their language; this was destined to play a major role in the revival of the Afrikaner nation.[11] As far as the convention was concerned, there was a friendly settlement of the language question which concluded that 'education should in any case be lifted out of party politics and administered on the basis already arrived at on the language question.'[12] It was decided that English and Dutch should not be allowed to become a contentious issue. At provincial level, the textbook issue, particularly history books, became central to the provincial educational policy. The government sought to design and promote a conciliatory world history that would accommodate both the Dutch and the English and address the common European origins of both groups. This scholastic initiative was driven by the post-war 'British rhetoric', which asserted, in Davenport's words: 'everything that cramps and confines… [the white children's] view to South Africa only … makes for Afrikanerdom and further discord.'[13] A sense of unity among the white community was fostered through an ideology of British South Africanness.[14] This was evident in the curriculum content that had an imperial focus in white schools. At the school level, Denoon notes, 'the students focused on the largest conceivable unit, namely the British Empire and its geographical composition … imperial teachers would find this curriculum admirably suited for placing nationalism.'[15] The mission-educated Africans were disappointed that the question of African education did not form part of the reconstruction agenda.

At the same time, religious education in white public schools became a contentious issue. By 1903, there was animosity between the Dutch and English churches. Some Dutch dominees, for example, called on Afrikaners to recover their separate identity and discover their strength in isolation from *uitlanders* (white foreigners) and Africans.[16] The Anglicans, on the other hand,

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10 The English-speaking group of Johannesburg were diverse; among many European groups there were Italians, Scottish, Jews, Irish and East Europeans.

11 T.R. H. Davenport, *South Africa: A Modern History* (Johannesburg, 1977).

12 E.H. Walton, *The inner history of the National Convention of South Africa*, (Cape Town, 1912), pp. 222-224

13 T.R. H. Davenport, *South Africa: A Modern History* (Johannesburg, 1977), p.152.

14 B. Bozzoli, *The Political Nature of the Ruling Class: Capital and Ideology in South Africa, 1890-1933* (London, 1981).

15 D. Denoon , *A Grand illusion: A failure of Imperial Policy in the Transvaal Colony during the Period of Reconstruction 1900 – 1905* (London, 1973) quoted in L Chisholm, Class and Color , Chisholm, Class and Color in South African Youth Policy 1886-1910' *History of Education Quarterly* . 27. (1987), p. 16

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viewed Boer *predikants* (priests) as taking a leading political role. This led them to oppose any religious education not controlled by the church. This was contested by the Nonconformist Christian groups who asserted that this would divide children along denominational lines who wanted churches to bring unity between the Boers and the English. This contestation led to the formation of the Religious Instruction Commission, established to inquire into and report on the Transvaal Public Education Ordinance (TPEO) No.7 of 1903. The primary aim of the Commission was to make inquiries into the working of the system of teaching of scripture in schools. Under the TPEO, there were clauses and sub-clauses that dealt with the matter of religious instruction in schools. Some of these clauses did not satisfy the Dutch section of the Transvaal population, particularly those who dealt with sectarian teaching; they were in favour of non-sectarian religious instruction by teachers in schools.[17]

Another major question that engaged the colonial officials in the Transvaal was that of compulsory white education. The government's main worry was the prevailing social conditions of the white youth on the Rand; for example, a number of the white, mostly Dutch, school-going age children had, for a number of reasons, never attended school. This effort aimed at incorporating the white working class, largely the destitute Afrikaners from the countryside, into the British ideological circle[18] and the only way to achieve this was to introduce compulsory schooling for whites. Jan Smuts,[19] who was by then a minister of education, advocated this idea; he saw the role of schooling as the only means that would mute social and cultural conflict between the English speakers and the Boers. He argued that, 'we should try to make a race with the same platform, and to have our children sitting on the same school benches and so, through education, adopt a unifying force and a unifying influence.'[20] This was interpreted by some as an attempt to anglicise the Dutch (Afrikaans) speaking group. This process was followed by Smuts'

J. De Gruchy, *Christianity and Modernisation of South Africa: A documentary history*, p. 64.

17 Report of the Religious Instruction in Schools Commission together with Minority Report of Proceedings, Minutes of Evidence and Appendices, (Pretoria, 1904).

18 M. Cross, 'The Foundations of Segregated Schooling in the Transvaal 1902-1924,' (Master's Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1987), p 268-72; K. Hartshorne, *Crisis and Challenge: Black Education 1900-1990* (Cape Town, 1992), 25-6. L. Chisholm, 'Class Practice, Racial Control: Education of the White working class on the Witwatersrand, 1886-1913'. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, July 1985 (mimeographed), p. 4; M. Cross, 'A Historiographical Review of Education in South Africa: Towards an Assessment'. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, Seminar Paper, August 1985.

19 Jan Smuts was a strong advocate of reconciliation, but he was not appointed by the British themselves in the Reconstruction He devoted his energies to the achievement of political union of the four British colonies in South Africa; see H. Giliomee and B. Mbenga (eds.), *New History of South Africa*, (Cape Town, 2007).

20 J.C. Smuts, Second Reading of the Educational Bill, Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, 25 June 1907.

Education Act of 1907, which enacted compulsory education for white children. In its nature, the new policy was consciously directed at white youth, not at African children.[21]

As early as the 1890s, the question of compulsory education among the Dutch community became controversial after the Dutch intelligentsia, most notably teachers, lawyers, churchman and politicians, proposed compulsory education for Dutch children. The proposal was resisted by the burgher community for whom it was intended that saw this proposal as an 'act of enslavement intolerable to a free people...[who] would provoke rebellion in the land.'[22] The post-war government nevertheless regarded compulsory education as an important contributor to the alleviation of white poverty. Between 1909 and 1920, this initiative increased school attendance among white children and the greater government spending on teacher salaries ensured that better qualified teachers entered the school system in Transvaal. These new developments also motivated non-profit organisations and churches to contribute towards the improvement of the institutional and infrastructural capacity in schools. At the same time, the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), with its many organisational arms, such as the *Afrikaanse Christelike Vrouevereniging* (ACVV), built and managed many industrial and agricultural schools that provided education to more than 1,500 students, as well as 160 boarding homes that served more than 7,000 rural children between 1917 and 1932.[23]

In the meantime, the question of African education was not addressed and African leaders in the Transvaal were very disappointed. Their frustration was intensified when settler churches were given an opportunity to respond to Article 8 of the Treaty of Vereeniging, which dealt with the question of African franchise, and missionaries representing the old Cape liberal tradition were reluctant to support the extension of the Cape franchise and equal education.[24] Even the prominent missionary educationists who took part in that session, such as Dr James Stewart, who was deeply involved with African education, did not raise any concerns about African education. It was frustrating to African leaders that a respected and deep-rooted mission educationist, such as Stewart, who dedicated his life to uplifting Africans through education, did not call for the recognition of African education in the post-war deliberations.

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21 Ibid, p. 26.

22 T. Keegan, *Rural Transformation in Industrialising South Africa: The Southern Highveld to 1941* (Johannesburg, 1986), p.24.

23 J. Fourie, 'The South African Poor White Problem' *Stellenbosch Economic Working Papers*, (2006); E.G Malherbe. *Education in South Africa* 1652-1922 (Cape Town, 1925).

24 J. de Gruchy, *Christian and the modernisation of South Africa: a documentary history, Volume 2*, (Pretoria, 2009).

This marginalised Africans, who hoped that their social and political situation would improve after the war. In other words, the educational matters of Africans were not worthy of consideration unless they impinged upon, or constituted a problem for the dominant white community. As we shall see, this was the case during the proceedings of the South African Native Affairs Commission (SANAC) when the migration of some Africans to American schools, the rise of Ethiopianism, and the mushrooming of African independent schools that were deemed to spread 'seditious propaganda' formed part of the Commissioner's agenda.[25] The new administrators ignored the African demand for education and political equality. The mining sector, on the other hand, certainly saw no need for African education. In 1903, the South African Mines and Industries Commission (SAMIC) made the point that 'a course of six or twelve months labour on the Rand was the easiest and most profound education that can be afforded to the native.' The officials of this organisation emphasised that, 'he [the native] learns the value of discipline, regularity, and the ways of the white man… [the African trained to be mine worker was] a better animal and a better man at the end of his term than he was when he began.'[26]

To some extent, the issue of African education was discussed during the proceedings of the South African Native Affairs Commission (SANAC), a commission designed to come up with a broader 'native policy' for an envisaged Union of South Africa. During the proceedings, different African and European witnesses were asked to air their views on educational equality between both South African racial groups. More specifically, the commission disapproved of the modest flow of Africans to American universities, as well as to the rising tide of Ethiopianism.[27]

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25 Ethiopianism became a generic term to describe a whole range of the African efforts to improve his or her religious, educational, and political status in society. See, J. M. Chirenge, Ethiopianism and Afro- Americans in Southern Africa, 1883-1916 (London, 1987); K. Roy, *Zion City*, (Cape Town, 2000).

26 *The South African Mines Commerce and Industries*. 14 March 1903, p. 3; also see, M. Cross, 'The Foundations of Segregated Schooling in the Transvaal 1902-1924, p. 39; N. Levy, 'the State, Mineowners and Labour Regulation in the Transvaal, 1887-1906", Collected Seminar Papers. University of London, Institutes of Commonwealth Studies, 1980.

27 For detailed studies, see J. Campbell, 'Conceiving of the Ethiopian Movement,' Seminar Paper delivered at the Centre for African Studies University of the Witwatersrand, April 1987; J. Campbell, *Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa,* (New York, 1995); R. K Massie, *Loosing the Bonds: The United States and South Africa in the Apartheid Years* (New York, 1997); Richard W. Hull, *American Enterprise in South Africa: Historical Dimensions of Engagement and Disengagement* (New York, 1990); R. Ralston, 'A Second Middle Passage: African Student Sojourn in the United States during the Coloinal Period and their Influence upon the Character of African leadership' (PhD Thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1972).

Shepperson notes, 'the term [Ethiopianism] ought to be applied only to some aspects of the independent African church movement in South Africa, whose origins may be traced back to the 70's of the nineteenth century and earlier.'[28] The Ethiopian movement came to a head first among the Wesleyans with the establishment of a tribal church in 1884 by a Tembu Wesleyan minister, Nehemiah Tile, and reached its first peak in 1892 with the founding of the Ethiopian Church.[29] The term Ethiopianism was adopted from Psalm 68:31, 'Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God.' It was embraced after a group of Wesleyan congregants experienced colour bar inside the Methodist church in Pretoria. Under the leadership of a Wesleyan minister, Mangena M. Mokone, this group broke away from the Methodist church to form Ethiopian church in Pretoria in 1892. Apart from colour bar inside the church, this group also experienced a great stream of social discontent that triggered the feelings of nationalism and search for avenues of personal advancement. Thus, the Ethiopianist agenda defeated the objectives of the state whose ambitions needed to be shaped the mission educated Africans in a direction that would not challenge the existing social order.

Although other educational matters, such as the question of equal education, were raised, both African connections to the USA and Ethiopianism became central during the proceedings of the Commission. The issue of African migration troubled the government because of the 'Negro influence'[30] , evident in a letter written by the High Commissioner of Johannesburg to Lord Milner:

> Negro propagandists who have brought with them the racial prejudice and hatred existing in the Southern States of America, a virus with which they inculcating the better educated natives. I went [the] other day to see Mzimba who for twenty years was pastor of the Native Presbyterian Church at Lovedale and who afterwards seceded with the object of starting a rival Presbyterian Church organisation managed by the

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[28] G. Shepperson, 'Ethiopianism and African Nationalism' *Phylon* 1953, p.9.

[29] Ibid.p.

30 The African-Americans' struggle promoted the unity of African people across the diaspora and freedom which called African-Americans to repatriate back to Africa, their ancestral homelands. For detailed discussion, see, G. Fredrickson. *White Supremacy: A Comparative Studv in American and South African History* (New York, 1981); G. Fredrickson. *Black Liberation: A Comparative History of Black Ideologies in the United Slates and South Africa* (New York, 1995); J. Cell, *The Highest Stage of White Supremacy: The Origins of Segregation in South Africa and the American South* (New York, 1982); See H. R. Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden: Pan-Negro patriot, 1832-1912* (Oxford, 1967); G.C. Cuthbertson, "Cave of Adullam": Missionary reaction to Ethiopianism at Lovedale, 1898-1902', *Missionalia*, 19(1, April, 1991), pp .57-64; G.C. Cuthbertson, 'Missionary imperialism and colonial warfare: London Missionary Society attitudes to the South African War, 1899-1902.*' South African Historical Journal,* 1987, 19: F. A. McKenzie, *The American Invaders* (London. 1902); G. Fredrickson, *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American and South African History* (New York, 1981); G. Fredrickson. *Black Liberation: A Comparative History of Black Ideologies in the United States and South Africa* (New York, 1995); J. Cell, *The Highest Stage of White Supremacy: The Origins of Segregation in South Africa and the American South* (New York, 1982).

> natives without any help from the white missionaries. I asked him what his people desired most in the way of education and he answered without hesitation 'higher training for native teachers'.[31]

Africans became aware of the futile struggle for representation within South Africa in the early years of the twentieth century and, Walshe notes, 'in common with subject peoples throughout the world, developed concurrently with the more profound and continuing influence of Negro America.'[32] During the SANAC hearing prominent missionaries like Dr Stewart were summoned to testify on African education. His position was highly controversial; during the earlier Treaty of Vereeniging respond session Stewart never mentioned African education. It was only during the hearings of SANAC that he demonstrated his support for the development of African education. In his testimony, he stated: 'The people will never become educated if you keep the educational machinery in the country working at Standard III or Standard IV.'[33] He further testified: 'if the state fosters higher education for whites ... It might be reasonably expected … to do the same for the black population.'[34] Initially, he called for higher education for Africans. By 1904, however, he was already under attack from a strong African contingent of Lovedale graduates on the issue of matriculation and fees. These former students complained that Lovedale, which was the only African institution other than Zonneblom where Africans could matriculate, refused to give Africans higher education.[35] Part of the reason was that Lovedale was becoming too expensive when compared to the 1880s and 1890s. As Africans were increasingly displaced and dispossessed, they were becoming poorer and poorer and could not afford to pay fees as they used to do.[36] By 1904, for example, the school charged £50 per head for a matric education, as well as £20 for food and boarding.

Stewart supported African education, but promoted segregated education; he indicated that although Africans and European students worked well together in the same classes for the past forty years at Lovedale, 'racial mixing at schools will not work well.'[37] Perhaps Stewart's attitude towards equal education may be traced back to his disagreement with Revd William Govan, the founder of Lovedale, on the training of African priests. As indicated in the previous chapter,

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31 UCT JSP BC 106, C160.70 C 251, A letter from the High Commissioner of Johannesburg to Lord Milner, 24 June 1904.

32 P. Walshe, *The rise of African nationalism in South Africa: The African National Congress, 1912-1952*. (London, 1970), p. 90.

33 SANAC, Minutes of Evidence, Testimony of Dr. J. Stewart, p. 902.

34 Ibid, p. 901.

35 Ibid, p. 901.

36 C. Bundy, *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry* (London, 1979).

37 SANAC, Minutes of Evidence, Testimony of Dr. J. Stewart, p. 903-904.

Govan believed that African candidates for the ministry should be trained to the same level as white candidates. Stewart argued that 'black evangelists needed white missionary guidance' because 'they are apt to claim equality, for which as a race they are not yet prepared.'[38] As a result, he introduced shorter courses for 'native preachers' and 'evangelists.' Duncan and Hofmeyr argue that by doing this Stewart was increasing the ranks of lay workers, and that simultaneously he 'could successfully restrict access to the ordained ministry.'[39]

The issue of race in schooling became evident when the son of John Tengo Jabavu was denied a space at Dale College in King Williams Town. The white school missionary administrators saw African students as potentially damaging the interests of white institutions. In other words, most missionaries did not significantly disagree with prominent segregationists such as Lionel Phillips who made it clear that 'the white race will insist upon ruling, and will never consent to be ruled by the natives, the amount of influence that they will be allowed to exercise must always be limited.'[40] It became clear that post-war white attitudes would not agree to mixed schools. The roots of this attitude may perhaps be traced back to the 1890s, when the teaching of science to Africans was steadily opposed by white public opinion in the colony. This was exemplified in a letter written to Revd David. Duncan. Stormont, the principal of Blythswood Institute, Butterworth in the eastern Cape by an unknown writer in 1894.

> The teaching of science to natives has been steadily opposed and scorned by public opinion in the colony ... a low elementary education as good enough for Kaffirs, who should mainly or only be taught to work. For twenty years we [missionaries] have been fighting this battle on behalf of a better education for natives.[41]

This correspondence demonstrates that not all the missionaries supported the idea of segregated education, evident, for instance, when Commissioner Thompson asked Revd Farmer during the SANAC hearing: 'you think that colour should not bar him from intermingling with the best schools? – I certainly think not. He should go side by side with Europeans? He should, yes.'[42] Discriminatory was also opposed by the likes of Canon Orford, the President of the Native Teachers Association, who had experienced working very closely with African learners and teachers from the Cape to the Orange River Colony (ORC). In various examinations that he conducted in African schools, he applied the same method and standard that was practised in

38 G. A. Duncan and W.J Hofmeyr, 'Leadership Through Theological Education: Two Case Studies in South African History,' *Verbum et Ecclesia* 23, (2002), p. 652.
39 Ibid, p. 653.
40 L. Phillips, *Transvaal Problems: Some Notes on Current Politics, quoted in* L, Chisholm Class and Color in South African Youth Policy 1886-1910' *History of Education Quarterly* 27 (1987), p. 7.
41 University of Cape Town, Stewart Papers, BC 106 C219.1, A letter from the unknown writer to Mr. Stormont, 7 March 1894.
42 SANAC, Minutes of Evidence, Testimony of Revd Farmer, p. 663.

England, and he noted that ‘the results have decidedly been good'. What struck him was the manner in which African youth grasped arithmetic.[43]

Orford’s testimony reveals that during the SANAC hearing contesting voices emerged from both Africans and some European missionaries. When Mr. Sloley, the Commissioner, posed the question to Jonathan Motshumi, an African Wesleyan minister and a teacher, whether the curriculum should be the same as the one in white schools, Motshumi answered, ‘it should be the same.’[44] Interestingly, Revd Orford supported Motshumi. It should be noted that the manner in which Revd Orford worked with Africans teachers and children impressed many African teachers and ministers who later seconded him to become a President of the Native Teachers Association in the ORC. This association promoted African education and better working conditions for teachers. It is clear that the conservative group at the SANAC hearing deliberately promoted the neglect of African education in order to maintain white superiority and possibly even cheapen African labour. This demonstrates that there was now two camps among the missionaries; some opposed the Stewart camp that recommended to the Native Commission that equal education was not feasible. At the most extreme end, one of the missionaries testified to the Commission: ‘the kaffir should not be educated at all. The “schooled kaffir” has no value. Any farmer will tell you that he gets much better service from a “raw” kaffir than from one who has learnt to read, write and do sums.’[45]

Following the SANAC recommendations, the segregationist policy on education was adopted; the separation of schools and curriculum for Africans and Europeans was endorsed in the Transvaal. In the field of education the Commission was of the opinion that: ‘education … had the effect of creating in the Natives an aggressive spirit, arising no doubt from an exaggerated sense of individual self-importance, which renders them less docile and less disposed to be contented with the position for which nature or circumstances have fitted them.’[46] The Commission discouraged educational migration of African students to America as undesirable; it was seen as promoting animosity. Many Europeans, including missionaries, recommended that ‘it would be better to educate the native youth in South Africa.’[47] The African witnesses were disappointed when their proposal that education should be compulsory and that there should be

43 SANAC, Minutes of Evidence, Testimony of Revd Canon Orford, p. 329.
44 SANAC, Minutes of Evidence, Testimony of Jonathan Motshumi, p. 329.
45 Ibid, p. 62.
46 SANAC Report, p.67.
47 Ibid, p. 68.

public non-denominational education was rejected.[48] African children in the Transvaal were then compelled to attend schools in the existing mainstream missionary schools. The issue of separate curriculum was not adequately addressed; the Commission limited its recommendation to the submission that educational experts and men of experience among the natives should discuss this.[49]

This recommendation stifled African education, and prompted ideas of 'African self-consciousness,' which intensified the restlessness and bitterness of the African educated class. The SANAC also set up guidelines for future South African policy that culminated in the Urban Areas Native Pass Act of 1909, the Mine and Works Act of 1911, and many other pieces of segregationist legislation.[50] It became clear to Africans that the continuity of political life in the defeated Republics would not be disrupted by the advent of British rule. The prevailing racial segregation remained fundamentally the same in the Transvaal painting a gloomy picture for the African political future, social life, and educational advancement. There was an outcry from Africans who suffered under stringent pass laws, which were applied more vigorously than previously in the Transvaal.[51] The post-war educational developments, as well as the recommendations of most white witnesses to SANAC, depressed Africans who had wholeheartedly supported the British war effort. They had hoped that if the British were victorious they would enjoy the benefits of non-racial policies.[52]

3.3 The rise of 'African self-consciousness'

Notwithstanding the post-war repressive steps, isolation, and the lack of educational facilities, Africans organised themselves into formal political and religious movements that protected their interests. Among these establishments were the Ethiopianist church movement,[53] the Transvaal

48 Ibid, p. 71.
49 Ibid, p. 73.
50 T.R.H. Davenport, *South Africa*, p.152
51 E. Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu: The Beginning of Black Protest Politics in South Africa to 1912,* (Cape Town, 1984), p. 38
52 For the detailed discussion, see A. Webb, *Some Question on the Settlement in South Africa* (London, 1900), pp.22-5; E. Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu: The Beginning of Black Protest Politics;* B. Nasson. *The War for South Africa: The* Anglo-Boer War. (Cape Town, 2010); P. Warwick, *Black people and the South African War, 1899-1902* (Cambridge, 1983).
53 George Shepperson argues that 'the term [ethiopianism] ought to be applied only to some aspects of the independent African church movement in South Africa, whose origins may be traced back to the 70s of the nineteenth century and earlier. Colour bar inside white churches, the search for avenues of personal advancement amongst a growing group of "educated" Africans, vague feelings of nationalism amongst peoples whose traditional institutions are being undermined - all combined to spur groups of Africans to seek at least a partial independence in their own churches. The movement came to a head first among the Wesleyans with the establishment of a tribal church in 1884 by a Tembu Wesleyan minister, Nehemiah Tile, and reached its first peak in 1892 with the founding

Native Congress (TNC), the Transvaal Vigilance Association (TVA), the Transvaal Basotho Committee (TBC) and Edward Tsewu's *Iso Lomzi*. All these organisations were multi-ethnic in composition, except for the ethnically based TBC, which later clarified that its concern was not limited to the position of Basotho, but to all Africans. The issues of land dispossession, education, pass laws, taxation and the poor living conditions in the urban areas brought these organisations into contact with each other. They all became involved in the struggle for education but, in this respect, the Ethiopianist movement played a leading role, as the principal organisation that led the struggle for independent education. The movement turned out to be the nodal point around which African educational problems and grievances were expressed. Both government and mainstream mission bodies were thus threatened by the rise of Ethiopianist churches.[54] The LMS, for example, reported loss of membership through the operation of the Ethiopianists.[55] In 1899, the French missionary, Francis Coillard, complained of the peril of Ethiopianism whose invasion had threatened the success of the Paris Mission in Barotseland on the Upper Zambezi.[56] In a slightly different criticism, Dr Alexander William Roberts, the Acting Superintendent of the Lovedale Mission Institution, was asked during the SANAC proceedings to give his views on the independent church movement. Roberts considered that the independent movement was: 'First a race movement; second... political; third... church, and because of the sequence, I think, it is harmful at the present day.'[57] The list of the government officials, magistrates and the missionaries who criticised Ethiopianism is too lengthy to recite in this chapter. For a time, it had even seemed that the movement was going to change the whole face of South African political relations.

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of the Ethiopian Church (Psalm 68:31, "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God") by another Wesleyan minister, Mangena M. Mokone. It was almost inevitable that the South African Ethiopian Church should seek affiliation with the American Negro body with which it had so much in common.' See G. Shepperson 'Ethiopianism and African Nationalism' *Phylon* 1940-1956, Vol. 14, p. 9, For more classical works dealing with Ethiopianism, see especially: B. G. M. Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa* (London, 1948); K. Schlosser, *Propheten in Afrika* (Braunschweig, 1949); E. Roux, *Time Longer Than Rope* (London, 1949). Earlier works and articles using the word in all its senses include: M. Leenhardt, *Le Mouvement Ethiopien au sud de I'Afrique* (Cahors, 1902); E. M. Green, 'Native Unrest in South Africa,' *The Nineteenth Century, XLV,* 1899; A. Burnett, 'Ethiopianism,' *Them Church Missionary Review*, LXXIII (1922); W. C. Willoughby, *Race Problems in the New Africa* (Oxford, 1923); A. Lea, *The Native Separatist Church Movement in South Africa* (Cape Town, 1926); R. L. Buell, *The Native Problem in Africa* (New York, 1928). L. A. Cook, 'Revolt in Africa,' *The Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 4 (1933)

54 J.R. Coan, *Flying Sparks: The genesis of African Methodism in South Africa* (Tennessee, 1987).

55 London Missionary Society Annual Report, 1899. p. 175 This was also reported in the LMS 1904 report, p. 259.

56 Ibid, p. 91.

57 SANAC, Minute of Evidence, testimony of Dr Roberts quoted in Millard, 'A Study of the perceived cause of schism in some Ethiopian type churches in the Cape and Transvaal,' (PhD Thesis, University of South Africa, 1995).

3.4 The white misinterpretation of the Ethiopianist movement

It could be strongly argued that the role of the Ethiopianist movement was misunderstood and deliberately misinterpreted by the missionaries from whom Africans expected better things. The white missionaries overlooked the fact that the Ethiopianist role was nothing but the augmentation of what the earlier generation of white evangelists introduced. On the other hand, the foundation of independent schools and churches proved that the work of the European missionaries among the 'natives' was not a complete failure, that it taught them to stand on their own feet and take a leading part in evangelising to their fellow Africans. The Ethiopianist movement was in many ways the answer to the prayers of the earlier missionaries who did the work of Christianising the 'dark continent'. In other words, the missionaries did not realise that the seed of Christianity that they planted within African converts heightened missionary enthusiasm among the Ethiopians, who felt that they should independently focus on missionary work upon the establishment of independent schools and churches. For the white missionaries, the success of the Ethiopianist endeavour threatened the old mainstream missionary order. In fact, the independent religious and educational establishments were not in conflict with the existing missionary organisation as was expressed by the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) Church group that called themselves the 'Henry McNeil Turner Crusaders of the Twentieth Century'.[58] This group of African-Americans worked very closely with the Ethiopianist priests on 'the crying needs of Negroes in Africa for the light of education.'[59] In their campaign for the proposed South African College project in 1899, they confirmed that: 'The Crusaders were not expected to conflict with the existing missionary organisations.'[60] What was not noticed was that independent Africans acknowledged the role of the pioneer missionaries for their labour and sacrifice.[61] The intention of the Ethiopianists was not to stir up sedition against the civil government. In its distribution over the territories of many governments, the AME Church encouraged its members to be loyal to the respective governments under whose control they lived.[62]

58 Bishop Henry McNeil Turner was the Bishop of the AME Church in the 1890s, he was instrumental during the negotiation between the Ethiopians and the AME Church that drove the incorporation of the Ethiopian church into the AME Church in 1896. Bishop Turner visited South Africa in the late 1890s.

59 *Christian Recorder*, 28 October 1899.

60 J.R. Coan, *Flying Sparks*, p. 116.

61 See, for example, Millard, 'A Study of the perceived cause of schism'

62 J.R. Coan, *Flying Sparks*, p. 160.

3.5 The urban educational struggle

In the urban Transvaal, the Ethiopianist movement represented African peoples in addressing different social problems, enthusing and motivating African urban residents. The Ethiopianist priests encouraged African children to go to school in order to be independent. The role that these clergymen played demonstrated that what the educated Africans extracted from the European schooling was important for the upliftment of the African communities.[63] As confirmed by the official correspondences between the Ethiopianist leaders and the Native Affairs Department, as well as their testimonies during the SANAC hearing, the actual words of the Ethiopians constituted a lexicon of resistance rooted in the everyday experience of the urban Africans on the Rand and in Pretoria. It became difficult for the Ethiopianist movement, made up of religious associations, to divorce African independent Christian practice from educational and land tenure rights. Not having land owned by the church where they could build places of education and worship meant that churches and schools had to pay high rents, which congregations could not afford.

They understood the difficulties that Africans faced when it came to education. While studying in missionary schools, their educational struggle included lengthy evening studies by candlelight and paraffin lamps, the remoteness of schools and libraries, and lack of financial support. All these demanded considerable determination and staying power for anyone seeking to overcome the obstacles to learning. At its best, the Ethiopianists developed strategies of educational service to the local African urban communities. As Campbell puts it: 'While adept in the ways of the white world they continued to cherish their independence from it.'[64] They were bold and kept

63 For the detailed discussion, see Lea, A., "Native Separatist Churches", in J. D. Taylor (eds.), The Native Separatist Church Movement in South Africa, Cape Town- Johannesburg, 1926. J. Millard, 'A Study of the perceived cause of schism in some Ethiopian'; C. Nyombolo The origins and development of Ethiopianism in E. Kamphausen, *Anf ange der kirchlichen Unabhangigkeitsbewegung in Siidafrika Geschichte und Theologie der Athiopischen Bewegung* 1872-1912 (Frankfurt, 1976); P. Makhubu,1988 *Who are the Independent Churches*? (Johannesburg, 1976); H. L. Pretorius, *Ethiopia stretches out her hands unto God Aspects of Transkeian Indigenous Churches* (Pretoria, 1993).

64 J. Campbell, *Songs of Zion*, p. 170.

well abreast of the post-war African urban struggle that prioritised the education of African children.

Although Ethiopianist priests were better off than their 'heathen' counterparts were, the education and skills they brought with them to the city and the common suffering that they shared with their fellow non-Christians urged them to invest their political energy in local urban issues that impinged directly on the lives of their congregants, non-congregants, and the larger urban African community.[65] Revd Edward Tsewu, for example, advocated better wages in the mining industry. During the hearing of the SANAC, the following question was posed to Tsewu: 'what do you mean by saying the mining companies should give them plenty of work?' He answered, 'I mean, so far as Johannesburg is concerned they should give them good pay … I think the companies ought to raise the wages of the natives.'[66] Jantye Zachariah Tantsi, who also originally came from the eastern Cape, played a prominent role in the fight for African independent education and founded many schools in the municipal location of the Rand

Unlike the urban non-Christian urban newcomers, Ethiopianist church leaders were de-tribalised, educated away from their own culture and traditions, and attached to the fringes of European culture. In class terms, they could have isolated themselves from the lower uneducated and the 'tribalised' urban dwellers. However, the social and administrative conditions, as well as the rural dispossession that included the rural discrimination of educated Africans in mission stations, facilitated the development of a new, more inclusive conception of African identity that drew them closer to the urban uneducated class.[67] As converts, their Christian upbringing shaped them to look at social and political issues affecting Africans in the urban Witwatersrand as moral issues, rather than political. As Chanaiwa argues:

> we have chosen to call the elites humanist because of their apparently overwhelming commitment to the ideology of individual dignity, non-racialism, and the brotherhood of mankind, which was not merely a philosophy of life, but a moralist crusade against evil, ignorance, and racism.[68]

Their attitude was shaped by the facts that, before the 1860s, the mission-educated Africans were initially not discriminated against on a racial basis but rather because of culture. They regarded all men as potentially equal but did not differentiate between Christianity and Western civilization.

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65 Ibid.
66 SANAC, Minutes of Evidence, Testimony of Edward Tsewu, p. 790.
67 See J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*.
68 D. Chanaiwa, 'African Humanism in Southern Africa: The Utopian, Traditionalist and Colonialist World of Mission Educated Elites' in A. T. Mugomba and M.Nyaggah, (eds.), *Independent without Freedom:* p. 33

One could therefore argue that before the formation of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) in 1912, the notion of 'political activism' was not on the minds of Ethiopianists; they acted morally as Christians who regarded the action of the white administrators, some missionaries and the colonists as 'wicked.' As a result, many Ethiopians played a leading role in vigilance associations and congresses. By 1904, William Windham, the Secretary for Native Affairs, reported that there were almost seventy highly educated natives on the Rand and 'in no case have letters of exemption been granted to an[y] Ethiopianist ministers.'[69] This encouraged them to write freely to the white government officials as representatives of organisations that represented Africans. The Secretary for Native Affairs gives us an insight into this:

> in Pretoria and Johannesburg… there are highly educated Natives who write and frequently correspond with us. This class should be able to ascertain and keep members, their nominees, in touch as far as possible with what is required…nominees should be especially selected on account of their knowledge of native requirements… [and be] in touch with the current native feelings and opinion, and from their knowledge of the natives and their customs they would be able to vote with some authority on all measures affecting the native population.[70]

This statement clearly illustrates that although the Transvaal was not liberal, the post-war administration gave the Africans a chance to officially represent African problems. This gave the learned contingent of the time an opportunity to lash out at white authorities whenever African rights were infringed upon. They addressed issues such as pass laws, housing problems, land tenure rights and educational matters. For them, the land issue was complex and directly connected with African economic development, education and racial co-operation.

3.6 The lack of education on the Rand

Africans in the Transvaal were behind the Africans of the Cape in education. This could perhaps be attributed to the fact that many schools in the Transvaal were isolated and conservative. They identified with the Boer Republic state policies and explicitly linked to segregationist policies of the Transvaal. Similar to those of the Cape they were designed to meet the labour needs of racial capitalism. One Transvaal chief testified to the SANAC that 'We had it hot and heavy under the Boer government, we had no education. The government did not attempt to teach us, but we used

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69 In urban areas the mission-educated Africans were able to acquire the certificates of exemption from the provision of urban laws. This was critical in terms of their legal ability to conduct business and acquire land outside locations and could free them from demeaning restrictions on the movement, from curfew regulations and the requirement to live in a location. Some were exempted from carrying passes. The power to grant exemption lay in the authority of municipalities within their boundaries. See A. Redding 'Peasant and the creation of an middle class in Umtata' International *Journal of African Historical Studies*, 26 1993, pp.513-539; A. Cobley, *Class and Consciousness: Black Petty Bourgeoisie in South Africa 1924 to 1950* (Westport, 1990).

70 SANAC, Minutes of Evidence, The Testimony of W. Winham, the Secretary for Native Affairs, p. 342.

to pay tax. Then we had no rights.'[71] In 1905, the SANAC reported that there were 60,431 'native scholars' in the Cape Colony and 11,683 in the Transvaal. While the percentage of the native population in schools was 4.24 per cent in the Cape Colony, it was a mere 1.13 per cent in the Transvaal.[72] In contrast to the Cape, there were very few highly educated Africans; those who were deemed educated had primary education. Some did not hold any certificates issued by the Department of Education. 'The principal of the Vrededorp Government School,' Chisholm notes, 'told the Commission that in practise school life for many meant two or three years attendance.'[73] Unlike their Cape counterparts, they had very little understanding of English, and some could not write in it. One illustrative example of this group was Revd Lethega of the Baptist Church of the Foreign Mission Board of the United States.[74] Lethega was educated at Botsabelo, Middleburg, under the Berlin Mission Society from whom 'he says he held certain certificates, but he holds no educational certificates from any Education Department … He understands a little English, but cannot write letters in it. He is one of the Bapedi of Sekukuni, and speaks Dutch and Sepedi.'[75] Perhaps the paucity of LMS missionary establishments contributed to the lack of fluency in English among some of the Transvaal-educated individuals; it is also possible that the exposure to the Dutch language affected their lack of English language competency. Before the war, St Cyprians was the only Anglican school on the Rand, founded by Revd John Darragh in the 1890s and was located in Brickfields, a working class area west of Johannesburg. The school catered for all races.[76] Due to the lack of detailed records about this school, we do not know if the staff was predominantly African or European or multiracial.

Unlike the Transvaal, where there was a shortage of African teachers, the mission schools in the Cape colony and its frontier were entirely taught by Africans supplied from Lovedale and similar institutions. Through education, some Africans advanced into better positions.[77] It was not only Africans, however, who lacked education in the Transvaal; the poor whites and middle class

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71 SANAC, Testimony of Chief David More, p. 651.

72 Ibid, p. 69.

73 L Chisholm, 'Class and Color in South African Youth Policy' p.11.

74 The American National Baptist Convention must not be confused with the Transvaal Baptist Church.

75 National Archive of South Africa, (NASA), SNA 314 NA 750/06 –NA 920/ 06, Commissioner for Native Affairs: Minute Paper, 12 June 1906.

76 E.H. Berr, 'Three centuries of Coloured Education in the Cape and Transvaal, 1652-1952,' (PhD thesis, University of Potchefstroom, 1952), p. 275.

77 UCT, JSP, BC 106 C67 –C160.69, Untitled article from Lovedale.

Dutch were generally not educated. Dutch parents were anxious for their children to attend school, but their post-war economic conditions limited them. 'Getting hold of the children' through compulsory schooling became a rallying cry; it was proposed as a major method of getting to the roots of white unemployment and poverty.[78] In Chisholm's words:

> If the children of the unskilled could be "rescued" from their families and surroundings, submitted to the discipline of the school, taught a trade and trained to be 'responsible citizens' it was believed the difficulties posed by 'poor whites' would disappear.[79]

Africans were, however, in a worse state. They had little or no access to education. Indeed, the barriers and trends the Dutch set up against Africans to prevent them from obtaining literacy were very real and often effective. Unlike in the Cape, the Transvaal Africans were subjected to severe discrimination and hostility, and often received inadequate educational facilities due to racial prejudice. Even Boer churches in the region did not operate missionary schools. E. H. Hogge, the resident Magistrate of Transvaal in 1904, estimated 'that these natives are at least twenty to twenty-five years behind those of the Cape Colony.'[80] The urban Transvaal had very few churches and missionary schools that provided education, perhaps because the LMS and other missionary societies neglected the urban Transvaal; even the very active Berlin Missionary Society concentrated in the rural Transvaal.[81] It was often not easy for missionaries to establish mission stations in some parts of the rural Transvaal. Between 1861 and 1864, for instance, missionaries established three mission stations but were forced to leave those under Sekhukhune's authority.[82] Very few missionaries began to work on the Rand in the 1890s. To give an example, 'The Salvation Army, with its brass bands, was the most conspicuous – but,' as Campbell notes, 'demand for churches, schools and ministers outstripped the supply.'[83] Although the Anglicans and other missionary societies detected the opportunities that urban Johannesburg afforded for missionary work, for the reason unknown to us they had no interest in initiating the establishment of mission stations that will proselytise the urban 'uncivilized natives'. They

78 L. Chisholm, Class and Color in South African Youth Policy, p. 12.

79 Ibid, p. 12.

80 SANAC, Minutes of Evidence, Testimony of E.H. Hogge, Magistrate and Native Commissioner, Volume 4,p. 454, 1904.

81 P. Delius, *The Land Belongs to Us*; C. Manganyi, *A Black Man Called Sekoto* (Johannesburg, 1996.)

82 P. Delius, *The Land Belongs*, p.19.

83 J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*, p. 145.

neglected the gangs of African location residents and mineworkers. Revd R. H. Bellamy confirmed this in 1900:

> I deliberately state here as my solemn conviction that there will be no greater responsibility attached to the British occupation of the Transvaal than that which proceeds from her duty to the natives … among the kaffirs working in the stores and houses in the town of Johannesburg itself we have one most devoted … Father Shaw… I must with genuine sorrow declare that these natives are almost entirely neglected by us … it must be borne in mind that we are totally forgetting the thousands of Malays, coolies, and Chinamen, all of whom occupy locations in the neighbourhood of the Golden City.[84]

Perhaps their neglect may be attributed to the anti-English sentiment that Republicans exhibited towards the non-Dutch missionaries in the Transvaal. In the 1870s, for instance, President Burgers refused permission to a party of Basuto missionaries accompanied by a French missionary, all under the direction of the Paris Missionary Society, to proceed through the Transvaal border. He had the whole party arrested and put into Pretoria goal.[85] It is possible that this threatened missionaries, who seemed uncomfortable working in the Transvaal. It is also feasible that they feared urban life in general.

3.7 Dissatisfaction with urban missionary schools

As indicated, after the war, non-denominational schools were established for white children and white education became free and compulsory. In the meantime, African children were compelled to access education at the few urban missionary schools. As we shall see below, African priests under the auspices of the AME Church applied for a government school that was free of denominational influence, but were denied. This was part of a strategy to push African children into the existing missionary schools, fundamentally limiting the choice of schools where African children could learn. The minimum condition of educational freedom in any country is that a parent should be free to choose the kind of school to which he or she sends his or her child.

On the Rand, however, African parents were denied this right; the choice rested with white administrators. In white communities, the school was linked to home, and parents had a reasonable chance to send their children to their schools of choice. The first ordinance passed by the imperial administration in the Transvaal after the war provided free primary schooling under state control 'for children both of whose parents are of European descent.'[86]

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84 R.H. Bellamy quoted in E. Farmer, *The Transvaal as a Mission Field* (London, 1900), pp. 71-3.

85 Ibid.

86 L. Chisholm, 'Class and Color in South African Youth Policy 1886-1910,' p. 2.

African parents were compelled to send their children to the existing missionary schools that had their own religious dogma, which was perhaps not in line with family beliefs. The educational aim of these schools was primarily to Christianise African children, and to build so-called 'character' and 'moral backbone'. Generally, the subjects of instruction included: Scripture, the Cathechism, Reading and Writing, Arithmetic and Singing. The vernacular bible reading was central to teaching rather than the skills demanded by the advancing colonial world.[87] In some cases, geography and physical sciences were taught. While all insisted on a thorough religious education, there were a few schools that took a broader view and included a variety of secular subjects.[88]

It should be noted that the majority of African families on the Rand were not Christians, and were therefore not allowed to register their children in denominational schools. This created a furore among African residents on the Rand and was brought to the attention of the Acting Commissioner of the Native Affairs, who wrote to the Director of Education about the matter.

> It appears that there are a certain number of native children in Johannesburg, and possibly elsewhere who are practically excluded from the educational facilities at present afforded to the schools supported by government owing to the fact that their parents belong to no recognised religious denomination…the position of these children raises the question as to whether it is desirable to recognise the principle of establishing any state native school.[89]

In those years, there were very few families who could send their children to denominational schools; the schools were only open to families affiliated to a specific church in the locations. If the family belonged to the Methodist church, for instance, their children would automatically be admitted in the Methodist church school. As pointed out in the letter, it was not only the children of the non-Christian residents who were turned away from the urban missionary-controlled schools, but also the children of the adherents of 'unrecognised churches,' that is, the Ethiopianists and the Zionists.

It could be argued that this was one of the major reasons why non-Christian urban dwellers supported the Ethiopianist independent school movement. Apart from the religious dogma, urban parents were also frustrated by what seemed like exorbitant fees charged by the urban missionary

87 J. Campbell, 'Conceiving of the Ethiopian Movement,' p. 16.

88 C.T. Loram, *The Education of the South African Native*. (London,1927), pp. 20-22; E.G. Malherbe, *Education in South Africa,* (Johannesburg, 1925), pp. 228-9.

89 NASA, SNA 276 NA 1588/05 NA 1686/06, A letter from the Acting Commissioner for Native Affairs, 16 November 1904.

schools. It is important to note that after the war the cost of living for Africans, who received meagre wages, was high. This was confirmed by the Commissioner after reviewing the economic status of Africans: low wages 'render it impossible for them to pay fees for their children, although there are schools connected with … churches … they are but poorly attended because of the inability of the parents to pay school fees.'[90] Africans also generally disliked the curriculum taught in these schools as they failed to focus on the secular demands of the advancing colonial world.[91] They wanted education that would keep abreast of modern requirements. Africans thus became increasingly unsure of and dissatisfied with missionary education. In addition, Africans were unhappy with the way in which missionaries spent grant-in-aid funds, expressed in a pugnacious letter written by Sefako Makgatho, a member of the African National Political Union (ANPU) to the Native Affairs Commissioner in 1906:

> The government gives a certain amount of money, which is said to be some £10 000 and it is so called to be Native Grants. Why should it be called a government grant towards the natives, rather than saying government grants to enrich the European ministers. If the native teachers do not receive the money, how can it be their grant. The money is doing nothing for our schools. We are buying books ourselves. We are paying for the school. There are some other schools which receive free education.[92]

Dissatisfaction with missionary schools was also observed by Robert Beith, who stated in a letter to Dr Stewart in 1900: 'Today, the attitude of the natives towards missionary, educational, and industrial progress, seem to be uncertain and restless. The older generation look back into the past and the younger generation look forward to the future.'[93] The surviving records reveal that part of the reason why the Director of Education did not want to build non-denominational schools in the location was because Africans were not stable; they were constantly removed from one part of the city to the other, involuntary nomads. As the Director wrote: 'it is useless to embark on future expenditure in that direction until the municipalities of both towns have come to a final decision as to the position of the native locations.'[94] The question of removal was raised by the location residents during the proceeding of the SANAC.[95]

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90 NASA, SNA 276 NA 1588/05 NA 1686/06, A letter from the Native Commissioner of Johannesburg to the Secretary for Native Affairs, 12 July 1905.

91 J . Campbell, 'Conceiving of the Ethiopian Movement,' p, 16.

92 NASA, SNA 337 A letter from Makgatho to the Commissioner for Native Affairs September 1906.

93 UCT JSP, BC 106 C124 D65/48 23A, A letter from Robert Beith to Dr Stewart 31 August 1900.

94 NASA, SNA 276 NA 1588/05 NA 1686/06, A letter from the Acting Director of Education to the Secretary for Native Affairs, 11 September 1905.

95 See, for example, The testimony of Paulus Malatye in SANAC, p. 854.

3.8 The African desire for higher education

In line with early twentieth century policy, the colonial government limited African access to higher education while at the same time emphasising rural agricultural and industrial education.[96] The lack of higher education institutions became problematic for Africans in the Transvaal where there were no colleges or universities for Africans to further their studies beyond Standard IV. The few institutions of higher learning throughout South Africa - the University of the Cape of Good Hope and Stellenbosch University - catered only for whites. This urged many South Africans to go abroad to further their studies. A number of African students who went to further their studies in the US were AME-sponsored. For example, three children of Tantsi and other members of the 'Zulu Choir' group studied in the Unites States at Lincoln and Wilberforce University.[97] According to Campbell: 'In their consciousness and character, they represented the finest flower of South Africa's nineteenth century mission culture. They could scarcely have been better suited for the world of Wilberforce.'[98]

As discussed before, evidence to the SANAC suggests that the colonial authorities and some missionaries did not favour this migration. In his testimony, Revd R. H. Dyke stated: 'one consequence is that they would go elsewhere; they would go beyond the limits of South Africa even to get that education. I think that in itself a danger and evil.'[99] In a similar vein, Shepstone of the Transvaal Agricultural Association testified that 'one reason that I am particularly strong about this matter of their going to America…to get educated [is] that they come back imbued with these Ethiopianist ideas, and there is [no] doubt that these sects are doing a great deal of harm.'[100] These testimonies reveal that white administrators and missionaries never wanted to accept that the African struggle could be global. Although Africans responded in their own way

96 This policy was not confined to South Africa. See A.S. Adebola, 'The Kikuyi Independent School Movement and the Mau Mau Uprising' *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria,* 10, 1981, pp. 53-71.

97 Lincoln University in Pennsylvania was founded in 1854 by John Miller Dickey, a Presbyterian minister and his wife, Sarah Emlen Cresson. It is located on Baltimore Pike in southern Chester County, a rural part of southeastern Pennsylvania. Lincoln was originally founded under the name Ashmun Institute, after the religious leader and social reformer Jehudi Ashmun, to educate young men of African descent. It is the first degree-awarding school of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in the United States. The University has a number of notable alumni, including Langston Hughes, famous American poet, Thurgood Marshall, the first African American US Supreme Court Justice, and Hildrus A. Poindexter, an internationally recognised authority on tropical diseases. The first president of Nigeria, Nnamdi Azikiwe, and the first Prime Minister of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, are also graduates of Lincoln. See, Lincoln University of the Commonwealth of Pennsylavian, About Lincoln: A Legacy of Producing Leaders, http:www.lincoln.edu/about.html.

98 J. Campbell, 'A Seed you saw in African: South African Students in the United States,' Additional Seminar Paper that was delivered at the Institute for Advanced Social Research, University of the Witwatersrand, (undated) p. 319 wiredspace.wits.ac.za/jspui/handle/10539/8499.

99 SANAC, Minutes of Evidence, Testimony of R.H. Dyke, a missionary of Basutoland, p. 426.

100 Ibid, p. 559.

to the colonial socio-political circumstances, African-Americans contributed significantly, in terms of both ideas and manpower, to the African struggle.[101] Depending on the type of education that Africans received in America, the experience of African students in America often heightened political expectations and socioeconomic frustrations in the colonies of South Africa. This led Stewart to recommend that a new institution of higher learning be built to discourage Africans from 'going to America and bringing back wrong ideas, political and social.'[102] By 1900, there were discussions in missionary and administrative circles about the possibility of Lovedale being sold and transformed for the purpose of establishing an inter-state college, a higher institution that would cater for Africans. This is captured in a long letter that was written by Revd B. B. Sargant to Lord Milner:

> I am confirmed in my view that the institution is ripe for some such change in its position as we have already discussed in a general way…at present great need for some adjustment of the views of these states and churches with regard to the native. What is wanted is the living energy of a single institution, in which the different opinion and modes of action of all government and denominations can be brought together … The function of the Inter –State and Inter-Church institution for the higher education may be summarised as follow:-
>
> 1. To produce a common native educational policy in the various states of South Africa
>
> II. To bring to a focus the educational and mission work of the various churches
>
> III. To give the opportunity for experiments as to the best subjects and methods of instruction for natives
>
> IV. To head of any separate native educational of church movement, this might become a political danger.
>
> There are many reasons why Lovedale should be selected for transformation into much a federal institution.[103]

The thinking behind the formation of the new inter-state college was perhaps a result of the questions around education and social control. But it was also sparked by a fear in missionary circles of Africans breaking away from the mainstream churches and explain why the AME Church and its programme of taking South African students abroad was so unpopular among administrators and missionaries.

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101 J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*; R.D. Ralston. 'A Second Middle Passage: African Student Sojourn in the United State During the Colonial Period and their influence upon the character of African Leadership. (PhD Thesis, University of California 1972).

102 SANAC, Minutes, Testimony of Dr. James Stewart, p. 905.

103 UCT JSP, BC 106, C193.10, A letter from Revd B.B. Sargant to Lord Milner, 24 June 1904

For Africans, there was an urgent need for higher education. As early as 1899, the Ethiopianists and the AME Church bishops discussed the need for a South African college. In the USA, the campaign for the college was spearheaded by the Department of Missions, of which Revd Henry Blanton Parks was the secretary.[104] Funding for South African college was to be organised by Secretary Parks and the college established on a twelve acre plot of ground, which was purchased by Bishop Turner near Queenstown in the Eastern Cape. This college was to be 'a school for Africans taught by Africans, founded and supported by the Missionary Department of the A.M.E. Church.'[105] It was imagined that African students who were already studying in African-American institutions would form part of the staff. It was envisaged that this college would train teachers and would be headed by Bishop James Dwane.[106] It was to have industrial and religious training and its objective was two-fold: 'first, the evangelisation and the civilization of the Dark Continent; second the unity of thoughtful Negroes of this country in a proper race spirit.'[107] (As indicated above, this 'proper race spirit' was feared by missionaries and colonial administrators.) The proposal of this college was supported by various influential figures in the AME Church, such as Dr J. M. Henderson, pastor of the Bethel Church in New York. In his speech to the annual meeting of the General Missionary Board, Bishop Turner, the presiding bishop of the AME in the 1890s,[108] said:

> We shall lengthen and strengthen the borders of the missionary enterprise of our church. I trust we have met with Christ['s] idea of extension and expansion of his Kingdom. I am here to dedicate the remainder of my life to the cause of Christ and to the uplifting of fallen humanity and to my race particularly; and I shall call upon my colleagues and brethren of this Missionary Board to assist me in the proper discharge of the duties which devolve upon us in the interests of God's holy church.[109]

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104 J.R. Coan, *Flying Sparks*, p. 113.

105 H.B. Parks, 'The Redemption of Africa the American Negroes Burden' *Voice of Mission*, March 1899.

106 James Mata Dwane, a member of the Amatinde tribe, was born in Debe Nek near King William's Town in the Eastern Cape in 1848. He was educated, trained and later worked as a teacher at Healdtown Methodist Missionary Institution. While at Healdtown he spent some time living in the home of the missionary, see, A. Paterson, Education and Segregation in a South African Mission Church: The Merger of Anglican Church and the Order of Ethiopia, *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 36 (2003), pp. 585-605; T T.D. Verryn, 'A History of the Order of Ethiopia' (Associate in Divinity Thesis, CPSA, 1962), later published as *A History of the Order of Ethiopia* (Transvaal, 1972).

107 J.R. Coan, *Flying Sparks*, p. 115.

108 For details, see, S. W. Angell, *Bishop Henry McNeal Turner and African American Religion in the South* (Knoxville, 1992); Edwin S. Redkey, *Black Exodus, Black Nationalist and Back-to-Africa Movements, 1890-1910* (New Haven, 1969); The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, *African American Desk Reference* (New York, 1999); K. Estall, ed, *The African American Almanac* 6th edition (Detroit: Gale Research, Inc. 1994). - See more at: http://www.blackpast.org/aah/turner-henry-mcneal-1834-1915#sthash.EgzoVZld.dpuf

109 *Voice of Mission*, September 1899.

This speech called on African Americans to promote a sense of unity with fellow Africans. They interpreted their unity through a civil theological dogma centred on Ethiopia. However, due to the shortage of funds, the establishment of the college in South Africa did not materialise. The AME Church was already confronted with the challenge of establishing schools in the United States, the West Indies and West Africa.[110]

Despite of the failure of the proposed college, the church managed to establish the Bethel Institute in Cape Town, opened by Bishop Coppin, the first African-American presiding bishop of the AME Church in South Africa, in 1902. It is, however, not clear how the Bethel Institute differed from the original proposal because Bethel offered an elementary, a high school and a theological education for the AME priests. The school was strong in religious studies and secular courses, and was headed by Revd Henry Attaway, an African American priest in Cape Town. The establishment of the school resulted from Coppin's success in negotiating with the Cape government for the church to be recognised.[111] In his speech at the opening of the institute in 1902, Coppin explained:

> Hitherto the natives students, boys and girls, who wished to prepare themselves for teachers and missionaries in the AME Church in South Africa were obliged to come all the way to America or else be prepared in other churches. To this there are two valid objections; first, it is too expensive to come to all the way from South Africa to America to get education, and especially when it was necessary to do preparatory work for the student before giving higher studies. Such a course requires so many years as to make the work a strain to missionary department. We have had as many as twenty two students at one and the same time in our American schools from Africa, supported by the church…Secondly it is not good policy to educate students in one church for work in another, and hence the objection to depending on workers for the AME Church who are trained elsewhere.[112]

This was founded primarily in response to the large population of uneducated African children of school age. Like other independent schools, Bethel did not receive any financial support from the government. The government educational regulations specified that:

> Each native mission school seeking financial aid from government must be specifically under the superintendent of a white missionary…or other European person recognised by government as competent to exercise an efficient control, who shall not as the correspondence with the government in all matters relating to the school, and be responsible for the disbursing of all government subsidies, for the furnishing to government of all returns desired and for the keeping of proper accounts for the school, which are to be open for examination at any time by the government official deputed for that purpose.[113]

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110 R. Coan, *Flying Sparks*, p. 117.

111 J.M. Chirenje, *Ethiopianism and Afro-Americans in Southern Africa 1883-1916* (London 1987), p. 98.

112 L. J. Coppin, 'The Progress of Our Work in South Africa' *Voice of Mission* 1 November 1902, quoted in J.M. Chirenje, *Ethiopianism and Afro-American*, pp. 98-99.

113 NASA, SNA, 178 NA 2383/03 -2461/03, The Report on the Government scheme on Native Schools.

The opening of Bethel Institute urged the Transvaal church district of the AME Church to develop a similar college in the district. But, as shall be discussed in detail later, due to obstacles created by white missionaries, the government and local authorities it was difficult to establish Wilberforce Institute in Johannesburg, a college envisaged along similar lines to Bethel. According to the set of regulations stipulated by the TED, these schools did not meet the requirements for registration because they were not under the superintendence of a white missionary or other European person recognised by government as competent.[114]

It is clear that the primary concern among almost all missionary-educated Africans was education. Some African-Americans, who wrote glowingly about Africans in South Africa, supported their zeal for education. These Americans shared a more or less similar experience with their fellow Africans. They, for instance, observed how emancipated slaves in the 1860s were denied education after emancipation. 'What happened? Churches… formed great organisations of home mission societies to meet this need.'[115] American missionary societies, such as the AMS, the Baptist Home Mission Society and the Presbyterians Methodists provided African Americans with their greatest institutions, such as Morris Brown University, Howard College and Lincoln University. Most of the 'Negro leaders' of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were products of these institutions. In South Africa, Ethiopianists adopted a similar strategy by responding to the educational discrimination that existed in the colonies of South Africa. It should be noted that South African Ethiopianists interacted very closely with Americans, cemented by the visit of Bishop Turner in the late 1890s. There were also 'Negroes' such as Emile Wattlington from St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, a 'Garveyite,' who operated a shop in Cape Town that sold American newspapers like the *Chicago Defender*.[116] This shop, and others in Johannesburg, gave local Africans access to African-American literature and newsletters. In addition, the AME Church had its own newsletter called *Voice of Mission* in which Africans and African Americans published. There was also close interaction in churches, such as the Baptist Church, and a variety of private spaces where Africans and Americans met and shared ideas.

114 Ibid, p. 2.

115 L.L. Berry**,** *A century of missions of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1840-1940* (New York, 1942)**,** p. XIX.

116 R.T. Vinson, ''Sea Kaffirs': 'American Negroes' and the Gospel of Garveyism in Early Twentieth-Century Cape Town' *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 47, No. 2 2006, pp. 281-303.

African Americans who worked in South Africa were part of an out-migration of what Vinson describes as 'hundreds of thousands of black West Indians to the Americas, Europe and Africa between 1880 and 1930 seeking to escape high unemployment, depressed wages and landlessness in their home islands.'[117] Some of these American migrants were missionaries who saw an opportunity of for mission work in South Africa. For example, Miss P. M. Rideout, an African American teacher in Natal, and a daughter of the freelance AME missionary, Revd A. A. Rideout, wrote in a letter to a *Voice of Mission*:

> They are allowed little or no opportunity to attain the higher rudiments of education and knowledge, and why? Because the whites know that they are a race of people that have made vast progress, yes, for the few years that more than any other people upon the globe. I say again, if they were just given a third of a chance that our American boys and girls had, there will be no race of people to surpass them. Dear Bishop I would ask you that you impress again upon the minds of our brothers, sisters, sons and daughters of America to wake up and unite with our Bishop in redeeming the land of our fathers …let us unite with one aim…for the redemption of our people here, and by so doing…Ethiopian shall have stretched forth her hands to God.[118]

In the meantime, African American priests encouraged the spirit of work, self-help and independence among local African priests. For example, Bishop Charles Spencer Smith, an African American presiding as the Bishop of South Africa in 1905, preached:

> I take occasion to repeat what I said when I first spoke in this rostrum. That the colored people of America cannot fight your battles; they cannot furnish you with your leaders. All that the church of which I am a humble, and perhaps unworthy, representative can do for you is to give you such advice, encouragement and moral support as occasion may require…Whatever problem now exist, or may thereafter arise affecting the interest of the African races in South Africa are a British problem and not American. I want to dispel a dilution that I find exist in the minds of some in these regions that their connection with the African Methodist Episcopal Church will ensure them help from America in case they should get in trouble there is not the least semblance of union between the state and the church in America. Each moves in its own sphere absolutely independent of the other … Beside every mission - in fact as indispensable auxiliary thereto I will plant an industrial school. With every copy of a bible distributed among the natives I would send an agricultural implement or a mechanical tool. The missionary of the day should know how to teach the hand to work as well as the mind to think and the heart to love.[119]

This further motivated local African priests to intensify their independent school building scheme. It should be remembered that African Americans did not initiate the Ethiopianist movement. Africans founded the movement; the AME Church only responded to the urgent delegation of Dwane and Mangena Mokone representing a large number of South African Ethiopianists. The issue of higher education and the migration of Africans to America, as I noted earlier, was raised repeatedly during the SANAC hearings. It is important to note again that

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117 Ibid.

118 *Voice of Mission (VOM),* 1 March 1900. A letter from P.M. Rideout an African American teacher in Natal, South Africa.

119 NASA, SNA 279 NA 1992/05 -1993/05, A Sermon delivered by Bishop C.S. Smith in the Chapel of Bethel Institute, Cape Town, South Africa, Sunday evening 21 March 1905.

many Africans went to America, first to train in missionary work, then to receive a general education and professional training in secular fields.[120]

3.9 Living Conditions in the Rand Locations

Before we can detail how Africans reacted to the educational system in the urban Transvaal, it is important to understand how African schooling became part of the broader struggle in the locations. This will help us measure the extent to which the municipal regulations suppressed the development of independent and non-denominational schools in the location. We cannot divorce the African struggle for schooling from the struggle for better living conditions in the urban locations on the Rand as they shared the same pattern of settlement that was subject to the same administrative principles that enforced spatial segregation. The access to these urban spaces was determined by the local state policy and the exercise of central state power, as well as the regional demographic patterns. It should be noted that these factors, which involved tight administrative regimentation, played a role in the educational dynamics in these localities. It is important, then, to reconstruct how these factors came into play when Africans struggled for the local state funded education and, later, independent schools.

These settlements on the Rand stretched from the east to west along the line of the Reef located in Vrederdorp, Fordsburg, Ferreirastown, Burghersdorp, Marshalltown, Jeppestown, Germiston, Boksburg, and Randfontein, as well as in the City of Johannesburg. Before Africans were relocated to Klipspruit, the increased size of the African population in the city led to a shortage of housing, poor living conditions and insanitary conditions. Arguably, this led to bubonic plague.[121] It became clear that authorities had to develop a more structured relationship between whites and Africans that would facilitate white domination and orderly control.[122] The white local authorities felt that the proximity of the African location to Europeans would seriously hinder this process, exacerbated by the attitude of white residents who were unwilling to accept large

120 R.D. Ralston. 'A Second Middle Passage: African Student Sojourn in the United State during the Colonial Period and their Influence upon the character of African leadership' Unpublished PhD thesis, University of California, 1972

121 For the recent works, see H. Phillips, 'Locating the location of a South African location: the paradoxical pre-history of Soweto,' *Urban History*, 41, (2014) pp, 311-332;, For an earlier study with adetailed overview of health and segregation, see M. Swanson, 'The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plaque and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony 1900-1909'. *Journal of African History* XVIII, 18 3 (1970), pp, 387-410; E. van Heynigen,'Cape Town and the Plaque of 1901, in *Studies in the History of Cape Town* Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town (eds.), C. Saunders et al, 1981, 4, 70-74; C. Saunders, 'The Creation of Ndabeni' *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, (1994), 1 pp, 176-184.

122 For details on white domination, see D. Richards 'The ideology of European Dominance' *Western Journal of African Studies,* 3.4 1976 pp, 283-317, B. Willan, 'An African in Kimberly; Sol Plaatjie 1894-1898' in (eds.), S. Marks and R.Rathbone, *Industrialization and Social Change in South Africa in Africa* (London, 1983).

numbers of Africans living close to them. As a result, a racially segregated township of Klipspruit was founded in the south of Johannesburg in 1904, within the broader context of residential segregation.[123] As we shall see below, this, and the lack of proper housing, encouraged African unity across the ethnic lines.

As early as the 1890s, the African urban locations were subject to municipal control and the conditions steadily worsened after the Anglo-Boer War under the British rule in the Transvaal. In 1904 Location Regulations, drafted by the Colonial Secretary's Office, was introduced. This generally applied to all the locations in the Transvaal and replaced the laws of the Republican regime. At the same time, single male migrancy was the overwhelmingly dominant form of urban migration. Very few African women at this stage joined the townward flow, although there were some rural families. Once in the city, men, women and children underwent qualitatively different experiences. While men entered into wage labour, women were generally unable to do the same. In Johannesburg, they could not work in the homes for the whites; African men dominated that niche.[124] After Africans were removed from the city centre to Klipspruit, which was fifteen miles away from the city centre, several meetings were held with the city officials. Africans were promised the security of tenure, healthy surroundings, good water supply and housing. It was further agreed that residents 'would be allowed to build their own houses, and municipal houses could be rented by single men unable to provide their own.'[125] For the residents who possessed livestock, they were given 'to understand at the outset that their animals would graze on the Klipspruit farm free of charges, and suitable land will be provided for any who desire to cultivate.'[126] These promises were, however, not fulfilled. Residents did not get access to the grazing land and cattle were impounded due to their encroachment on the sewage farm. The arable land promised was not allocated. The lack of security of tenure made it difficult for

123 For similar studies, see J.F. Kirk, 'Race, Class, Liberalism and Segregation: the 1883 Native Strangers' Location Bill in Port Elizabeth' International *Journal of African Historical Studies*. 24, (1991), pp 239-321, A, Mabin, 'The Rise and Decline of Port Elizabeth, 1850-1900' *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 19, (1986), pp 276-6.

124 For a detail description of the women on the Rand, see D. Gaitskell, 'Female Mission Initiatives in the Witwatersrand Churches,' (PhD Thesis, University of London, 1981). For the detailed study of the Rand Location, see A. Proctor, 'Class Struggle and the City: a History of Sophiatown 1905-1940' in Bozzoli (eds.), *Labour, Township and Protest* (Johannesburg, 1979). For the description of the municipal administration of location in Transvaal and the pattern of urbanization that was not sex exclusive where families settled and toiled together, see J. Wells, 'The Day the Town Stood Still: Women in Resistance in Potchefstroom 1912-1930 in B. Bozzoli, (eds.), *Town and Countryside in the Transvaal* (Johannesburg, 1983).

125 NASA, TPB 550, TA 2/1437 Klipspruit Native Location: Report of the Native Grievance Committee, undated.

126 Ibid.

Africans to build independent schools and churches. There was also lack of healthy water. According to the local Grievance Committee, water was initially drawn from a small reservoir:

> on the farm to which water is pumped from the spruit near Nancefield station. A further supply was laid on from the Rand Water Board supply at Zuurbekom the reservoir supply being no longer intended fit … for domestic purpose unless previously treated. We find [,] however, that the residents were never warned about by notice as to the unhealthiness of the domestic supply. There are three or four taps on the Rand Water Board supply in the main thoroughfare to serve [to] a population of about 3000 people … this supply has been cut off for a period of three or four days. The number of taps is insufficient.[127]

Geographically, Klipspruit was far from the city centre, local residents paid high railway fares, and the railway transport service was insufficient. This made the cost of living high; fares were '1/- as against the weekdays fare of 6d. Monthly season tickets, however, are available at a charge of 8/6.'[128] This was expensive considering the meagre wages that Africans earned in those years. In some months, residents would not afford to pay rent and were vulnerable to be harassed by the local authorities for arrears. The municipal officials would break into houses to seize the furniture and, in the process, some houses would be confiscated.[129] For those who commuted to work on weekends it was difficult: on Saturday, there were no trains after 7 pm, and workers who worked later had to remain in town until the following morning. The sanitary conditions were not suitable: the proximity of the location to the sewage farm led to unhealthy surroundings. The depositing site next to the residential area aggravated the bad health conditions.[130] While local men entered into wage labour, women were unable to do the same; they, however, became economically active through beer brewing and some sold vegetables and other foodstuffs. The beer business was severely disturbed by the police and the Superintendent in search of liquor and residents without passes.[131] This prompted Charlotte Maxeke, an activist who had a stand in Kliptown(which was geographically located next to Klipspruit) and a member of an Ethiopianist church, to intervene.[132] The residents were also disturbed by the manner in which the Superintendent and his police, locally known as 'blackjacks,' treated residents in the township. There were regular disagreements between the Superintendent and residents on a number of local administrative issues:

> Frequent disagreement occurred and relations became strained. There was … a natural tendency on the part of Mr. James to favour his adherents, and there can be no doubt that he clearly embarked on a systematic policy of 'strafing' all those who attempted to oppose him. These were persons consisting principally of

127 Ibid.
128 Ibid.
129 Ibid.
130 Ibid.
131 Ibid.
132 J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*.

> the educated and more civilized class of natives, and leaders of the principal native political organisation of the Transvaal, described by Mr James as 'political agitators and criminals.'[133]

It is clear from this record that the Superintendent disliked the educated Africans in the location. In the case of Mr James, he became unpopular among the local residents and was considered unqualified, inexperienced and unsuited for the position he held. As a result, the residents called for his resignation from the supervision of the location in 1909.[134] 'Up to 1909,' the Grievance Committee, a committee that presented complaints of the locals to the municipality explained, 'the police patrolled the location and undertook all searches for liquor. Complaints were made at the time that in carrying out these searches many innocent natives, both male and female, were being unnecessarily harassed.'[135] The permit system was a source of restlessness among the location residents. Stand holders were required to get an annual permit to continue residing in the location. In these residential permits, the names of household residents were listed. From the municipal point of view, permits enabled the local authorities to determine easily which people belonged to the location and which ones were visitors. Frequent raids were undertaken into the homes of the local residents by police in the middle of the night to check on permits**.**

Immediately after the foundation of Klipspruit in 1904, Africans from different locations were called by the SANAC to testify about their living conditions. Some of the many witnesses, such as Paulos Malatye, disclosed to the Commission that in various parts of the country municipal inspections were carried out in a harsh and injudicious manner, respectable natives and their families being turned out of their dwellings at night time, and subjected to objectionable personal handling. Conduct of this sort is extremely harmful and rankles in the minds of the people, Paulus Malatye testified.

> The treatment is bad for us in the location and everywhere we live. Sometimes when we sit in our houses we simply see policeman walking in, pushing the door open; and sometimes in the middle of the night when we sleep lots of policemen come around the location and take everybody out of their houses to the square … Here in the town we have very bad treatment under the pass laws.[136]

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133 National Archive of South Africa, TPB 550 TA 2/1437, Klipspruit Native Location: Report of the Native Grievance Committee, undated.

134 Similar behaviour of the administrator was documented by some historians. In Potchefstroom, for instance, a new Superintendent, Mr. Dormyl was appointed with experience from the Rand applied insensitive technique that created furore in the location. On his first Sunday on the job 'browsing around the location 'doing just what he pleased,' he kicked over water container and cooking pots full of food and entered people's houses.' After six days residents complained and wrote the contesting letter to the Town Clerk. See, J. Wells, *The Day of the Town Stood Still*, p. 275.

135 NASA, TPB 550 TA 2/1437, Klipspruit Native Location: Report of the Native Grievance Committee, undated.

136 SANAC, Testimony of Paulus Malatye, p. 854.

By 1904, the movement of Africans at night in town was regulated. Local ministers could not undertake missionary duties in town at night in the city of Johannesburg. Malatye, who was a minister, complained, 'we are all working men…the nine o'clock bell is very hard for us. When we leave work at nine at night, sometimes we have to go and do some work at nine o' clock at night.'[137] In addition, the lack of space and inadequate accommodation that led to the low standard of living and over-crowding topped the list. In reaction, the Commissioners undertook a site visit and inspected several locations, but no improvements were proposed. The Commissioners only recommended that Africans 'should be encouraged to stay as useful members of the community.'[138] Above all, the SANAC endorsed that:

> The present practice that [whenever] a location is within an area controlled by a Municipality or other Local Authority the responsibility for its control and management should be left in such Authority. But it is necessary that the government should always reserve the power of inspection and be able to exercise it with effect. Such inspection should be frequent and regular and if possible be made in the daytime….these locations should not be made a refuge for surplus or idle for whose labour there is no local demand or who will not work, and power to expel such Natives from the location and from the entire urban area should be vested in the Local Authority … This Commission is of the opinion that certain restrictions upon the purchase of land by Natives are necessary, and recommends that purchase by the Natives should in future be limited to certain areas to be defined by legislative enactment'[139]

In some municipalities, regulations compelling children to leave school at a certain age were implemented. This, however, varied from place to place. In Bloemfontein, for instance, the age was sixteen, and enforced by taxation measures. At the age of sixteen boys were liable to pay the poll tax. The tax regulation was also applicable in Johannesburg locations; Malatye, a resident of the Native Location in Johannesburg who paid tax for his sister's son, confirmed this. In his testimony to SANAC, he stated: 'some very young people have to pay taxes, and what we do not understand, some boys who are quite young who are unable to work have to pay tax.'[140] In other towns, the regulations required children to leave school at the age of fourteen; in some places it was twelve.[141] For African children, these laws were detrimental, denying them an opportunity to advance educationally. This was condemned by the Conference of the Native Section of the Church of the Province of South Africa (CPSA) in Transvaal. Revd L. Fuller, who headed the CPSA conference, questioned this: 'I do not know what is meant by school boys having to pay the native tax… the matter shall at once be investigated. I think that [a] student pursuing [a] course of study can be exempted during the period of study.'[142]

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137 Ibid, p. 854.
138 SANAC Report, p.47.
139 Ibid. SANAC, p. 47.
140 SANAC, Testimony of Paulus Malatye, p. 854.
141 Ibid, p. 329.
142 SANAC, Testimony of Rev Fuller, p. 889.

It is possible that the underlying aim of these regulations was to meet labour demand in the white owned farms. H.A. Malan, a member of the Transvaal Agricultural Union, for example, testified: 'supposing you turn your native male population into carpenters and blacksmiths, and tailors and other things, where will you get all the men from to work on your farms as common labourers[?]'[143] This testimony is an example of a number of white witnesses who gave evidence during the SANAC hearing that did not want Africans to be skilled; they wanted to keep them as unskilled labourers in order to prevent them from competing with whites. These testimonies reflect the growth and solidification of racism and segregation linked to economic, social and political institutions that were established in order to protect white privilege. Lord Milner, for instance, touched upon this particular point, 'I do not mean that they should be educated like Europeans, for their requirement and capacities are very different, but they should be trained to develop their natural aptitude for their own good.'[144]

3.10 The African educational initiative

This section examines the degree to which the Ethiopianists became progressively engaged in the campaign for non-denominational schools, as well as for independent schools. The number of schools that were founded by the Ethiopians grew in this period. For the most part, the establishment of these schools was seen by the government officials, the colonists and the missionaries as 'seditious'; they were alleged to be spreading misleading propaganda among Africans.

In response to both the post-war government neglect of African education and the lack of sufficient missionary schools on the Rand, Africans had to lobby for better education for their children. The struggle began when the urban-educated elite petitioned the government for non-denominational schools in Pretoria and Johannesburg. They advocated for schools that would cater for all African children irrespective of their denomination. The failure of the government to respond positively to the Ethiopianist request soon developed into an articulate criticism, pushing the Ethiopianist leaders to seek control of their own education. These attempts took place first through an official request for government supported secular schools; later this initiative

143 SANAC, Testimony of H. A. Malan, p. 556.
144 SANAC, Testimony of T. Shepstone quoting Lord Milner's speech, p. 556.

intensified when the independent churches established independent schools within the mission framework of schooling.[145]

The establishment of the state-controlled school for coloured children in Vrededorp in 1905 ignited the call for non-denominational, or rather state schooling. The formation of the coloured school bothered African priests who saw the practice as discriminatory. As a result, they applied for a similar school, but their application was rejected. In their submissions, Tantsi of Johannesburg and Samuel. J. Mabote, an AME Church priest from Pretoria, wrote two different letters that requested the establishment of schools similar to those of coloureds in their respective areas.[146] The application was addressed to the Acting Commissioner for Native Affairs in Johannesburg:

> Having consulted some of our people here we arrived at a conclusion of sending this application to you Sir requesting the Government or Educational Departments through you to establish an undenomitional school[s] for native children under the same conditions and basis as coloured schools in Vrededorp. We have the fullest confidence that you will support our application and that the hundreds of our destitute children [will] have [a] free government school.[147]

In response, the Department instructed the Inspector of the schools to pay a site visit 'for the purpose of ascertaining the actual requirements of the native parents and children.'[148] The Department then promised that after the government was in full possession of this information the question would be carefully considered. Tantsi who applied for a school in Johannesburg

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145 Some scholars have noted that this contest for the control of education was a highly political issue in other parts of Africa. See, T. Ranger, 'African Attempts to Control Education in East and Central Africa,1900-1939,' Post and Present, 32 (1965), pp. 57-85; R. Hunt-Davis, 'The Black American Education Component in African Response to Colonialism in South Africa' http://www4.uwm.edu/libraries/ereserve/kirk/davbla.pdf

146 The coloured community is predominantly descended from numerous interracial sexual unions, primarily betweenWestern European men and Khoisan women in the Cape Colony from the 17th century onward. In KwaZulu-Natal, and other provinces coloureds possess a diverse heritage including British, Irish, German, Mauritian, Saint Helenian,Indian, Xhosa and Zulu.[Griqua, on the other hand, are descendants of Khoisan women and Afrikaner Trekboers. Despite these major differences, their ancestry from more than one naturalised racial group means that they are coloured in the South African context. After 1994, such mixed-race people did not necessarily self-identify this way; some preferred to call themselves black or Khoisan or just South African. As early as 1900, more money was spent on coloured than on the average African community but less than on the average white one. Thus the racial hierarchy was, politically and economically entrenched and this was intensified by the implementation of apartheid's population registration laws.

147 NASA, SNA 276 NA 1588/05 NA 1686/06, A letter from the group of Ethiopian priests to the Acting Commissioner for Native Affairs in Johannesburg, 13 June 1905.

148 NASA, SNA 276 1588/05 NA 1686/06, A letter from the Secretary for Native Affairs to Rev S.J. Mabote, 4 August 1905.

received the same reply. After some time, the Acting Director of Education replied to both Mabote and Tantsi.

> With reference to the correspondence which has passed between us regarding your representations for the establishment of an undenominational state-aided school the Pretoria Location [,] I now have the honour to inform you that in view of the educational facilities which are already in existence, there does not appear to the Government to be any necessity for the institution of such a native school as that for which you have asked.[149]

During this process, the Director of Education also wrote a government interdepartmental letter regarding the Ethiopianist application to the Secretary for Native Affairs:

> to start [an] undenominational school for purely native children would not only entail increased expenditure and a readjustment and extension of administration beyond what the Department can at present undertake, but would involve an entirely new departure in Native Education Policy, such as has not yet been attempted in any part of South Africa and a responsibility that I am not as yet as at any rate justified in undertaking. The comparison between the educational facilities for coloured children and those for natives involves a highly contentious question which the Department does not feel itself warranted in stirring while other very urgent matters claim its attention.[150]

The application of the Ethiopianist priests was rejected because there were fourteen subsidised denominational schools on the Rand. In Pretoria Location, there were three mission schools for African children.[151] In his letter that responded to the application, the Director of Education outlined that: 'there was still room for African children in the existing schools.'[152] This frustrated the Ethiopianists because the existing schools were admitting only children of denominational adherents. There were no other forms of schools that admitted non-Christian urban children. With an attempt to appeal against the decision of the Department, the delegates of the Transvaal Conference of the AME Church that was held in 1905 unanimously agreed that they should send a delegation to the Native Affairs Department (NAD) to table their grievance. It should be remembered that in those years the emerging independent churches, such as the AME Church, came under heavy attack not only for avoiding white control, but also for being foreign.[153] The

149 NASA, SNA 276 NA 1588/05 NA 1686/06, A letter from the Secretary for Native Affairs to Revd S.J. Mabote, 5 October 1905.

150 NASA, SNA 276 NA 1588/05 NA 1686/06, A letter from the Acting Director of Education to the Secretary for Native Affairs, 11 September 1905.

151 NASA, SNA 276 NA 1588/05 NA 1686/06, A letter from the Acting Director of Education to the Secretary for Native Affairs, 11 September 1905.

152 Ibid.

153 H. Hughes, 'Religion and Education in the African Methodist Episcopal'. The AME published a newspaper in the United States, *Voice of Mission*, which sometimes carried articles critical of white presence in Africa. Much was made of these articles as grounds enough for trying to keep American influence out. For example, one particular article reported in *The Star* of August 16 1902, was described as 'pernicious rubbish'. The headlines 'A specimen of its literature and the article itself was to do with the ides of whipping the British back to England.' Moreover, the presiding Bishop, Turner was one of the greatest campaigners of the 'Back to Africa movement' in the United States. For the detail study of the AME Church, see J Campbell, The Songs of Zion; J.R. Coan, *The Flying Sparks.*

NAD welcomed the Ethiopianist request for a meeting, which was held in April 1906. Godfrey Lagden, the Commissioner for Native Affairs and William Windham, the Secretary for Native Affairs, represented the NAD. The Ethiopianist delegates nominated James Yapi Tantsi, an American graduate and the son of J.Z Tantsi, as their spokesperson. In that meeting, two issues were raised: firstly, the government refusal to grant them exemptions was discussed. Secondly, the issue of education was discussed. Tantsi stated:

> There is a free school in Johannesburg for coloured children which native are prohibited from attending. Our children can attend the denominational school for natives, but not the government free school for coloured people. The coloured people (Cape boys) do not pay poll tax. It has affected our hearts very much to see that government gives free education to those children whose parents do not pay taxes,while those children whose parent pay taxes are not granted this privilege. It has a gross injustice in our sight. Our children has to attend the denominational school abd pay for their fees[154]

In response, Lagden posed the question to Tantsi: 'Do you think that the coloured people are averse to your children and their education being educated together? Do they think that they are of higher standard?'[155] Mabote replied: 'I think they have shown it by forming an association apart from us under Dr. Abdurhaman.'[156] Ladgen asked: 'where do your children go to school?' Tantsi replied:

> We had a school in the old location for which we have received compensation which will enable us to build a new school. The new school is in course of erection on a site which has been granted to us. We ask Sir Godfrey Lagden that all our schools may be placed under Native Commissioner so that all our correspondence with the Department of Education may be through the Native Affairs Dept.[157]

In this meeting, Lagden told the Ethiopians that he would discuss their concern with the Director of Education, but he did not promise them anything. The archival records reveal that the request of the Ethiopianists was accepted and the school in Klipsruit was built in 1908. It is important to note that the missionary neglect and the lack of European supply for religious facilities in the

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154 Ibid.

155 Ibid.

156 Ibid, Dr. Abdurrahman was a South African coloured politician and physician, born in Wellington, South Africa. He was the first coloured city councillor of Cape Town, and a leader of the anti-segregationist movement African Political Organization (APO) established in 1902. Abdurahman was the son of relatively affluent Muslim Cape Malays, and his grandparents were slaves who had bought their freedom. After receiving a good British education in Wellington and Cape Town, he went to the University of Glasgow to study medicine in 1888, qualifying as a doctor in 1893. Upon returning to South Africa he set up a thriving private practice in Cape Town. See, M. Adhikari, 'The Product of Civilization in its most Repellant Manifestation': Ambiguities in the Racial Perceptions of the APO (African Political Organization*), 1909–23'. Journal of African History 38*(1997) (2): pp. 283–300.

157 Ibid.

urban Transvaal strengthened the Ethiopianist movement on the Rand and contributed greatly towards the development of pockets of independent schools.

In general, it might be said that the AME group found the social code of urban Africa comprehensible. In whatever campaign they undertook, they did not have trouble in working with non-Christian urbanites. Given that they were Africans themselves, with the broader understanding of African languages and the concept of *ubuntu* (humanness), which aims to preserve and give stability to the social unit, they struggled to restore balance to the urban community. To this extent, the educated class assisted in calming down the tribal tensions that were perpetrated by the compound social setup and other weaknesses and splits within the urban African community. Their understanding of tribal culture, economy and politics further facilitated their success. To some extent, the effort of this group fulfilled Dr. James Stewart's ambition that was later echoed by James Henderson: 'to bring the native people into line with the European occupants of the same land.'[158] The energy and commitment of the Ethiopianist priests as 'home missionaries' was noted in an AME Church publication.

> They were carrying gospel to the communities building up churches in the different parts of the Goldfields. They did a great deal of what could be referred to as social service. Wherever there is human need that nobody can meet for which those who need cannot pay, the church in its social service sends a missionary to meet that need, thus it establishes schools for those who have no schools, and urges the government to do its duty in the education of the people.[159]

Before 1908, there were no government or missionary schools in Klipspruit or the whole of the Rand, except for a small school that J.Z. Tantsi opened under the auspices of the AME Church. Although the school reflected the higher aspiration of the Ethiopianist movement, it suffered from poor performance because of limited financial resources compared to mission or government schools. The schools opened by the Maxekes in Boksburg and Mabote in Pretoria struggled in a similar way.[160] The operation of the Klipspruit school was further affected by the departure of Adelaide Tantsi, a graduate from Wilberforce University and daughter of J.Z Tantsi, leaving Klipspruit when she got married to Charles Dube, the younger brother of John Dube and principal of the Ohlange Institute in Natal.[161] The departure of Adelaide and the closing down of her father's school urged the Native Commissioner to report that: 'from the number of children in the location I formed the opinion that a need exist[s] for the establishment of a free school for

158 J. du Plessis, A *History of Christian Mission in South Africa*. (London, 1911).

159 L.L. Berry, *A Century of Missions of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 1840 -1940* (New York, 1942), p. XVIII.

160 J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion.*

161 The Ohlange Institute, the first African independent school, was founded by his brother John Dube.

natives in Klipspruit Location.'[162] This report, along with the aforementioned appeal of the Ethiopians, seems to have pressured the government into opening up a government school in Klipspruit. After two years of pressurising the government, the school was opened in 1908. A grant of £30 was sanctioned for school furniture and the amount of £20 was granted for school material. The fees charged were 2/- per term for all children in Standard V and 1/- for children in the lower standards.[163] Like any other school in those years, the challenge that confronted the parents of the learners of the new school was fees, as residents who petitioned the government on the issue of free education stated;

> your petitioners wish to humbly point out that during the late Imperial Government they asked that government for a grant of a free school for the purpose of free[ly] education…and that Sir Godfrey Ladgen the then Commissioner for Native Affairs your petitioners that the grant of such a school would be done by the government, but the Imperial Government terminated before the request was settled.[164]

This petition reveals that the imperial government promised the urbanites to improve and fund their children's education, but this promise was not fulfilled. Generally, various records reveal that the issues of fees became a burden in those years due to low wages that did not keep up with the post-war cost of living. Africans were not only embittered by the government for not fulfilling promises made before and after the war, by also by the fact that coloureds in Kliptown and white children enjoyed free education while their African counterparts paid fees. In view of the considerable contribution to local revenue that the local inhabitants made, African residents were deeply frustrated. They also felt that the government deliberately marginalised the township. As a result, they drew attention of the Minister for Native Affairs to the isolation of their location, which:

> has from time to time brought much expenses…which are faced by your petitioners as it will be seen in the following table:
>
> Train expenses about £3500 per annum
>
> Stand Licence and Hut rent about £1500
>
> Total expenditure per annum amounts to £5000

162 Ibid, p, 155.

163 NASA, SNA 407 NA 1647/08 NA 1754/08 A letter from J.E. Adamson, the Director of Education to the Inspector of Schools 16 June 1908 The Petition from the members of the Klipspruit Native Location Free School Committee to the Minister for Native Affairs.

164 NASA, SNA 407 NA 1647/08 NA 1754/08 The Petition from the members of the Klipspruit Native Location Free School Committee to the Minister for Native Affairs.

> no education at all as they are penniless by the above table expenditure hence the appellation for a free school for educating native children who are now going about without having anything as their parents have not even a penny to pay for them in the fee paid school.[165]

The individual resident expenditure was as follows:

2/- Monthly pass
1. 8/- Stand Licence
2. 1/8 Monthly Poll Tax
3. 10/ train fares monthly
4. 45/per month daily ration labour
5. 5/ church contribution
6. -/5 dog tax
7. House hold expense not included in the above catalogue
8. Grand total 72/1[166]

It was not only the question of fees that irritated Klipspuit residents; the school did not have proper buildings that were suitable for effective schooling as it rented the AME Church building. During the official visit of the Director of the Department of Education, the residents were promised that a new school building would be erected but this never materialised.[167] It should be noted that, at that time, white prestigious schools in Johannesburg were mushrooming, such as Jeppe Boys School was built in 1909. These schools were supported by the state and had enough learning support material; the school infrastructure was well developed with extramural facilities, such as playgrounds and school halls.

The problems that confronted the school in Klipspruit and the denominational privatisation of education that marginalised urban non-mainstream Christian children may have contributed to the spread of African independent schools on the Witwatersrand. This process was never smooth; it was contentious, dominated by the conflict, contradictions and mistrust between the colonial officials, the white missionaries and the agitators for the independent school movement. It also drew the attention of the local authorities in different locations that rejected the establishment of independent schools by refusing to grant stands. This historical process was also surrounded by uncertainties with finance. For instance, the missionary dominated Transvaal Education Department (TED) obstructed Godfrey Lagden's effort, as Chief Native Commissioner, to grant an educational subsidy to the AME church sponsored school.[168] The TED was distinctly antagonistic towards the development of independent education. Looking back, a similar pledge was made in the Cape in 1885 when the Afrikaner Bond (AB) tried to use its

165 Ibid.
166 NASA, SNA 407 NA 1647/08 NA 1754/08 The attached paper shows a true story of the expenses labouring under.
167 Ibid. The Petition from the members of the Klipspruit Native Location Free School Committee to the Minister for Native Affairs.
168 J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*, p. 226.

influence to withdraw of all government grant-in-aid, whether to schools of European or Africans. The *Christian Express*, however, reveals that nearly two to one votes of the AB members affirmed that 'too much money…was being expended on the schools for natives.'[169] As indicated earlier, it is clear from the records that there was a group of colonists who did not want to see Africans either educated or Christianised. Most educated Africans opposed this. Revd Walter Rubusana expressed his concern in an interview with the *Christian Express* in 1905:

> why should they take this attitude against [the] educated native? Simply because they have formed hasty judgements, often expressed in statements in the colonial papers, and founded entirely upon their acquaintance with bad native characters belonging to the submerged tenth, found in railway and harbour works, and on farms. Hence some of these supercilious critics pretend that every educated native is a rogue and that educational attainments only make the natives more evil. Such prejudices are founded on absolute ignorance of the real results of mission schools. The truth is that most of the people who indulge in this contemptuous style of talk have scarcely come into contact with any of the numerous creditable representative of Kaffir race.[170]

The second point raised was the issue of the labour market that urged whites to deny Africans proper education.[171] Furthermore, the very eagerness for education which had led to an initial acceptance of missionaries and their schools soon developed into an articulate criticism of both when they failed to meet African expectations.

Unlike the urban mainstream mission schools, the Ethiopianist schools offered access to non-Christian children. Apart from the admission criteria of the denominational schools, they could not cater for the rising urban African population of the Rand. As a result, many children could not attend school. This was observed by W.W. Lloyd, a location Superintendent, in a letter addressed to a city official in 1905: 'there … are so many children running about the street and do not attend school.' The response from the Native Commissioner was that it 'is because they do not wish to attend a school belonging to a different denomination…they [are] afraid it might interfere with their religion but would… [attend] a government school if one was established.'[172] The District Surgeon for Fordsburg also noted 'that in Vrededorp alone fully 25 per cent of the boys do not attend school'[173] As we shall see, this period also experienced a close collaboration

169 *Christian Express*, 1 May 1885.

170 *Christian Express,* I December 1905.

171 See, for example M. Cross and L. Chisholm, 'Origins of Segregated Education in South Africa', in M**.** Nkomo, (ed.), *Pedagogy ofDominarion* (New Jersey, 1990).p. 47; M. Cross, 'The Foundations of Segregated Schooling in the Transvaal 1902-1924'. *History of Education,* 16, (1987), p. 268-72.

172 NASA , 279 NA 1992/05 -1993/05, A letter written by W.W. Lloyd, the Superintendent of the location to the Native Commissioner, September 1905.

173 District Surgeon Gilchrist report quoted in Chisholm, 'Class and Color in South African Youth,' p. 11.

between African American missionaries and Ethiopianist priests, and this indicated 'signs of restlessness' among the white authorities.[174]

In Campbell's words, educated urban Africans were demanding, 'modernisation under African control; the presentation to Africans of the full range of Western education without preliminary conditions.'[175] Most of the independent schools had ties to independent churches that emerged in the last decades of the nineteenth century. These educational institutions, however, should not be understood as anti-Christian and anti-colonial in character; they operated within the mission and colonial framework. J.Z. Tantsi expressed this in his testimony to SANAC:

> in order that we may explain certain points which have special reference to our church, our object is [a] simple and clear one: to preach to our people the gospel, to advance education to their good, and to encourage them in habits of industry. It is not right that our church should be credited with feelings of hostility towards the European, which is absolutely not truth.[176]

In a similar vein, Revd S. J. Brander, J. M. Mphela and S. Ngwato of the AME Church responded to the Commission by pronouncing that the aim of their church was to 'erect the schools as industrial colleges, to educate our people in Transvaal … we are very weak, and we have… [no] money, and our people are still in darkness, and we want aid from the government to help us with the schools.'[177] Secondly, the aim of these schools was not to separate the children of the races because of prejudice, but rather was aimed at meeting the needs peculiar to a people just emerging from 'darkness.' Finally, the independent schools should not be seen exclusively as a resistance directed against whites.

The advocates of the independent school movement wanted to have control over Africans education. Although they were financially unstable, the educated class of Africans felt they were sufficiently enlightened to provide their own school facilities. Despite the hardship and sacrifice that the Ethiopianist clergymen endured, by 1904 they boasted nineteen educational institutions in the urban and rural Transvaal. Mabote reported this: 'in my district of Pretoria and Zoutpansberg there are thirteen schools [;] in Tantsi's district [Johannesburg] there are about six; at Potchefstroom there are two.'[178] This initiative aimed at promoting a special provision that would bring the African youth into contact with sympathetic African teachers who knew the

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174 J. Campbell, 'Conceiving of the Ethiopian Movement,' A Seminar paper presented to African Studies Institute at the University of the Witwatersrand, 1987, M. Chirenje, Ethiopianism and Afro - American in Southern Africa; S. Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion: the 1906-68 Disturbances in Natal* (Oxford, 1970), p. 63-64.

175 Ibid, p. 68.

176 Ibid, pp. 474-5.

177 SANAC , Minutes of Evidence, Volume 4, p. 520.

178 SANAC, Minutes of Evidence, Testimony of S.J Mabote, the AME Church priest, p. 474.

needs of their students, educators who would impart educational essentials in a 'relevant' manner. These schools were tolerant of African traditional beliefs; for example, they accommodated boys who went for initiation during the school term - we saw in the previous chapter how initiation was a contentious issue. These schools also allowed children to wear *isiphandla,* the traditional goat bangle that some Nguni African ethnic groups wear after a traditional ceremony.[179]

In the rural areas of southern Africa, chiefs were interested in education and the Ethiopianists under the auspices of the AME Church responded to this call. The literature informs us that the Lozi paramount chief and aristocrats coveted schools but resented Paris Evangelical Missions insistence that only churchgoers' children attend.[180] In the northern Transvaal, Charlotte and Marshall Maxeke established an Ethiopianist school. Unlike in the urban areas, where the Ethiopianists struggled to find land on which to build their schools, in the rural areas access to tribal land through the channel of the chief was relatively easy. The Maxekes accessed land through Chief Ramokgopa of the Batlokwa tribe of the baPedi in 1904. In the post-war years, many chiefs were willing to give away land for schools.[181]

The Maxeke's school that was named Wilberforce Industrial Institute was built through local labour supplied by the chief and students; bricks were made from the plot of the ground allotted by the chief. The building had ten classes and a chapel was completed in 1906.[182] The aim of the school was to teach industrial education and train teachers. According to the report of Mr Jones, the inspector of schools in the Pietersburg area:

> this school is sometimes advertised as Wilberforce Industrial School but no industrial instruction is given except in needle work to the girls. Maxeke is anxious that his school be recognised as a training institute for native teachers, yet from the advertisement taken from 'Imvo' which is published at King Williamstown … it is evident that his object is to provide for higher education[183]

179 In East Africa, the issue of girl circumcision became contentious in missionary schools and was one of the factors that led to formation of independent schools. See, A.S. Adebola, 'The Kikuyi Independent School Movement and the Mau Mau Uprising' *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria,* 10. (1981), pp. 53-71.

180 T. Ranger, 'African Attempts to Control Education in East and Central Africa 1900-1939,' *Past & Present* 32 (1965), pp. 57-85.

181 Chief More, for example, appealed to the SANAC, 'we ask the government to give us schools, to help us, to assist us.

182 J.R. Coan, Flying Sparks, p. 194.

183 NASA SNA 325 NA 1644/06 NA 1768/ 06 A letter that report on the Maxeke's school from T.J.H. Jones to the Director of Education.

The condition of this school was poor but it had more than one hundred learners. With only three teachers, it was under-staffed. Marshall Maxeke taught Mathematics, Latin and Greek, while Charlotte taught Science, French, German and English. The records do not indicate what Eliphaz Nkolo, the third teacher, taught. The school struggled financially. Unlike the Bethel Institute, Wilberforce Industrial School did not get aid from the AME Church, which was also struggling financially, aside from an amount of £75 sent to the school by Bishop Coppin, the presiding Bishop in South Africa.[184]

The objective of the school was to promote higher education by teaching industrial education and to train teachers, but financial constraints and the lack of staff stifled the aims of the school. The Maxekes applied for the recognition of the school, as well as a grant-in-aid, but they were denied because of their affiliation to the AME Church, which, as an Ethiopianist church, was not recognised in the Transvaal. In the history of the Ethiopianist educational endeavour, this school was important: it laid the foundation of the school that was later called Wilberforce Institute in Evaton. After a site visit, the school inspector from the Transvaal Education Department commented: 'if a government grant be made to this school, the Ethiopianist School movement will, in all probability, receive great impetus in this district, but, on the other hand, a grant appears to be the only means by which the control and supervision of such school can be secured.'[185]

3.11 The post-war assault on the Ethiopianist schools

After independent African schools were developed, the government and missionaries became increasingly suspicious of the spread of secessionist religious movements and the solidarity of the 'negroes and the natives' in the United States and South Africa. The foundation of African independent schools was perceived by both missionaries and colonial officials as potentially 'seditious,' as instruments of resistance to colonialism. The colonial administrators overlooked the fact that the independent school initiative was an attempt to access new opportunities, such as careers that had been created by the colonial government. The opportunities were at that time monopolised by whites. As I have shown, all the schools that were established by the Ethiopianists were opened without the approval of the colonial authorities, and they were not

184 J.R. Coan, *Flying Sparks*, p. 194.

185 NASA, SNA 325 NA 1644/06 NA 1768/ 06 A letter that report on the Maxeke's school from T.J.H. Jones to the Director of Education.

subsidised. This prompted Makgatho to write a letter of protest to the Commissioner of Native Affairs in 1906:

> We don't feel this sir be fair; that while other schools receive government grants that they are excluded. We think that just as they are sharing with us in government tax, they should also have government inspector and the government grant. Because by excluding these schools, it simply means that the government leaves our colony in dark instead of lifting it higher up in education. We think sir it is the time that even heathen people are to be educated by the government laws.[186]

When these schools emerged, the colonial authorities were convinced that they would soon collapse because they believed Africans could not undertake such an important educational venture on their own and without missionary assistance.[187] Yet by 1900, the founders of these schools had already graduated from well-established missionary schools, such as Lovedale. Missionaries and administrators also failed to note that

> Each year hundreds of natives are turned out of mission schools, cursed with the rudiments of an education which suffices only to make them despise manual labour as degrading. Crammed as they are with a knowledge which fades like a breath on a looking glass, they drift to cities and towns in search of employment.[188]

This was another important factor in the foundation of Ethiopian schools. As independent schools multiplied, authorities began to assault them in different ways. For instance, they were denied financial support and the access to land where they could build schools. In 1905 for example, Samuel.Olaf. Samuelson, the Secretary for Native Affairs clearly stated: '…no official recognition in any other form either by grant in aid of schools, or otherwise, shall be given to native churches independent of, and free from European control, as aforesaid, or to any religious movement among natives embodying race cleavage as principle.'[189] This was combined with the condemnation of the newly established churches, whether Ethiopianist or Zionist. Samuelson wrote: 'the African Methodist Episcopal Church [should] be discouraged and refused recognition [whatever] possible, as the parent of Ethiopianism in South Africa.'[190] AME Church ministers and teachers were also denied exemption from the 1903 pass laws on the ground that their church was not recognised. Some missionaries who testified to the SANAC condemned teachers at independent African schools in the location as 'lazy' and people who did not care for education[191] and this impression was spread by white missionaries of the time. African graduates

186 NASA, SNA 337, A letter from Makgatho to the Commissioner for Native Affairs September 1906.
187 A.S. Adebola, 'The Kikuyi Independent School Movement and the Mau Mau Uprising, p. 55.
188 S.O Samuelson Quoted in J. Campbell, *Songs of Zion*, p. 146.
189 Pietermaritzburg Provincial Archive (PPA), SNA 1/1/377, ref 2587, Minister for Native Affairs.
190 Ibid.
191 SANAC, Minutes of Evidence, Testimony of Rev Farmer, p. 654.

were not regarded as qualified and competent educationists but as men 'who out [ought] to be doing manual labour but who are perhaps lazy…so they take up teaching.'[192]

Ethiopian schools were regarded by both missionaries and colonial administrators as wellsprings of African accumulation and community life.[193] The official attack was reinforced by Ordinance 5 which stated:

> the assistance given by the government in the education of the native races in the Transvaal colony shall partly be granted through the channel of the various religious bodies engaged in missionary work, and any religious body of standing approved by the government of the Transvaal that may be desirous of assisting in the education of the native races in the said colony shall receive through their authorised representatives, grant from the funds assigned by the government in aid or such education on the conditions specified hereafter … each native mission school seeking financial aid from government must be specifically under the superintendence of a white missionary … or other European recognised by government as competent to exercise an efficient control, who shall set an correspondent with the government in all matters relating to the school, and be responsible for the disbursing of all government subsidies.[194]

This Ordinance was tailored to suppress independent schools; it ensured that all the schools should be under white control. In some cases students from independent schools were not treated equally to those from recognised schools. Dr John Dube of Ohlange, for example, complained to Samuelson:

> I beg [to] draw your attention and that of the Minister of Education to the fact that owing to the examination of the candidate for Native Teachers last December my pupils were not fairly treated. The assistant inspector showed partiality against my pupils … they took their examination at Inanda Seminary ... when my boys asked [a] question he said 'what have you been taught in schools' but when the girls [from Inanda Seminary] wanted anything explained he did so kindly. Previous to those examinations he passed through here [at Ohlange] and saw [the] state work of our pupil[s] and went to Inanda and in the presence of the girls of that seminary made uncomplimentary remarks.[195]

This letter indicates that girls from a missionary-controlled school were treated better than boys from the African-controlled school of Ohlange. Dube further stated that the department unfairly failed some of his students he regarded as good. For instance, 'Ezekiel Kuzwayo who entered for I Class and Caleb Maneng who entered for II Class both of these boys failed in their examination but I am not satisfied at all,' said Dube.[196] Though evidence is scanty, this does suggest that children from independent schools might have been victimised by department officials.

192 Ibid, p. 655.
193 Ibid, p. 173. It should be noted that Ethiopianists in the ORC experienced similar problems.
194 NASA, SNA 176 NA 2383/03 NA 2461/03 Scheme: Native Schools.
195 PPA, SNA 1/1/392 A letter from John Dube to S.O Samuelson, 17 February 1908.
196 Ibid

These schools also suffered attacks from local municipalities. In some towns, particularly in the Orange River Colony (ORC), Ethiopianist teachers were harassed and ejected from the location.[197] Some municipalities refused to grant stands to the church. In the town of Springfontein in the ORC, for instance, the 'council declared [the] AME Church['s] large, unburnt brick building in violation of municipal building codes and ordered it torn down … In Rouxville, police broke up an AME service, citing [a] 1893 law that empowered municipalities to regulate meetings.'[198] In Natal, some ministers, like Zondi, who preached about 'Africa for Africans,' were sent to jail.

Between 1896 and 1910, the LMS and other mainstream mission societies experienced a series of bitter secessions. The new urban and the old rural converts from the mission stations flocked to Ethiopianist churches. Many African ministers and ordinary members of the white mainstream churches broke away from white dominated churches.[199] In Natal, for instance, Revd Mbiyana Ngidi and Revd Shibe, who originally worked with the American Zulu Mission, seceded from the American Board Mission to open up cells of Ethiopian movements in 1897.[200] In the Cape, Mzimba broke away from the Free Church of Scotland. Other secessionists, such as Revd Sibiya and Moses Mbhele from the Dutch Reformed Church, then joined him. Mzimba ordained Mbhele and he opened up his own church, the *Ibandla lika Mosi* (the Church of Moses) in the Umvoti area in Natal.[201] One of the reasons for their popularity was their tolerance towards African traditional practises, such as *lobola*, polygamy and initiation.[202] At the same time, many members of the traditional authorities were beginning to join hands with Ethiopian ministers. In Lusikisiki, for example, the Resident Magistrate complained that Mtintso, a local Ethiopianist priest, preached self-government and the virtues of making arms. Campbell notes that 'He also played a role in the effort of both Sigcau and his son Marelane to extend the authority of the paramountcy at the expense [of the] government appointed headman.'[203] This secessionist movement responded to land dispossession and displacement, taxation, and racism that intensified among white missionaries in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

197 Ibid, p. 173.

198 See for example, C.S Morris 'A work for American Negroes,' *in Report of the Ecumenical Conference*, pp. 469-70; S. Marks Reluctant of Rebellion, p.65; SANAC, Minutes of Evidence, Testimony of W.J. Clarke, the Chief Inspector, Criminal Investigation Department, p. 615. J.M. Chirenje, *Ethiopianism*, p. 93.

199 J.M. Chirenje, Ethiopianism and Afro - American in Southern Africa, 1883-1916 (Louisiana, 1987), p. 91.

200 S. Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion: the 1906-68 Disturbances in Natal* (Oxford, 1970), p. 63-64.

201 J.M. Chirenje, *Ethiopianism,* p.92.

202 J. Campbell, 'Conceiving of the Ethiopian Movement,' 1987, p. 13.

203 Ibid, p. 20.

3.12 Land for schooling

During the onslaught on African independent schools, the educated African residents of Johannesburg were clearly worried. Their main concern was to get access to land, or rather a building site, where they could build their school. After the war, land tenure became the common source of many serious problems; it dominated most issues. Coupled with this fear was the question of the local government regulations and, above all, the TED regulations that governed the establishment of missionary schools in the province. At the same time, Africans who served as teachers and organisers of the independent schools were keen to own and register land in their names, which, until 1905, was illegal. Those Africans who were fortunate to buy land could register the transfer of the property from the previous owner in the name of a white person only, especially a missionary or, after 1880, a public official, who would hold it 'in trust' for the real buyers.[204] In the Transvaal, Africans were technically without any land and were dependent on the Afrikaner authorities to demarcate 'locations' for them. Whites allowed Africans to live on the locations on condition of 'good behaviour', but did not allow them to own the land directly with title deeds.[205]

This led the educated class to wage a struggle for land ownership. Prominent members of this movement were Revd Edward Tsewu, J. Z. Tantsi, James Ngubane, D.H. Hlathi, Tyesi Gunuza, S.J. Mabote, Mangena Mokone, Simon Sinamela, Saul Msane, Paulus Malatye of the TBC. Revd Tsewu played a leading role. Tsewu's activism may perhaps stem from the fact that he had already enjoyed the privilege of the right to vote in the Cape, and the right to buy land in that colony. In his affidavit to the Supreme Court during his application for land tenure rights in the Transvaal he took the oath that:

204 J. Bergh and H. M. Feinberg, 'Trusteeship and Black Land Ownership in the Transvaal During the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century's, *Kleio,* 36, 2004, pp 170-193.
205 Ibid, p. 175.

> I undersigned… [am]… a minister of the Presbyterian Church and as such … [I am]… exempted from the operation of the Native Pass Laws enforced in the Transvaal. The deponent was a duly registered voter in the Cape.[206]

In an additional affidavit, he declared:

> I am the registered owner in the Cape Colony, by virtue of Deeds of Transfer, bearing the date the 15th day of September 1902, and registered in the office of the Registrar of Deed in Kingwilliamstown in the said Cape Colony … of a piece of land containing twenty one square roods.[207]

Educated Africans like Tsewu wanted to extend the relatively liberal Cape legal framework to the conservative Transvaal. Tsewu shared similar ambition with some of the educated Africans from Natal. For instance, the Natal-born Saul Msane, who owned land in Natal, thought similarly to Tsewu. During the SANAC proceedings, Msane was asked by the chairman whether 'the people should be allowed to buy the land.' He replied, 'Yes I would like all individual[s] that can buy to buy.'[208] As the records indicate, Tsewu and his peers who later migrated to Johannesburg enjoyed the rights of buying land and the right to vote back home. More importantly, the struggle for African land ownership was also joined by the Transvaal born activists, such as Paulus Malatye of the TBC.

Both Tantsi and Tsewu were born and educated in the eastern Cape[209] and representative of the new educated class. They were graduates of Lovedale, and student contemporaries of men like Elijah Makiwane, Pambani Jeremiah. Mzimba, among others. These activists invested their political energies in a host of campaigns and struggles. Land and education was, however, on top of the list of their priorities.[210]

In a famous court case in 1905, Edward Tsewu successfully challenged the Crown government in the Transvaal to allow Africans to buy and register land in their own names. This legal victory permanently altered the face of African landownership in the Transvaal. Africans could now buy land and register properties in their own names. By 1905, the settlement of Evaton acquired the status of being a freehold settlement, and also became an important African educational and religious centre for Africans in the Transvaal. Africans wishing to begin a new life and make

206 NASA, ZTPD 8/732 286/ 1905, The affidavit of Edward Tsewu in the court case between Edward Tsewu vs Registrar of Deeds in the Supreme Court of Pretoria, 30 March 1905.
207 NASA, ZTPD 8/732 286/ 1905, The affidavit of Edward Tsewu sworn before the Justice of Peace in Johannesburg, 31 March 1905.
208 SANAC, Testimony of Saul Msane, p.865
209 A. Ondendaal, *Vukani Bantu*, p.53.
210 J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion.*

Evaton their home were welcome. The freehold status provided local residents with the autonomy to build independent churches and schools without any government intervention. Residents could also trade freely without being regulated, and could own land an economic resource. Evaton provided a sense of belonging, a social structure where the previously disadvantaged could begin to reconstruct an African identity and dignity. Residents embraced the strict social mores of the time, aspiring to middle class standards of conduct, dress and speech as part of uplifting the African race. The foundation of the Wilberforce Institute was laid. [211]

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the process towards the formation of Wilberforce Institute was not easy; African control of education was a contentious and very sensitive issue. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that the colonial government saw the Ethiopianist schools as politically dangerous. The government saw the growth of these schools as a potential 'uprising' and missionaries were increasingly worried because they were losing followers. It is clear, then, that we cannot divorce the formation of independent churches from the establishment of independent schools. It is also clear that the role of African-Americans raised fear among the white authorities and the government became hostile to their involvement with the Ethiopians. The chapter has also revealed that Africans wanted to have control over their education because a Transvaal government that made white education compulsory and free discriminated against them. The building and support by government of a non-denominational school for coloureds further urged Africans to build their own schools.

211 V.R. Kumalo, 'From plough to entrepreneurship: A history of African entrepreneurs in Evaton 1905-1960s,' (Master Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 2014).

CHAPTER 4

A History of the Wilberforce Institute

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapters dealt with the status of education in the Transvaal and the process by which independent African education emerged. This discussion revealed how education became a contested terrain between Africans, missionaries and the white administrators after the Anglo-Boer War, particularly on the Rand. This was partly caused by the fact that administrators and missionaries seemed baffled by the idea of an African independent school; they did not believe Africans were capable of running their educational affairs. These controversial developments included disagreement over the approach to education, as well as 'a desire to see religion disappear from the state school and a wish to see it take its rightful place as the true core subject for all studies.'[1] We have seen how urban mission schools' admission criteria marginalised non-sectarian African children. Most of teachers in these schools were desperately underprepared, and the institutes were elementary in character. There was practically no proper educational infrastructure and equipment, except that occasionally there would be a rough blackboard. Besides, they only catered for those who were able to pay fees. For those who were poor, largely urban Africans, they were simply not among the elect who could survive the system.

The purpose of this chapter is to reconstruct the evolution of Wilberforce Institute from 1905 until the outbreak of the World War I when the war forced the school to suspend its service. The year 1905 was the turning point in both the history of African education and landownership in the Transvaal, marking Edward Tsewu's legal victory over property rights and the foundation of Wilberforce Institute. After Tsewu's victory, the news of the land tenure victory was swiftly carried from one white-controlled newspaper to another.[2] This chapter clarifies what it meant for Africans to buy and own a property, and how land ownership provided them with an opportunity to build their own independent school, which they had been so longed for but feared they would never live to see. For the founders of Wilberforce, this came with the great responsibility of

1 . H. Holmes, 'The Problem of Religious Education in the State School with reference to English Medium Schools in the Transvaal' (PhD Thesis, University of Pretoria, 1959).

2 . See *Rand Daily Mail* 5 September 1905.

having to think and plan for themselves. It is, therefore, safe to say that the foundation of Wilberforce was the beginning of a new kind of struggle for the founding fathers and mothers, as well as for the hungry earnest souls who wanted to secure knowledge.

As we shall see, starting a school from scratch was a more serious challenge than the forerunners of Wilberforce anticipated. It was the first African independent school that had ever been opened in the Transvaal - it was, of course, a great achievement and an exciting event. The most perplexing difficulties, however, were to find a teacher or teachers with considerable education, to raise funds that would kick-start the school, and to develop a curriculum that would meet African needs.

Writing about this period is a challenging task for several reasons. One is that Wilberforce was an African independent school that was not registered with the TED; the institute fell under the category of 'native schools,' which were not eligible for a government grant and inspectorate. The school does not appear in the list of the schools that were regularly inspected from 1905, or in the records of the schools that received government grants. For reasons unknown, the pioneers of Wilberforce did not leave any archival trace that relates to the early days of the school, or of their personal involvement in the institute. Moreover, for the period before 1940, the use of oral history is not feasible because the generation that witnessed the events of this period has perished. Although the accessible sources used in this chapter do reveal significant and useful information, these records neglect more personal and private experiences. If we had access to oral history, we would have learned more about the hopes, feelings, aspirations, disappointments, family histories, and personal experiences of the stakeholders.

There are some important historical blind spots. For instance, it is difficult to establish how much cash the school had in its early financial budget. It is also hard to establish how many students enrolled at Wilberforce in the early years of its existence, as well as the origins of these students. We are also not sure whether the school operated a night school for older students. After the Anglo-Boer war, there were older boys and girls, as well as men and women who had to work in the daytime but still longed for some education. The most reliable source that details the early days of the school is a booklet written by Dr Jacob Nhlapo, the former Principal of Wilberforce, which provides a relatively reliable record of Wilberforce from an administrative point of view.[3]

3 . J.M. Nhlapo, *Wilberforce Institute* (Boikhutso Institute, 1947). This source is housed at Wits Historical Papers (WHP) and at Stuart. A Rose Manuscript and Rare Book Library at Emory University in Atlanta (SARUE.) At WHP this booklet is archived under Jacob Nhlapo Papers A006, at Emory they are archived under Josephus

Despite of limited sources, this chapter reveals how the school steadily advanced from its humble beginnings and how it gradually grew with meagre resources that were raised from the self-help programme, largely from the AME church and the local community.

The first part of this chapter establishes how access to freehold land became central to the foundation of Wilberforce. For the founders of the institute the possession of freehold land was essential to their plans. In its nature, landownership served as the backbone and the main driving force towards the foundation of Wilberforce. The second part of the chapter takes us step by step into the evolution of Wilberforce paying particular attention to the foundation of the school, its mission, the social context that surrounds it, and the significant role that the local community played in the development of the school. The chapter also examines the challenges that confronted founders, ranging from finance to administration. The school had to provide a trained leadership that would overhaul and then reorganise the curriculum. This transformation was to a large extent a revolt against the 'piety' of the mainstream missionary schools. Another great task that faced Wilberforce was to develop a programme that would deal with children from poor socio-economic backgrounds, as well as set educational standards that would meet South Africa's economic needs.

4.2 Towards African landownership

Despite the post-war depression and financial setback of the AME Church, the piece of land where Wilberforce is currently standing was purchased after Edward Tsewu's land tenure case victory in 1905. This triumph permanently altered the face of African landownership and property rights in the Transvaal.[4] But before we examine the issues of African landownership and how it ties together with the establishment of Wilberforce, it is important to understand the dynamics of land tenure in the Transvaal before 1905. It is also important to comprehend what

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Roosevelt Coan Papers (JRCP). Another source that assisted in reconstructing how school was financed is the annual Conference minutes of the AME Church that dated back to 1908, housed at WHP.

4 . Edward Tsewu challenged the government on land tenure when on the 14 May 1904 he purchased Lot No 5 situated in the township of Klipriviersoog Estate (Kliptown) from Henry Rocke Murray. Murray signed all the documents and executed all deeds required to enable transfer to be registered in the name of Tsewu. On the 13 December 1904 he tendered the transfer of the property to the Registrar of Deeds for registration at Pretoria, but he was refused on the grounds that he was a 'native' and not entitled to hold land and register it in his own name in the colony of Transvaal. The refusal was based on Article 106 of Volksraad minutes of 14 August 1884, see National Archive of South Africa, ZTPD 8/732 286/1905 In the Supreme Court of the Transvaal in the matter of Edward Tsewu, Applicant and Registrar of Deeds, Respondent, Applicant Petition. See also NASA, ZTPD 271 to 290. For a response from a group of whites who called themselves Rand Pioneers to Tsewu's victory see *The Rand Daily Mail*, 13 July 1905.

land meant to the mission-educated urban Africans, how access to land provided a learning opportunity for the ordinary African children who were denied schooling by white denominational urban mission schools, and how it ultimately assisted them to escape missionary sectarian discrimination that marginalised non-Christian children. It is only through this context that we can understand the ways in which African land rights became central to the establishment of Wilberforce, and how land ownership led the founders of the school to stand firm in the midst of oppression.

After the Anglo-Boer War, the majority of white landowners in the Transvaal were bankrupt. It was difficult for them to recover from the effects of the war and they were unable to rebuild and restock their farms.[5] As a result, most of these owners renting out land to displaced and dispossessed Africans who cultivated land on a sharecropping arrangement.[6] At the same time, the economy of the Transvaal was faltering and Britain was hesitant to become too deeply involved with the problems of the province beyond the Rand gold mining industry.[7] These circumstances, including the land licence system that Lord Milner introduced as the Settler Ordinance of 1903, insisted that landowners should fence and cultivate their properties. This was difficult for many farm owners who were destitute and simply could not afford to comply. It is important to note that before the Anglo-Boer War, large-scale commercial agriculture was rare in Transvaal; the economy of the province remained rudimentary and largely based on subsistence and barter. All these post-war economic dynamics seriously limited prospects for accumulating wealth.[8] In addition, the indigent Transvaal landowners were not even able to pay the farm inspection costs. As a result, they were forced to sell their land to speculators 'and others prospective buyers for a mere trifle'.[9]

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5 . NASA, Precis of Correspondence relative to the inquiries of the Zoutpansberg Land Tenure (Occupation Commission), SNA 178 NA 2383/03 – NA246/ 03, 1903.

6 . T. Keegan, *Facing the Storm: Portrait of Black Lives in Rural South Africa*, (London, 1988); T. Keegan 'Crisis and Catharis in the Development of Capitalism in South African Agriculture, *African Affairs*, 4, (1984); C. Van Onselen, *The Seed is Mine: The Life of Kas Maine A South African sharecropper 1894-1985*, (Cape Town, 1996).

7 R. H. Davenport. Native Land Act, 1913, *Black Sash*, (1983).

8 A.L. Muller (ed.), *Die Ekonomiese Ontwikkeling van Suid-Afrika* (Pretoria and Cape Town, 1979). pp.120-147.

9 NASA, Precis of Correspondence relative to the inquiries of the Zoutpansberg Land Tenure (Occupation Commission), SNA 178 NA 2383/03 – NA246/ 03, 1903.

When applying a deeper analysis of Milner's land policy, it is clear that his scheme sought to modernise the Transvaal's political and economic structure, and was tailored to break up the traditional patronage politics that underpinned President Kruger's regime. Politically, Milner wanted to establish everlasting British control in white South Africa through massive immigration of Europeans, initiated to modify the white demographic and electoral balance against the Afrikaners. In order to achieve this, a land reform scheme became one of Milner's strategies.[10]

4.3 The subdivision of Weldebeesfontein

Among the white landowners, Thomas Adams and Charles John Easton, the owners of the Weldebeesfontein Farm 536 IQ, subdivided their land in a form of stands and sold to landless Africans. The farm was later rezoned as Evaton township. This large tract of land was located between two industrial towns: Johannesburg and Vereeniging. At that time, it was not easy to sell land to whites because of the post-war economic credit squeeze. Sale to Africans was therefore attractive because of the high price that could be charged; it was further encouraged by Tsewu's legal victory that permitted Africans to buy land and register it in their own names in 1905.[11] This transaction rescued the Adams and Easton families from their precarious economic condition. Little is known about these former landowners.

In an effort to confirm the African legal triumph, many Africans, including Ethiopianist preachers in the AME church, bought properties. David Qupe, the son of Mr Qupe, the former bookkeeper of Wilberforce, recollects that his father told him that this victory excited many Africans, such as Revd J. Z. Tantsi, who walked all the way from Phillip Street in Johannesburg to Weldebeesfontein, a distance of approximately 45 kilometres, to buy property on behalf of the AME Church.[12] The geographical location of the newly subdivided township was accessible and invitingly situated to buyers, located between the main road, the Golden Highway, and the railway line, on the west, which links Vereeniging.[13] On the eastern part of the township, the Rietspruit River served as an important source of water. The township was accessible through

10 · S. Marks and S. Trapido, 'Lord Milner and the South Africa State' in P Bonner (ed.), *Working Papers in Southern Africa* vol. 2 (Johannesburg, 1981).

11 . V. R. Kumalo, 'From Plough to Entrepreneurship: A History of African Entrepreneurship', p. 34.

12 Interview with David Qupe, conducted by Vusumuzi Kumalo, Evaton 21 July 2011.

13 . The railway line connected Johannesburg and Vereeniging.

Evaton station, which made the building operations simpler since the building material could be delivered to the station.

4.4 A brief history of Weldebeesfontein

In 1834, Weldebeesfontein Farm 536 IQ was received by Wilhem Viljoen in the form of a state grant from the Transvaal Republican Government. We are not sure of the size of the farm; the backwardness of the agrarian Transvaal made it impossible for the local surveyors to use formal land surveying methods to lay out farms. Later, the size of a farm was determined as an area that would take an hour to traverse on horseback (*een uur gaans over kruis*), a method conducive to inaccuracy and very open to abuse.[14] The inaccuracy of the inspection system led to considerable confusion over the size and even the exact location of farms.

The deed history indicates that in 1864, Weldebeesfontein Farm was transferred from Viljoen who sold it to the Jouberts and it was subdivided to Joubert's children, Joshua François Joubert and Francois Jacobus Johannes Joubert. The intention was probably to provide his sons with viable farms of their own before he died. (It was common for farm owners in the Transvaal to divide land among their male heirs.) The Jouberts later sold the farm to Adams and Easton in the late 1890s, but due to the delays of registering land transaction, the land was only registered in 1905. There is no mention of a purchase price in the records of the Deeds Office or the State Secretary.[15] Adams and Easton formed a partnership under the company that traded as Easton and Adams Company, which subdivided the farm into plots that were sold to Africans.[16] Since the settlement was not set apart or reserved for African occupation only, whites and coloured also bought properties.[17] The archival records reveal that the relationship between white and African residents was contentious. There were several letters written by the Evaton Health Committee, a local white residents' organisation, complaining about Africans and their livestock. The majority of white residents were Afrikaners who had been displaced from their Highveld farms. The white residents occupied the southeastern part of Evaton, and coloured residents lived with Africans in the remainder. Only Indians were prohibited by law from buying property by the Transvaal's Act

14 . G. Allen, F.J 'Buizedenhout Doornfontein: A Case Study in White Farmland Alienation on the 19th Century Witwatersrand,' *New Contree* 36, 1994.

15 . The Office of the Surveyor General, Pretoria, Deeds of Transfer 9427/1905 9428/ 1905.

16 . Surveyor General Office, Akter van Transport, NMS Staatsprokureur, Micro Filmed 3401/73/D3/b.

17 . Ibid, p.39.

3 of 1885, which debarred them from owning land and confined them to locations.[18] Several Indians, however, rented or leased from African property owners.

After the subdivision, the new settlement was named Evaton, the name derived from the combination of Eve Adams, Thomas's wife, and Easton.[19] The stands had residential and agricultural sites; owners also enjoyed mineral rights, as well as grazing rights. The quality of land was exceptional; portions of Evaton had been under cultivation for some years. The company reserved some open spaces for schools, churches and markets.

The sale of stands welcomed Africans and coloureds who excitedly purchased stands and began a new life. The owners of Adams and Easton Company noted that many prospective buyers did not have money, so they accepted credit. It was possible that, if they demanded full value for the stand in a form of cash, many Africans who were poor could not have afforded them, which would have slow down sales. The records indicate, however, that the first group of residents, largely displaced sharecroppers and educated urbanites, never borrowed from building societies; they used their own money to build and buy stands from the Adams and Easton Company. However, the deeds records reveal that those who bought stands later between 1935 and the 1950s borrowed money from several building societies and privately owned mortgage companies to buy stands.[20] As in any other freehold township, these later property owners carried the burden of repaying mortgage bonds.

4.5 The freehold status and Wilberforce

Before we turn to the historical development of Wilberforce, it is important to ask the following: How did freehold status shape Evaton as a suitable space for the establishment of Wilberforce? Why was Wilberforce established in Evaton and not in the old municipal location of Klipspruit, which was a stronghold of the AME church and closer to the big city of Johannesburg? What set apart the older urban location and the new settlement of Evaton? More importantly, it is important to understand why the struggle for land rights became central before the purchase of the land where the Evaton (Wilberforce) institute was built. These questions may only be

18 . M. Naidoo, *An outline of South African Indian History* http://www.muthalnaidoo.co.za/stories-from-the-asiatic-bazaar-othermenu-96/111-outline-indian-south-african-history-1860-

19 . V. R. Kumalo, 'From Plough to Entrepreneurship,' p. 39.

20 . NASA, TALG3/10840 Evaton Drafts and Loans 1935.

answered through understanding the dichotomy between the municipally controlled townships and freehold settlements, giving us an indication about how both localities were controlled, and how land was accessed for educational, religious and entrepreneurial activities. Finally, it is also important to grapple with the concept of 'freehold land' in the context of South Africa. According to the *Economic Times* definition of freehold property**:**

> Freehold property can be defined as any estate which is "free from hold" of any entity besides the owner. Hence, the owner of such an estate enjoys free ownership for perpetuity and can use the land for any purposes however in accordance with the local regulations. Sale of a freehold property does not require consent from the state and hence requires less paperwork, thus, making it more expensive than leasehold property.[21]

In the South African context, this definition is incomplete because freehold land was not subject to any 'local regulations'. This is clearly confirmed by the post Anglo-Boer war land sale newspaper advertisements. For instance, the *Rand Daily Mail* advertisement for the sale of stands in Roosevelt Freehold Township clearly points out: 'don't forget that we sell stands FREEHOLD without restriction, therefore don't wait but secure your stands immediately.'[22] This meant that freehold land was free of local authority's restrictions and outside of municipally controlled areas.

Unlike in other countries, different African localities in South Africa need to be understood within the context of the colonial government programme of national population control that encompassed three distinct localities: a 'native' village or 'native' hostel; the location; and the reserves that later acquired 'homeland status' after 1948. For each settlement, the South African government adopted specific policies that governed each of these three categories. The reserves, for instance, were under the control of chiefs, while locations were under the authority of the superintendents.[23] There was virtually no aspect of urban community in South Africa that was

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21 http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/definition/freehold-property accessed 31 January 2017.

22 *Rand Daily Mail*, 4 April 1906.

23 A. J. Christopher, 'Spatial Variations in the Application of Residential Segregation in South African Cities', *GeoForum*, 20 (1987), pp. 253-267; A. Christopher, 'Formal Segregation and Population Distribution in Port Elizabeth', *New Contree*, 24 (1988), pp. 5-12; V. Bickford Smith, 'Commerce, Class and Ethnicity in Cape Town, 1875-1902', (Ph.D. Thesis, Cambridge University 1989); A. J. Christopher, *Atlas of Apartheid* (Johannesburg, 1994); G. Adler, 'The Factory Belongs to All Who Work in it': Race, Class and Collective Action in the South African Motor Industry, 1967-1986', (Ph.D. Thesis, Columbia University 1994). N. Kagan, 'African Settlements in the Johannesburg Area, 1903-1923', (Master Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1978); E. Koch, 'Doornfontein and its African Working Class, 1914-1935: A Study of Popular Culture in Johannesburg', (Master's Thesis , University of the Witwatersrand 1983); C. A. Soudien, 'Johannesburg 1917-1930: A Preliminary Survey of the Protests and Conditions of the African People', (Master's Thesis, University of Cape Town 1979); D. Cachalia, 'Pageview: The Uprooting of a Community', (Master's Thesis, University of Essex 1985).

independent of racial administration, policies and attitudes.[24] One of the areas that is not listed and under-researched is the freehold area; unlike the aforementioned areas, the freehold settlements enjoyed relative freedom and self-governance. In Evaton, for example, the local public works, including waste, water management, the construction of roads, electricity supply, schools and health facilities became the responsibility of the local residents. In other words, freehold status granted residents of Evaton a full right ownership, which qualified them to run their own public affairs. It is difficult to establish why the government limited control in these areas. It is likely that the unprecedented urbanisation and industrialisation, which pushed cities to expand rapidly, prompted all sorts of physical and management problems that forced the government to sweep aside freehold areas. As a result:

> Local residents enjoyed the power of deciding where community service amenities that were designed to improve the lives of the local community members should be built. For them, Evaton provided a space where they could express themselves freely and move without restraint from authorities.[25]

In contrast to the freehold status that Evaton enjoyed, the previous chapter indicated how locations like Klipspruit and other urban municipally controlled locations were administered, and how the superintendent controlled the lives of the location dwellers under his fiefdom. The preceding section also showed how the residents of the urban locations presented their grievances during the proceedings of the SANAC. We have seen how the regulation restricted freedom of movement and the development of independent schools in Klipspruit. Unlike Klipspruit, the relative autonomy of Evaton provided room for Africans who aspired to advance themselves in different spheres of life, such as religion, business and education.

Evaton provided a refuge for Africans who sought to evade municipal control and pass laws.[26] As a result, many Ethiopianists who openly challenged the restrictive municipal by-laws in urban Johannesburg and surrounding locations bought properties and relocated to Evaton. One of the prominent urbanites was Revd Tsewu. The surviving document of his will indicates that Tsewu had more than two stands in Evaton: one in Small Farm No. 29, measuring 283 square roods 48 square feet situated on Selborne Road, the other a one acre plot, No 1385, situated on Easton and

24 S. Parnell and A. Mabin, 'Urban Studies and Urban Change in Southern Africa,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 21, (1995) pp 39-61.

25 . V. R. Kumalo, 'From Plough to Entrepreneurship', p.82.

26 . Ibid, p. 39.

Mikado Road. He purchased both properties in 1907,[27] and a considerable number of independent church leaders bought properties there at the same time.

The significance of the freehold status is best explained by the fact that it made it easy for the school to be built without being registered with the TED. In the previous chapter, it was shown that the TED educational scheme for Africans required that each native mission school seeking financial aid from government must be under the supervision of a white missionary or other European person recognised by government. Both the educational ordinance and the rigid municipality regulations made it difficult for independent schools to access land in the municipally controlled areas. Above all, the freehold status gave the school autonomy to decide independently what to teach. It also implied that Wilberforce could admit learners and teachers of any denominational affiliation, from all over the country, without them being regulated by the pass laws and the residential restrictions of the local municipal authorities. It is important to note that municipal residents, including tenants, had to apply for occupational permits that would be signed by the Municipal Location Inspector or Superintendent. The municipal administrative documents clearly state that:

> municipal location resident shall mean any adult male [or female] native who produces when called upon to do so a certificate signed by a Municipal Location Inspector, Superintendent or other duly authorised officer of a municipality or Village Management Board to the effect that he has occupied as owner or rented a stand in a Municipal Native Location during the previous consecutive twelve months, and has paid the rent and taxes thereon. [28]

4.6 The local community and Wilberforce

Documenting the complexity of the Evaton community,[29] its social formation and peculiarities that distinguished it from other communities can serve as a framework for understanding the connection between Wilberforce and its social surrounding. It might also give us insight into why the local community adopted a self-help programme that substantially contributed to the survival and the development of the school. It is equally important to understand how the school bolstered local identity by offering new opportunities to local children and elders who were in a

27 . NASA, TOD 2671, The Estate of the late Edward Tsewu.

28 . NASA, SNA 275 NA 1587/05 –NA 1588/05, Municipal Location Resident.

29 By community we mean local residents, who live in the area and may or may not have children in the school, but have an interest in the school.

position to take advantage of them, and how the school elevated the local community into a middle class social status. More opportunities to attend school provided a greater sense of security and respectability. As an independent school that did not enjoy grant-in-aid from the government, Wilberforce was left alone; it is clear that without any local community contributions, the institute would not have survived.

The community of Evaton can better be understood within the broader context of African suppression, displacement and dispossession that led to the involuntary movement of people when land became consolidated in the hands of white people. The pioneers of the settlement shared more or less similar experiences, including being subjected to various repressive social forces that included land dispossession, ill-treatment in the urban locations and in white farms, and discrimination in mission stations. This background strengthened the community bond and created a sense of group identity among all the residents of Evaton. As a freehold space, Evaton afforded local residents an opportunity to condemn the aforementioned repressive forces and Wilberforce embraced by the community as one of the great local achievements that reacted against the colonial marginilisation of Africans.

The pioneers of the township were the educated urbanites, largely Ethiopianists. They were also independent farmers and sharecroppers who, after the Anglo-Boer war, returned to the white farms to trigger a remarkable economic revival. The educated residents became dominant and exemplary to the younger generation; they appeared to have a strong influence on other residents. Their dominance was bolstered by their optimism and daring belief that, as the first African-controlled school in the Transvaal, Wilberforce would one day outstrip her rivals and even challenge other mainstream missionary schools.[30] This suggests that the Ethiopianist residents remained powerful agents of conscientisation, offering a vision of hope and restored human dignity by motivating local Africans to be independent. They also advocated self-help programmes. As we shall see, this urged the local community to be conscious of the problems facing Africans of which education was central.

It is also important to examine why different pioneers of the area, who came from different parts of the country, decided to move on to Evaton. This would help us to understand why local residents valued Wilberforce and contributed so much towards its institutional development.

30 . V.R. Kumalo, 'From Plough to Entrepreneurship.'

After the Anglo-Boer War, some sharecroppers found old landlords unwilling to accept their service back on their farms, possibly because of their participation in the war on behalf of the Imperial government that later disappointed them.[31] While some were welcomed, others told to cull their herds or vacate the land. 'This situation was exacerbated by the implementation of the Rights of Coloured Persons in Respect of Fixed Property Act 42 of 1908. The Act required tenants - mostly sharecroppers - to sign contracts, which brought them within the ambit of law.'[32] This Act aimed to transform sharecropper families into labour tenants, and was not well received by sharecroppers. As a result, the insecurity of tenure, violence and contentious relationships with landowners often encouraged them to move out of the white farms.

The subdivision of the farm and the freehold status of the new settlement of Evaton offered them an opportunity to buy stands there. The sharecroppers themselves came from the important agricultural region of the Transvaal and some from the Orange Free State, both Republican colonies that institutionalised the use of violence to keep Africans subordinate and poor.[33] Their farming skills and the knowledge of soil fitted well with the farming advantages offered by Evaton. They were impressed by the large tracts of treeless plains that had bigger stands. The availability of large tracts of ground with grazing land brought hope that they might re-establish themselves as farmers in Evaton. At the same time, they felt that prospects of making a living by agriculture were immeasurably better in this region than on the industrialising Rand.

Between 1905 and 1930, these small-scale farmers farmed quite large plots, which they either rented for cash or owned some both in Evaton and in different parts of South Africa. The new freehold settlement attracted independent farmers from the British colonies of the Cape and Natal. Farmers like James J. Mbhele, who came from Natal in 1907, bought a small farm in Evaton that comprised six stands. He also had a farm in Kokspruit, Newcastle. (Mbhele was an example of an African farmer who had the opportunity, as mentioned earlier, to own land in Natal.)

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31 . J. Boje and F Pretorius, 'Black resistance in the Orange Free State during the Anglo-Boer War' *Historia,* 58, (2013), pp 1-17.

32 . Ibid, p. 43.

33 . T. Keegan, *Facing the Storm: Portraits of Black Lives in the Rural South Africa* (London, 1988).

There were also African traditionalists like Absolom Dlamini, whose grandfather who was an *inyanga* (traditional healer).[34] There were 'detribalised' educated professionals, such as court interpreters, insurance agents, nurses, bank clerks and bookkeepers.[35] Some of these educated elites were adherents of the AME Church, while others, like E. D. Mashabane, a teacher from Orange Free State, were Methodists transferred by the Methodist Church to Evaton. The list of the pioneer-educated residents included well-known names in eastern Cape politics, such as David Matsolo, the vice chairman of the Thembu Association, and Revd Masiza, who worked very closely with the Herschel Teachers Association. These activists, including J. Z. Tantsi, the founder of Wilberforce Institute, brought a wealth of political experience to Evaton.

The township also received 'Oorlams', who were later classified in the Native Affairs Department's records as coloureds.[36] Philip Bonner documented how in the late 1840s the Swazis, 'by far and away the most important dealers in captives in the eastern Transvaal', raided children from their weaker neighbours such as the Kopa and the Tonga and sold them to Afrikaners in the eastern Transvaal.[37] Among the members of the Oorlams community were Mr Van Der Merwe, who was a stonemason, John Malay, who looked after the Easton, Adams and Company's interest, Sophia Maria Adams who bought Plot 3 and 4 on Block 123 in 1905, and F. W. Francis who owned Plot 8 and 9 in Block 139 that he bought in 1910. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, these residents became victims of the Group Areas Act which squeezed them out of Evaton.[38]

The arrival of these newcomers, including the eastern Cape political activists, shaped Evaton into a hotbed of social and political resistance. The surviving documents reveal that by 1906, for example, the AME Church cabal from Evaton and Pretoria organised a deputation to J.Y.

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34 . V. R. Kumalo, 'From Plough to Entrepreneurship,' p. 64.

35 . T. D. Mweli Skota, *The African Who is Who: an illustrated classified register and Nation Biographic* (Johannesburg, 1965).

36 P. Delius and S. Trapido pioneered the literature on the formation of Oorlams, and P. Bonner added more to the nascent literature on the Oorlam.

37 . P. Delius and S. Trapido, 'Inboekseling and Oorlams: The Creation and Transformation of Servile Class, in B. Bozzoli (ed.), *In Town and Countryside in the Transvaal: Capitalist Penetration and Popular Response*, (Johannesburg, 1983); P. Bonner, *Kings, Commoners and Concessionaires: the Evolution and Dissolution of the Nineteenth-Century Swazi State*, (Cambridge, 1983), p. 81-84.

38 . V. R. Kumalo, 'From Plough to Entrepreneurship,' p. 67.

Lagden, the Native Commissioner on the issue of exemption. In the meeting that they held in Pretoria they asked:

> we cannot understand, sir, why the privilege of exemption should be based upon religious lines …we cannot understand why we are excluded from this privilege. We do not know of a single act of disloyalty which has been alleged against us by the government our history of birth in any colony can prove that we have been loyal to the king. We came for the purpose of getting an explanation because we think it is a great grievance which requires redress.[39]

This deputation indicates that the presence of the AME Church hardliners from the Cape and Natal missionary schools shaped the community of Evaton to take a critical view of colonialisation. The defiance was spurred by the presence of displaced sharecroppers who were conscentised by rural injustices and displacement that they suffered in the countryside. In other words, Evaton became the area of deep thought where African residents began to reconstruct their way of thinking. This culture was, of course, driven by the angry recognition that their white counterparts possessed land, freedom, education, mobility and luxuries. The radical stance of some residents of Evaton was confirmed by the Native Commissioner's report, which described the complaints of industrialists in the area of the Vaal, who were unwilling to employ people of Evaton because of their radical politics. Before World War I,[40] Evaton reflected broader political stances. Some residents and teachers of Wilberforce, for example, like the Maxekes, Tantsi and Ngcayiya, actively took part and spearheaded the formation of the South African Native National Congress in 1912.

It is important to note that all the residents were detribalised and polyglot; the township presented a strong element of cultural mingling between different language groups that formed the settlement. The larger part of the sharecroppers, for example, were BaTswana, while others were BaSotho and very few Nguni. Among the BaTswana, were the BaKgatla BaMakau who came as group; there were also other small groups of the Tswana language groups. The BaSotho were BaKwena, BaFokeng and others. Among the AbeNguni were AmaZulu, AmaXhosa, who

39 NASA, SNA 325, NA 1644/06 NA 1768/06 Notes of the meeting between the Commissioner for Native Affairs and Deputation from District Conference (Johannesburg and Pretoria Districts) AME Church held at Pretoria 24 April 1906. In urban areas the mission-educated Africans were able to acquire the certificates of exemption from the provision of urban laws. This was critical in terms of their legal ability to conduct business and acquire land outside locations and could free them from demeaning restrictions on the movement, from curfew regulations to the requirement to live in a location. Some were exempted from carrying passes. The power to grant exemption lay in the authority of municipalities within their boundaries. See A. Redding 'Peasant and the creation of an middle class in Umtata' International *Journal of African Historical Studies*, 26 1993, pp.513-539; A. Cobley, *Class and Consciousness: Black Petty Bourgeoisie in South Africa 1924 to 1950* (Westport, 1990).

40 NASA, A letter from the Native Commissioner to the Director of Native Labour File 361/363, undated.

were largely educated.[41] For these newcomers, land possession provided a space where independent education and religion fostered racial pride and through which solidarity was forged. Africans created independent educational, religious and economic institutions that served as the basis of challenging humiliation by white authorities.

4.7 Wilberforce and its humble beginnings

After confronting educational problems and practical difficulties that occurred on the Rand locations, the legal victory of Tsewu gave J. Z. Tansti hope to advance his lifelong dream: he finally had the opportunity to buy land for the establishment of a church and an independent school, a piece of land that was to provide African people with greater security from municipality harassment. The educational institution was to rationalise, channel African aspiration, and get closer to the real needs and conditions of African communities. To a large extent, its forerunners saw Wilberforce as part of independent development that would increase skill and capacity and offer greater freedom for African children. This educational development was to meet demands of African people in the cities. The achievement of Wilberforce was to be the personal development of students and South African society as a whole.

The new African independent educational establishment was named Lillian Derrick Institute in Evaton, named after the wife of Bishop Derrick. It was renamed Wilberforce Institute by the graduates of Wilberforce University in the United States and the first staff members of the institute in 1908.[42] Getting Wilberforce started was not an easy task and there were many complications that confronted the founders of the institute. Firstly, there were conflicting educational philosophical aims between the founders of the school and the Transvaal educational authorities. Secondly, the founders had to provide room for fuller intellectual cultivation and be responsible for raising the standard of the African learners. There was thus a need for qualified teachers who would readjust western education to suit African needs, to be achieved through the promotion of reading that furthered understanding African culture and other civilisations. At that

41 Ibid.

42 . It is important to note that the literature documented that Wilberforce was founded in 1908. Thist is incorrect as the school was founded in 1905 by J. Z. Tantsi and named Lillian Derrick Institute. From 1905 to 1908 the school was very small and it was not recorded in the records of the AME Church. It only appeared in records when mobility of the AME Bishops was lifted. It was also popularised by the involvement of the Wilberforce graduates who renamed the school Wilberforce.

time, there were very few educated people in the Transvaal, so qualified and recognised teachers were hard to find.[43]

These teachers faced several problems. For instance, reading material was not easily accessible, especially since they were not admitted to public libraries, such as the Johannesburg library. As Mr. Cadenhead, the Chief Librarian of Johannesburg Public Library, reported:

> The question of permitting coloured persons to the Free Reading Room has never been discussed by my Committee. We have never had coloured people in the room at all, and as far as I know the question has never been raised.[44]

Furthermore, Africans were not involved in the publishing field to produce books that would teach an African based curriculum and methods. It is important to note that the everyday life of Africans, particularly the Ethiopianists who conceptualised African independent education, were greatly influenced by many changes brought about by local whites and the interaction with African-Americans through their cultural advancement and extraordinary progress made in the educational fields.

It could be argued that the increased demand for education of the masses was largely driven by this exposure. However, the Transvaal was unlike the Cape, where a number of American Negro dockworkers and Africans from the West Indies formed distinct communities, and Trinidadians, such as the founder of Pan Africanism Henry Sylvester Williams, lived.[45] In the Transvaal, it was not easy for the local African teachers to exchange information on various aspects of education with African Americans. Moreover, books from America were expensive and one of the greatest hardships that faced the urban family, whether educated or not, was their inability to earn sufficient income to support their family. Thus, without books and practice in reading, it was very difficult to develop African education.

According to the 1905 *Special Report on Educational Subjects,* 'the demand for natives who are qualified to act as teachers … exceed the supply, and it would be difficult for [the] government

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43 . See J. Nhlapo, *Wilberforce Institute.*

44 . See Cadenhead quoted in M. A. Peters 'The contribution of the Carnegie non-European Library Service, Transvaal, to the Development of the Library Service for Africans in South Africa: An Historical Evaluative Study' Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Cape Town 1974, p.45.

45 See R. Vinson, The *Americans are Coming*, p. 73.

to establish institutions to meet this want.'[46] Owing to the acute shortage of teachers, the AME independent institutes, particularly Wilberforce Institute, had to 'fall back on' the Wilberforce University graduates who became the 'strong rock'[47] for many years, helping with educational upliftment and academic support. Throughout decades of greatest difficulty, they maintained a commitment and deep desire to do all they could for African children.

As indicated in the previous chapter, liberal education, such as Greek, Latin and advanced mathematics was preserved for whites; the mainstream missionary schools that catered for African children only offered courses in 'manual labour'. As a result, sporadic efforts at Wilberforce had to be made to adjust the curriculum. As we shall see, this presented a serious challenge for the founders of Wilberforce who were caught in the American hot debate between Booker Washington's industrial education and William Edward Burghardt Du Bois' liberal education model. Another serious challenge was the fact that the institute had to accommodate children from different denominations, including non-Christian children, and work out what and how to teach them. The crucial question, of course, was how this initiative could be carried out effectively. In the words of the Director of Education reporting to the Commissioner for Native Affairs: 'learners are the children of heathen parents.'[48]

4.8 The rejection of the founders

During the initial phase of the independent school movement on the Rand, the AME church founded many institutions throughout the Reef, in Pretoria and in the remote border areas of the Transvaal. These educational institutions aimed to overcome African illiteracy in the Transvaal. A year after the Lillian Derrick School was opened the founders of Wilberforce consulted with the government. J. Z. Tantsi led the AME Church deputation, and a meeting with the Commissioner of Native Affairs was convened in 1906. One of their requests was for the school to be registered, but the aim of this meeting was to ask Sir Godfrey Ladgen if the AME church-controlled schools could be placed under the Native Commissioners so that correspondence with

46 Board of Education: Special Report on Educational Subjects: Educational System of the Chief Crown Colonies and Possession of the British Empire, Including Reports on the training of Native Races, (London, 1905), p.334.

47 This phrase was used by J. Nhlapo in his book *Wilberforce Institute.*

48 NASA, SNA 276, A letter from the Director of Education to the Commissioner for Native Affairs (undated c 1906).

the Education Department could be through the Native Affairs Department.[49] In that meeting, the issue of the government subsidy, which included the funding of the newly founded Wilberforce, formed part of the agenda. The Commissioner responded:

> It is the policy and practice of the Education Department to give grants-in-aid in cases where a responsible white missionary is in charge. Your schools do not comply with that standard and so you do not get grants … I offer no opposition to anybody who advances the rights of the native children to have schools. But I think the natives should do what the white people do and not ask for free schools, but should show that that they are prepared [to] contribute towards the cost.[50]

This led to a serious outcry and the founders of the school, together with other Africans, protested this decision. '[I]t affected our hearts very much to see the government give free education to those [coloured] children whose parents do not pay taxes, while those whose parents pay taxes are not granted this privilege. It is a gross injustice in our sight.'[51] This concern was supported by the 'native section' of the Church of the Province of South Africa in the Transvaal. In their petition to the Commission for Native Affairs, they wrote:

> We the members of the Native Conference representing upwards of ten thousand of our people, sitting under the Presidency of our Bishop, the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Pretoria do present our humble petition to the government of this country ... we beseech the government to reduce the heavy burden of taxation under which we labour ... at the same time we see only heavy taxes and very little money for schools from the government[52]

It is clear from this petition that even African mission schools that were under the control of the mainstream missionary churches were under-funded. As we shall see, the failure of the government to provide funding to Wilberforce and other AME-controlled schools placed a heavy responsibility upon the community and local church adherents. Although the mainstream urban missionary schools were funded, the scale of funds was, however, granted in accordance to the government regulations and based on the average attendance. School attendance, in part due to denominational admission criteria, was very low on the Rand - as mentioned earlier, a substantial number of urban children on the Rand were non-Christian and never attended school. It is unlikely that a mainstream missionary school in Transvaal would have welcomed non-Christians in the cordial way that non-Christian students were welcomed at Wilberforce. In 1906, the sum of £10 000 was provided for Native Education Grant in Aid; this funding excluded AME church schools.

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49 NASA, SNA 325 NA1644/06 NA 1768/06, Notes of the meeting between Commissioner for Native Affairs and Deputation from District Conference (Johannesburg and Pretoria Districts) A.M.E Church, held at Pretoria, 24 April 1906.

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid.

52 NASA, SNA 325 NA1644/06 NA 1768/06, The Petition of the Native Section of the Church of the Province of South Africa in the Transvaal, May 1906.

Institution for the Training of Native Teachers £1,550

Instructive courses for Native Teachers..... £750

Native Schools.....£7. 700

[TOTAL] £10 000[53]

As demonstrated below, the rejection of the founders' request impacted negatively on the smooth operation of the school. As a result, the institute had no governmental inspection that would have helped infrastructural and teacher development, which made it difficult for the government to keep records on the development of Wilberforce. The scarcity of government records that covers the period between 1905 and 1929 poses a serious challenge for contemporary researchers.

4.9 In the beginning

Despite the AME church's precarious financial circumstances, and the internal tension between the church elders and Bishop Smith, the twelve-and-a-half acres of land where Wilberforce's foundation would be laid was purchased, funded by the Phillip Street AME church Sunday collection. Tantsi's success in raising funds as the church minister can be explained by the following: firstly, there were few schools that catered for African communities on the Rand, particularly for the children of independent churchgoers and non-Christians. Secondly, and more significantly, there was growing resentment of the oppressive laws that were increasingly imposed on Africans, who had no meaningful participation in the political life of the country. Thirdly, fund raising was motivated by the exclusion of independent schools from state financial benefits. Finally, the AME church members were reacting against the 'disorganised state' of schools in the locations, further reported by the Native Commissioner in 1906 who expressed his concern about the state of schools in the Klipspruit location.[54]

Unlike some dishonourable AME church ministers who registered church properties in their own name using the church funds, planning to keep the properties when they retired, Tantsi registered the property under the Trustees of the church. Bishop Johnson who advised ministers to follow suit later applauded this. In the Bishop's speech at the opening of the 1910 conference, he advised ministers that 'whenever they secured [property] for the church [they should] make it in the name of the African Methodist Episcopal Church under Trustees; and always to consult with

53 NASA, SNA 325 NA1644/06 NA 1768/06, A letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs from the Director of Education, May 1906.

54 NASA, Native Commissioner's report 25 April 1906, SNA 313.

the Presiding Elder before they take any steps to buy that land.'[55] The Bishop was clearly aware that some of the AME church ministers were unscrupulous when it came to the ownership of properties.

Despite some awkward circumstances surrounding the development of the school, Lillian Derrick was formally dedicated as a school in 1905. The available records do not reveal how the opening ceremony unfolded. It is, however, likely that eager hundreds assembled, eager to observe the event. In the beginning, Wilberforce had only one mud hut that was used as a school during the week and a church on Sundays. It later emerged not only as a primary and high school, but also as non-sectarian training institute for theological studies catering for all African independent church ministers, a college for teachers, and a teacher training college.[56] We shall see how Wilberforce, which started with one mud hut building had expanded by the 1940s into a large African mission institution, with a theological college that flourishes even today.

From 1905 to 1914, the development of the school was slow. This period represent the days of small things, but of the toil of digging trenches for the foundations and problems concomitant with the beginning of any great undertaking.'[57] In those days, the school struggled financially and its existence was also affected by the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 when the school suspended its educational activities. Unlike Ohlange Institute, an African independent school in Natal, which was erected with the financial assistance of an American committee of white advisers and friends in 1900,[58] Wilberforce received no financial contributions from white philanthropists, the government or even from the African American missionaries and philanthropists of the AME church. As indicated, it was not the policy of the government to contribute towards the foundation of Wilberforce because the government felt that 'if a government grant be made to… the Ethiopian School Movement [it] will, in all probability [,]

55 WHP, African Methodist Episcopal Church, Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual Conference of the Cape Colony Conference held in joint session with the Orangia Conference at Queenstown on the 9th November 1910, African Methodist Episcopal Church Collection A2936.

56 Many sources claim that Wilberforce Institute was founded in 1908, yet the school was founded by JZ Tantsi in 1905. The reason behind this claim may be attributed to the fact that the school records or rather the exposure of the school existence was recorded in the AME Church records in 1908, when Bishop Albert Johnson was assigned by the Norfolk Conference to supervise the church work in South Africa.

57 J. Nhlapo, Wilberforce Institute.

58 M. Marable, 'John L. Dube and the Politics of Segregated Education in South Africa,' in A. T. Mugomba and M. Nyaggah, (eds.), *The Political Economy of Colonial Education in South Africa*, 1980, p. 113.

receive a great impetus.'[59] Co-operation between the local residents of Evaton and the church was essential.

During this period, especially following the post-war reconstruction in the Transvaal, compulsory education was as chimerical in the province as in the rest of South Africa. In some localities, particularly in white communities on the Rand, educational development had reached a remarkably high standard. For instance, old white schools, such as Sacred Heart, the Parktown Convent in Johannesburg, and many others were immaculately built structures that included sports ground and other facilities, made possible by the financial subsidy from the government. In the same year, the Colonial Treasurer offered:

> £50 000 for new schools the principal being Booysens £10 000, Hospital Hill £12,500, Christiana £8 750 and Pretoria Burgher Right Erven £6 500. Other new school to come out of £50 000 are Jeppestown, Bloemhof. Haartebeesfontein, Troyeville … and Mayfair … while provision is also made for the purchase of the site for a coloured school in Johannesburg. Altogether new schools will provide[d] accommodation for 2,140 children.[60]

The state budget, however, did not mention plans to build any schools for Africans. Instead, 'the Native Affairs Department call[ed] for new Pass Office in Johannesburg at a cost of £22 000, while £4000... [and for a] similar office in Germiston.'[61] African education was not a priority within the broader government development programme; the erection of that pass office is indicative that the state prioritised social control over African education. The fact that the African urban population was increasing and the existing schools did not meet the demand was not a concern.

It also became clear that schools erected for whites would not be the same as those that had been built for Africans. Even coloured schools that were established received similar treatment to schools for white children[62] receiving, for example, the same annual grants and they were placed on the equal footing with regard to equipment. The opportunities for education within the reach of the average African were undeniably minimal,[63] in spite of the fact that between 1904 and 1905 'natives contributed £400 000 towards the revenue of the state.'[64] Considering the meagre

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59 NASA, SNA 325 NA 1644/06 NA 1768/06, A letter from the District Inspect, Mr T.J.H. Jones to the Director of Education, 4 July 1906

60 *Rand Daily Mail*, 13 July 1905.

61 Ibid.

62 M. Cross, 'The Foundation of a Segregated Schooling System on the Witwatersrand 1900-1924, (Masters Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1986), p. 76.

63 *Board of Education: Special Reports on Educational Subjects: Educational Systems of the Chief Crown Colonies and Possession of the British Empire including Reports on the training of Native Races*, (London, 1905).

64 *Rand Daily Mail* 16 August 1905.

income that Africans received in those years, having to pay for school fees was a heavy burden for Africans to bear; yet they were excluded in the state school development programme.

The establishment of Wilberforce was not welcomed by the educational authorities and missionaries and the school was eliminated completely excluded from participating in the Transvaal central educational system. This did not, however, discourage the Ethiopianist initiative from establishing Wilberforce. Instead, the founders of the school were driven by the belief that Wilberforce would one day open all the doors European mission education had promised but failed to open. But the isolation of Wilberforce from the state school subsidies brought financial hardship that delayed institutional expansion and the erection of its brick and mortar structures.

The history of funding for the Wilberforce is depressing until 1939, when the government finally recognised the school. As we shall see, the government only became more concerned with African education after Bishop Richard R Wright pressured the state in the late 1930s to take part in the Wilberforce educational endeavour. Still, the state did not provide enough to make much effective contribution to the school. As Gray tells us, 'total financial contribution remained relatively small throughout the inter-war period.'[65] As a result, the school was maintained with difficulty, and the strain created by the lack of a state grant became serious as the school expanded, especially after the First World War, impacting negatively on the recruitment of good teachers and perpetuating the unequal development of African education.

4.10 Wilberforce before World War I

In 1905, Wilberforce had one teacher, James Yapi Tantsi, who also served as a principal of the school.[66] Tantsi, who had a Bachelor's degree from Wilberforce University in the United States, was the most important learning resource available to local Wilberforce students. By the time Tantsi graduated from Wilberforce University in 1905, he was respected, a competent teacher and a learned man of his time.

Wilberforce University was under the control of the AME church and had an underlying faith in the intellectual potential of the 'black race'. Students were exposed to a full classical curriculum featuring ancient and modern languages, mathematics and science. At Wilberforce University,

65 R. Gray, *The Two Nations* (London, I960).

66 James Yapi Tantsi was the first-born child of J. Z. Tantsi, born in 1870. He received his education at Clakerbury in the eastern Cape and later moved to Wilberforce University where he graduated with Bachelor of Arts in 1904.

Tantsi internalised a good work ethic, temperament and attitude. He was a student of Du Bois at Wilberforce in 1896. Du Bois argued that 'negroes' should protest emphatically and continually against the abridgement of political and civil rights and against unequal economic opportunities.[67] The ideas that Tansti was exposed to in America seem to have shaped him into a dynamic educationist, with a positive energy that stimulated progress and change; sadly, the lack of archival records on his role as a leader limit our knowledge of him.

It is not clear how he was recruited to become the first teacher at Wilberforce. He was perhaps asked by the congregants and his father, who was by then a leader of the church, to go to Evaton. For a young graduate like James Tantsi, this opportunity might have been a tempting offer. After consultation with the elders of the church, Tantsi then took residence in Evaton where he put his knowledge and talent to work. When the small community heard that Tantsi was coming to Evaton, they eagerly awaited him. His appointment was an unprecedented event for the local community and the church as there were, as mentioned earlier, very few highly trained African educators with Bachelors degree in Transvaal at the time.[68]

Wilberforce Institute was 'blessed' to have a graduate with a bachelors degree. The low standard of African teachers training was associated with a wide variety of related concerns such as hiring practices, certification patterns, and the social context of African schooling, particularly the segregated underdevelopment of African education in the South Africa. In most cases, teachers had limited academic skills and even less classroom training, and were teaching in the local schools they formerly attended. As an African, James Tansti understood African needs, and the records reveal that he interacted closely with parents, forming a ground-up community that treated schooling as a collective responsibility.[69] He also played an important role in the community and was expected not only to educate children but also to engage in social work, public health campaigns, racial uplift and interracial diplomacy.[70]

He was also clear that the AME church saw education as a tool for liberation. He was confronted with the challenge of giving his students the type of education that would meet their needs and the demand of their communities, most notably to empower them to become teachers in schools

67 A. Meier, Negro *Thought in America 1880-1915* (Michigan, 1966), p. 178.

68 WHP, Mweli Skota Papers A1618, Skota's manuscript on yearly register of the African elites.

69 J. M Nhlapo, *Wilberforce.*

70 WHP, African Methodist Episcopal Church, Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual Conference of the Cape Colony Conference held in joint session with the Orangia Conference at Queenstown on the 9th November 1910, African Methodist Episcopal Church Collection, A2936.

that were to be built by the AME church in the future.[71] The conflict of interests between the needs of the African community and the church's ideas on education must have been almost overwhelming for Tantsi. His impact upon the school as an outstanding teacher brought repeated praise within the church both in America and in South Africa. In recognition of his work as a home missionary and educator, Tantsi was conferred with a Doctor of Divinity by Wilberforce University.[72] As a Christian, he was expected to retain an old-fashioned sense of missionary idealism.

Since the school was poor, Tantsi's work as the principal offered very little financially. Why did many independent school teachers endure such hardship? One AME pastor answered this question: 'the struggle was for [the] educational and economic future of the African children.'[73] This statement framed the Ethiopianist agenda and connected well with the objectives of the AME church. The attitude and the commitment of these teachers were motivated by the struggle for equality, encouraging a special sense of dedication to compensate for the material deficiencies of the schools. In the government un-aided schools that mushroomed after the Anglo-Boer War, these teachers were expected to fulfil the role of teacher, mother or father, disciplinarian and mediator. They were expected to handle significant behavioural and academic issues with no support from the government. In most cases, students needed the kind of help that was beyond capacity and training of teachers. They, however, enjoyed close relationships with their pupils, had empathy for the children and an intimate knowledge of the black community, enabling them to motivate their charges. Despite the meagre remuneration that Tantsi and his successors received at Wilberforce, their love of education kept them at their jobs.

As mentioned earlier, it is difficult to establish how many students enrolled at Wilberforce in its early years. We are also unable to establish their age and origins. The only source available is Dr Nhlapo, the former principal of Wilberforce in the 1940s, although his booklet does not provide an absolute figure of the student body. It only presents the following names: 'Marina Opperman who later became Mrs Moikangoa, Gladys Opperman, Jonathan Mokone, Alfred Mejoane, Benjamin Sechaba, Joseph Mabulelong, and Elisha Sibeko.'[74] The names of the students indicate that the student body was made up of both boys and girls, and their surnames point out that they

71 The question of teachers in the AME schools was clearly stated in the 1910 minutes of the AME that: 'there was a need for more teachers that the church should produce.'

72 Ibid.

73 Ibid.

74 J. M. Nhlapo, *Wilberforce Institution*, Marina and Gladys Opperman were coloureds and sisters of David Opperman, a longest serving vice-principal of Wilberforce. David later got married to Charlotte Ndlebe.

were of different cultural background: some were BaSotho, the Oppermans were 'mixed race,' which was later classified as coloureds and Sibeko was umZulu.

While small in numbers, some of these students were to play a significant role in the broader political and educational history of South Africa, and had a profound impact on the AME church. Some, like Jonathan Mokone, the son of the AME church founder Mangena Mokone, migrated to the United States to further his studies at Wilberforce University in 1911,[75] an achievement that reveals that Wilberforce inculcated principles of discipline and hard work. The Oppermans were from one of the pioneer families. Marina Opperman became a teacher at Ohlange Institute in 1914. At that time the school had fewer than ten students. It is worth noting that 'as early as 1905 there were barely two hundred Africans students enrolled at government aided schools in Johannesburg, and still fewer in Pretoria.'[76] The shortage of schools was described by the AME Educational Committee as

> as single drop of water in a dry land they felt that the existing number of old centres of education, such as Kilnerton and other schools was not enough to meet the number of ten million of the descendants of the sons of Ham south of Zambezi…we need more and more of this power of education to go through the land of our fathers.[77]

Jean van der Poel, a Cape historian and a teacher writing in the 1930s, concluded that by the year 1924,

> about 24 per cent of native children between the ages of 6-16 ... [were] in school, which means that about 1,200,000 children are receiving no education … of those in school 60 per cent … less than one third reach standard II and only 5 per cent attain standard VI to VIII.[78]

Considering that these figures represented four provinces of the Union, the AME church members had no choice but to call for more educational institutions. This clearly demonstrates that Wilberforce was founded when there were very few students in the Transvaal who attended school, and those like the Mokones and Oppermans were privileged. It is not clear how many of the first students were the sons and daughters of the AME church members themselves.

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75 See J. Campbell, 'The Seed that you sow.'

76 J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*, p.154.

77 WHP, African Methodist Episcopal Church, Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual Conference of the Cape Colony Conference held in joint session with the Orangia Conference at Queenstown on the 9th November 1910, African Methodist Episcopal Church Collection, A2936.

78 J. van der Poel, 'Education and the Native,' A Paper read at the conference of the South African Teachers Association at Cape Town, 28 June 1934.

4.11 Self- help programmes

The Evaton community and the AME church played an important role in funding the school. In the early days of the Wilberforce Institute there was no accommodation for students on campus and the first cohort of students was accommodated in the homes of the local residents. Nhlapo mentions that a room was hired for boys at Mrs. van der Merwe's house.[79] Van der Merwe was one of the coloured pioneer residents and a member of the Anglican Church. She became a 'house mother' to the African young boys, living with them in her home and became becoming responsible for their discipline, clothing, accommodation, and so on.[80] Mrs Mqgibisa, the wife of Abraham Mqgibisa, one of the elders of the AME church, accommodated girls.[81] It is, however, difficult to assess from sources whether students paid rent for accommodation or were accommodated freely by non-AME church members, such as Mrs van der Merwe.

A large part of the student body was not from Evaton. Because there were very few African schools on the Rand, many learners were compelled to attend schools far from their homes. The problem was exacerbated by the fact that a number of mission schools on the Rand that catered for African children were developing a bad reputation. A number of missionaries proved themselves to be no different from other 'Europeans' by discriminating against African teachers or failing to treat their African pupils with affection or respect.[82] It is hard to imagine how learners moved from one locality to another seeking education. However, it made sense for students to seek the best education options, wherever that might be, especially if parents and guardians were willing to pay for them to go away.

It is possible that the independent status of the Wilberforce Institute compensated for its geographical location. As a result, students from remote locations were willing to make the sacrifice. Those who came from areas, such as Klipspruit struggled more because their parents paid higher rents and were further impoverished by higher transport costs.[83] Apart from accommodation, student's meals were prepared and served at Charlotte Maxeke's house.[84]

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79 J.M. Nhlapo, *Wilberforce Institute*.

80 It is interesting to note how after the implementation of Apartheid in 1948, and Group Areas in the early 1950s segregated coloured people who lived in Evaton from the local Africans. Under the Group Areas Act all coloured residents of Evaton were forcibly removed.

81 *The Wilberforcean, 1964.*

82 WHP, Report of the commission, Union Advisory Board on Native Education Papers, AD I760, CPSA.

83 J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*, 155.

84 Ibid.

Interestingly, a large part of the meals consumed by students were prepared by students themselves as boys were actively involved in the cultivation of vegetables.[85] They also planted fruit trees that helped to make the school self-supporting. The families of Mqgibisas and the van der Merwes provide us with a good example of how members of the local families assisted the school.

The stories of these families are full of interest and deserve further research. For more than two decades they worked for their African communities and the church. The Maxekes, for example, were strong advocates of independent education. As indicated before, long before Wilberforce was established in Evaton, they opened the Wilberforce Training Institute in the northern Transvaal. Abraham Mqgibisa hailed from a mission station along the Cape frontier. On the Rand, he was credited as the first priest who opened a Wesleyan Chapel. He was, however, victimised by the white priests, which led him to join the Ethiopian movement.[86] Unfortunately, little is known about Mrs. van der Merwe.

The contribution of these families and other community members indicates that the local residents were delighted by the existence of Wilberforce, and were willing to offer any service that could be of assistance in getting the school running.[87] This means that the vision and mission of Wilberforce was clear to the community, and it was welcomed. As parents, the community members wanted better educational opportunities for their children and felt that collaborative efforts would improve the school. Without coordination and a mutual commitment to Wilberforce, the school would not have succeeded.

As discussed earlier, the community of Evaton was free from municipal control. It was engaged in local public issues and works; community members trusted one another to act fairly and the local leaders in this community were regarded as honest and committed to community upliftment.[88] In other words, the community took ownership of the school and supported it in every effort. It is perhaps relevant to add here that from 1905 to the 1940s Wilberforce survived without any donations from white philanthropists. As we shall see in the following chapter, it was only in the late 1930s and 1940s that the school received contributions from white people, particularly from Dr. Ray Phillips of the American Board, as well as from the South African

85 *Voice of Mission,* September, 1910.
86 See J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*; M. Skota *Who is Who.*
87 J. M. Nhlapo, *Wilberforce.*
88 See V. Kumalo, 'From Plough to Entrepreneurship'.

Institute of Race Relations liberals and from the academics of the University of the Witwatersrand.

It is important to note that in many schools agriculture was part of curriculum; at Wilberforce agriculture was not part of vocational teaching but rather for subsistence purposes. In those years, agriculture was the most important occupation of the people of Evaton; there was little point in Wilberforce teaching agriculture.[89] For Africans, education meant reading books, writing, speaking English and doing arithmetic. In addition, it was difficult for the dispossessed and displaced founders to imagine an agricultural future when Africans were already dispossessed and increasingly squeezed out of white-owned farms. Moreover, the existing reserves were already overcrowded.

The years between 1905 and 1913 were difficult years; Wilberforce had no money for the development of school infrastructure, unlike schools for white children on the Rand. There were, for example, no bathrooms or other forms of bathing facilities for students at Wilberforce, and showering had to be done outside at night in the open air. Even in the cold seasons, students at Wilberforce washed outside, whereas white students in places like Parktown were enjoying warm baths and a sanitary system that was laid down under the strict supervision of the Municipal inspector.[90] The food at Parktown Convent was served in a kitchen 'of the most up to date kind, and equal to that of the first class hotel, comprising as it does the most elaborate heating and cooking apparatus.'[91] Wilberforce boys were accommodated in the houses of the local residents while white students in Parktown Convent slept in well designed, well ventilated dormitories.[92]

4.12 New buildings as part of self help

The growth of the local population and the increase in demand for education, as well as popularity and recognition that Wilberforce gained, created pressure for more buildings. In many ways, the existence and growth of the institute during this formative period represented the achievements of the Ethiopianists and the ordinary Africans on the Rand. The school was, after all, the base of African hope. More than any other missionary school in the Transvaal, it

89 For a more detailed study of subsistence farming and the re-arrangement of this enterprise in Evaton, see V. R. Kumalo, 'From Plough to Entrepreneurship.'
90 Ibid.
91 *Rand Daily Mail* 7 September 1905.
92 Ibid.

expounded an African mission. As a result, the reputation of the school enhanced the respectability of its founders; it was regarded as the central triumph of African progress, proving that African missionaries could compete with their white counterparts.

This put pressure on the school administration and the Board of Trustees that was made up of church elders, such as Tantsi, Mabote and many others, to work harder than before. Perhaps these church elders were aware that if they failed it would harm their reputation, the standing of the church, and Africans in general, adding to their already considerable burden of responsibility. From 1905 to 1913, the school steadily improved and new buildings were erected. During the time of Harsant Tantsi, another son of J. Z. Tantsi, who became the principal after Henry Msikinya, a new building which became a girls' dormitory was erected. This building was named after the dynamic and highly cultured wife of Bishop Levi Coppin,[93] possibly to honour Lady Coppin for her contribution to Negro education. Fanny Coppin was the principal of the Institute for Coloured Youth (ICY) in Philadelphia, the first black woman to head an institution of higher learning in the United States of America. She later became the assistant of her husband Bishop Coppin, founder of Bethel Institute and the first AME Church presiding bishop in South Africa.[94] Although the building is currently in bad repair, it is still standing at Wilberforce today.

It is interesting to note that the money used for the erection of Fanny Coppin Hall was donated by the women's wing of the AME. This was applauded by Bishop Johnson during the 1910 conference in Queenstown:

> He referred to the work begun by our women in the Transvaal to establish a dormitory for girls at Evaton, he referred to the money of the A.M.E church, spent to establish the work of the Evaton school. He made a general reference to most of our fund showing how all the money are spent for our work in South Africa.[95]

The initiative to build a girls' residence was also reported in the subsequent conference in Bloemfontein in 1911, the Bishop reported, that the Women Society of the AME 'had collected £60 to furnish the girls dormitory at Evaton and further explained that the Board of Trustees [intended] shortly to erect a suitable building as the Teachers House.'[96] On the same day, the

93 WHP, Historical African Methodist Episcopal Church, Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual Conference of the Cape Colony Conference held in joint session with the Orangia Conference at Queenstown on the 9th November 1910, African Methodist Episcopal Church Collection, A2936.

94 L.M. Perkins, 'The Impact of Black Women in Education: An Historical Overview', *Journal of Negro Education*, 13. (1982), pp. 181-190.

95 WHP, African Methodist Episcopal Church, Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual Conference of the Cape Colony Conference held in joint session with the Orangia Conference at Queenstown on the 9th November 1910, African Methodist Episcopal Church Collection, A2936.

96 Ibid.

plans for the proposed teachers house was exhibited on the wall and the Bishop reported that he would deposit £500 into account at Standard Bank for the purpose of erecting of teachers house in Evaton. The Bishop further indicated that: 'have to be signed, a written agreement that the balance if any will be payable in December 1912, and that the work will be supervised by the skilled mechanic to be appointed by the Board.'[97] At the same conference it was announced that other provincial conferences of the AME should be represented on the Wilberforce Board of Trustees.

During the construction process, boys made bricks and plastered in the afternoons, so little cash was needed for outside labour. This also helped male students acquire building skills and enhanced a sense of ownership of their school. It is likely that during the construction process students made mistakes, but these may have taught them valuable lessons for the future. This initiative strengthened self-reliance and self-determination among students. Apart from the students, a number of men in the community also volunteered and provided several days' of labour towards the erection of the building. Among those who were recorded by Nhlapo were two local residents, Masiza and Motshwari who contributed labour and their work played an important role by manufacturing bricks used by Matsolo, the local bricklayer, to build the structure.[98] Tantsi said: 'Our little knowledge of carpentry has helped us very much in this work. Every missionary to Africa ought to know something about this trade.'[99] In the school, boys planted trees, painted and fenced the campus; they also made chairs, desks and tables.[100] The erection of the hall of residence meant that the number of long distance students increased considerably, particularly girls. The boarding department might have brought new challenges for the school; existing sources do not mention provisions made for kitchen, cutlery, furniture, dining room and bedclothes to keep students warm during winter, and food. It is not clear whether food was prepared in the kitchen or outside in the open fire, and we do not know whether meals were served at fixed or regular hours. We are also not sure if students were happy with the food provided; in later years food became the source of dissatisfaction that led to strikes in many schools.[101]

97 Ibid.

98 J.M. Nhlapo, *Wilberforce.*

99 The *Voice of Mission*, September 1910.

100 Ibid.

101 See for example, C. Kros, 'They Wanted Dancing and not merely the Lambeth Walk: A Reassessment of the 1940s School Disturbances with particular reference to Lovedale.' A paper presented in African Studies Institute

4.13 Finance and staffing

The poor financial position of the school impacted on the frequent changes of principals, who were paid from Sunday church contributions that constituted their salaries. J. Y. Tantsi, for example, did not spend many years as a pioneering principal; he remained only for a year and was succeeded by Henry Msikinya who was elected principal of the institute at the 1910 conference in Queenstown. Msikinya served until his sudden death in 1912.[102] Msikinya was succeeded by Harsant Tantsi, brother of J. Y. Tantsi, and replaced by Marshall Maxeke, Charlotte's husband. The lack of adequate payment and state aid to the school brought unhappiness that may have taken its toll on their private lives. When Maxeke resigned from the church duties as a principal he wrote to the Bishop saying, 'Please accept my resignation…owing to financial pressure I am compelled to take an appointment offered me in Transkei.'[103]

Is it possible that the financial problems experienced by the early staff members of Wilberforce raised their political consciousness? They were, ultimately, addressing local issues that directly affected their personal lives. Some, particularly those who came from the eastern Cape peasant background like Msikinya, were well off, and could have lived upper middle class lives.[104] But they decided not to on the grounds that a clergyman, even if he had private means, should set an example of simplicity and sympathy with the poor. It is important to note that Msikinya and others emerged from the colonial Christian loyal convert families who occupied African owned enclaves scattered around the Cape. Any movement for the elevation of the school was highly valued by the church and its women's wing; this was reported by David Msikinya, the head of the Committee on Education in the 1910 Conference:

> The Committee on Education beg to report…that education is a great power in the church and state … the church must do its own share to the dark races out of ignorance into the light of knowledge … into the liberty of higher citizenship. As a church we need men who will devote their time and energy in teaching sons and daughters … We cordially and most thankfully recognise the work carried on at Evaton[105]

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at the University of the Witwatersrand, 1992 T.R H White, 'Master of the Night: the context of the evolution of the Lovedale Riot 1946' *Historia* 1997; J.Hyslop,'Social Conflicts over African Education in South Africa from the 1940s to 1976.' (PhD thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1990), J. Hyslop,'Food, Authority South African Schools 1945-1976, and Politics: Student Riots in South African Schools, *Africa Perspective*: 1987.

102 *The Wilbeforcean*, 1912.

103 MHP, African Methodist Episcopal Church, Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual Conference of the Cape Colony Conference held in joint session with the Orangia Conference at Queenstown on the 9th November 1910, African Methodist Episcopal Church Collection, A2936.

105 Ibid.

4.14 AME church funds from America

The lack of American financial support to Wilberforce during its formative years and the following decades raises a concern. In order to address this, it is necessary to consider the historical development of the AME church as a religious institution and how it became the integral to the idea of 'racial upliftment.' During the mid to late nineteenth century, a period of heightened institutional building in the aftermath of slavery, the AME church became central to African American life, not only as a place of worship but also as the incubator of behind schools, business enterprises, clarity, politics and recreation. The church offered an array of community outreach.[106] Furthermore, at the Congress on Africa held in Atlanta in 1895, the redemption of the 'Dark Continent' was enthusiastically discussed and the religious 'duty' and 'obligation' of African American to redeem Africa was stressed, this obligation considered all the more binding in light of the transatlantic bonds of 'racial kinship' and 'racial affinity.'[107] After this congress the issue of race and education in Africa became a central topic in various church gatherings. In his own words Bishop Coppin declared:

> What has been done for the uplift of the coloured man in America, by schools and colleges and by contact with a superior civilisation, means, not only that he should be a helpful agency in the body politic; but also he should bear his part of the religious burden of uplifting the world.[108]

This was embraced at Wilberforce and in other AME church schools. Charlotte Maxeke, a former teacher at Wilberforce, argued 'that in the schools, the students should see pictures on the walls which depicted "our own people" rather than portraits of the British monarchy. "Our children"', she said, 'must learn to know and respect the race, their benefactors and their ministers.'[109]

From 1905 to 1914 Wilberforce was, as discussed earlier, financially supported through community initiated self-help programmes and the local church collection. When Wilberforce was formed, there was no clear direction from the AME church leadership in America if the

106 F.E. Frazier and C. E Lincoln, The Negro Church in America: The Black Church since Frazier. (New York, 1974); F. Harris, Something Within: Religion in African-American Political Activism. (New York, 1991); W. Montgomery, Under Their Own Vine and Fig Tree: The African- American Church in the South, 1865-1900 (Louisiana, 1993.).

107 J R Coan, *Flying Sparks*, p. 238.

108 Ibid, p. 53.

109 Quoted in A Paterson, 'Contest and Co-option,' p. 307.

church was prepared to fund local educational projects. For the founders of Wilberforce, however, America represented in general an independent source of inspiration and support for a wide spectrum of Africans. The literature has revealed how Africans put their trust in African-Americans who were seen as exemplary, as people that would deliver Africans from the colonial bondage. It also states that the amalgamation of the Ethiopianist church with the AME church raised new hopes among Africans. For them, this unification meant access to external sources of aid.[110]

> Such assistance was to a certain extent able to resolve the bitter paradox that faced the proponents of independent schools, namely that independent school movements have had higher aspirations but lower performance (because of less financial resources) than mission or government school systems.[111]

The Ethiopianists thought of African-Americans as wealthy people that would help them to build schools and churches. Bishop Turner who promised Mangena Mokone one thousand dollars to erect a new church in Cape Town fostered this. He also assured James Dwane that the ten thousand dollars allocated appropriated for the South African college would be forthcoming as soon as returns from the annual Easter Day mission collection had been counted.[112] None of these promises were fulfilled:

> The failure of the AME church to fund a proposed training school in the Cape Colony for educating South African church members, and the belief that the Ethiopian Church's absorption into the AME Church undercut the Ethiopian spirit of self-reliance led [James Mata] Dwane, [the superintendent of the AME] to secede from the AME Church on October 6 1899.[113]

In response, J. Z. Tantsi wrote a follow up letter to Bishop Abraham Grant, urging the church to speed up the process of the South African college. In reply, he received a pledge of five pounds and a homily on self-help. These pounds were accompanied by the following message 'no race or people can become great who do not depend on their own resources.'[114] It became clear to the local church leaders that they had to come up with self-help programmes that would fulfil their own educational dream for their children. To make matters worse, in his 1905 sermon, Bishop Smith stated:

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110 R. Hunt Davis, The Black American Education Component Education in African Responses to Colonialism in South Africa, http://www.uwm.edu/libraries/ereserve/kirk/davbla.pdf, p.3; J Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*, p. 217.

111 Ibid, p.3.

112 J Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*, p. 217.

113 Ibid.

114 Ibid, p. 219.

> the colored people of America cannot fight your battle, all that the Church, of which I am humble and perhaps unworthy, representative can do for you is to give you such advice, encouragement and moral support as occasion may require…whatever problems now exist, or that may hereafter arise affecting the interest of the native races in South Africa are British problems not American. I want to dispel the delusion that I find exist in the minds of some of our adherents in these regions that, their connection with the African Methodist Episcopal Church will ensure them help from America … It would therefore be futile to appeal to America for aid in case you should be confronted with difficulties not involving the personal liberty or property rights of American citizens. As your leaders they must spring from among yourselves and … select some most of your worthy sons, possessing the widest intellectual aptitude and send them to the best universities of the United Kingdom.[115]

Bishop Smith's attitude also impacted negatively on the passage of African students to study in America. His attitude 'flatly discouraged Africans from coming to America during his conflict-ridden eighteen months as resident Bishop of South Africa.'[116] It is clear from this statement that some African-American bishops, such as Wesley Gaines and Charles Smith 'took a dim view of the African interest,' believing that it diverted African-Americans from responsibilities awaiting them in America.[117] This, coupled with previous promises, frustrated Ethiopianists, such as Dwane who had already left the AME to form the Order of Ethiopia. Samuel Brander who testified in front of SANAC explained:

> They told us, look here; we will show you and teach you and bring you equal education with the whites, so they will recognise you.' All they had provided, however, was a cohort of men from America, and the chain of broken promises. They that they would give us a school from America at their own expense, with teachers and all, and this they did not, we had to support schools and everything here ourselves, and also take collection for Easter Day.[118]

Campbell's work reveals how the relationship between Africans and the American AME bishops in South Africa, particularly Levi Coppin and Charles Smith, became contentious. It worsened with the controversial Bishop Smith who presided for a year in 1905, and sparked the American bishops' prejudices; they were, it could be argued, not dissimilar to some European missionaries who were ignorant of the local needs, languages and way of life. Above all, they were sceptical of African self-governance. It is not clear whether their action was perhaps influenced by their upbringing, or by the manner in which Africans were represented by the Anglo-Saxon scholars in the western world as backward. It is also possible that these black Christian's minds were shaped by the Judeo-Christian ethic, implanted by the 'slave drivers' in their minds that drew a sharp contrast between black and white, sin and virtue, between children of darkness and

115 NASA, SNA 276, Extract from a Sermon delivered by Bishop C.S. Smith, in the Chapel of Bethel Institute, Cape Town, South Africa Sunday evening 21 May 1905.

116 J. Campbell, The Seed that you Sow, p. 274.

117 J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*, p. 217.

118 SANAC Minutes quoted in J Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*, p. 240

children of light.[119] Freire, who wrote several decades later argued, : 'the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors, or 'sub-oppressors.'[120] During his visit to the United States, Dwane confirmed this assumption: 'I found amongst the coloured themselves that the darker ones were looked down upon by the lighter coloured ones … In America,' he concluded 'they are doing all they can to get white.'[121]

It must be noted that the 'fathers' of the AME Church were not actively antagonistic to their fellow African's desire for educational improvement. They only had a limited amount of money available. Before the AME missionary expansion to Africa, Bishop Daniel Payne warned the advocates of missionary expansion about the lack of funds. He raised the issue of cost and ability as one of the major obstacles for the foreign missionary endeavour. His criticism was levelled against the 1852 New York Conference, which expressed the will of the church to 'look after perishing Africa, the West India Islands, the Santo Doming and others – and all those who are not Christianised – as any other Christian Church upon the face of the globe.'[122] In his own words, Payne said, 'This zeal of the zealous bishop out ran his knowledge of the cost and difficulties of establishing missions in the foreign land'.[123] Bishop Payne's criticism appeared as a fulfilled prophesy when the AME church in America was unable to maintain its mission in Africa in the early twentieth century.

It is important to note that the poor social and economic conditions of African-Americans compelled the AME church to fashion itself as a social welfare organisation in America, particularly in the south where African-Americans were particularly impoverished. The church had to operate kindergartens, old age homes, libraries, penny saving banks, schools and employment agencies; all this required funding. In 1890, for instance, the church supported 23 schools, colleges and seminaries, including Wilberforce University in Ohio, Allen University in South Carolina and Morris Brown College in Atlanta.[124] When the AME attempted to establish a South African college, a project fully supported by the United States, it failed, as did the proposed Turner Normal School that was to be built in Queenstown with the aid of the mother church in America. All these educational projects were to be under Bishop Dwane who was then a 'Vicar-Bishop' of the AME Church. In addition, the school that Marshall and Charlotte

119 See G.K. Lewis, *Slavery Imperialism and Freedom: Studies in English radical Thought* (New York, 1978), p. 73
120 P. Freire, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed, (New York, 1970)* p.4.
121 James Dwane's SANAC testimony quoted in J. Campbell, The Songs of Zion, p. 219.
122 Ibid.
123 Ibid.
124 L.S. Little, *Disciples of Liberty: African Methodist Episcopal Church,* p.9.

Maxeke built in Ga-Ramokgopa in the Northern Transvaal received less support than expected from the American AME Church head office. The only school that was fully supported by the Americans was the Bethel College. Due to this lack of funding, African dissatisfaction with Americans deepened.

These historical dynamics represent a turning point in the history of the AME church in South Africa. Local leaders became pessimistic and changed their attitude towards the American church leaders, particularly with funding of South African educational projects. In turn, this situation inspired African adherents of the AME church to be more independent, to take more and more responsibility in their education projects. E. B. Sargant reported this in 1908:

> in none of the South African colonies has this movement lacked support, and the natives themselves, in their own territories as well as elsewhere, are showing their desire for such opportunities for more advanced studies by offers of monetary contributions towards the realisation of any suitable scheme.[125]

Sargant's report was confirmed by L. L. Berry's study of the AME mission in South Africa. In his findings Berry wrote: 'never in the forty years has one penny of the funds collected at the South African Annual Conference been sent to America or elsewhere. It was spent in South Africa to develop the work there.'[126] Berry's work also confirmed that different properties acquired by the AME on the Rand, as well as in Pretoria were bought by the local congregants under the funds raised by the Home Missionary Society of the Transvaal.[127]

All the funds that were collected at the South African Annual Conference were spent locally. During the 1912 AME Church conference, for instance, Rev Mabote a member of the Wilberforce Institute Board of Trustees reported on the income and expenditure as follows:

> Amount of receipts £538.7.2
>
> Expenditure was £518
>
> And indebtedness of £225[128]

The only property that Americans bought was the site where Bishop Coppin built the Bethel Institute in Cape Town in 1902. The *Voice of Mission* recorded that Dr H. B. Parks, the Secretary of Missions in New York, sent Bishop Coppin $4,000. Of this amount, $3,500 came from the

125 E.B. Sargant, Report on Native Education in South Africa: Part III Education in the Protectorates (London 1908), p. 64.
126 L.L. Berry, *A Century of Mission of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 1840-1940* (New York, 1942), p.185.
127 Ibid, p.185.
128 WHP, African Methodist Episcopal Church Collection, A2935, Minutes of the 1912 AME Church Conference, p. 257.

Mission Department and $500 from the Church Extension Department.[129] Unlike the poorly built schools in the Transvaal, this financial support enabled the school to have a chapel, a hall and a school, whereas Wilberforce during its humble beginning had one hut which was used as the school during the week and a church on Sunday.[130]

4.15 Conclusion

This chapter focused on how the freehold environment and landownership paved the way for the establishment of Wilberforce Institute. It also highlights the role of the community in the development of the school. The local AME church could not rely on American donations or white philanthropists for the upliftment of the African child during this early period. The chapter links African independent education to the dichotomy between the freehold township and the municipality-controlled location and explains the simultaneous struggle of the Ethiopianists for land and education in Klipspruit. With the condemnation of independent churches and schools by the municipal authorities, if Africans had not challenged the Transvaal government on land tenure rights, the establishment of Wilberforce would have failed.

129 *Voice of Mission*, September 1901; see also R.J. Coan, *The Flying Sparks*, p. 172.
130 J. M. Nhlapo, *Wilberforce Institution*, Boikhutso Institute, 1947.

CHAPTER 5

The Wilberforce Institute, 1917-1929

5.1 Introduction

After the First World War, the South African urban population grew rapidly and the society became more complex. New job opportunities opened up for the educated youth and a variety of educational needs became apparent among African communities. Basic elementary schooling, secondary and higher education that included teacher training and vocational education were all, in varying degrees, in short supply. In order to meet the post-war multiplicity of African educational needs across many countries, the AME church devoted enormous intellectual energy and substantial funding to education. In the midst of the war, the AME began to plan ambitious educational projects with the aim primarily to expand Wilberforce and other elementary schools. Although the financial muscle of the AME to operate large educational institutions was limited, the AME's optimistic plans were given a boost when Wilberforce was reopened after the war. The secondary education and the teacher training courses were introduced; this achievement was accompanied by the expansion of the school infrastructure and the increase of the number of staff and learners. The aim of this chapter is to examine how the institute expanded its service after the war and the challenges that confronted the school. The first part of the chapter will focus on the factors that attracted new students to Wilberforce and the role of the church leaders in the operation of the school. The second part will explore the challenges that confronted the school for its teacher-training course to be recognised.

5.2 After the War

Before World War I, Wilberforce was very small and unpromising. This was worsened by the outbreak of the war in 1914, which obstructed the academic progress of the school. Subsequently, the institute had to close down. It is not clear, however, why the school suffered; institutional resources were not channeled into the war effort and teachers and students did not volunteer or participate in the war. Moreover, Wilberforce did not rely on state funding. Nevertheless, the schools most affected by the war were white schools. Lambert notes that from 1914 to 1918, 'the [white] schools were nurseries of imperial patriotism, providing fertile

recruiting grounds for South Africa's war effort. Weaned on stories of imperial greatness and imbued with ideals of imperial glory and chivalry, few schoolboys questioned the call of King and Empire.'1

On the 5th February 1917, Wilberforce reopened and a new 'glorious chapter of the institutional history began.'2 The reopening ceremony was chaired by Dr. Francis M. Gow, father of Francis Herman Gow,3 who later succeeded Tolityi Magaya and became the principal of Wilberforce and later the Bishop of the AME church in South Africa.4 In 1917, Wilberforce had to once again start the difficult road to financial security, but things were not quite as bad as many had feared because of the £500 that the AME' church's Foreign Missionary Department donated – an endowment announced during the 1914 [AME] Conference in Worcester - in addition to students' fees and other donations.5 At that conference 'the Bishop reported that he had £500 in the Standard Bank which he had received from the Missionary Department to be used for teachers in the Wilberforce Institute'6 this was still a miniscule amount compared to those received by the white missionary-controlled schools. Because the school was still closed due to the ongoing war, the Bishop reported that the money was bearing interest in Standard Bank in Cape Town and that members of the AME in the USA promised £2,000 more for educational

1 J. Lambert, `Munition Factories Turning Out a Constant Supply of Living Material': White South African Elite. and the First World War *South African Historical Journal* 51, 2004, p. 69. These schools, particularly English schools such as Pretoria Boys High, King Edward VII School and Jeppe Boys became the epicentre for servicemen recruitment. As a result, the war affected old boys, teachers, and senior pupils' volunteers. Many never returned; some came back with mutilated bodies or health undermined. The evidence in Bill Nasson's paper is equally clear that white students and teachers played an important role during the war. For instance, 'officers from Johannesburg's King Edward VII School ... play[ed] veldt aphorisms, in German South West.' Boys' Schools and the First World War *South African Historical Journal* 51, 2004, p. 69.

2 J. M. Nhlapo, *Wilberforce.*

3 F.H. Gow was the pastor of Bethel Church, former student of Wilberforce University and Tuskegee. He was an outstanding minister. He was the first Superintendent of the AME Church in South Africa and for over thirty years pastor of Bethel, built during his long ministry. He also served as Presiding Elder for many years. He was also the first non-white person appointed a director of the Community Chest. He published his sermons in three Cape Town newspapers, see, R. R. Wright, 'Wilberforce Institute in South Africa: Forty Years Missionary Work of the A.M.E. Church,' (undated) p.309.

4 Francis Gow was a West Indian born photographer married to Sarah, an African-American from Pennsylvania. As we shall see, the Gow family played an important role in the life and the post-war development of Wilberforce. His son was Francis Macdonald, South African AME minister, trained and ordained in the United States. He was appointed Superintendent Cape district and became minister the Bethel Church congregation.

5 The Foreign Missionary Department was the AME unit that administered church affairs in foreign lands, including in Africa and Asia.

6 WHP, Journal of Proceedings of the Joint Session of the Cape and OFS Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church held at Worcester on the 7th-11th October 1914.

buildings for the extension of Wilberforce.7 Part of that money had to pay the pre-war debts that the school incurred to local service providers. Out of £156.13.9 that Revd Mabote presented during the conference, he 'beg[ged] to ask the Board of Trustees to appropriate the sum of £15.15 to pay an old standing debt to one woman for iron and wood … a part of the said money to be used for the repair of the fence round the school property which is altogether out of repair.'8

The other funds were sourced from the AME Dollar Fund programme, a scheme that raised money for purposes such as the training of missionaries and church social programmes. The Dollar Fund programme proved to be most successful because of the role that women played. In nearly every church, for instance, women organised committees to raised funds.9 In the previous chapter, we have shown how women contributed through this scheme to erect Fanny Coppin Hall girls' dormitory at Wilberforce. Part of that money was contributed by the Baltimore and Philadelphia women.10 Paterson argues, 'even so, women's involvement was couched in the role of supporter rather than leader.'11 He quotes a speech of Mrs Coppin in which she says women in the AME were given the place of Ruth whose functions included 'gleaning moneys', 'visiting the sick' and ensuring 'that children [were] sent to school.'12

7 WHP, Journal of Proceedings of the Joint Session of the Cape and OFS Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church held at Bloemfontein 1916. African Methodist Episcopal Church Collection, A2936.

8 Ibid.

9 L.S Little, Disciples of Liberty: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Age of Imperialism 1884-1916 (Knoxville, 2000).

10 R. R. Wright, 'Wilberforce Institute in South Africa: Forty Years Missionary Work of the A.M.E. Church' (undated), p. 310.

11 A. Paterson, 'Contest and Co-Option: The Struggle for Schooling in the African Independent Churches of the Cape Colony '(PhD Thesis, University of Cape Town, 1992,) p. 307. Women were expected to achieve much in terms of their schooling However, South African racial discrimination and the laws that supported it diverted a number of AME women to become "servant girls" in the homes of white people in bigger cities of Cape Town and Johannesburg. Some, like Eva Morake, however, expanded their educational horizons and held top positions; Morake, for example, became a principal of Wilberforce in the 1930s, managing the men that became part of the staff at Wilberforce Institute. It was the same in the Cape, as Patterson describes in one of rural AME School in the Piquetberg district AME women found opportunities for leadership. Mrs Sarah Bell displayed leadership qualities and considerable resourcefulness in maintaining her school in the face of Dutch Reformed Church opposition. A. Paterson, p. 308.

12 Ibid, p. 307.



Fanny Coppin Hall (photo by the author, 8 July 2011)

Some funds were raised from the Educational Rally Day contributions that were collected from different circuits.13 In support of the Rally Day, 'the Bishop spoke very strongly to the conference about the necessity of raising this money and made reference to the Evaton educational building.'14 This allowed the school to withstand the post-war strain astonishingly well, far better than the administrators of Wilberforce expected. It also helped the school to gain fresh vitality and momentum. Fuelled by the greater number of congregants and the general growth of the church in South Africa, the AME in America through the Missionary and Financial Departments, the Women Missionary Society, the Women Home and Foreign Missionary Society reached its peak between 1924 and 1928, when about $60 000 was given to the South African branch of the church.15 In those years the church: 'stress[ed] everywhere "Group Self Help", "Self-Support" and "Self Determination" for the effective co-operation with the white

13 WHP, Journal of Proceedings of the Joint Session of the Cape and OFS Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church held at Worcester on the 7th-11th October 1914. African Methodist Episcopal Church Collection, A2936.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

people in church and otherwise for the building of a great Christian community.'16 It is important to emphasise that the question of self-determination was central in the teachings of the AME church; it brought hope.

In other words, the survival of the school depended on the AME philosophy that was based on the spirit of human service, racial upliftment, self-help and self-determination. The school's resilience and flexibility depended on the energy and enthusiasm of the parents, the church and community, rather than on government aid. The church went as far as lecturing Africans on how to open up business corporations and encouraged them to buy land. Some of the members of the church such as Henry Ngcayiya attempted to purchase farms in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State for church, educational and agricultural activities.17 Paterson notes that there were other land applications by Ngcayiya on which he had intended to erect a large church, school buildings and a training college for candidates for the ministry in Wakkerstroom; these land parcels were, however, blocked by the government.18 An example of upliftment and self-help is recorded by Bishop Wright: 'A fine looking man … told me an A.M.E. bishop lectured on business co-operation and explained how Negroes in America organised a burial society.'19

5.3 A significant attraction

The introduction of a teachers' course marked the turning point in the history of Wilberforce and the educational programme of the AME church. Wilberforce was on the threshold of a new era. It was the first time in Africa that the church introduced a teachers' programme and it attracted a considerable number of students who wanted to become teachers. In addition to the newcomers, there were students who advanced to the higher standards and some returned to start the new teachers' course. The majority of students that were admitted could not afford other prestigious schools like Lovedale or the other fine white missionary-controlled schools that were the equal of many schools in America and England.20 This suggests that Wilberforce's social composition was much the same as other schools but without the top slice of students from wealthy families. Some students and parents resented missionary-controlled schools because they were heavy-

16 R.R. Wright, 'Wilberforce Institute in South Africa.'

17 NASA, Assistant Magistrate, NTS 133 17, April 1914.

18 A. Paterson 'Contest and Co-Option,' p. 317.

19 Ibid, p. 310.

20 WHP, The account of Noge, the former teacher of Wilberforce, Institute for Advanced Social Research AG 2738-444. Due to the lack of records we are not sure how much students paid for fees but records indicate that the fees in AME schools were considerably lower what might have been expected at other mission schools.

handed and paternalistic, especially rural boarding schools.21 It is therefore important ask why students came to Wilberforce. Paterson noted that many parents took their children to AME-controlled schools because of unfair treatment by teachers in different mission schools. For example:

> Mr. Jack Jawaka alleged that the schoolmaster of the English Church Mission School, Hoedjes Bay, Malmesbury had employed his children to carry water for the Principal. Jawaka took exception to the treatment of his children and removed them from the school … In 1911, Mr. C Wannenburg of Paarl Road, Malmesbury, complained that his children had been excluded from the DRC mission school because of a dispute over the payment of fees. In 1910, Mr. J.E. Landers complained to the Education Department that his children were not admitted to the DRC school at Hoedjes Bay unless he paid double fees, because they were Malay.22

This heightened politicisation of education stemmed in part from the development of African political activity in the Cape, expressed clearly in a great volume of correspondence that was addressed to the Education Department. The communications ranged from complaints to petitions covering a wide spectrum of problems, some of which dealt with conditions of service for teachers and irregularities in the management of schools.23

The African-oriented teaching that addressed the daily needs of the students in particular attracted the educated parents, clergymen and teachers. This was a distinguishing feature among the parents who wanted their children to enjoy the right to equal education. In the minds of these parents, education was vital in the quest for improvement as new job opportunities were opening up for the educated youth. There was, for example, a huge demand for interpreters in the courts, teachers, priests and journalists in African newspapers, like *Umteteleli*, as well as in printing houses. Loram commented in 1917 that 'the tendency to close all clerical occupations to Natives [made] teaching almost the only non-manual vocation open to them.'24 Bradford argues that after the war 'education - especially higher education - was of the essence in escaping from the ranks of labourers and poor peasants into those of the salariat and successful self- employed. It was a prerequisite for evading politically coercive measures such as passes and exclusion from Parliament. And it was the key to identifying culturally with the white dominant classes rather than the black under-classes.'25

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21 B. Hirson, *Year of Fire, Year of Ash* (London, 1979), p. 20-34.

22 A. Paterson Contest and Co-Option, p. 308.

23 Ibid.

24 C. Loram, The Education of the South African Native (London, 1917) p,149.

25 H. Bradford, Mass Movements and the Petty Bourgeoisie: The Social Origins of ICU Leadership, 1924- 1929, *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (1984), pp. 295-310.

Parents were concerned about the method of teaching, the size of classes, the content and syllabus. One of their major concerns was the stereotyped method of teaching in the mainstream mission schools that relied on great slabs of set books or grammar learned by heart and *Bishop Vernon's Collection at Spencer Research Library: (Rh Ms -P 529, Box 2, File Folder 1, The University of Kansas*.) recited.26 As politically aware parents, they wanted their children to advance to secondary education so that they could be admitted at the new Native College at Fort Hare; they suspected that in these mainstream mission schools there was a little scope for personal initiative, curiosity and sophisticated teaching.

After the war, many educated parents like Davidson DonTengo Jabavu and his Ethiopianist peers believed in lifelong learning; they assumed that educated Africans, such as teachers, should learn to become students for life. This was strongly expressed by Jabavu in his speech during the Natal Native Teachers Conference in 1918 in which he encouraged teachers: 'If you teachers aspire to real civilisation you must first learn to become students for all your life; do not rest content with your present Second or First Grade, get into the business of private study.'27 At that time, there was a wave of rewriting of African history by Africans of the educated class. This, for example, featured in African-controlled newspapers, independent church and teachers' conference notes and other African publications. At the same conference, Jabavu added:

> There are other branches of study which are your exclusive privilege. For example, we want a history book on the Zulu nation, written by a pure Zulu Native, from standpoint of Zulus, and based upon information gotten from the Zulu who remember the stories of their own people from in these things, too often present the Native at a disadvantage. Why should we be told so often of these 'cattle-stealing savages want only attacking unoffending white farmers'? Surely Zulus have some explanation of your own for all this, and there must be another side to the question.28

The history books of the time did not provide attractive reading for the educated class and students who felt that the 'native story' was being unnecessarily painted in the 'blackest of colours.'29 This urged educated parents to send their children to Wilberforce where they believed African teachers would properly represent African history. Above all, parents felt that the mainstream missionary schools were physically and spiritually withdrawn from the world behind their high gates and walls; they were closed communities. In their perception, the

26 C. Barnett, *The Collapse of British Power* (Gloucestershire, 1972), p. 33.

27 D.Jabavu, The Black Problem: Papers and Addresses on Various Native Problems (Alice, 1920), p.73.

28 Ibid, p.73.

29 Ibid.

teaching in missionary schools did little to reflect the real world of their children.30 One of the factors that made Wilberforce more attractive to parents, particularly the uneducated, was that the school teachers and the church did not shun the uneducated and 'heathen families', however 'backward' they may be. The AME church and its 'public spirited' teachers worked hard to win them over. In some communities, these teachers had a great influence; in some parts of Basutoland, for instance, the 'AME church was led by a number of laymen [and] teachers who had a great influence over this band.'31 This stemmed from the fact that AME teachers were not influenced by the ideas of sectarianism and this was, as we shall see, how Charlotte Maxeke and many other teachers attracted new converts and students to Wilberforce.

Many parents made considerable sacrifices for their children to be admitted at Wilberforce. Critics of African independent schools may argue that these sacrifices often did not yield the envisaged benefits because Wilberforce was not registered and might not be significantly better than Lovedale, Zonneblom and other white missionary-controlled schools. In his memoir of Wilberforce, Nhlapo records that a number of students who applied for admission were worthy but poor, with no money even to pay small charges at the school, and it was a great sorrow for Wilberforce administration to refuse them.32 Although the costs at Wilberforce were low, some parents with modest income and large families could not afford to meet them. Besides, parents who disliked urban influences were attracted by the geographical isolation of the school from the urban centre of Johannesburg.33 Above all, parents were attracted by the non-denominational admission policy of the school and its independent status. Wilberforce had a reputation for being different from the rest of the state-aided missionary schools on the Rand.

By 1918, the Pass Officer (PO) of Vereeniging reported that 'the school was divided into two sections for educational purpose, consisting of primary in which there are 12 boarders and 86 day scholars'34 with fewer than 200 students on campus. Everyone knew everybody by sight and there was an expectation that every individual would pull his weight in some way. By this time, female boarders were housed in Fanny Coppin Hall, a hall of residence described in the

30 Ibid, p. 34.

31 Stuart A Rose, Emory University (SAREU), Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Unknown author, Outline of AME History Sketch of the Winburg Circuit, Coan Papers MSS 872, Box 68.

32 Ibid.

33 WHP, The account of Noge, the former teacher of Wilberforce, Institute for Advanced Social Research AG 2738-444.

34 NASA, A letter from the Pass Officer to the Director of Native Labour, GNLB 302 File 383/18/45, 5 December 1918.

PO's report as the main building of the institute, 'which contain two [classrooms] and [a] kitchen.'35 This building was under the supervision of a Matron and one woman teacher; the Matron was Mrs Johanna Khumalo, wife of Revd Benjamin Khumalo. The boys were accommodated separately in the building situated 200 feet from the main hall. The primary school was located in the same yard but 150 feet away from the main building. 36 boarders paid £12 per annum and the day scholars paid according to their economic circumstances from 1/6 to 3/6 per month.37

The 1917 admission records do not give us a clear picture of the Wilberforce enrolment. It is difficult to identify where students came from, or how many were from the educated families or non-educated. Because the AME schools admitted non-AME learners, it might be misleading to conclude that the majority came from the AME church congregants. In those years it was, however, normal for church adherents of all denominations to send their children to the denominational school and many church-controlled schools were built to meet the demand.

The fact that the school was still not registered and recognised by TED was very worrying. As we shall see, the situation worsened with the marginalisation of Wilberforce's newly introduced teachers' certificate course: the student teachers could not sit for the TED centralised examination because the school was not registered. Furthermore, the school was still not yet funded, which meant that there was always a desperate need for money, worsened by the Wilberforce's commitment to provide space for young men and women from families with limited means.

By 1917, a substantial number of African parents began to appreciate the value of education and were willing to make huge sacrifices for it. As indicated, the school was still not recognised by the TED but, despite the gloomy predictions that without the control of the white missionaries the African school was doomed to failure, the school continued to grow. By 1917, the self-supporting Wilberforce was becoming firmly anchored in the grounds of Evaton. These were encouraging developments.

In this spirit, parents believed that Wilberforce would transform their children and the African community from a group of timid, untrained, fearful citizens into a powerful, courageous and

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

convincing class of Africans.38 Most parents who sent their children to schools believed that, through education, their children might acquire money, property, civil rights, and social status.39 At that time, Africans had to adjust to fit into the colonial economy; they had to improve lives in their respective communities; they had to build schools and churches, and become economically independent. During the post war era, many Africans recognised Wilberforce as an important institution that could produce students who could not only read and write, but who would be a an asset to both their race and their nation. They also had a strong belief that those who acquired literacy or advanced training recognised an obligation to pass that knowledge on to others within their family, community, and cultural groups.

In 1917, the amenities of Wilberforce were old fashioned even by the standard of the day. There were, for instance, candle lights and oil lamps in the principal and teachers' houses. There was no running water in the dormitories or internal toilets; the school had pit toilets and hipbaths. This state of the school depressed Charlotte Crogman-Wright, the wife of Bishop Wright, on her arrival in the late 1930s.40 In her account, she mentions that the buildings too 'were in a sad state of despair.'41 The dilapidated buildings included the principal's run down cottage and a few dwellings for teachers.42 Students and volunteers from the local community did all the service, carrying in coal and firewood, lighting fires in winter, bringing jugs of hot water for the morning wash.43 Bishop Wright compared the state of Wilberforce with very poor schools in the rural southern states of America.44 Parents built most of the buildings. In some areas, heavy rent was paid for unsuitable buildings. It was common for buildings used for African schools to be in

38 L. L. Berry, *A Century of Missions,* p, XV.

39 H. Bradford, Mass Movements and the Petty Bourgeoisie: The Social Origins of ICU Leadership, 1924- 1929, *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (1984), pp. 295-310.

40 Mrs Wright was a supervisor of the Missionary work in the Sixteenth Episcopal District of the AME Church. She was a graduate of Clark University at Atlanta, of which her father was a president. She did post-graduate work at University of Chicago and taught English at Naines Normal Industrial School. She became an ardent advocate of the education of Africans. During her husband's tenure as a Bishop of the AME in the late 1930s and 40s, she constantly visited schools where she conducted classes in needlework. Her articles on child training were considered outstanding contributions to the *Christian Recorder*, the AME oldest publication, She published the firsthand story of Africa: *Beneath the Southern Cross: The Story of an American Bishop's wife in Southern Africa* (New York, 1955), see, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *Cleveland Call and Post,* 24 December 1955.

41 C. Crogman-Wright, Beneath the Southern Cross: The Story of an American Bishop's wife in Southern Africa (New York, 1955), p.44.

42 Ibid, p. 44.

43 J M Nhlapo, *Wilberforce.*

44 R.R. Wright, 'Wilberforce Institute in South Africa: Forty Years Missionary Work of the A.M.E. Church (undated).

appalling shape in the post-war period: they were hot, dark and unventilated; some classes were conducted under the trees.

It was a very different picture for white schools in Johannesburg. According to E.H. Waugh, an architect, Building Inspector and Town Valuer of Johannesburg:

> As for workmanship, there are no buildings here (in Johannesburg) which are so well constructed as the school buildings … Your school buildings ... are constructed in such a way that they will long outlive any change in ideas. When I say the building will last for a thousand years I specially refer to the brickwork. Bricks are so excellent that one might say they will last forever.45

5.4 The role of the church leaders

The success and growth of Wilberforce depended very much on the organisational and educational standing of individuals. Internationally, there was consensus throughout the AME Church about the creation of colleges. All members of the church agreed that colleges were a vital aspect of racial upliftment and self-determination.46 As indicated in the previous chapters, the establishment and the growth of Wilberforce may, in many cases, be traced back to the abilities of the pioneer AME church ministers, such as J. Z. Tantsi and his successors, who fiercely appealed to Africans to struggle for education, industriousness and self-reliance.

After the war, the Wilberforce Board of Trustees appointed Magaya as a principal in 1917 and Revd James Mabote as the Superintendent of the school.47 Revd Magaya's appointment, and the role that he played as a member of the AME Educational Committee before the war, strengthened his connection with the church leadership, and gave him a wider view of educational problems than the inward looking members of the AME community. Like his predecessors, he devoted himself to the school's affairs until he died in 1924. Unlike his predecessors who were graduates of the Wilberforce University in the United States, Magaya initially registered for an undergraduate programme at Wilberforce University but never

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45 The Union of South Africa, Province of Transvaal Interim Report of the Education Commission (Pretoria, 1919), p .32.

46 See for example, S.A Butler-Moroko, 'Racial Uplift and Self-Determination: The African Methodist Episcopal Church and its Pursuit of Higher Education, (PhD Thesis,' Georgia State University, 2010). The idea behind higher education was imported from America where the AME saw education as a key to advocate for adequate education and employment for freed Negroes to fighting for education, employment, and housing for Negroes that was equal to that of whites.

47 Mabote also served as the Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of Wilberforce Institute.

completed. For reasons unknown to us, he proceeded to Lincoln University where he graduated in the early 1900s.48

Magaya was highly accomplished. A resolution of the conference of the AME in 1914, for example, exempted him from any further theological and literary examinations. The conference reported:

> your committee has examined him as to his experience of the work, and his love of the discipline of the AME church, and has been satisfied to recommend him that he, having completed a term of some years on probation, be admitted into full connection with the conference.49

Magaya's intellectual wisdom impressed the new Bishop, Bishop William Wesley Beckett, when Magaya presented what is described in the minutes of the conference as an'excellent paper so full of thought showing so much erudition that the Bishop pronounced it as one of the best … he has ever heard.'50 His paper grappled with educational problems confronting Africans and the church; he crystallised much of the AME elders and priest's thinking about the role of the AME in education, and the role that the AME church might play in African education in the years ahead.

The series of AME conferences that convened in different parts of the colony just before the war identified serious educational gaps that affected Africans, including the lack of schools and the great difficulty in obtaining certificated teachers. This was, it must be noted, a problem common to all churches on the Rand. Magaya's educational background and his profound understanding of African educational needs convinced Bishop Beckett and his Wilberforce Board of Trustees members that they had found the right man to implement AME church objectives. As a principal, Magaya took over a school that was becoming more confident. Much was expected from him. Within AME church circles, there was high hope that he would bring to Wilberforce a reputation of learning and raise the academic performance of students.

With its limited endowments, Wilberforce did not always attract the 'ablest men', but many who accepted appointment, like Magaya, were as qualified as any in mainstream missionary schools.

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48 The University had a long relationship with the abolitionists, such as Revd William Drew Robeson, who escaped slavery. Robeson received a Sacred Theology degree from Lincoln University in 1876.The University also accommodated many African-Americans who were refused entry white Universities, such as Princeton, because of their race.

49 WHP, Journal of Proceedings of the Joint Session of the Cape and OFS Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church held at Worcester on the 7th-11th October 1914. African Methodist Episcopal Church Collection, A2936.

50 Ibid.

As principal, Magaya enjoyed virtually unlimited authority to appoint teachers, admit students and make rules for internal management or discipline. It is hard to overestimate how difficult it was for a man like Magaya to have borne the burden of Wilberforce's work, a college that was humiliated by the TED, and a school that suffered because of its independent status.

Under the supervision of Magaya, four teachers were appointed - two men and two women. These teachers divided seven classes among themselves.51 Due to the lack of records, we are able to name only one of these teachers: A.L. Mokgoteli.52 Among the students of the time were Godfrey M. Kuzwayo, who later became the editor of *Umteteleli waBantu*, an African-controlled newspaper,[53] Esther Phashumeni from the Orange Free State, Bella Monchusi, and Samuel Tlali.54 While the government in the state-aided schools paid teachers, Bishop Beckett paid Mokgoteli and his colleagues. The Bishop and the church ensured that enough funds were raised to pay the salaries of the teachers and this was done without any incurring debt.55

The role that Magaya played as a principal of Wilberforce was remarkable. In Evaton, for instance, Magaya associated himself with the lives of those he came to serve. As we shall see below, he was not only a principal; his influence and contribution was felt beyond the borders of this country, by the Head Office of the AME church in America, as well as by the Africans across the provinces of the Union of South African. Like his predecessors, education for Magaya was not merely about the imparting of knowledge, skills or ideas, but about helping others to become better people.56

Despite the economic problems of the post-war era, Magaya transformed Wilberforce's image. In collaboration with other members of the AME, Magaya changed the scope of the institute: the school expanded its educational services; he also introduced a new educational programme for

51 NASA, A letter from the Pass Officer to the Director of Native Labour, 9 July 1918, GNLB 302, File 383/18/45

52 NASA, A letter from the A.L Mokgoteli to the Commissioner of Native Affairs in Vereeniging GNLB 302, File 395/18/319, 30 May 1919.

[53] In a partnership with the Reverend N.B. Tantsi through the help of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church Kuzwayo became a printer, publisher and editor of the South African Christian Reader. In 1942, he joined up with his friends to set up a printing and publishing company – Africa's Own Printing and Publishing Company.

54 SAREU, Historical Sketch of the Winburg Circuit, Coan Papers, MSS 872, Box 68.

55 WHP, Journal of Proceedings of the Joint Session of the Cape and OFS Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1916, African Methodist Episcopal Church Collection, A2936.

56 He was driven by the spirit of racial upliftment and this was instilled by elders such as, JZ Tantsi

young African students.57 He added the teachers' training department. Along with the church elders, Magaya was determined that the quality of teaching in all the AME church schools should be raised by training a better class of teachers,58 a vision of the AME long before Magaya became a principal. This was discussed during the AME conference in Kimberly in 1913, where Bishop Johnson said that Wilberforce 'was not going to be a mere day school, but a Training Institute for the education of our ministers [and teachers].'59 As a centre of African education in southern Africa, Wilberforce provided a service that had not been previously available for AME adherents and local African communities on the Rand.

Magaya helped to fulfil the Ethiopianists' ambition to: 'assure the natives of economic security and enable… [them] to assume … [their] rightful position as a useful member of the society in ...[their] homeland.'60 This was to be achieved through the creation of an educated class from which teachers, catechists, evangelists and fully qualified preachers might be recruited for the increasing number of newly established AME Church mission stations and schools. Having implemented the teachers' course, Magaya and his team felt that the Wilberforce teachers' training department would make it unnecessary to send suitable children to American universities.61 The 1914 conference reported that:

> Today we have more than a hundred young men of African blood in Europe or America, who have gone there simply because they are hunting for education which is denied them in the land of their ancestors and birth.62

57 WHP, Journal of Proceedings of the Joint Session of the Cape and OFS Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1916.

58 See J.M. Nhlapo, *Wilberforce*.

59 WHP, Journal of Proceedings of the Joint Session of the Cape and OFS Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church held at Kimberly 21 to 26 October 1913. African Methodist Episcopal Church Collection, A2936.

60 L.L. Berry A Century of Missions of the AME Church, p. 165.

61 At that time the AME church was sending many students to American and British Universities, see J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*; Skota, T. D. M. *The African Who's Who: An Illustrated Classified Register and National Biographical Dictionary of Africans in the Transvaal.* Johannesburg: (Johannesburg, 1965); J.M. Millard, Charlotte Manye her Legacy Lives, *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, XXXIV, Supplement, 75-89, 2008; D.B. Govinder, The mother of African freedom: The contribution of Charlotte Maxeke to the struggle for freedom in South Africa in I Phiri, and D.B. Govinder, (eds.), *Her story: Hidden stories of women of faith in Africa*. (Pietermaritzburg, 2002).

62 WHP, Journal of Proceedings of the Joint Session of the Cape and OFS Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church held at Worcester on the 7th-11th October 1914 see also, R.D. Ralston, 'A Second Middle Passage' The experience of Africans students in America influenced them to adopt unique ethos of the United States and the nature of professional and political prospects encountered upon repatriation. (PhD Thesis. University of California, 1972).

It could be argued that this fulfilled the dream of pioneering staff of the institute, the graduates of Wilberforce University, who believed that by renaming the Lillian Derrick Institute the Wilberforce Institute, they brought the Wilberforce University to Africa. Like other denominations, the AME church had insufficient and inadequate schools in the Transvaal, with too many untrained and incompetent teachers. As Revd Farmer reported, 'Men without any theological training....[were] obliged to take Sunday services and teach the people, the result of this....[was] obvious - the people....[were] not properly taught.'63 Magaya was driven by the old call of the AME to train ministers and teachers, as expressed by the Revd Geo T. Watkins:

> An intelligent and educated ministry is a spiritual necessity, and an ignorant ministry cannot, in this enlightened age, be consistently tolerated for a moment by an intelligent man or woman. … Yet, who does not know, that we have men in our own beloved connexion, who scornfully repudiate it [education] "as a false doctrine." Yes! We have some ministers, (thank God they are but few), who profess to be educated
>
> themselves, but who encourage by their acts, I mean their official acts, the sending forth as ambassadors of Christ, the expounders of the Gospel, of men who can no more read it to the people, or for themselves, than they can pluck the stars from their azure home. Such men are an incubus upon he proper development of our people, and a disgrace to the profession to which they have called themselves.64

In this publication, Watkins emphasises the role of education in preaching the gospel. The AME church and members constantly sought to enhance educational awareness on many levels. At the AME Cape annual conference in 1908, Revd A.W. Phijeland of Chatsworth and Piquetberg in the Cape, made the following impassioned speech on the rights of the Church to demand both the spiritual and educational development of children:

> the greatest need in and out of our church is education....we must make more use of the opportunities which tend to education....every member of my church must know as soon as they have brought the child for baptism, that the minister has as much right as the parents to claim the child for the church and see that it is educated.65

Other indications of the pervasive concern for education in the church were regular reports tabled on educational achievements in the various districts. The minutes of the AME conferences serve as evidence that educational topics were frequently presented at the AME conferences all over southern Africa by various officers of the church.66

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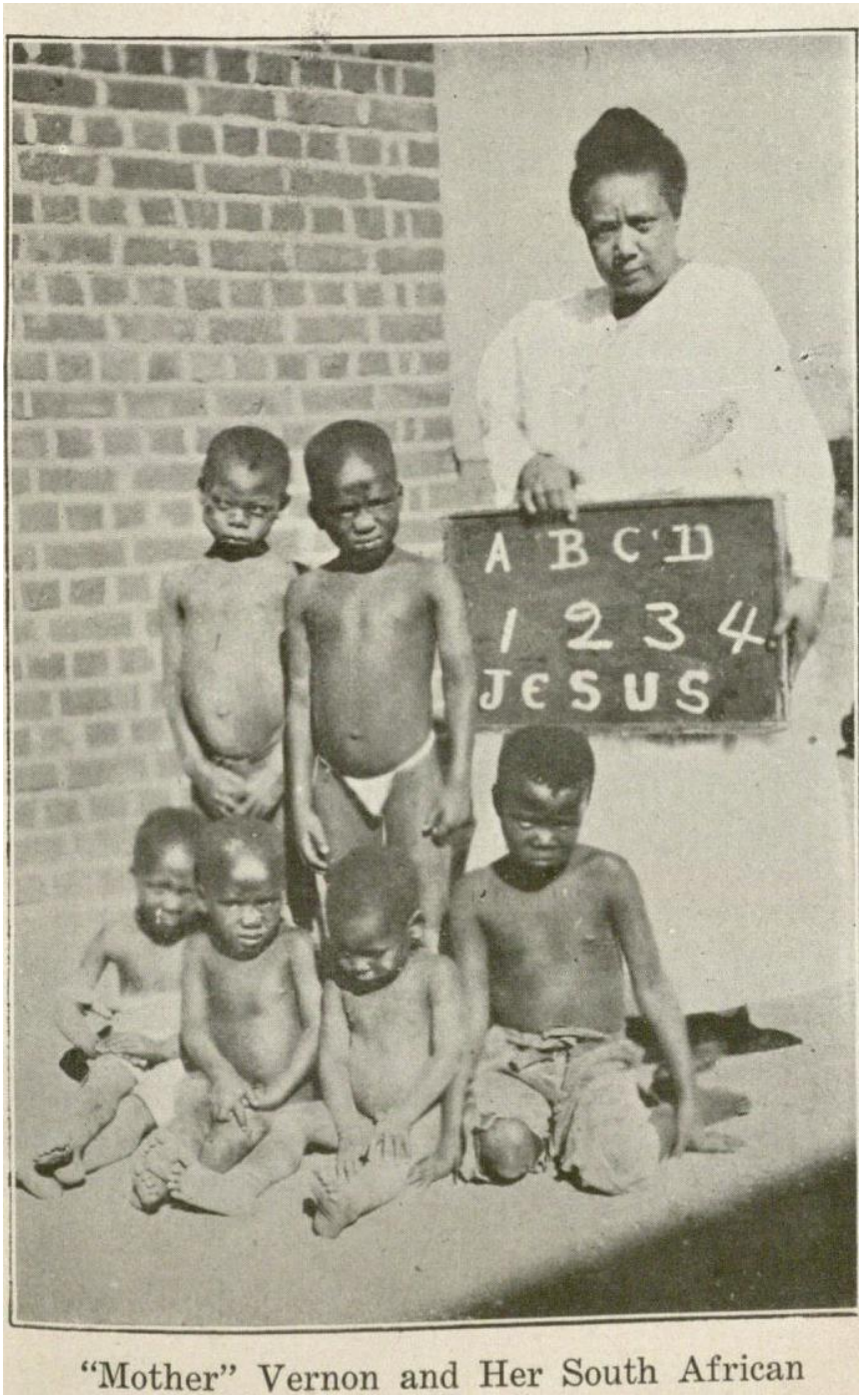
63 E. Farmer, *The Transvaal as a mission field* (London, 1900), p.97.

64 G. T. Watkins, "An Educated Ministry," *The Christian Recorder*, 31 January 1863.

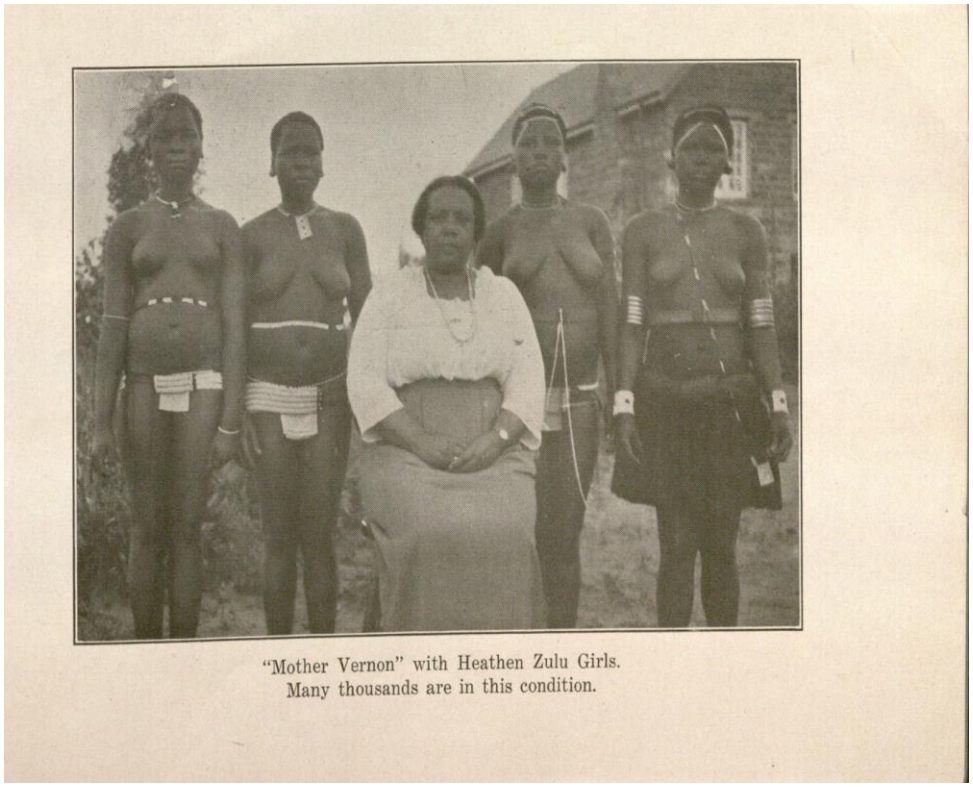
65 Quoted in A Paterson, Contest and Co-option, p. 311-312.

66 For the AME, the importance of possessing the skills of literacy was bound up with the importance of possessing books as both instruments of schooling and symbols of educational status. The AME educators therefore laid great stress on the acquisition of books and libraries for their schools. This was reflected in reports of the Worcester AME



Mrs Vernon and her South African pupils, Bishop Vernon's Collection at Spencer Research Library: (Rh Ms -P 529, Box 2, File Folder 1, The University of Kansas.)

Quarterly Conferences between 1902 and 1911 where the question, "What number of books in library?", was regularly asked see A Paterson, 'Contest and Co-option' p. 313.



"Mother Vernon" with Heathen Zulu Girls.
Many thousands are in this condition.

Mrs Vernon and and the Zulu Girls Bishop Vernon's Collection at Spencer Research Library: (Rh Ms -P 529, Box 2, File Folder 1, The University of Kansas.)

This idea reflects the construction of a broader, academically trained African class who would 'decolonise' the syllabus and be seen as proof of the maturity and the capacity for self-reliance of the independent church. As indicated in the previous chapters, the ethos of the church discouraged elitism, so AME church graduates should not be seen as part of a privileged upper class of society but rather as an instrumental influential class in the service of the masses.67 The church believed that the educated were what they were by virtue of sacrifices made by the rest of the population. In order to balance religion and education, the AME church adopted a resolution in Ohio in 1903: 'our first care should be to provide for the training of the educated ministers, teachers and leaders of the people.'68 Wilberforce was structured to be a model Christian village from which local missionaries would arise and go out to preach the same doctrine of Christian work.

67 Charlotte Maxeke is a typical example of this class, as noted in this chapter; she serviced poor women in jail.

68 L.S. Little, *Disciples of Liberty: African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Tennessee, 2000).

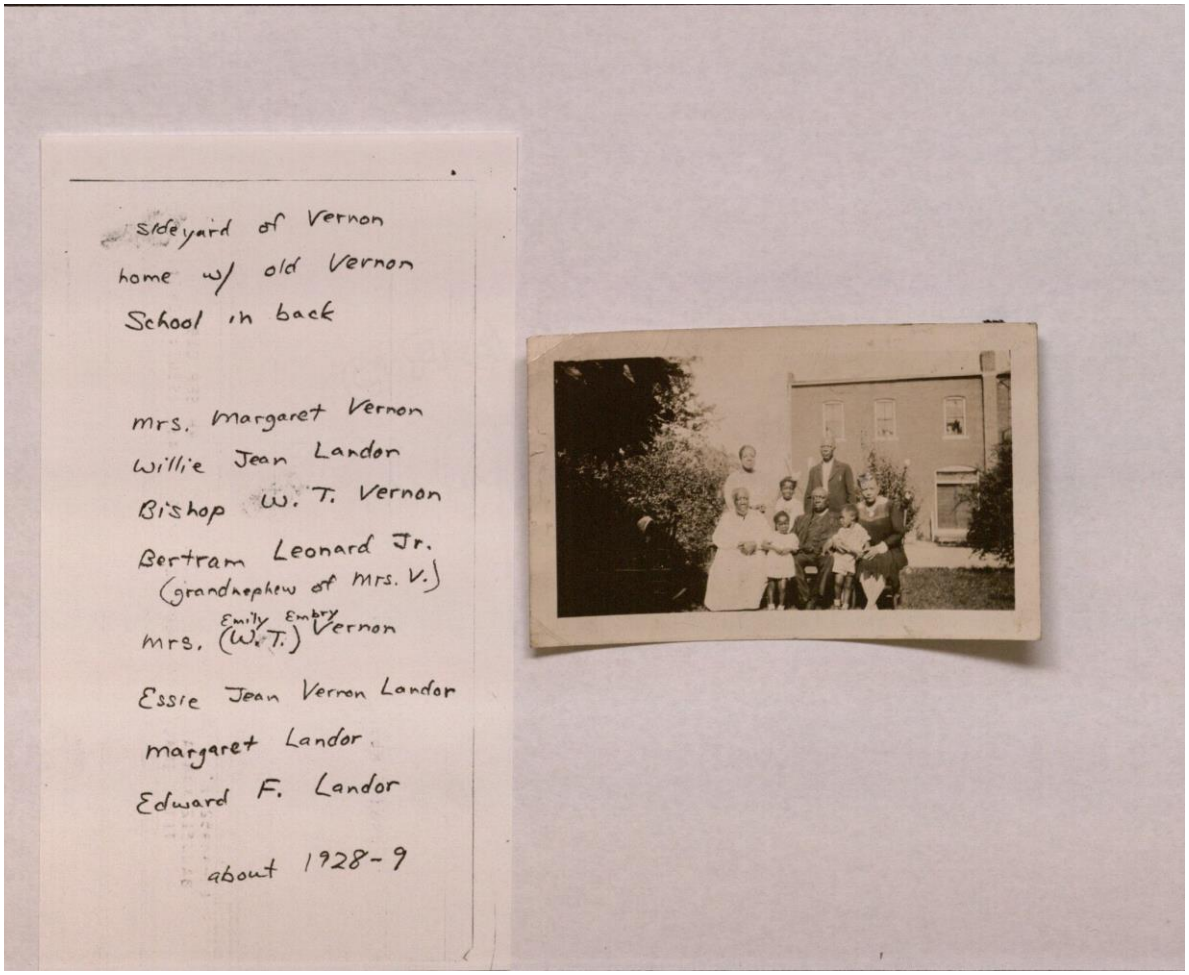
The AME church was influenced by broader curriculum debates in America.69 The curriculum debate is often portrayed through the conflicting philosophies of Booker Washington and Du Bois. While many scholars argue that the debate is over-simplified, there was often discussion within the AME church about which was the better curriculum to offer. In a substantial number of AME publications different authors expressed their preference for one curriculum over the other. As affiliates of the AME church, the administrators of Wilberforce had to look at what kind of philosophical education African-American brothers and sisters imparted to their children in their American independent schools. Was that curriculum relevant to their needs? Africans considered these questions throughout the continent.

Before we can develop our discussion, it is important to explore why the church promoted the idea of 'home missions' and how it connected to the introduction of the teachers' course at Wilberforce. This notion of 'home missions' was driven by the fact that it was expensive for the AME church to send missionaries from America, who had to learn the language and local culture. In addition, with the rise of Garveyism in the Union of South Africa in the 1920s, immigration laws were tightened. The Union government became aware that many Africans saw Marcus Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) and the AME church as their divinely ordained liberators from South African white supremacy.70 As a result, all African-Americans that came to the Union were regarded by the Union government as potentially seditious, and this created difficulties for the AME church members to attend foreign missions. AME Bishop William Vernon, for example, was denied permission to enter South Africa

69 See for example, the 'Moral Training of the Young,'*Christian Recorder*, 2 March 1861; 'Industrial Education the Need of our Youth,' *The A.M.E. Review*, July1888; and 'Education Proper,' *The A.M.E. Review*, July 1889. S. W. Angell and Anthony B. Pinn, (eds.), *Social Protest Thought in the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, 1862-1939 (Knoxville, TN:The University of Tennessee Press, 2000); J. Campbell, *Songs of Zion*; L. Little, Disciples of Liberty: *The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Age of Imperialism, 1884-1916* (Knoxville, 2000); and C. E. Walker, *A Rock in a Weary Land: The African Methodist Episcopal Church during the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Louisiana 1982.) Butler-Moroko has raised a concern that 'it is not clear however, that in the mid-1800s when the A.M.E. Church was establishing its colleges that this debate over liberal arts versus industrial training was a matter of concern.'

70 R. T. Vinson, *Americans are Coming*, p. 75.

1921.71

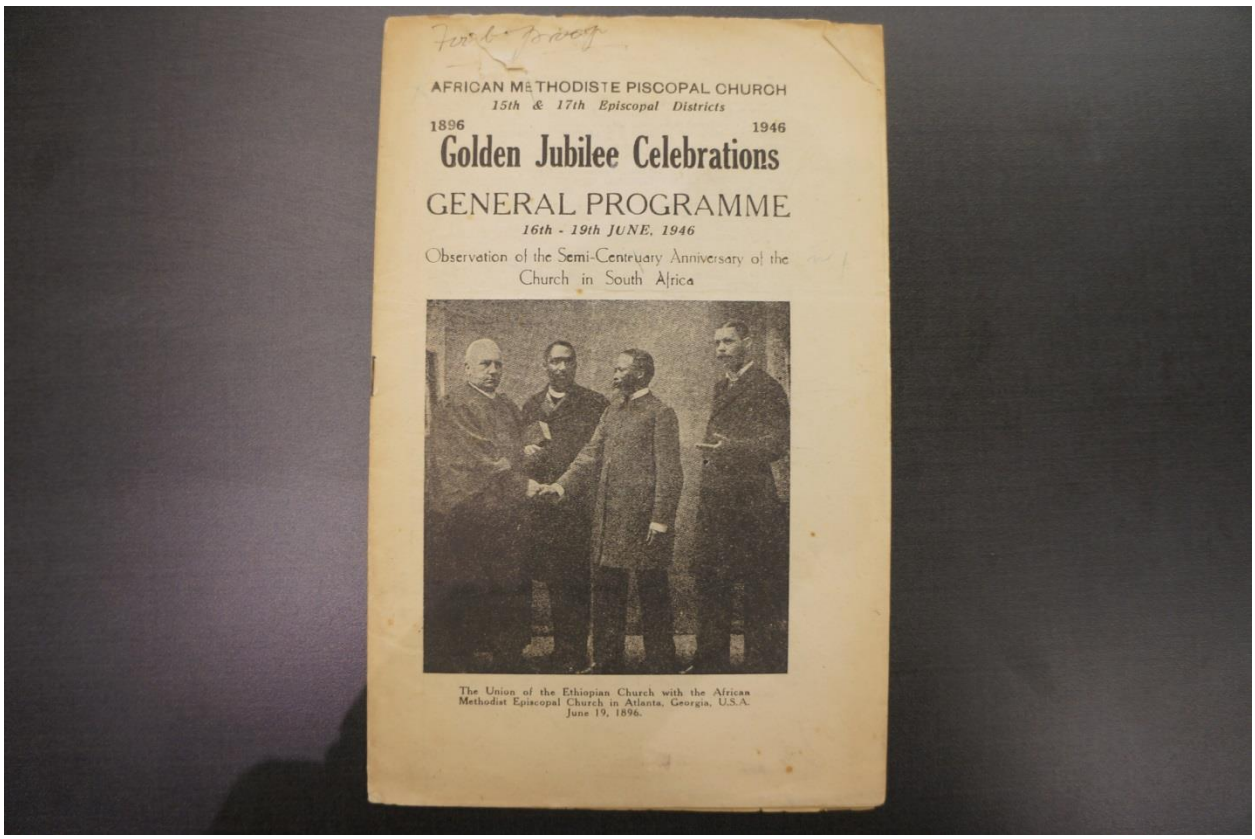


Bishop Vernon and his family, Bishop Vernon's Collection at Spencer Research Library: (Rh Ms -P 529, Box 2, File Folder 1, The University of Kansas.)

The state feared that this highly literate class, once created, would form a spearhead of anti-colonial resentment. At the same time, they would be able to challenge racial hierarchies because of their skills as debaters, capable writers, and multilingual orators. Within the AME church, the call for children to go to school became more important. Dating back to 1831, African Americans in the United States had attempted to create and fund institutions of learning for 'Negro' children and youth.72 This practice spread to Africa after James Dwane visited America in the 1890s. As a result, during the inter-war years, different independent schools were erected and these institutes had to meet the demand of different communities all over southern Africa.

71 J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*, p. 344.

72 Ibid.



James Dwane and Bishop shaking hand with Bishop Turner in America, Coan Papers, Emory University

During this period the AME church expanded as more and more discontented African converts broke away from the mainstream churches and the new AME church branches proliferated across the subcontinent. John Marutsane Molatedi, for example, a former London Missionary Society member, was not satisfied with the administration of the society:

> 'he decided to join another church so he went to Kimberly in 1920 … he then got a job in one of the diamond mines. While he was working at the mine he met a man who was working at the same mine named Monnaangaka Molantwa who happen to be a preacher in the AME Church and a steward at Christiana wherdenied he was residing. They were staying at the same compound one night they happened to talk about churches in their discussion Monnaangaka related the story of the Ethiopian church as [AME] was called in the olden days … In that explanation John … asked Molatedi to recommend him to his minister at Christiana which the latter did … at that time juncture … [the] message reached the pastor at Christiana. Rev Moloaodi [of Christiana] did not wait for another message he once started a journey of about 60 miles on foot accompanied by Br Molaodi who was a steward then. When they arrived at Shaleng [they] were received … and the number of 8 were baptised.73

When the members of the London Missionary Society heard that Molaodi joined the AME, they persecuted him and falsely accused him of delivering seditious speeches, which were reported to the Commissioner of Shaleng. They told the Commissioner that the AME church would cause a

73 SAREU, A Historical Sketch of Shaleng Circuit, Coan Papers, MSS 872, Box 68.

war between Africans and the white population of South Africa, and asked the Commissioner to expel him and the AME church from Shaleng in 1918.74 Similar accusations placed AME schools and Wilberforce in a very complicated situation because several denominational schools accused AME schools of poaching students, worrying that AME schools were drawing away students in the 1920s who would otherwise have attended the mainstream establishments. In Cape Town, for instance, this put the Revd F.M. Gow, who was the AME Superintendent of Schools in Cape Town at the time, in an uncomfortable position. Even if people voluntarily joined the church, it exposed the churches to accusations of poaching students.75 In the context of denominational competition, the superior improvement opportunities offered by the AME contributed to the popularity of the church among Africans. Many lay members who, for example, were discriminated against and denied ordination opportunities in the mainstream churches, were ordained as priests by the AME church. Peregrinoin in the *South Africa Spectator* reported this*:* 'The Native races seem anxious to avail themselves of the opportunities for higher culture and broader usefulness afforded by this denomination.'76

In addition, the growing influx of Africans from the rural areas to new locations in Boksburg, Randfontein, Pretoria and other areas on the Rand provided a fresh pool of possible converts. Historians have identified many factors contributing to the growth of the AME church,77 one of which was the energetic activities of AME churchwomen leaders, such as Charlotte Maxeke in her role as a native probation officer. From 1919 to 1922, Maxeke played an important role in the growth of the church on the Rand and other parts of the Union. James Campbell has shown how Maxeke secured permission to hold church services for female inmates in the Fort Prison. She also organised legal aid for women prisoners and took their children into her home in Kliptown. She rendered whatever service she could, attracting many women and children into

74 Ibid.

75 A Paterson, *Contest and Co-Option*, p. 322 Inspector Golightly informed the Department that there was considerable jealousy between the authorities of the respective schools. He urged that the Dutch Reformed Church missionary, Reverend Jones who had recently arrived from the Clanwilliam and Ceres region, should be consulted whether the operation could prejudice his school's chances in any way, before decision taken in the Department. See A Paterson Contest, p. 341.

76 The South African Spectator 27July 1901.

77 B. Sundler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970; T. Balcomb, 'Left, Right and Centre: Evangelicals and the Struggle for Liberation in South Africa.' *Journal for Southern Africa* 118 (March 2004): 146-60. J Campbell, *The Songs of Zion.*

the AME church.78 As an institution that reflected the interests of an economically marginal population, the AME was committed to provide social services to the poor, evident in the 1930s when Bishop Wright erected Crogman Clinic in Evaton, a clinic that formed part of the greater Wilberforce.

Among African communities, the AME church was a significant institution because it offered refuge to Africans in need of assistance and guidance. The church provided cultural meaning, values, ideals and objectives drawn both from its doctrine and from the social experience of its leaders.79 However, depending on the geographical locality, this commitment varied from place to place, finances and the needs of the specific community. In Evaton, for example, church commitment was high because of the church's obligation to Wilberforce. New members were perhaps also attracted by the heightened political awareness of the AME leaders, who became actively involved in the opposition of the Native Administration Bill of 1917 and the Native Land Act of 1913. Indeed, in the broader southern African region, the church met various human needs that different colonial governments could not meet in different parts of Africa.80

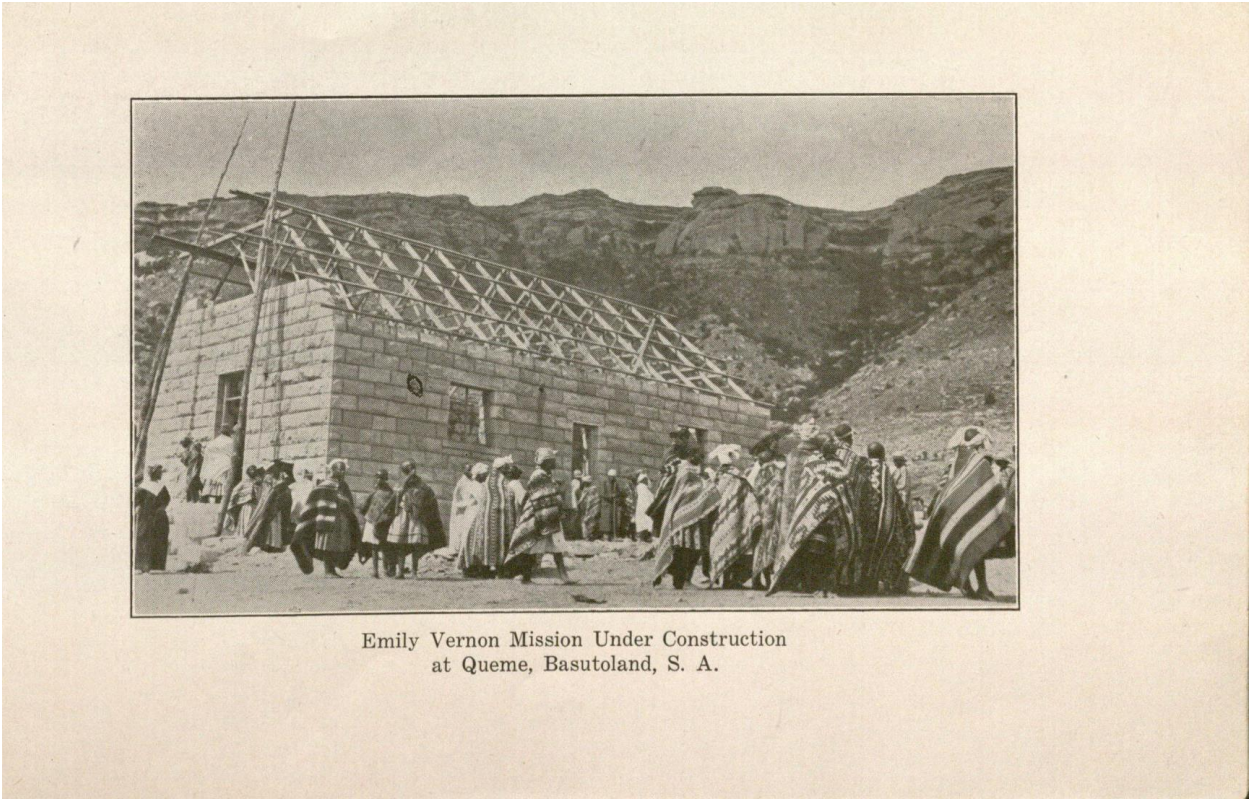
From 1917 to the mid-1920s, many schools were founded by the AME church in southern Africa. Bishop William Vernon founded Emily Vernon School in Basutoland in 1922. Under his leadership, the AME Cape members founded Chatsworth Normal and Industrial School near Malmesbury, the Bethel Memorial Church School in District Six, Piquetberg School, Morris Brown School and many others. Unlike the Transvaal, some of the AME schools in the Cape, such as Diep River, Bethel, Chatsworth, Wellington and Piquetberg were aided by the Cape government. We are, however, not sure what motivated the Cape government to aid these schools. After the war, many African communities found themselves running schools that were entirely independent of any white authority. In hindsight it appears that the independent movement itself was to some extent contrived by politically minded AME church leaders seeking to find an issue which would simultaneously reduce stale authority and unify Africans. There are no records on how many schools belonged to the AME church countrywide during this

78 J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion,* p. 289.

79 See J Campbell, *The Songs of Zion;* A. Butler-Mokoro, 'Racial Uplift and Self Determination: African Methodist Episcopal Church.'

80 The history of Negro churches and their leaders is rich in examples of men (and some women) that not only shaped the religious fabric of their communities, but advocated for self-determination and racial upliftment, and assisted in the process of political, economic, and social change across the United States. See J. Woodson, *The History of the Negro Church 281-28, 5.*

period; however, in the Cape the AME church operated ten schools: five in Cape Town itself (Bethel Institute, Diep Rivier-Plurnstead, Woodstock, Goodwood and Belleville), and five in the outlying districts (Groen Rivier, Wellington-Paarl, Worcester, Piquetberg, Montagu). 81


Emily Vernon Mission Under Construction
at Queme, Basutoland, S. A.

The erection of the AME church, this church was also used as a school in Basutoland, Bishop Vernon's Collection at Spencer Research Library: (Rh Ms -P 529, Box 2, File Folder 1,(The University of Kansas).

By 1946 Dr Coan reported: '…[The AME] has a total of 64 000 members, 150 Primary schools 1 Training Institute and Secondary School, 1 Health Clinic.'82 It is important to note that the secondary school and training institute was Wilberforce, the largest school operated by the AME in southern Africa. Unfortunately, a large number of small independent church-affiliated schools found themselves in difficulties and the majority closed down before World War II. Those which survived, however, strengthened the quality of their services.83 Some, such as the Nancefield School, a small school that was founded by Revd Tantsi, was taken over by the government. The

81 Cape Archive (CA), CA PAE 239 - E252 Acting Superintendent General of Education, the Provincial Secretary, 10 May1917.

82 SAREU, A letter from Dr Coan to the Mayor of Johannesburg, 23 June 1946. MSS 872, Coan Collection, Box 1.

83 SAREU, A letter from Dr. Coan to the Mayor of Johannesburg on African Methodist Episcopal Church, Fifteen and Seventh Episcopal District: 1896 Golden Jubilee Celebration 1946, Sample programme and Worship Material for Anniversary Celebration, Coan Papers, MSS 872, Box 68.

1913 conference, which as discussed previously reported that: ‘in that same church a school of over a hundred children is held by a white teacher with two native assistants appointed and paid by the government through the effort of the great man [Revd Tantsi].’84 The tone of the delegates expressed the intensity of disappointment, even anger and frustration at how this school was ‘captured’. As we shall see below, similar sentiments were expressed when the PO and the Native Affairs Department attempted to take over Wilberforce between 1917 and 1918. This recurred in the late 1930s, when the TED wanted to appoint a white principal to take over the school.85

Before World War I, the difficulties of these small independent AME schools were complex, allowing opponents of the independent school movement to ascribe these problems to the failure of Africans to manage their own affairs. Although most of these schools had a short lifespan, the growth of Wilberforce disproved paternalistic perceptions that Africans were incapable of organising, financing, and running efficient schools without European supervision. As we shall see, up to the 1940s Africans were capable of financing and operating some of these schools without government support. In this context, it is important to understand that, as Ball puts it, ‘the whole history of colonial schooling is marked by the contestation between rival social and political groups with separate and conflicting vested interests,’ which Anderson calls 'the struggle for the school'.86 This tussle, for the most part, was between the colonial authorities, the missionaries of various persuasions and particular groups within the indigenous populations.87

White schools enjoyed substantial government grants, private sponsorship from organisations such as the Council for Higher Education, which founded the University of the Witwatersrand and several white urban English schools, such as Jeppe High on the Rand.88 This was intensified by the critical and a complex period when J.B.M Hertzog’s government took over from 1924 to 1929. His administration mainly focused on white schools, which were used as centres for the

84 WHP, Journal of Proceedings of the Aannual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church held at Worcester 7-12 October 1914.

85 A. White and L White, *Dawn in Bantuland: an account of Missionary Experience and Observations in South Africa* (Boston, 1953).

86 S. Ball, Imperialism, Social Control and the Colonial Curriculum in Africa, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 15 (1983), p. 237

87 Ibid.

88 NASA, SNA 325 NA 1644/06 NA 1768/ 06 A letter that report on the Maxeke’s school from T.J.H. Jones to the Director of Education.

alleviation of the 'poor white problem'. Public schools were intended to weld white youth together into a new broad South African nation.

Given the challenges and struggles experienced by these schools, what enabled Wilberforce to expand? More specifically, what made Wilberforce more important in southern Africa after World War I? From 1917 to the 1940s, with limited funds, Wilberforce became the only AME school with a teachers' programme in southern Africa. Although the school struggled for the recognition of its teacher's certificate, its teacher-training programme was not recognised and this limited the horizons of Wilberforce teacher graduates. It is important to explore briefly the educational struggles of the AME school within the broader political context and compare the AME struggle for schooling with those of other independent schools.

Paterson, who conducted a detailed study of African independent schools in the Cape, argues that, 'the educational struggles of the AME school congregations were conducted in a political context that was different to that pertaining in the region within which the case studies of the African Presbyterian Church and the Order of Ethiopia were located.'89 His findings reveal that:

> A distinguishing feature of the Western Cape was the heightened political awareness among people of colour in the region. This was expressed concretely in terms of a great volume of correspondence that was addressed to the Education Department. The communications ranged from complaints to petitions covering a wide spectrum of problems, some of which dealt with conditions of service ·for teachers and irregularities in the management of schools. Thus there was a far greater willingness on the part of black people in the Western Cape to demand access to education, and to defend their rights in education.90

Historians and political scientists have written extensively on how church ministry historically served as a springboard for Africans aspiring to political office. The point is usually made that an African preachers' congregation provides a built-in constituency for launching a political career.91

With an attempt to increase its influence and help enlighten the multiple underprivileged and dispossessed classes, the AME expanded its missionary work to rural areas; it approached 'heathen chiefs' with the claims of the Gospel under the banner of the AME. The AME priests invaded pagan kraals and conducted revivals until entire homesteads converted to Christianity. In towns and villages, they won new converts and built churches.92 Various chiefs supported this

89 A, Paterson, Contest and Co-option,' p. 308.

90 Ibid. p. 308.

91 A. Odendaal, The Founders; P Walshe, The Rise of African Nationalism.

92 Ibid, p. 52.

missionary adventure; some were impressed by the Afrocentric approach that the AME adopted. At the 1914 AME conference, for instance: 'they came [and reported that their paramount] Chief Shuman Makgoe and the Baphiring tribe have surrendered themselves to be served … by the African Methodist Episcopal Church.93 In the subsequent conference Chief Stephen Makgoe addressed the conference in English expressing joy 'to be …[at] the conference.'94 Apart from Christianity, historians have shown that many chiefs invited missionaries for secular reasons. It is possible that these chiefs wanted education for their subjects.95 In some chiefdoms, such as the amaMpondo chiefdom, this caused considerable anxiety among the white authorities and missionaries because Ethiopianists encouraged chiefs, such as Sigcau, to claim rights of chieftaincy and landownership.96 Another feature that attracted the chiefs to the AME church was that it was 'more tolerant of traditional practices than its predecessors and thus better able to accommodate traditional leadership.'97

Even in some remote freehold townships, such as Daggakraal, the AME church was invited to build schools.98 Wherever the AME missionaries went, education was in demand, and the church worked together with the community to build schools. This meant that schools were not imposed from outside; they were community initiated schools. They were not spiritually withdrawn from the surrounding community; they engaged with the real world and their people. It is important to note that the post-World War I period was a time of intense industrial development and social change, and the AME church ensured that this transformation was reflected in their schools.99

What evolved out of the AME church was a civic tradition that nurtured a sense of charity for the poor and an active engagement in social life. In order to run rural schools, the church deployed a small class of clergymen who became teachers and principals of these institutes.100 A large

93 WHP, Journal of Proceedings of the Joint Session of the Cape and OFS Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church held at Worcester on the 7th-11th October 1914.

94 WHP, Journal of Proceedings of the Joint Session of the Cape and OFS Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1916, African Methodist Episcopal Church, A 2936.

95 G. Shepperson and T. Price, *Independent Africa* (Edinburgh, 1958); T. Ranger, 'African Attempts to Control Education in East and Central Africa', *Past and Present*, 32, pp.

96 W. Beinart, The Political Economy of Pondoland 1860 to 1930s (Cambridge, 1982), p. 153.

97 J Campbell, *The Songs of Zion,* p.185.

98 Ibid.

99 S. A. Butler-Mokoro, 'Racial Uplift and Self Determination; J Campbell, *The Songs of Zion* .

100 Ibid.

proportion of these professionals graduated from missionary schools, and they were leading Africans of their day.101 Driven by religious devotion to helping their race through education, their commitment was imbued with a deep sense of their obligation to community upliftment. Some gave up their life work and their families; they forsook friends and went into all parts of southern Africa to open new churches and schools. Some suffered and never saw their families again. They realised the importance of their position in their communities; they also recognised their duties and responsibilities and ensured that they fulfilled a real mission of their calling.102 As African teachers, their dedication surpassed their limited freedom as segregated Africans and they pursued their missionary objectives. Despite the financial difficulty that resulted from the adoption of European habits and the underpayment of teachers, the social service that these mission-educated clergymen provided was overwhelmingly determined by the ethos of the AME church. In the 1920s, Jabavu described the financial position of these teachers' as follows:

> the present conditions of Native education in Union is one of chaos … Natives here have a just grievance … while they have to be satisfied with having their children taught in mission rooms with dilapidated and rough and scanty teacher receiving a miserable pittance, so miserable that a raw and illiterate Zulu policeman in Durban today gets better than the best paid Zulu school teacher.103

We may label these teachers respectively as evangelists, ecclesiastical, sociological and humanitarians. In an attempt to contextualise this situation, Cooke asserts that, 'African Methodist Episcopal efforts in South Africa were localised to wherever the denomination could enter and garner support, such as Evaton in the Transvaal, Cape Town and Johannesburg. This localisation of support was a significant strategy to ensure the continuation of mission work.104 Like Wilberforce, the community spirit kept these institutes going in the face of adverse criticism, shortage of funds and teachers. In some areas, they did not survive because the white authorities took measures to prevent the AME from taking root. It is therefore not surprising that there is no trace of AME church schools in Natal province and other parts of southern Africa where the AME was severely suppressed by missionaries and colonial authorities. In the preceding chapters of this dissertation, I showed how hostile letters that attacked the AME church similar to the one cited below were published in the different newspapers and

101 Among clergies who opened schools were Luke Dlepu of Port Elizabeth, John Sonjinca of Indwe in the Eastern Cape, Francis Gow of the Western Cape. Many, such as Henry Msikinya and Mbulelani Kuzwayo some were graduates from American universities.

102 See D.D. T. Jabavu, *Black Problems*, p. 77.

103 D.D.T. Jabavu, The Black Problem: Papers and Addresses on Various Native Problems (Alice, 1920).

104 C. Cook, Married to Freedom? The Importance of Marriage for African Methodist Episcopal Missionary Women in South Africa, 1900 – 1940, *The Australian Review of African Studies*, 36, (2015). pp. 84-97.

government reports. It is however, also important here in this section to cite a letter from *The South African Spectator*:105

> But, and if a Church, such as the AMEC Church goes out of its way, stirs up strife and disloyalty, meddles in politics; and under the cloak of religion preaches a crusade against the powers that be, it suborns its sacred calling. Pray, I would ask, what real complaints have the coloured races here.106

Under conditions, AME schools could not easily stay away from accusations of interfering in politics.

5.5 The role of Wilberforce in teacher training

Evidence from the minutes of the pre-war church conference suggests that teacher training was intended to bridge the educational gap experienced by African children. After the war, the educational advancement in church schools was very slow and discouraging. According to Amos and Luella White,107 '

> this was due in part to irregular and inadequate pay … Teachers, though ambitious to improve their qualifications, often found themselves up against a financial stone wall when vacation time gave them freedom from classroom restraints, but not the money with which to meet expenses for study.108

As a result, teachers were often worried about how to provide for themselves and their families. Teachers, according to Jabavu, were given 'wages less than those given to many uncivilised Natives in the larger towns.'109 During the 1918 teachers' conference in Natal. Jabavu encouraged teachers to confront the authorities. In his speech he said: 'to achieve the former it is necessary for us for each individual to live up to the highest ideals of his profession, and in order to be able to present our case we should all join in a Teachers Association such as this, and then ask the authorities to receive a deputation.'110

105 This newspaper was produced for the African community in the Cape and was later adopted by the AME.

106 The *South African Spectator*, 23 September 1902.

107 Leulla and Amos White were African-Americans who were offered an opportunity by Bishop Wright, the Bishop of the AME Church, to serve as educators in South Africa in the late 1930s. Amos served as a principal of Wilberforce and he was assisted by Leulla, his wife who served as the secretary of the school. They were at Wilberforce from 1937 to 1940.

108 A. J. White and L. G. White, *Dawn in Bantu,* p.17.

109 D.D.T. Jabavu, *Black Problem*, p.76.

110 Ibid. p.76.

As a dynamic principal, Magaya introduced the Junior Certificate and the three years Teachers Diploma course in 1917.111 These achievements were not Magaya's alone, but of the entire AME church. However, under his leadership, he created favourable conditions to enable these developments. As we shall see, this attracted diverse students from all over southern Africa to become students at Wilberforce. For the AME church and the African communities, this was a tremendous achievement and should not be overshadowed by the administrative challenges that Wilberforce experienced over these years. Wilberforce was set to become one of the most important intellectual institutions in African schooling.

5.6 A significant challenge

Wilberforce became a site of important struggles between different mainstream mission societies, the government and the AME church. All these agencies wanted to gain influence over the newly urbanising population on the Rand. The TED's refusal to recognise the teachers training course at Wilberforce suggests that the state sought to discourage tertiary education for Africans and it became an important source of conflict between the African independent school movement and the government. In the context of the urban Transvaal, Campbell notes that the principle of African education increasingly was questioned within the context of the discovery of mineral wealth on the Rand. Mining capital's demand for a cheap, unskilled labour conflicted with the social aspirations and upward mobility of African elites with a mission-based education.112 Campbell further argues that educated Africans were seen as antithetical and undesirable in terms of the demands of the market. In reviewing their education policies, missionaries generally felt the need to limit African education to a Standard III level, thus creating a labour force that was useful to the demands of capital.113 The exclusion of African converts from upward social mobility exposed the hypocrisy of the missionary movement in the eyes of African converts and was a direct cause of the independent church movement.114 . It also had a direct bearing on the rise of Wilberforce's teachers department.

111 J. M. Nhlapo, *Wilberforce.*

112 J. Campbell, 'Our Fathers, Our Children: the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa,' (PhD Thesis, Stanford University, 1989), p.95-96.

113 Ibid, p. 95-96.

114 M. Friedman, 'A History of Africans in Pretoria with special reference to Marabastad' (Master Thesis, University of South Africa 1994) p.26.

5.7 An attempt to contain Wilberforce's expansion

Unlike in the Cape, where there were number of teachers training centres for Africans, the Transvaal had only one training college, Kilnerton Training College. This college was founded by the Methodist church in 1886115 and did not admit non-Methodists. Unlike other denominations that operated in the urban Transvaal, the notion of a teacher-training institution was fundamental to the mission ideology of the Methodists and explains why the AME church, that seceded from the Methodists, valued normal and tertiary education that instilled and reinforced particular norm.[116] Both denominations strongly believed that: 'the teacher and the preacher are fellow labourers in the Gospel....[who were] both included in the higher synthesis of the Christian ministry.'117

In the context of the urban Transvaal, the restricted access to Kilnerton may partly explain why Wilberforce introduced a teacher training department. In the first two decades of the twentieth century there were very few teachers who graduated from Kilnerton. Most teachers who worked in small African schools on the Rand were graduates of Cape and Natal missionary schools.118 This means that non-Methodist students who aspired to become teachers had to travel to Natal and the Cape for teachers training. In these English colonies, teachers were admitted to the training institution upon passing an examination in the subjects prescribed for Standard IV. Attendance of five sessions was required: after four sessions a student teacher could start teaching for one hour under the supervision. At the end of the course student teachers were examined in the following subjects:119

Scripture Knowledge

English Language

115 M.J.Mphahlele, 'The Methodist Venture in Education at Kilnerton 1886-1962', (Master Thesis, University of the North, 1972).

116 'Normal' herein refers to the goal of these institutions to instill and reinforce particular *norms* within students. Such a project was critical given the exigencies of the new industrialised economy of the time and its need for a reliable, reproducible and uniform work force. Norms included reinforcing targeted societal values, ideologies and dominant narratives in the form of curriculum. The process of instating such norms within students depended upon the first uniform, formalised national educational curriculum. "Normal schools," as teacher training schools, were tasked with both developing this new curriculum and developing the techniques through which teachers would instil these ideas, behaviours and values in the minds of their students. See H.A Brown, 'The Normal-School Curriculum'. *The Elementary School Journal*. 20: (1997), pp. 276–284.

117 M. Friedman, 'A History of Africans in Pretoria,' p.29.

118 See, J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion.*

119 Special Report on Educational Subjects: Educational System of the Chief Crown Colonies and Possession of the British Empire including the Report on the Training of Native Races Vol. 13, London, 1905.

A Vernacular language

Writing

Arithmetic

School Management Practise of Teaching

Geography

History

Practise of Singing

Drill

Freehand drawing

Theory of Music[120]

A pass in six of these subjects qualified a student for a Teacher Practitioner Certificate. Any subject the candidate failed, and any subjects omitted in this examination, had to be taken at subsequent examinations during probation.[121] From the 1900s to 1930s, there were no studies conducted on African teachers' education, and it is difficult to ascertain the type of training they received. There is also no information on the numerical and ethnic breakdown of African teachers. The pioneering study conducted by P.A.W Cook in the late 1930s reveals some very interesting details about the academic and social background of African student teachers in recognised training institutes: 'over 60 per cent had failed at least one class at the primary or training level, only 36.9% of those in the highest level of teacher training had succeeded in reaching that level in minimum period of 3 years after Standard VI.'[122] Cook interpreted this as an indication of the inefficiency of the system of teacher training[123] and argued that the levels of failure and repetition were expensive and wasteful.[124]

While this is certainly not explicitly stated by Cook, his work does explain to some extent that the curriculum taught to African teachers was poor; it prepared African teachers to teach a curriculum that would shape an African child to be a subject of white colonialism in a capitalist

120 Special Report on Educational Subjects: Educational System of the Chief Crown Colonies and Possession of the British Empire including the Report on the Training of Native Races Vol. 13, London, 1905.

121 Ibid

122 P. A. W. Cook, *The Native Student Teacher: A Socio-Educational Survey* (Pretoria: South African Council for Educational and Social Research Series No. 12, 1940).

123 Ibid.

124 Ibid.

system. The curriculum was largely designed to make 'Greater England greater still through the spread of noble traditions.'125 This attracted the attention of the AME church and inspired it to develop an alternative teacher's curriculum to be taught at Wilberforce. Jabavu noted the poor standard of teachers in the early 1900s:

> Out of 100 native teachers that one meet[s], not more than five show sign[s] of having added anything to their stock of knowledge since passing [the] T.3 examination. Their speech writing and school work betray stagnant minds. Doubtless it was this fact that led Sir Thomas Muir to conclude that the native brain is not capable of following the higher studies of matriculation and post matriculation work.126

Unfortunately, there are no surviving records of the Wilberforce teachers' curriculum of the 1920s. As indicated in the previous chapters, studies of the AME independent schools have often been hampered by a lack of primary source material.127 In contrast to the mainstream missionary and government schools, there is no central AME mission archive and the material that has survived is not as extensive as that of other mission societies. The richness of the source material differs significantly from other denominations.128 There is no information on the curriculum or even the numbers of students and staff at the schools and no material covers curriculum in government correspondence. However, secular newspapers from South Africa do provide some insight on curriculum. *Imvo Zabantsundu,* for example, contains some valuable material on the school subjects offered at AME schools.

A 1906 advertisement for Wilberforce Training Institute, a school founded by the Maxekes at KgaRamokgopa Village, is possibly the only surviving source on the subjects that were taught in AME schools. The advertisement reads as follows:

> *kwakona sijonge ukukupa amakwenkwe namantombazane kwi Mviwe ze* Cape University *ezinjenge* Teachers, School Elementary, School Higher, Matriculation, Surveying, Intermediate, Sewing, and Domestic Economy, *nezinye izimviwe ezipakamilelyo*.
>
> I Classes *ezivuliwe zika* 1906, le class *iyakungena nganqam alandelayo* (1) English (2) French (3) Latin (4) Arithmetic (5) Algebra (6) Geometry (Euclid) (7) Greek (8) History…

125 Ibid, p. 136.

126 D.D.T Jabavu, *Black Problem*, p. 85.

127 The AME publications, particularly the *Voice of Mission* and the *Christian Recorder* are not easily accessible in South African university archives. The most extensive holdings of the *Voice of Missions* are housed at Columbia University in New York, and Drew University in Madison, New Jersey. Other issues that can be read from microfilm are housed in Yale University. Very few AME newspapers are digitised at Pitts Theology Library and Woodruff Library at Emory and during my visit to Emory I could not find anything related to Wilberforce curriculum.

128 C. Cook 'Married to Freedom? The Importance of Marriage'

> Teachers Classes *kutatyatwa* I courses *njongoko zinjalo*…(1) Physiology (2) Geometrical Drawing (3) Latin (4) Algebria (5) Euclid (6) History (7) Domestic Economy (8)Needle Work129
>
> We are looking forward to provide boys and girls the Cape University examination subjects, such as, Teachers, School Elementary, School Higher, Matriculation, Surveying, Intermediate, Sewing, and Domestic Economy and other subjects of higher education.
>
> Opened classes for the year of 1906 will provide the following subjects (1) English (2) French (3) Latin (4) Arithmetic (5) Algebra (6) Geometry (Euclid) (7) Greek (8) History. For teachers classes Teachers Classes courses that will be provided as follow … (1) Physiology (2) Geometrical Drawing (3) Latin (4) Algebria (5) Euclid (6) History (7) Domestic Economy (8)Needle Work130

Latin (Rome), French and Greek literature and language was regarded as representing the higher quality of education. This was noted by Revd Joseph Cook who said during in his Boston Lecture in 1885, 'I deliberately maintain that a man who is not possessed of a considerably large acquaintance with the language and literature of Greek and Rome is not liberally educated.'[131] As we can see from the above advertisement, these schools diverged from the mainstream missionary school curriculum; they never taught moral instruction, religious studies or manual training as offered in the mainstream missionary-controlled schools. They diverted from the subjects that were designed by missionaries and the colonial Superintendent-General of Education to cultivate obedience, respect to superiors and good manners generally. The Superintendent-General reinvigorated the teaching of these subjects during the 1910 Native Education Conference in Butterworth. During this conference and speaking to delegates, who were largely educationists and missionaries, the Superintendent insisted strongly to 'pay careful attention to these points in the training schools.132

As demonstrated by the *Imvo* advert, before the Union in 1910 the Maxekes' school offered a teachers' course under the guidance of the Cape of Good Hope University. After the Union, Wilberforce teachers training courses in Transvaal had to be accredited by the TED and letters from Revd Francis McDonald Gow in 1923 reveal that the school had to apply for its student teachers to sit for the TED teachers' examination: 'I do pray for the success of our attempt … I have written to the Sub-Native Commissioner at Vereeniging stating that he may forward my letter to the Education Department of Pretoria, We hope for the best.'133

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129 *Imvo Zabantsundu,* 21 May 1906

130 ' See CA, CTM 3/628, Conference on Native Education held in Butterworth, 1910

131 SARUE, Unknown author, Outline of the history of the AME church, Coan Papers MSS 872, Box 68

132 CA, The Conference on Native Education held in Butterworth, 1910, CTM 3/628 T.

133 WHP, A letter from F.M. Gow to Revd Mabote, 13 March 1923, The South African Institute of Race Relations Collection, AD 843/RJ/KB 14.8 File 2.

During the same year, Gow received a reply that responded positively to his application. This letter reads as follows: 'I have just received the enclosed letters from the Education Department of Pretoria, I am forwarding them to you at once…we have fought so hard and so long we must not lose this chance.'134 The enclosed letter from H.P Mills, an official of the TED, reads as follows:

> With reference to your letter dated 2 March 1923 I am directed to inform you that permission has been given for the students of your institution to enter for the Native Teachers Certificate Examination of this year as Private Candidates. It must be understood that the admission of these candidates does not in anyway involve a further recognition of your training institution. A supply of entry form is attached and I… request to have these completed and forwarded to the Inspector of Native Schools P O Box 4439 Johannesburg at an early date. The candidates will take the examination at Kilnerton and the necessary arrangement with regard to to their accommodation at Kilnerton Institution during the period of examination must be made by you. You will duly be notified by the Inspector of Native Schools as to whether the oral test will be taken by him at Evaton or Kilnerton. A copy of the instructions and table of marks is attached.135

5.8 The struggle for recognition

With the growth of Wilberforce, the teachers curriculum was seen by the Wilberforce administrators as a guarantee to the open road to learning, the type of pedagogy that 'go[es] beyond the classroom boundaries and effect significant changes in the society as well,' as Paulo Freire argued a few decades later. 136 Although the Wilberforce administrators had differing political approaches and educational strategies, their perception and belief was, however, driven by Victorian ideas of civilisation, equality, industry and progress that pressed them to seek equal education. They saw independent education as the only way to translate their educational dreams into reality.137

In the earlier chapters of this thesis, I have shown how Ethiopianist schools were associated with the question of political teaching; this was evident during the SANAC proceedings. The colonists and missionaries frequently made allegations of political teaching. For instance, Revd Dieterlen claimed that the teachers of independent schools 'have a great deal to do with political

134 WHP, A letter from F.M Gow to Rev S Mabote 23 March 1923, The South African Institute of Race Relations Collection, AD 843/RJ/KB 14.8 File 2.

135 WHP, A letter from HP Mills 26 March 1923, The South African Institute of Race Relations Collection, AD 843/RJ/KB 14.8 File 2.

136 P. Freire, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, (London, 1970).

137 See S.M. Burns-Ncamashe, 'An Investigation into the 'Provision of Education by the Order of Ethiopia to Africans in the Cape Province between 1900 and 1952' (Bachelor of Education Thesis, University of Cape Town, 1954) pp.20-29.

matters ... They speak on them in public meetings or from the pulpit; and their voice is listened to with much reverence ... Much evil can be done by bad evangelists, school teachers or ministers.'138 In reality, the AME church called for uniformity with the mainstream curriculum. The church saw higher education as a way help to resolve the problems of 'race contact' and cooperation.139 Hence the teacher department at Wilberforce was pragmatic about the question of curriculum uniformity between African and white schools.

Curriculum is clearly a very complicated issue. On the one hand, Wilberforce and the AME fought very hard for autonomy, and the records reveal that the church and the school were willing to include both political and racial issues in their teaching. On the other hand, they felt that exclusion from the traditional western liberal education meant inferior education. It is safe to argue, then, that they actually wanted to mimic the western liberal curriculum even though it was Eurocentric. They enthusiastically accepted ancient Greek and Latin as part of liberal education, for example, and this raises a question whether these languages had any real value for Africans other than for biblical study.

As the provincial educational authority, the role of the TED was to ensure that the process of teacher training was thorough and genuine, that instructors who trained teachers were qualified, and that schools that trained teachers were well equipped and maintained a good standard of efficiency. The TED, however, did not recognise that the AME church introduced a teachers' course to improve education among the African population.

The TED, along with mainstream missionaries, became a great critic of Wilberforce. It continued to adhere to the old government resolution that 'no official recognition in any other form either by grant in aid of schools, or otherwise, shall be given to Native Churches independent of, and free from, European control.'140 It appears that there was a growing impression that children produced by the independent school system were not made useful members of the colonial society.

While the pre-World War applications for the school to be recognised failed, the teachers' section became important in the struggle for recognition. The AME church persisted tirelessly in

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138 H. Dieterlen, 'The Preparation of Native Ministers' Report of the Proceedings of the Second General Missionary Conference for South Africa. Johannesburg 5-11 July 1906 (Basutoland, 1906) p.50.

139 WHP, Journal of Proceedings of the Joint Session of the Cape and OFS Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church held at Worcester on the 7th-11th October 1914.

140 KwaZulu Natal Provincial Archive, (KZNPA) Minister for Native Affairs, SNA 1/1/377/, Ref 2587.

its fight for recognition. The letters written by the Wilberforce School Board members, who were troubled by the fact that there were not enough dedicated teacher training institutions for Africans in the Transvaal, illustrate how the struggle for recognition was waged. Application for recognition started before the World War I and continued until 1919. In a letter to the Director of Native Labour in 1919, the local PO wrote:

> I am forwarding another letter from the principal of the A.M.E. Mission School at Evaton applying for an interview with the Secretary of the Education Department to obtain … recognition of the Mission School by the government.141

In another letter in May 1919 A.L. Mokgoteli wrote:

> In view of the forthcoming yearly inspection, I kindly ask the Education Department Authorities to take immediate steps by sending an Inspector to come and undertake the school, to register same as any other recognised Government Mission Aided School in the Transvaal.142

The content of the petition is the same as the one that was written in May.

> I hope the continual intercourse we are having with you will not irritate or tire you. I am writing now in connection with the day of Mission School of the A.M.E, that is I wish to draw your kind attention to the fact that the inspector of school for the district is about to visit Evaton [in the] third month or next month therefore I kindly ask to communicate with the Chief Inspector of Schools or some person in authority to see that when the Inspector in question visits these other Evaton schools Mission Schools to please call around.143

The response to the March letter might have been delayed by bureaucratic procedures or perhaps the letter was deliberately ignored. However, the PO's report dated 5th December 1919 shows that an inspection visit was done. Mokgoteli also wanted the TED to give Wilberforce educational guidelines that would help the school to achieve its objective. Mokgoteli requested the inspector who was due to visit other local schools, to come and investigate Wilberforce. It seems odd that the Department of Native Affairs eventually decided to send the PO, who was not a school inspector. Did the PO possess the professional skills required to make a proper evaluation?

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141 NASA, A letter from the Pass Officer of Vereeniging to the Director of Native Labour, 1 May 1919, GNLB 302, File 395/18/319.

142 NASA, A letter from the A.L Mokgoteli to the Commissioner of Native Affairs in Vereeniging, 30 May 1919, GNLB 302, File 395/18/319.

143 NASA, A letter from the A.L Mokgoteli to the Commissioner of Native Affairs in Vereeniging, 5 March 1919, GNLB 302, File 395/18/319.

School inspections varied from full inspections of both schools and individual teachers, to inspections of specific subjects.144 Upon arrival in a specific school, inspectors would give advice and recommendations to school leaders and teachers. The Wilberforce administration expected that the inspector's stopover to the school would contribute to school improvement initiatives.

From an educational perspective, the purpose of the PO's visit was ambiguous. Nonetheless his report was the opposite of what the educated staff of Wilberforce expected. His report states: 'I am willing to act as a Superintendent of the above school in my capacity as Sub-Native Commissioner provided the condition regarding transport to and from.'145 This suggests that the PO did not recognise the school administration and its Superintendent. His visit to Wilberforce merely offered him an opportunity to pursue his personal interest in asserting control over Wilberforce. Although the request for inspection was an attempt to solicit TED funding and recognition, the AME tried by all means to circumvent interference from white intermediaries and mission church agents. The church was aware that government recognition and funding mechanisms might lead to the eventual state capture of the school.

Another part of the report reads as follows:

> the school was divided into two sections for educational purpose, consisting of Primary in which there are 12 borders and 86 day scholars (54 boys and 44 girls) and the Institute containing 45 Borders and 33 days scholars (57 boys & 21 girls) total 176.... Borders paid £12 per annum and the day scholars paid according to the class they are in from 1/6 to 3/6 per month.146

This only described the school environment, the number of learners and the amount that students paid in a form of fees. Nothing was reported on educational development matters, suggesting that the motivation behind the visit was to assess the possibility of taking control of the school. Broadly speaking, this was part of the Native Affairs Department's strategy to consolidate control; this was later incorporated in the 1927 Native Administration Act.

This policy impacted on education. The government's attempt to control African independent schools was also experienced by other African independent schools, such as Ohlange Institute. Manning Marable, in his study on the institute, observed that:

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144 Ibid.

145 NASA, A letter from the Pass Officer to the Director of Native Labour 9 July 1918, GNLB 302 File 383/18/45.

146 NASA, A letter from the Pass Officer to the Director of Native Labour, 5 December 1918, GNLB 302 File 383/18/45.

> The Natal government proposed to take… over [Ohlange Institute] in the [1920s] as a state institution and assume responsibility for the debts incurred under Dube's management … Dube rejected the offer without refusing outright.147

In a similar interaction with Wilberforce, the government proposal was triggered by Howard Pim's visit and condemnation of Ohlange in 1919 (Pim was the founder of the Joint Council of Europeans and Africans and the South African Institute of Race Relations): 'this institution cannot be judged by European standards.'148

The attempt by the state to control schools has drawn some attention from scholars. Krige, for example, argues that the government was threatened by African demands for more state and community control, and by provincial government threats to amalgamate schools of different denominations in oversubscribed areas. She further asserts that the Transvaal government was extremely concerned about the influence of independent churches and initiation schools on their pupils.149 It is clear from this argument that the PO visit to Wilberforce was in line with the aim of the Transvaal government desire to control, secularise, bureaucratise and professionalise the system of African education. According to Paterson, this type of secularisation occurred at two levels: secularisation of control over the schools; and the secularisation of content of mission schooling.150 It is not surprising, then, that the government's attempt to control schools became so forceful and explicit.

Yet, for a number of reasons, the government attempt to control Wilberforce proved difficult to achieve. First, the school was associated with an independent church. Second, there was apparent friction between the AME church and the government that resulted from the state misinterpretation of the church as 'seditious', mainly in official reports and commissions. Third, the AME church was fiercely opposed to putting Wilberforce under government control. This could be attributed to the fact that the church leaders and local communities expressed great faith in Wilberforce, and felt that the institute should strive for better education that would enable Africans to challenge the Europeans for equal rights in the courts, as Tsewu had done in 1905. In other words, Wilberforce wanted autonomy and also wanted state recognition and subsidy.

147 M. Marable 'John L Dube and the Politics of Segregated Education,'in A Mugomba and M. Nyagga (ed), *Independent without Freedom: The Political Economy of Colonial Education*,(Oxford 1980), p. 118.

148 Ibid, p. 118-119.

149 S. Krige, 'Trustees and Agents of the State,? Mission and the Formation of Policy towards African Education, 1910-1920,' *South African Historical Journal*, 40, (1999), p, 79.

150 A. Paterson, 'Contest and Co-option: The Struggle for Schooling, p, 116.

The state was willing to consider recognition and subsidy in exchange for greater control. This is a very common battle between state and education institutions throughout the world.

5.9 Popularity in southern Africa

As the largest African independent school in the Transvaal, Wilberforce gained popularity in the southern African region and attracted students from as far as Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia. For example, Revd E Chunga, one of the founders of the AME church at Ndola in Northern Rhodesia, applied for his daughter to study there in the 1930s. Chunga was partly inspired by prominent Northern Rhodesian students, such as Doctor Kamangeni who had been Wilberforce learners after World War I. In the application letter Rev Chunga wrote: 'a pupil[,] Doctor Kamangeni [,] at Wilberforce will be able to tell you more,'151 Chunga's application letter reads as follows:

> the abovementioned [Ethel Hluphe Chunga] is my daughter aged 12 years and I wish to send her to Wilberforce Institute early in June this year, is there any form I need to fill in order to make a proper application and what are the condition of your institution in connection with school fees … I want her to study for the J C teachers certificate and become a school mistress in future and help the backward race of Central Africa. She is also interested in music.152

Michael Mwase from Nyasaland also applied to attend Wilberforce. In his application letter, Mwase wrote:

> I am Michael Mwase of Nyasaland came here [in South Africa] for education I was suppose to attend a school at Wilberforce College near Johannesburg but my application was not accepted. I explained to the principal that I belong to the AME church nothing successful came out.153

These letters reveal that after the World War I, African students from southern Africa with a limited access to education in their respective countries flocked to Wilberforce in large numbers, increasing the number of Wilberforce students considerably. By 1917, the government official in Rhodesia reported that: 'native evangelists have seceded from religious bodies under supervision of Europeans and adopted Ethiopian tendencies.'154

In the southern African region, the conditions of colonial development were very different from the Union of South Africa. Missionary activities varied from one colony to another. In some

151 WHP, A letter from Rev E Chunga to the Principal of Wilberforce Institute, 7 March 1936, Xuma Collection AD 843.

152 Ibid.

153 SAREU, A letter from Michael Mwase to Dr Roosevelt Coan Undated. Coan Papers, MSS 872, Box 1.

154 Report of the Chief Native Commissioner for the year 1917 quoted in J.M. Chirenje Ethiopianism and Afro-American, p. 154.

regions, particularly north of the Limpopo, mission stations and schools were less established than those in South Africa. As a result, Africans from these colonies were forced to come to South Africa for education. It is important to note that by the 1920s, the work of the AME church was officially recognised in other English colonies of southern Africa, including the South and North of Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Swaziland, Bechuanaland, Basotuland and South West Africa. The AME church also officially existed in Portuguese East and West Africa, Belgian Congo and Tanganyika.155 In West Africa, the church operated the Girls Institute in Sierra Leone and Bethel Institute in the Gold Coast.

In 1919, the municipal officer in Fort Victoria reported: 'it appears that he [Makgatho] has baptised some 40 natives at Mashaba and has gone back to Bulawayo.'156 By this time, the AME church demonstrated 'vigour after a long period of somnolence' in Rhodesia.157 In Nyasaland, the AME church operation started in 1924, founded by Revd Hanock Msokera Phiri. Phiri opened his first school in 1925. His school was elementary and had a modest building; his own house served as a boarding house.158 This led to a proliferation of the AME church branches in southern Africa. The churches pressured the church members to send their children to Wilberforce to obtain higher education. There were only two big AME church schools in southern Africa: Bethel and Wilberforce. Wilberforce was the closest for the southern Africa students, largely from North and South Rhodesia and Malawi. These students found it easier to travel to Evaton than to Bethel, which was located in the south western Cape and was too far for these students who had to travel long distances after crossing Limpopo River.

AME newsletters, such as the *Voice of Mission* and the *Christian Recorder*, played an important role of communication within church circles. They provided a forum for communicating church information, political news, letters from the church leaders, birth, death, and marriage announcements, and the opening of new associations and institutions. Even for the uneducated population, the church newspapers became the best way to keep in touch with the community, the country, and even the world. Long before the outbreak of the World War I, the activities and the progress of Wilberforce were constantly reported in these newspapers, helping to popularise

155 SAREU, The administration of the work in the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Southern Africa, MSS 872. Makgatho was born in South Africa and he went to Rhodesia on mission.

156 Ibid.

157 Ibid.

158 B Pachai, 'A History of Colonial Education for Africans in Malawi' in A T Mugomba and M Nyaggah (eds.), *Independent Without Freedom*, p.114.

Wilberforce in southern Africa. For instance, in the *Voice of Mission* September issue of 1910, for example, Rev. Hasan Tantsi reported on his Wilberforce work in different churches.159 Ministers often included current news events in their weekly Sunday announcements or wove current events into their sermons. Church sermons also played an important role in popularising Wilberforce.

As indicated in the previous chapter, the mainstream mission schools did not admit non-Christian students. This missionary admission practise was not limited to South Africa but practised in all the British colonies. There were missionary educational centres for Africans in Northern Rhodesia, for example, and the London Missionary Society station had a school in Mbereshi, the present Luapula Province of Zambia.160 Having been prohibited from gaining access to Zambian mission schools, some students, such as Ethel Chunga, saw Wilberforce as the only option to the existing mainstream missionary schools.

Revd Chunga's letter, in voice and tone, represents many aspiring parents who wanted their children to be admitted to Wilberforce. It appears that some parents during this period were driven by the idea of racial upliftment and it is certainly true that there was a much greater demand for education after World War I. Nevertheless, by the 1920s there were still some African societies that viewed western education with suspicion.161

'Racial upliftment', encompassed the strive for intellectual, moral and economic improvement issues. Africans saw schooling as the most important channel in assisting their children to achieve these goals. The idea of racial upliftment focused on overcoming the ill effects of colonialism and racial inequality. It encouraged Africans to work hard toward gaining the same type of rights and privileges, and creating the same types of institutions and organisations that whites enjoyed.162 The idea of racial upliftment was emphasised in almost every sermon and conferences of the AME church, evident in the Bishop's closing statement during the 1914 AME church conference:

> The very same thing that the AME church did in [a] hundred years in [the] USA is possible here in South Africa, for the Negro in America is the same Negro in Africa, and the whole of this continent will be

159 *The Voice of Mission*, September 1910.

160 S. Morrow 'No Girl Leaves the School Unmarried": Mabel Shaw and the Education of Girls at Mbereshi, Northern Rhodesia, 1915-1940,' *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 19, (1986).

161 T. Ranger, 'African Attempt to Control' p. 32.

162 S. A. Butler-Mokoro, 'Racial Uplift and Self Determination: African Methodist Episcopal Church and its Pursuit for Higher Education,' (PhD Thesis, Georgia State University, 2012).

> gained for Christ, and from Cape to Cairo … we therefore beg to recommend that the brethren shall go back from conference determined to do their best to build up and uplift their people who are still in darkness.163

A general overview of this rhetoric reveals that self-determination and racial upliftment dominated the political, social, and economic discourse of Africans across the diaspora during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It helped to create many African institutions, such as churches, schools, and newspapers.164 Through these institutions, Africans were able to express themselves freely without the restriction of white supervision. The survival and the growth of Wilberforce from being a small school before the war into a school that trained teachers after the war shows that Africans had the strength, knowledge and skills to resolve their own problems and shape their own futures in a positive and productive manner. With this idea in mind, Africans saw Wilberforce as the only establishment that successfully promoted an educational agenda that was both academically strong and culturally relevant to Africans.

Conclusion

The number of African people laying claim to educational opportunities grew progressively larger during the post-war period, while the dearth of school places and lack of control of schooling became a challenge. This heightened political awareness among the urban and rural people in the Transvaal. The AME church was determined to defend their rights to schooling through formal bureaucratic channels and representatives of the church. Although Wilberforce was not recognised in this period, the school continued to expand through self-help programmes and the support of parents.

163 WHP, African Methodist Episcopal Church, Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual Conference of the Cape Colony Conference held in joint session with the Orangia Conference at Queenstown on the 9th November 1910, African Methodist Episcopal Church Collection, A2936.

164 Ibid.

CHAPTER 6

Wilberforce Institute after Magaya's death, 1924-1938

6.1 After Magaya's death

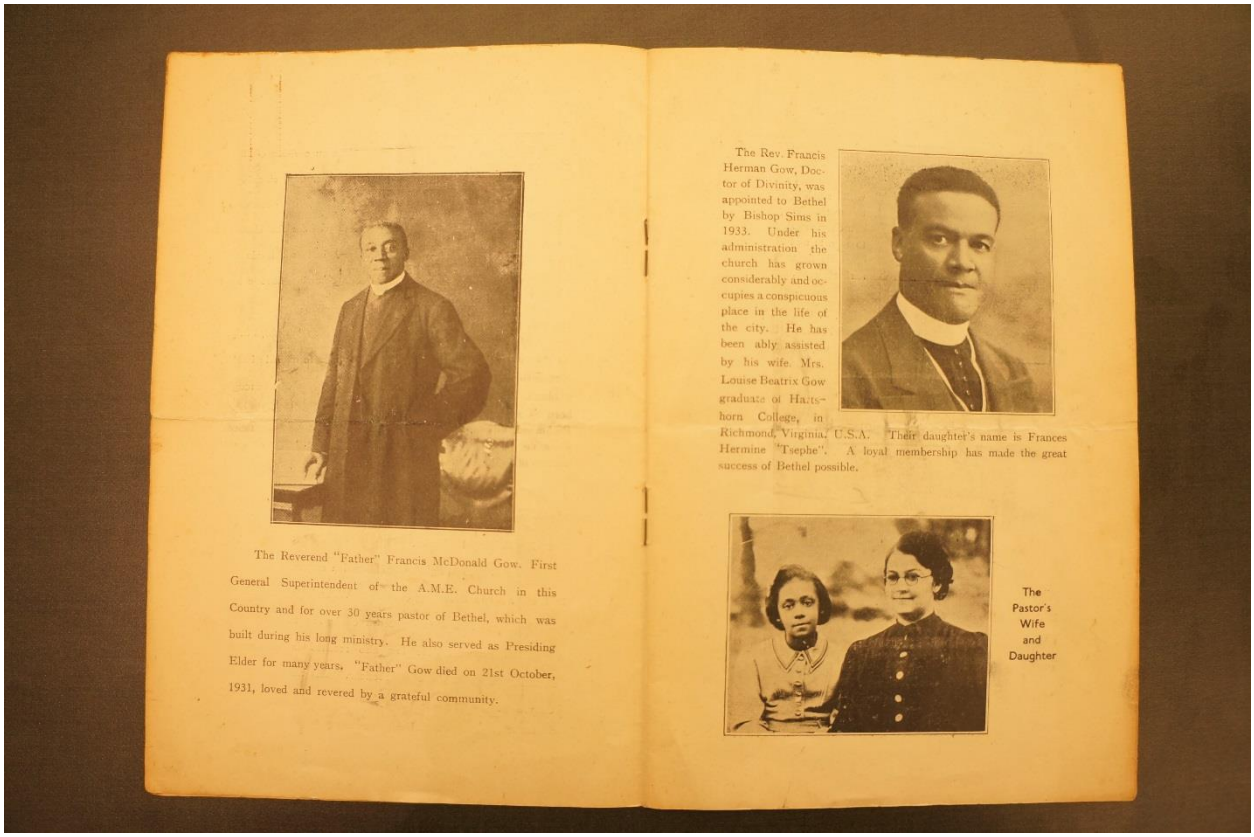
After the sudden death of Magaya on the 24th August 1924, Wilberforce closed a chapter of hard won consolidation and growth in the history of the school. During his tenure, a teacher's course was introduced, the number of students' increased, new buildings were erected, and the permanent teaching staff expanded. This was a great achievement for a needy school that was not subsidised by the government. In material terms, the situation for students and teachers improved substantially compared to the period before World War I.

Magaya's unexpected death created a vacancy which was temporarily filled by the appointment of David Opperman, a coloured teacher and the vice principal, who acted as a caretaker principal until the church could find a suitable candidate for the long term.[1] While the church was engaged with finding a new principal, Bishop Gregg invited Revd Dr Francis Herman Gow who was, at the time, still in America.[2] Dr. F. H. Gow was the son of Francis McDonald Gow, a black West Indian-born AME priest, a photographer and an elder of the AME church in Cape Town. Dr F H Gow was an American graduate and a minister who involved himself in civic affairs. He became the first black director of Community Chest, a prominent non-government organisation in the Cape. He was often quoted in Cape newspapers, especially on issues of race, in the 1930s and 1940s.

In 1925, Dr Gow junior was officially appointed as the fourth principal of Wilberforce, an office he was to retain for seven years (1925-1932). As headmaster, he was responsible for the overall administration of the school, the recruitment of teachers, the supervision of teaching, the attendance of all meetings of the school board, as well as the supervision of the maintenance of the schoolyard and buildings. Gow also handled the discipline of students and teachers, and complaints and inquiries from students, parents and the general public. Since Wilberforce was not registered with the TED, he rarely met with TED officials. As a result, there is no

1 J. Nhlapo, *Wilberforce*, p.10. .
2 For details see, R.R. Wright 'Wilberforce in South Africa: Forty Years of Missionary Work in South Africa' undated.

correspondence available in the records of the TED reports. For professional assistance, Gow relied on Mrs Charlotte Opperman, the secretary of the school.[3] He also worked very closely with Mr. M.J. Qupe, the school bookkeeper, a Lovedale graduate who joined the staff during the time of Magaya. Along with Mrs Opperman, Qupe took charge of the accounts office and the commercial teaching up to the late 1930s.[4]



The Gow Family, Coan Papers, Emory University

Much of the history from this period has been lost. There are no church or government records, apart from the report of the Pass Officer's visit in 1919. Until the end of Gow's term of office in 1932, there were no official inspections by the TED or the Native Affairs Department. Perhaps the best explanation is that Wilberforce was still not recognised by the TED, and the state was still hostile to the existence of the school. As a result, it is not possible to reconstruct some important administrative details, such as the number of students that enrolled or the fees that were paid. However, the evidence from *Chicago Defender*, an American newspaper, assists in addressing this. In an interview with the *Chicago Defender* in 1928, Gow told the newspaper that

3 Charlotte was the wife of David Opperman, the vice principal.
4 Ibid, p.10.

the school had 450 students in 1928.[5] *Umteteleli waBantu,* the local African newspaper, also sheds light on what some Wilberforce graduates did after graduating. Joram Chombo, a Malawian, for instance, was

> Seconded to the Nyasaland representative office as a clerk interpreter. He was educated at Wilberforce Institute, and after he left school he travelled a great deal, visiting among other places, Cape Town, Durban, Upington and Lorenzo Margues and making contact with many of his countrymen[6]

Chombo was the founder of the United Nyasaland and Rhodesian Improvement Society, which looked after the welfare and interests of Malawians and Rhodesians in Johannesburg.

It is important to ask why students came to Wilberforce and what made the numbers increase so dramatically. It is possible that a substantial number of American graduates that held the principalship over the years attracted them. As indicated in the previous chapter, some parents were attracted by Wilberforce's AME character and its attitude toward African advancement. Other parents who were not religious were attracted by the relatively low costs. The number of African people laying claim to educational opportunities grew progressively.[7] As we shall see, the Negro spiritual music introduced by Gow elevated Wilberforce in the eyes of Africans and coloureds in southern Africa. The school brought coloured students together with African students of different languages who lived thousands of miles away and united them into a common educational programme.[8]

The increase in size of the student body posed a serious challenge for the school because the school buildings were originally designed for a small number of students. As a result, Gow appealed to Americans to assist the school so it could expand its infrastructure. At the time of his fundraising venture in America, Wilberforce had already produced a number of graduates who worked as teachers and priests in different part of southern Africa, as the *Chicago Defender* reported:

> the school gives high school and normal education, and has for its purpose the training of teachers to work among the natives. … Professor Gow said that a number of the graduates were teaching throughout the country. He said that in order to spread the influence of the institution throughout South Africa … extension courses are given, which reach upward [of] 10 000 natives [over time]. [9]

5 *Chicago Defender* 29 September 1928.
6 *Umteteleli waBantu* 26 October 1939.
7 A. Paterson, 'Contest and Co-option.' p. 372.
8 Ibid.
9 *Chicago Defender* 29 September 1928.

6.2 Dr Gow and American education

Like his predecessor, Gow was an American graduate and the American influence shaped his work at Wilberforce. It is important to note that up to the 1930s, all the Wilberforce principals were recruited exclusively from the ranks of American graduates, largely from Wilberforce University in the US. Their exposure to black American ideas influenced their political outlook. For instance, they condemned all forms of enforced separation and insisted that Africans be granted full political rights. They played a prominent role in the building up of the African National Congress (ANC) and the African Political Organisation (APO).

They brought sophisticated diplomacy and a degree of political confidence that contributed to their success in negotiating the continued survival of Wilberforce and other AME schools. In spite of the school's poor financial position, the institute had well qualified staff members similar to the academic personnel of reputable missionary schools. As young students at Wilberforce University, these missionary workers who later became headmasters of Wilberforce sought to enlighten the 'Dark Continent.' They stood in the frontline of defence of the AME church and the principles of African Methodism.[10] In America, Gow joined the military, serving at the Fort Des Moines camp in Iowa, the only army training camp established for African-American officers in America. Gow was commissioned as a first lieutenant, commanding a platoon of soldiers in Company M of the 365th Infantry.

10 SAREU, A speech that was delivered by Revd Wayman. A Jennings to the Bishops, General Officers Ministers and Layman of the Great African Methodist Episcopal Church in Florida on the 16th October 194, Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 1 File 1/9.



Dr F H Gow in Military uniform. As a highly educated priest, Gow was commissioned by Fort Des Moines, Iowa, the only U.S. Army training camp established for African American officers.[11]

Through the significant role that his father Revd F. M. Gow played in the development of the AME church in the Cape, F. H. Gow was already well known in the South African AME church circles.[12] Like his father, Gow laboured for more than twenty years to improve the image of the AME in South Africa. He was instrumental in sending AME missionaries to help establish the church in South West Africa, which is now known as Namibia. In 1956, he became the first South African born Bishop of the AME church in the fourteenth and the fifteenth District of South Africa. Unlike American born Bishops that served South Africa from 1900, Dr Gow

11 http://freedomcenter.org/cincinnati-soldiers/individual-pages?page=8

12 After James Mata Dwane's disappointment about the American AME Bishops who never fulfilled their promise of funding the proposed Queenstown College, a number of Africans came to believe that the AME Church never had the financial capacity they boasted about. This was evident from the promised funds for the Educational College in Queenstown that they never received, as well as the money promised to Mokone to erect a church building in Cape Town. Many members of the AME church seceded. Maake Mokone, one of the founding members of the AME Church in South Africa, also left with the dissident group, but later re-joined. Mokone contacted F. M. Gow, leader of the AME Church in Cape Town, to discuss in detail the decision of the Queenstown Conference to break away from the AME Church. He furthermore advised Gow to correspond with Bishop Turner and explain what led to the secession. Gow played an important role in creating peace and harmony within the AME Church and requested Bishop Turner to come to South Africa to defend the AME Church and rectify the mistakes on the side of the church See J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion* p. 147; R. Coan, *Flying Sparks.* Gow also played an important role in African and Coloured education in the Cape. As General Superintendent in the Cape Districts, Gow was also an important influence in the growth of the schools. He led the struggle for independent education against the strenuous attempts by the Dutch Reformed Church churchmen and Schools Inspector Golightly to oust the AME schools. See A Paterson 'Contest and Co-option'.

understood the local needs better than any other American Bishop who had come to South Africa.[13]

Gow completed both his primary and secondary education in District Six, Cape Town. He left Cape Town in 1904 to further his studies in different parts of the United State of America,[14] including Tuskegee Institute. As a student, Gow spent more than 23 years in America. This impressed the editor of the *Rand Daily Mail* in 1927, who reported:

> Dr Gow told me that as a boy of 13 he had left South Africa for America and he had remained for 23 years in Tuskegee Institute where he graduated as a Doctor of Divinity. He had now returned to take charge of Wilberforce Institute[15]

After his graduation at Tuskegee, Gow moved to Wilberforce University, and later to Miami University before taking a fellowship at Lane Theological Seminary. After completion, he went to Morris Brown University in Atlanta where he received Doctor of Divinity.[16] He also received an LLD from Allen University in South Carolina. He then served the AME congregations in Cincinnati, Charleston and West Virginia. He also worked as a lecturer at Tuskegee Phelps Hall Bible Training School.[17]

Like his fellow Africans who studied in America, he was familiar with the arguments advanced by Washington and Du Bois in their dissenting view on industrial education.[18] Like Charles Dube and other African students in America, he saw industrial training 'not as the essence of their education but as an adjunct to it, to help prepare them for the responsibility they would assume

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13 The normal practice for American bishops who served in the African districts was that they always came prepared with their own programmes without consulting with the African constituency. See for example A.C Booyse, 'The Sovereignty of African' p. 9. It is important to note that some sections of the church in South Africa and America were not satisfied with some African American Bishops that came to South Africa, and there was a need for a 'native Bishop'. In addition, as was indicated in the previous chapter, African American Bishops were increasingly denied access by the South African government.

14 A.C Booyse, 'The Sovereignty of African' p.140.

15 *Rand Daily Mail* 16 June 1927.

16 R.R. Wright, *The Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*. (Nashville, 1963), p. 188.

17 J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*, p.274.

18 One of the well-known debates during the late eighteenth/early nineteenth century in regards to Negro education was over providing liberal arts curriculum versus industrial training curriculum. This debate is often symbolised through the words of Booker T. Washington (full name) versus W.E.B. (full name) Du Bois. In the mid-1900s in the different AME journals, different authors expressed their opinion about preferring one curriculum over the other. Examples of some of these articles include: 'Moral Training of the Young' *Christian Recorder*, 2 March 1861; "Industrial Education the Need of our Youth," *The A.M.E. Review*, July 1888; and 'Education Proper,' *The A.M.E. Review*, July 188 See, S A. Butler-Mokoro 'Racial Uplift,' p. 180. The opponent of industrial education argued that industrial institutes would produce leaders for a stable, literate, and semi-skilled community that would remain in a state of permanent economic, political and social subordination to the dominant, white sector of southern society. See R. Hunt Davis, 'Producing the 'Good African: South Caroline Penn School as a guide for African Education in South Africa' in A. T. Mugomba and M. Nyagga (eds.), *Independent without Freedom: The Political Economy of Colonial Education in Southern Africa (*Oxford, 1980), p.85.

back in South Africa.'[19] What drove his ambition was to come back to Africa and fulfil the useful task of training African children, the sons and daughters of poor clergymen, and offer them the type of education that was based on the principle of industrial education.

Unlike many other South Africans who found cause to remain in the US,[20] including Gow's sister Hannah, who studied at Wilberforce University and married an African-American, Gow never lost contact with his people in Africa.[21] He successfully negotiated his return to South Africa in 1924. Before moving up to take a principal's post in Evaton he served at the Bethel Memorial AME Church in District Six. In America, he gravitated towards teaching and ministry that was dictated by the AME church educational ethos and African-American mentors. This suggests that exposure of African students to America provided them with a broader perspective on problems of race, as well as with an obsession for self-improvement. Gow certainly fits this pattern.

As an American graduate and the son of an Ethiopianist, there were events and forces that influenced and shaped Gow's approach and thinking. As a boy, he was probably typically patriotic and attached to Pan Africanist sentiments of the time. Conscious of his father's respected position in the church, he was pressured to be loyal to the AME church. After Bishop Gregg's invitation, he felt obliged to come back to Africa to serve his people and promote biblical study, as well as theological awareness about colonial injustices of South African society.[22] He realised that his American education was directly relevant and applicable to the educational needs and political development in Africa. At Wilberforce, he began to play a dynamic role that built upon his predecessor's work.

In the 1920s, students who extended their stay in America, particularly those who never returned to serve people in South Africa, distressed the AME church. As a result, Henry Ngcayiya, a church elder, 'resorted to writing to Marcus Garvey, asking him to remind African students of

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19 J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*, p.268.

20 Among South African students who never returned home were John Manye, Patrick Ngcayiya, Theodore Kakaza, Stephen Gumede and Jonathan Mokone, the son of Mangena Mokone. Jonathan Mokone married a black African woman and postponed returning home for the better part of twenty years. In deference to his dying father, he returned to South Africa in 1930, pastoring a series of congregations in South Africa and Rhodesia, but his experience was an unhappy one. In 1943 he attached a plaintive note to his passport application, in which he professed a lack of affinity with African people and complete ignorance of African languages. He concluded 'All my friends, school mates and acquaintances are in America … I have lost every contact with my people here who regard me as a foreigner'. See J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*, p.247.

21 Ibid.

22 Before coming to South Africa, Bishop John Gregg was the President of Wilberforce University in Ohio. He was well qualified to advance education of the humbler South African Wilberforce.

their responsibilities to the countries they have left behind.'[23] Church leadership began to look at the migration of African students to America as a risk of losing aspirant teachers and ministers. They felt that 'there was a danger that African students would become deracinated, so imbued with the values and attitudes of their African American mentors that they would "lose touch" with African life.'[24] As a result, it became critical for the AME church to halt African student migration by expanding Wilberforce Institute into an institute of higher learning that would offer similar courses offered at American universities. This was later emphasised by Bishop Richard Wright, who struggled to put Wilberforce on the path to accreditation that provided opportunities for African-American educationists to come to Evaton to develop young Africans in South Africa. [25]

> In seeking to build up Wilberforce Institute in South Africa, Bishop Wright says that the high cost of sending African students to America for education has made that plan impractical. It cost about 1 100 [dollars] for one student to come from Africa to America and spend a year in study, while that sum will educate 10 students in South Africa.[26]

As we shall see in the following chapter, Bishop Wright tried his best to improve Wilberforce to halt the exorbitant cost of taking African students to America. The obstacles he faced were, however, complex. In simple terms: money was the core problem, intensified by the alienation of white philanthropic capital. Above all, the lack of state financial support made it almost impossible for the school to reach great academic heights in the 1920s. It worsened in the 1930s when the effects of the Great Depression reduced Wilberforce to a struggling missionary school.

By the time of his appointment at Wilberforce Institute, Gow had written commentaries on the bible and many other articles. He was a man from whom much was expected. Inside Wilberforce Institute, there were high hopes that he would bring to the college a reputation for learning, raise the academic performance of its students, and advance the interests of the African people and the AME church.[27] Outside of his career, Gow interacted extensively with both the government

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23 J Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*, p. 247.

24 Ibid, p. 274.

25 Bishop Wright was born April 16, 1878 in Cuthbert, Georgia. He methodically engaged the social issues of his day. His actions were deeply rooted in his theological and sociological training. Wright provided hope to many through his work with the AME Church. He helped thousands of Southern migrants to Philadelphia to secure employment, develop businesses, invest in their community, and own homes. His work as a researcher and academic shed much light on a variety of sociological and economic issues. In South Africa, he saved Wilberforce Institute from closing down and fought for the school to be recognised by the TED. He also opened a clinic in Evaton and a number of churches all over southern Africa. See, K.F. Modesto (2004) Won't be weighted down:" Richard R. Wright, Jr.'s contributions to social work and social welfare,' *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare: 31*: 2, Article 5; J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*, p. 298-299.

26 *Chicago Defender* 23 July 1938.

27 R.R Wright, *The Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*. (Nashville, 1963), p. 189.

officials from the Department of Native Affairs and other white South Africans. He consulted with Superintendents and Commissioners. Since the church was increasingly opening up new schools and churches all over South Africa, he officiated in these occasions where he laid cornerstones of new schools. As a cultured person, when interacting with government officials, he demonstrated a certain political style which is described by James Campbell as 'moderate decorum'. All grievances that he tabled to the officials were presented politely.[28]

As indicated, under his administration Wilberforce grew considerably. His predecessor 'Magaya had set the institute on wheels; Dr Gow made those wheels turn faster.'[29] Like his forerunner at Wilberforce, Gow's term of office was undoubtedly a difficult one because the school was not yet registered. Existing difficulties were aggravated by the Great Depression that disrupted the South African and American economy, forcing the AME church in America to make major cuts in its grants to African AME schools. As we shall in the following chapter, the economic position of Wilberforce became worse during the term of Eva Mahume-Morake in the 1930s, the first female principal who succeeded Dr Gow. The effects of the Great Depression added new debts to the institute's precarious financial situation.

The Great Depression turned the ambitious programme of the AME and other African-American controlled church expansion into a devastating catastrophe as the vast majority of these churches were stretched to their financial limits and strapped with large debts.[30] It was, however, not only the African-American churches that suffered. Most major white churches suffered significant losses. The Methodist Episcopal Church, for example, declined from 134,573 members in 1926 to 107,245 in 1936. While the Negro Baptist grew from 226,989 members in the late 1920s to 322,362 in 1936, the AME Church dropped from 22,439 to 19,592 members.[31] It is not clear why the Negro Baptist grew significantly.

The effects of the Great Depression had a far-reaching impact on the internal character of Wilberforce. Money for the operation of the school was seriously stretched and this crisis included the payment of teacher' salaries. At this time, much private philanthropy and the state funds were directed to the improvement of the white-controlled missionary schools. As an

28 Ibid, p. 278.
29 J. Nhlapo, *Wilberforce*, p. 10.
30 E.C. Lincoln and L.H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in African American Experience*, (Durham, 1990), p. 119-120.
31 R.J Sparks, *Religion in Mississippi*. (Mississippi, 2001), p. 183.

African-controlled institution, Wilberforce missed this opportunity and remained an anomaly among missionary education institutions.

6.3 Dr Gow's contribution

As a church leader and the principal of Wilberforce, Gow made every effort to put Wilberforce 'on the map'. He communicated with African-Americans, such as Du Bois, and asked for American published magazines and books that could be read by students at Wilberforce. This is recorded in a letter that Du Bois wrote to Gow: 'I am sending herewith, under another cover some sample copies of *The Crisis* for use in your school.'[32] Because of Gow's strong connection with Americans, students got exposure to American literature. Until the late 1940s, the school received a large part of its literature from America.[33]

Academically, the quality of teaching at Wilberforce depended heavily on the calibre of the school principal. Gow strengthened normal classes and commercial courses, while Qupe ran classes on Typewriting, Bookkeeping and Shorthand.[34] As a graduate of Tuskegee, Gow also introduced carpentry as an industrial educational course. He was determined to make Wilberforce another Tuskegee; his aim was to train 'the head, the heart and the soul'.[35] The carpentry department became instrumental in making school furniture, such as cupboards and desks; the school was only responsible for the purchase of material and tools.

Gow put more emphasis on artisanal skills than his predecessors did. For him, the school had to prepare students for skilled work opportunities in an industrialising South Africa. Unlike the previous principals who graduated from Wilberforce and Lincoln Universities, his conception of Wilberforce was influenced by his time at Tuskegee; he believed that Wilberforce should have a sound practical training for those who wanted it. Perhaps his conception was in line with the criticism that liberal education was too 'bookish.' Regardless of where he stood ideologically, he served the cause of African upliftment. He also introduced a printing press, as Bishop Gregg noted:

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32 University of Massachusetts, Special Collection and University Archives, A letter from W.E Du Bois to F.H Gow, 11 December 1925, MS 312.

33 This is evident in a letter written by Josephus Coan: 'The postal authorities are on me again concerning the £1-5-0 sent for books. I am to present them with a certificate when the books arrive. They have not yet arrived. I would be pleased if you could see what might have happened. The order is described in your letter of 7 August 1946.

34 *The Wilberforcean* 1964, p.6.

35 Ibid, p.6.

> We have installed and entirely paid for, at Wilberforce Institute, a complete Printing Department in which we have cylinder press, job press and necessary type, where we print our own minutes, the South African Christian Recorder and job work for our ministers. Dr F. H. Gow and his good wife are rendering splendid service in heading up our work there.[36]

The *South African Christian Recorder* was a newspaper of the AME Church in South Africa, initiated in 1902 and was published in Cape Town. After the introduction of a printing press at Wilberforce, this service was taken over by the Wilberforce Printing Press. With its press, the school played a significant role in spreading the news of the AME Church to neighbouring countries.[37] *The South African Christian Recorder* was an informative newsletter that was accessible to thousands of readers. It found its way into many remote villages in different southern parts of Africa where no one ever heard of the *Cape Argus*, *Rand Daily Mail* or *Natal Mercury*. It published articles on the objectives, achievements and sacrifices of the church and it spread news of church developments to church and non-church members in southern Africa. The newsletter brought fresh ideas and inspiration. In some instances, the newspaper was translated and printed in different African languages, including Afrikaans. Until this was done, most AME churches in southern African could offer their congregants nothing to read about their own philosophy and activity.[38] The printing press also helped the school and the church save money on publishing and printing. Some of the work that was done by the press was to publish translations of the AME hymn book, Catechism and Liturgy into Afrikaans, isiXhosa, SeSotho and other languages used by young African scholars.[39] The printing press influenced the intellectual development of Wilberforce students and it built self-confidence. The records reveal that some of them later graduated and played a worthy part in the printing world and in the field of journalism. As indicated in the previous chapter Godfrey Kuzwayo became editor of

36 WHP, Bishop Gregg Report, (undated), Xuma Papers, AD 843.

37 A.C Booyse, 'The Sovereign of African.'

38 The *South African Christian Recorder* originated from the *Southern Christian Recorder* which was founded in 1882 by Bishop Henry McNeil Turner. 'The *Western Christian Recorder* was founded in 1900 by Dr J. Frank McDonald. The *Christian Recorder* and the *Southern Christian Recorder* were officially merged at the General Conference in Los Angeles in 1960. The 1980 General Conference changed the *Christian Recorder* from a weekly newspaper to a fortnightly, now published every14th day, with Monday as the publishing date, from the African Methodist Episcopal Sunday School Union Publishing House, Nashville, Tennessee. The *Christian Recorder* does, indeed, have a noble history and respected tradition that dates back to the New York Annual Conference of the First Episcopal District, where, in 1836, a resolution established a quarterly periodical, the first copy being printed in 1841. In 1848, the *Christian Herald* was the name of our paper that was operated out of the Third Episcopal District from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In 1852, when the operation was moved to Philadelphia, the name was changed from the *Christian Herald* to the *Christian Recorder*, and published by the African Methodist Episcopal Book Concern.' See R. A Hildebrand and T.T Thompson, *The Legacy of African Methodism in the Third Episcopal District (Nashville, 1988), p 47.*

39 R.R. Wright 'Wilberforce in South Africa: Forty Years of Missionary Work in South Africa' undated

Umteteleli WaBantu, a popular newspaper on the Rand.[40] During Dr Gow's tenure, a series of new buildings were erected at Wilberforce. The principal's cottage was enlarged and the Eliza Gregg Hall was erected and dedicated on the 26th June 1927. This building, named after the mother of Bishop Gregg, popularly known by students and staff as 'The Red Bricks Building', was used as a dormitory for boys.[41] But the buildings were functional, rather than attractive. Even with the extensions, the principal's house was small and primitive.



Eliza Gregg Hall (photo by the author, 7 July 2015)

Mrs Wright described one exception to the general dreariness when she arrived at Wilberforce in the late 1930s. The house of Mr and Mrs Opperman 'was meticulously kept, there was a dignified, low brick wall in front, with an ornamental entrance gate; there was an abundance of flowers and, one side, vegetable and fruit trees.'[42] During the years under review, white principals from the mainstream missionary schools lived in comfortable houses.

40 J Nhlapo *Wilberforce*, p. 10.

41 J Nhlapo, *Wilberforce*, p, 10.

42 Ibid, p. 44.

In collaboration with the church, Gow registered the Wilberforce Postal Agency and established a post office at Wilberforce. Considering the significance and the central role that the postal system played at the time, this was a great achievement. This accomplishment was reported by the Bishop, who proudly said: 'We have our own Post Office and the government has recently installed telephone and telegraph facilities, making Wilberforce one of its trunk line stations.'[43] After the official opening, David Opperman was appointed as the Postmaster.

6.4 The School Finances

To finance these new developments the church depended heavily on donations, primarily from the church collection from the AME Women Missionary Society and Foreign Missionary Society, as well as from other church sources in America. Despite the fact that these groupings were increasingly experiencing hardship and their contributions were strained by numerous new AME mission stations that were spreading all over southern Africa, they generously assisted Wilberforce. In addition to funds donated by the church in America, the Women Mites Missionary sent out clothes, medication, toiletries and other commodities that helped the school.[44] Putting all these sources of support together, along with the fees and unrecorded donations that included community contributions, the school was able to function properly.

The contribution of the AME women to Wilberforce was reported in various newspapers in America, including the *Pittsburgh Courier:*

> In addressing the missionary mass meeting, Mrs Hughes [the president of the Women Home and Foreign Missionary Society] told the history of her society which has now 25 000 women organised in America. [she said] 'we have pledged ourselves to support South Africa'... and we are proud of the work we have done...we at one time we have spent as much as 5,000 [dollars] per quarter to this work here[45]

Bishop Gregg presented to the Church a financial report for the period of his office of his stewardship from 1924 to 1928. He reported that from 1925 to 1928 the AME church in South Africa received $24,118.18 from America. From this, Wilberforce received $1,800 in 1926. In addition, the school received $1,600 dollars for the salary of the principal in 1927, a donation from the Women Mites Missionary Society. In the first quarter of 1928, the school was granted $500 dollars towards the salary of the principal.[46]

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43 WHP, Bishop Gregg Report, Xuma Papers, AD 843, undated.
44 SAREU, A letter from Bertha R Bennett to Revd Coan 28 April 1927, MSS 872 Box 1, File 1/7.
45 *Pittsburgh Courier*, 12 November 1938.
46 Ibid.

On 10 February 1925, an amount of £145 was given to Revd Mabote, the chairperson of the Wilberforce Board, for teachers' salaries. On the 1 August 1925, the institute received £94 pounds for teachers' salaries; on the 18 March 1926, the Bishop in America sent £100 for teachers' salary, five days later £80 pounds for supplies was granted. On the 15 July 1926, the amount of £100 was cabled to Dr Gow. The 1927 church expenditure on Wilberforce included:[47]

[Pounds]

February 21, Oxen for Wilberforce..... 10-0-0

March 8, Bricks for Evaton 5-0-0

March 10, Wilberforce teachers, salaries 52-5-0

March 12, Workmen repairing pipe ..... …….....5-0-0

March 16, J. Y. Tantsi for 15000 bricks, Wilberforce.... 25-0-0

May 14, On Wilberforce Grocery bill 25-0-0

September 3, Two fares to Evaton 25-0-0

September 27, Donation Missionary Society..... 5-0-0

September 27, Wilberforce Teachers, salaries 153-0-0

December 15, Abe Cohon, Wilberforce Boarding Dept….. 69-9-6

December 23, Tannant & Brown to pay quarterages of

Mission preachers and salaries of Wilberforce

Teachers for quarters due in March, June and

September, 1928 _____ 1233-0-0

1927 Salary of Wilberforce Principal.....320-0-0

1928 a/c Salary Wilberforce Principal 100-0-0

18, Mabote for repairs at Wilberforce 50-0-0

November 29, Wilberforce Bills (1926) 25-0-0

November 30, Storm damage repairs, Wilberforce ....25-0-0[48]

47 Ibid.

48 WHP, Xuma Papers, AD 843 undated. It is estimated that from its inception to 1955, the AME Church spent 300,000 dollars, helping missionaries, helping to build schools, churches, bursaries for students in college and for representation of the South African church to the general conferences. See C. Wright, *Beneath the Southern Cross: The Story of an American Bishop\s wife in Southern Africa* (New York 1955), p. 45.

We lack records on how much the school received from fees and other donations. As indicated in the previous chapter, the local missionary did their utmost to help Wilberforce by collecting money for the development of the school. Women at local churches did their utmost. These women were often at the bottom of the economic scale, some earned as little as five shilling per month. According to Bishop Wright, women in South Africa were responsible for paying half of the salaries of the teachers at Wilberforce Institute.[49] In fact, the 'Transvaal sisters' raised more money for the mission school than any branch in the Women's Home and Foreign Missionary Society.[50] These women were desperate for a brighter future for their children and were not contaminated by church politics that became so detrimental to the AME church in America.[51] What impressed African-Americans with the AME in southern Africa was the absence of church politics: 'the ministers and missionaries… [were] free to carry on their kingdom building without its blighting influence'.[52]

It is important to note that, apart from the donations received from America, there was a local fund raised by the AME church in South Africa; at the end of 1928, this fund amounted to $29,882.48. This money was spent on different church expenditures, such as stipends to mission preachers, superannuates, widows, orphans and gifts to schools. It is, however, evident from the above expense table that the bulk received from America was spent on salaries for teachers and administrative staff. In the financial statement, there is no money spent on books or other learning materials needed for teaching and learning.

From an educational point of view, the amount of money spent on learning materials is a good indicator of the school commitment to provide a quality education. It is possible that the cost of textbooks was a key barrier that prevented children from accessing the learning materials they needed. Under such circumstances, students would share textbooks. It appears that the church may have prioritised teachers' salaries and the building programme, and it is clear that in the 1920s and most of the 1930s Wilberforce did not have a good library, which greatly hampered its academic work. Finally, in 1938 a small library of much needed books brought back from America by Dr Josephus Roosevelt Coan, an African American from Atlanta who spent nine years as Superintendent of Wilberforce Institute in South Africa and as a teacher at the R. R.

49 R. R Wright, 'Wilberforce in South Africa: Forty Years Missionary Work of the AME Church' (undated article).
50 Ibid, p.162.
51 Ibid, p.127.
52 Ibid, p.127.

Wright School of Religion.[53] These books were a gift from different individuals, learned and scientific societies, as well as universities with special contribution coming from the AME church in America.

6.5 Gow's commitment to music

Perhaps the most outstanding feature of Gow's administration was to promote Wilberforce through music. The new principal raised the level of musical appreciation, wrote musical scores and participated in dramas that he personally wrote and produced. Wilberforce's choir brought a great deal of prestige to the school and Gow put Wilberforce on the map when Columbia Records[54] recorded the Wilberforce Choir singing four spiritual songs, including 'Mary Don't You Weep' and 'It's Me O Lord.' According to Erlmann, 'these recordings constitute the earliest recorded evidence of spiritual singing in South Africa.'[55] The South African Music Archive Project also recorded the choir.[56] The type of music that Wilberforce Choir sang shared many stylistic features with the older American university choirs, such as the Fisk Jubilee Singers from Fisk University.[57]

This success boosted the morale of Wilberforce students, parents and staff, and Wilberforce began to play an important part in cultural life of the Rand. It is important to note that school choir music attracted more attention nationwide than it would have today, perhaps because there were fewer cultural activities to compete for media attention. Wilberforce singers, according to Nhlapo, held 'audiences spellbound on the Reef and elsewhere. Gramophone Recording

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53 C. Wright, *Beneath the Southern Cross*, p. 51.

54 Columbia Records is an American recording company that had some of the most highly regarded sound recording studios in the 1920s. It became a leader in jazz and blues after purchasing the Okeh record company in 1926. The purchase added Louis Armstrong and Clarence Williams to a roster of artists that already included Bessie Smith. Due to financial woes in the Great Depression, Columbia Records nearly collapsed. However, a fortuitous signing of country gospel group The Chuck Wagon Gang in 1936 helped the label survive, and in 1938 Columbia Records was purchased by the Columbia Broadcasting System or CBS beginning a long collaboration between the broadcasting and recording companies. See S. Wilentz *360 Sound: The Columbia Records Story* (New , 2012).

55 V. Erlmann, *African Stars: Studies in Black South African Performance* (Chicago,) p.52.

56 The South African Music Archive Project is a University of KwaZulu-Natal based project that aimed at preserving old recorded music. Much of South Africa's music heritage is hard to access. The recorded material available in this archive digitized politically sensitive music; some of collections were never released. This has left a large amount of local recorded music in need of identification, digitisation and research. A number of independent music archives currently lack the infrastructure to preserve their collections. An immediate concern is the deterioration of analogue tapes, records and other obsolete media which store much of the material. Another matter of concern is the fading memories of those musicians and other individuals involved. According to Nhlapo, during Gow's term music became the best advertising medium for the institute.

57 W.K. McNeil, *Encyclopaedia of American Gospel Music* (New York, 2005).

Companies eagerly sought these singers and recorded their voice.'[58] This gave Wilberforce a much higher national profile.

Clearly, Gow achieved a high degree of choral teaching success. His talent and the recordings had a far-reaching effect on the popularity of African-American sacred music in South Africa. It led to the formation of two important quartets: the Wesley House Quartet of Fort Hare and the Bantu Men's Social Centre Quartet.[59] Despite all the racial prejudices of the time, which meant that Africans were the last ones to be considered for broadcasting, the Wilberforce Choir was given live broadcasts on Johannesburg radio, the new Johannesburg-based radio station, popularly known as JB Calling.[60] At that time, however, few had wireless radios and radio was initially not an integral part of the public's everyday life.

Consequently, Wilberforce soon established a reputation for itself as a centre of music, particularly 'Negro Spiritual' music. In 1927, the editor of the *Rand Daily Mail* reported:

> A native...stopped into my office yesterday and in reply to the query he mentioned that he was Dr F.H. Gow and that he would like some public mention made of a forthcoming native pageant entitled 'overcoming'. The pageant is to be held in Inchape Hall on June 24, and will be done by the native students of the Wilberforce Institute.[61]

Gow's dramatic potential manifested itself early in his career. As a young teacher, he wrote and produced a show called 'Up from Slavery' before taking the post at Wilberforce. During his term at Wilberforce, Gow facilitated performances of, among others, *Overcoming* and *Up from Slavery*, both of which aimed to educate Africans about self-help and African progress, portraying Africans as progressing from dependence to autonomy. This was clearly expressed by Dr Gow's own words during his interview with the editor of the *Rand Daily Mail*: 'Its intention ... is to depict the changes that have taken place in native conditions from the days of American slavery to the present endeavour of the African to rise in the scale of civilization.'[62] As a graduate of Tuskegee, stage performances produced by Gow were influenced by Washington's writings and teaching, depicting the African advance towards independence and self-realisation.

58 J.M. Nhlapo *Wilberforce*. p.10.
59 Ibid, p.53.
60 V Erlmann, *African Stars: Studies in Black South African Performance* (New York, 2013).
61 *Rand Daily Mail* 16 June 1927.
62 Ibid.

6.6 After Gow's tenure

In 1932, Dr Gow left Wilberforce and relocated to Bethel AME Church in Cape Town. He later became the president of the African Political Organisation (APO), a Cape-based political organisation representing Coloureds and Africans.[63] Once again, Mr Opperman, the vice principal and the longest serving senior staff member, acted as a headmaster until Mrs Eva Morake (née Mahuma) was appointed in 1934. During Morake's tenure, Mr Opperman reverted to the vice-principal position. Morake had been a schoolteacher in the Free State. She was also a Wilberforce University alumna with a Master's degree from Columbia University. It is not clear from the records why Morake was appointed ahead of the long-serving Opperman. Perhaps the church was impressed by her American Master's degree, or perhaps it was a deliberate act to promote gender equity. Morake was one of the most distinguished educated African women in South Africa; in a recommendation letter that was addressed to Mr H.J.G. Dumshall, the Director of Native Education, Professor Mabel Caney, Morake's former lecturer at Columbia University. Caney was an American authority on rural education, highly regarded by educational practitioners and academic peers alike. Her areas of special interest and expertise-teacher education and rural school development-broadened over time to include infrastructural and organizational concerns of rural communities, including race relation described her as follows:[64] In her letter, she described Morake as follows

> I have never known a woman of greater influence in any student body. All our graduate students, both white and colored, American and foreign, look up to her with greatest respect, friendship and admiration. This is due in part to her sheer ability, but even more to her rare character, keen human sympathy and splendid personality. In short, she is the type of person born for leadership and counsel, and this fact is readily recognized by all who know her ... So far as we know, she is the first African woman in the world to receive Masters degree[from Columbia]. She [had] Master's degree, but none of this has spoiled her or turned her head in the least. She is still just as fine and sincere as when she left her native Reserve and even more desirous of helping her people and doing honest work for Africa. Those of us who know Miss Mahuma best feel that she is admirably equipped to serve as a … Supervisor, and we hope that there may be some opening of this type for her some place in South Africa.[65]

It is also possible that Morake's appointment was in line with the dream of Ms Jarena Lee, the first woman preacher in the AME's church, who was against institutional policy that discriminated according to gender.[66] As early as the first AME universities and other educational

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63 Much of APO activity involved raising funds for the purchase of land, the establishment of schools, and supporting students who travelled abroad. See G. Lewis, *Between the wire and the Wall* (Cape Town, 1987) See also: I. Goldin, *Making Race: The Politics and Economics of Coloured Identity in South Africa* (London, 1987).

64 R. Glotzer, ' The Career of Mabel Caney the Study of Race and Rural Development in the United States and South Africa,' *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* Vol. 29, 1996

65 WHP, A letter from Mabel Caney to H.J.G Dumshall, 29 October 1932 Xuma Papers, AD 843.

66 *The Journal of Christian Education* 2000, p. 15

institutions were founded, female education was encouraged. As the *Christian Recorder* commented in 1864:

> We need a class of refined men and women, who will change the moral status of our people, we need educated daughters that we may have educated wives and mothers that our children may be taught, by the fireside, the great duties of life. Then we need this college, because there are thousands of our people who will now need it, who never could get it before. Then we will need it because there is so much prejudice in other institutions.[67]

Dr Alfred Xuma, an official member of Wilberforce Institute, shared similar sentiments during the inauguration of Morake as a principal in 1934:[68]

> We feel that your determination to succeed under discouraging circumstances, your achievement as well as your interest in the welfare and progress of your people should be an inspiration to our younger generation to strive, to struggle, and to achieve.[69]

The sizeable contingent of educated Africans that progressively assumed leadership was seen as bringing hope amongst Africans. Morake was one of the first African female graduate in South Africa to acquire a Master's degree from the College of Education at Columbia University. Born in Victoria West in the Cape; she taught at a number of schools before going to the US to improve her education where she gained a B.Sc. and M.A. degrees. She then returned to South Africa to become principal of Wilberforce Institute in Evaton. Mweli Skota, a journalist and a former Secretary General of the South Africa Native National Congress in 1925, Skota described her

> as a very kind hearted person, [who] had done a lot for many people. In Johannesburg, she organised a club to teach women social science and domestic work. She was responsible to find work for a very large number of women. She lives in retirement in the Free State.[70]

At Columbia, Morake was a student of Prof Mabel Caney and Dr Loram, who later became the inspector of schools in Natal. All these scholars specialised and promoted rural education in the colonies.[71]

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67 *The Christian Recorder*, 26 November 1864

68 Dr Xuma became a member of the Wilberforce Board of Trustees and the Treasurer of the school in 1933. Although a staunch member of the Methodist Church, he was never absent in the Conferences of the A.M.E. Church. He played a very important part in the management of Wilberforce Institution. Xuma's role was remarkable during the time when Wilberforce was in financial crisis. He died in Johannesburg after an illness of some months. and his funeral on the 2nd of February was attended by many thousands. See S. D. Gish *African, American and South Africa* (New York, 2000) p. 70.

69 Quoted in S. Gish, *African, American* p. 70.

70 WHP, Manuscript of Biographies, T.D. Mweli Skota Papers, A1618,

71 WHP, Rural Education Newsletter, South African Institute of Race Relations, AD1715, Rural Education Newsletter: Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1 January 1936. For the details on rural education. See R. Hunt Davis, 'Producing the 'Good African': South Carolina Penn School as a Guide for African Education in South Africa' in T. Mugomba and M. Nyaggah (ed), *Education without Freedom*; R. Hunt Davis 'Charles T. Loram

Morake was also the first female to serve as a principal of a large missionary school in South Africa and her appointment as a principal was an unprecedented achievement, particularly in those years. At that time, employment available to women was less prestigious than the jobs men could access, and it traditionally required less formal training. In order to contextualise gender difference, it is perhaps important to draw an example from the white South African female counterparts: South Africa was rather backward in accepting a positive role for women in the society; white women were not granted the franchise until 1930.[72] They were paid less than their male counterparts were. Although some, particularly from the upper classes, could hire other women to care for their children and assist in running their households, they were less valued than men.

In South Africa and elsewhere, the issue of race was 'outweighed by the similarities decreed by gender'.[73] Being born female was the first factor that defined women's experience. In many educational institutions, for instance, whether European or African, female staff members were discriminated against in terms of pay and decision-making. African women teachers were generally paid less than educated women employed as nurses or domestic servants were. With gender inequality in mind, Dr Xuma argued that: 'some of our people believe that the low salary practice … [was] an attempt to discourage the desire for education on the part of the African.'[74] In addition, women were seen as less politically and socially conscious. Morake's achievement as a Master's graduate and a principal of a reputable African college such as Wilberforce was remarkable.

It could be argued that Morake's appointment represented a radical 'gender revolution' that demythologised the archaic ideas that had restricted girls' training in the western world.[75] It is important to note that, although the AME claimed the upliftment of both male and female, there was, nevertheless, inherent gender inequality in the church. According to Shannon Butler-

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and an American Model for African Education in South Africa' *African Review* 19. Vol 2 1976; V. Murray, *The School in the Bush: A Critical Study of the Theory and Practise of Native Education* (London, 1938).

72 B. Murray, *Wits: the early years* (Johannesburg, 1982), p. 327.

73 B. S. Anderson and J. P Zinsser, A History of their own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present (London, 1990), p. xii.

74 WHP, Committee on Native Education by A.B. Xuma, 1935, Papers, Xuma Papers, AD 843.

75 This discriminatory practice was enforced through the divided curriculum and the careful selection of text that narrate the tales of obedience and chastity, like those of heroines Penelope, Virginia and Lutrecia. See B. S Anderson and J. P Zinsser, *A History of their own: Women in Europe*, p. 31. The issue of women's obedience was perpetuated by the Humanists and was personified by European queens, such as, Mme. De Maintenon, companion of Louis XIV of France who personified the image of a chaste and accepting woman. She and the king founded a school in 1648, which aimed at educating poor but young aristocratic women to virtues she endorsed. This school later influenced women education in Europe, as well as in the colonies.

Mokoro, there were women present in the early days of the AME schools and colleges, but women served primarily as deans for the women in the residences or as teachers in Home Economics departments.[76] Aside from Fanny Coppin in the US and Charlotte Maxeke in South Africa, there are no women documented as being active in establishing the colleges or serving in leadership positions. Even in the relatively progressive AME church, women did not hold positions of leadership openly, especially not in a church or institution of higher education.

Gender barriers limited access to top roles for females in education. Often these barriers resulted in women giving up because visible or invisible obstacles overwhelmed them.[77] In response, AME women began to challenge the church authorities in the 1930s, particularly in the US; this protest pressured the church to revise its rigid rules that prevented women from being ordained as elders and ministers. This drew the attention of the international press and in South Africa *Umteteleli WaBantu* reported:

> [women] lost their fight at [the] New York conference, the conference voted [the] Bill down … The Bill before the conference presented by women required that women with five years theological training be ordained as ministers and have the right to solemnise marriage and give the holy communion [.] Mrs Keg who piloted the Bill says that she will present the Bill again to the general conference in 1940.[78]

This suggests that the talk of freedom, autonomy, and equity questioned the church's patriarchal hierarchy. 'Neither black nor the white churches ordained women; the very idea of women addressing mixed assemblies ran counter to prevailing attitudes regarding women's proper sphere.'[79] Despite the fact that women had historically outnumbered men in the black denominations and had been supportive of local ministries, they rarely occupied positions of leadership.[80]

The appointment of Morake as principal appears controversial. For local graduates, it appeared that African-American Bishops favoured American graduates over South African schooled teachers. This was evident when Charles Demas, a coloured teacher and a graduate of Wilberforce Institute in Evaton where he later worked as an educator, wrote:

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76 S A. Butler-Mokoro, 'Racial Uplift,' p.8

77 K. Giscombe and A. Sims, 'Breaking the Color Barrier'. *HR Focus*, 75, (1998). pp. 9-17. M. Grogan. (1996). *Voices of women aspiring to the superintendency*. (New York, 1996) R. Growe, and R. Montgomery, Women and the leadership paradigm: Bridging the gender gap. *National Forum of Educational Administration and Supervision Journal.* (1999) Retrieved August 2017 from http://www.nationalforum.comlI2growe.htm.

78 *Umteteleli WaBantu* 4 July 1936.

79 J. Lee, 'A Female Preacher among the African Methodists,' in Milton C. Sernett, (ed), *African American Religious History: Documentary Witness* (North Carolina,1999), p. 164.

80 Ibid, p.164.

> I am convinced that your faith in the ability of the African for permanent and progressive achievement in every sphere is founded upon some knowledge and experience. Hence, my writing to you upon a topic that must possess your immediate interest; namely [the] principalship of Wilberforce Institute, it is a question that has for years aggravated and retarded the growth of the Institute until even the very teachers have been grossly misrepresented and practically labelled. The position mentioned above become once more problematic … America is regarded as the only place possessing the desired talents for developing the institute. I say … emphatically that African talent and learning should receive more concrete recognition than has hitherto be[en] given to them. Wilberforce Institute is such an opportunity and field to prove to the European the practicability and advisability entrusting African with administration and development of his own institution … I am therefore in no danger of presumption when I desire in this way to recommend to your notice one who can suitably and credibly fill the post in question, one who not only holds distinguished qualifications but who undoubtedly possesses the necessary personal qualities of ability that will make the institution not only successful but progressively so. [81]

Demas contested the appointment of American graduates, and he preferred internal appointment. It is possible that Demas and his clique saw graduates from America as administratively inexperienced and unsure of themselves. Along with his group of African trained teachers and priests, Demas did not welcome the appointment of Mrs Morake. His letter suggests that the faction of African graduates felt they were not promoted into principalships, and felt that they were regarded as inferior to their colleagues educated in the US.

Morake's administration was eclipsed by the economic hardship the school experienced during her tenure. It is possible that salary cuts and the bad condition of the school buildings, both of which created a dull, deadening and uninspiring teaching and learning environment, were attributed to Morake's administration.[82] This sweeping condemnation was closely linked to the 1935 complaints of a group that called themselves the Wilberforce Club who blamed Mrs Morake for her

> failure to acquaint the office of the Vice Principal of her departure, [to attend a conference in America] and thus not resigning the administration of the institute to that office, [this] is a flagrant infringement of a commonly accepted principal, namely that a vice principal act in the absence of the principal.[83]

It is important to note that the frustrated opponents overlooked the fact that the adverse conditions in the school resulted from the effects of the Great Depression. This cabal turned a blind eye to the fact that Morake inherited what Xuma described as 'a most unenviable situation of debts, mismanagement and loss of morale, [and] she… [was] struggling on with it'[84]

81 WHP, A letter from C Demas to Dr Xuma 1 January 1937, Xuma Papers, AD 843.
82 It is important to note that salary cuts for teachers was initiated by the government and it started in 1931.
83 WHP, A letter from W.H and F.M Society that formed Wilberforce Club 25 August 1935, Xuma Papers, AD 843.
84 WHP, A letter from Dr Xuma to Bishop Sims, 5 September 1933, Xuma Papers, AD 843.



*Eva Morake the first female principal of Wilberforce (Extract from J.M. Nhlapo's book***)**

The larger part of the criticism originated from the fact that Morake was a woman and a graduate from America. However, some patriarchs of the church applauded her. Bishop Sims, for instance acknowledged that she 'has done wonderfully well', but he was aware that Morake was criticised because of her gender. As he commented in a letter to Xuma: 'some of her trouble… [was] sex prejudice that emerged from her colleagues.'[85] As a top leader of the church, Sims drew attention to both Chief Griffith of Lesotho and Chief Mtshowoeti's attitude towards women, comparing how Morake was treated with what he observed during his visit to both chiefs who treated women with prejudice. He unhappily noted that sexual prejudice was 'an obstacle.'[86] Erlank notes, 'this was particularly true if … [women] undertook labour that encroached upon the masculine and they were viewed with ambivalence'[87] Above all, the clique that criticised Morake ignored the fact that the school suffered from lack of subsidies.

Sexism was rife in the AME church; as early as 1893 women such as Sarah Duncan, an African American, fought for the eradication of sexism within the AME church. The records give us an impression that Duncan suffered similar criticism and prejudice as Morake. She protested:

85 WHP, A letter from Bishop Sims to Dr Xuma, 24 October 1935, Xuma Papers, AD 843.
86 Ibid.
87 N. Erlank, 'Gender and Masculinity in South African Nationalist Discourse, 1912-1950' *Feminist Studies*, 29, (2003), p.659.

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> And, brethren, if you have any ministers in your district who seem to have so much jealousy against the women concerning their work, tell them that we are not trying to take their pulpits; for my part I have studied the history of the Church since my connection with the same, when only eleven years old. I have studied its laws… and, had I been aspiring for the pulpit, could have taken an examination for elder's orders ten years ago. [88]

Since the 1890s, gender related inequalities had been a subject of discussion in the AME Church.[89]. During Morake's tenure, the role that the school played in the society was noticeable to many parents who were attracted by the employment opportunities and professional prestige that Wilberforce graduates like Demas, Kuzwayo and Chombo enjoyed. The hard-earned reputation of the school attracted good teachers from as far as the Orange Free State. One of these teachers was Mr T.J. Motshumi, whose letter of appointment indicates that he was offered a post in 1934.[90] Among other reputable teaching staff members were Mr Sentso, Mrs Pule, Miss Mosaka, Mr Petros, Mr Qupe, Mrs Monstioa and Charles Demas.

By the 1930s, there were still very few schools for Africans in the Transvaal, and the educational ladder was still too steep and narrow for most African children. It was worse for girls whose access to education was very limited. In many townships and villages, boys and girls were still loitering in the streets, not going to school. Dr Amos White, the first African American principal of Wilberforce Institute, noted:

> Now many of these [children] are beginning to feel that they best rise out of the squalid conditions, met in the locations by attending schools ... out of this group will also come … those endowed with qualities of leadership.'[91]

White's article showed that the issue of children not going to school troubled the AME church leadership and the Board of Wilberforce. This was also evident in a letter from the Trustees addressed to Bishop Sims that stated: 'our boys and girls are still seen going up and down the village streets whereas the church has provided the institute … where all school business should be carried.'[92]

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88 L. E. Scriven, The Motif of Redemption in the Nineteenth Century Educational Philosophy of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, (PhD Thesis, Purdue University, 2003).

[89] This topic requires further research

90 WHP, A letter from the Wilberforce School Board to T.J. Motshumi, 13 March 1934, Xuma Papers, AD 843.

91 A. J. White, Wilberforce Institute and Native Education in the Transvaal, *The Negro Journal of Religion*, V 1939, p.5.

92 WHP, A letter from Wilberforce Board of Trustees to Bishop Sims, 22 August 1935 Xuma Papers, AD 843. It was estimated that over 50 per cent of African children of school going age could not find school accommodation. Many schools were overcrowded with often very poor accommodation or none at all. In some areas classes were held outside even during bad weather. In spite of these overcrowded schools there were thousands of children who loitered in the streets. As a result they became delinquent and followed a life of crime. See Xuma's

6.7 Troubled Times

Morake's period was one of the most difficult in the history of Wilberforce Institute: the school faced salary cutbacks, fees were not coming in smoothly and the school was struggling to pay service providers and suppliers. Morale declined and there was the looming possibility of permanent closure. It was recorded in 1933 that the outstanding credit was as follows:

Mr C.D. Nthoba ……£56-6-3

Sujee (for groceries……..£4-3-11

I.M. Jada……£49-10-5

This financial position differentiated Wilberforce from other missionary institutions. Some students made the best or even a virtue out of Wilberforce's separation, but this isolation was not greatly appreciated, especially when the school was not recognised which compounded its financial problems.[93] Nevertheless, the graduates of Wilberforce covered the whole of southern Africa as teachers and pastors who headed and opened up new schools in urban and remote rural areas. In spite of their altruism and efficient service, a great shadow hung over them and their *alma mater* because it had not been accredited.

It is important to note that fees were low because the school tried hard to make it possible for parents to afford it, but the school could not afford to feed students and provide accommodation and books without contribution from fees. In those years, many African parents in South Africa were very poor and struggled to pay fees, a common problem in all missionary schools. Dr Edgar Brookes, the principal of Amanzimtoti between 1933 and 1945, noted this. During his tenure at Amanzimtoti, Brookes wrote: 'we should like to be able to charge even less than we do, [we]…know that many parents are poor and that it means a great sacrifice on their part to send their children to school.'[94]

Between 1933 and 1937, Wilberforce had no money at all to pay teachers. Due to the Great Depression, there were few generous donations coming from America but unusually long periods passed without the school receiving any funds from the church. Even Bishop Sims, the presiding patriarch of the church, was bankrupt and could not assist. In a letter to Dr Xuma he expressed his economic position:

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paper on Committee on Native Education University of the Witwatersrand, Historical Papers, Xuma Papers, AD 843, Committee on Native Education by A.B. Xuma, 1935

93 S Gish African, *American and South Africa*, p.70.

94 WHP, Xuma Papers, AD 843 An open letter from Dr Egdar Brookes to parents, (undated).

> Man [,] I have been through the mills. I have had trials which no predecessor has had. Right at my door tons of debts of one sort of another have faced me. Lawsuits have been numerous. Threats have been almost overwhelming. I have never seen the like of thieves, ignoramuses and poor business policies. I think God certainly must have been in my assignment here … I have as much right suffering the hardship of a pioneer as did Stanley or Livingstone or Turner. So I have fought it out the best I could to save the good name of the A.M.E. Church. ..I almost found myself embarrassed financially.[95]

In May 1933, the Executive Board of Trustees under the directorate of the Bishop announced salary cuts that became effective on the 7 June 1933. The Teachers Committee was given plenipotentiary power to adjust the salary scale and reshuffle staff positions in the school. The Board felt that the small boarding department did not need more than one chef, and the salary of the remaining cook was reduced by 13s. 4d.[96] The post of the secretary was frozen; the Trustees suggested that the secretary's work could be done in the principal's office.[97] This increased the burden of administrative work for Morake considerably. By 1936, the school could not afford to pay teachers: Mr Boyse Petros, Mrs Pule, Mr Sentso and Miss Mosaka spent six months without salary and Mr Opperman took this up with the treasury department of the school. In a letter of appeal, Opperman wrote:

> it might be well for you to take an appeal for funds to meet the teachers halfway? I refer to Mr Sentso, Mrs Pule and Miss Mosaka, they have had to go for six months now and it's not nice to keep them hoping indefinitely. All three of them are on the job.[98]

This affected academic progress as some teachers left the school. Mr Petros, for instance, did not return when the school reopened after the 1936 winter holidays.[99] A highly qualified teacher, such as Reginald Cingo, who was headhunted by Dr Xuma, was unable to join Wilberforce because of this crisis.[100] As the Chair of the Teachers Committee, Xuma and Morake realised that both Cingo and Motshumi were interested to be part of Wilberforce, but the 'haphazard financial policy and the method of paying teachers… [made it] impossible to attract [Cingo to Wilberforce]…so [Xuma] abandoned communication that was already in progress with Mr Cingo.'[101]

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95 WHP, A letter from Bishop D.H. Sims to Dr Xuma, 18 August 1933 Xuma Papers, AD 843.

96 WHP, A letter from Bishop D.H Sims to Mrs Morake, 27 October 1933, Xuma Papers, AD 843.

97 Ibid.

98 WHP, A letter from D Opperman to Dr Xuma, 17 July 1936, Xuma Papers, AD 843.

99 Ibid.

100 WHP, A letter from Dr Xuma to Bishop Sims 5 September 1933, Xuma Papers, AD 843. In 1933, Cingo was a principal of Bantu United Primary and Secondary School in Kroonstad, a school that enrolled thousand students with over thirty teachers. The records reveal that Cingo was a competent teacher with Bachelors of Arts Degree.

101 WHP, Untitled Biographical Document written by Xuma who explained his involvement with Wilberforce, 31 January 1937 Xuma Papers, AD 843.

It also impacted negatively on Morake as a principal and she was in great distress. It became increasingly difficult for her to manage Wilberforce, which was a large institution, with heavy financial obligations to meet, without knowing where the money was coming from month to month. In addition, the physical condition of the school was not satisfactory, failing even to meet health standards. This is illustrated in a letter that was written by Opperman to Dr Xuma in 1936:

> The kitchen where food was prepared looks like a hen house and the dining room and class rooms want white washing badly[.] I hope to do this if anything like three or four pounds come in during the holidays.[102]

The unhealthy physical condition of the school was also noted by the TED, which threatened to close the school. The conditions in the classrooms seemed to be the source of ill health, predisposing students to infections. Dormitory accommodation was described as looking more like army barracks than a school.[103] Charlotte Grogman Wright, the wife of Bishop Wright, sadly described the shabby state of some buildings at Wilberforce. In her account, Mrs Wright wrote:

> Eliza Gregg … a pretentious looking building, but in great disrepair, with heavy brick braces on the sides … had once been condemned by government as unsafe.[104]

Levi Coppin Hall was also in the state of dilapidation and the principal's cottage was run down. 'This was the picture we found - discouraging and disheartening,' said Mrs Wright.[105] The lack of medication formed part of an increasingly uncomfortable material environment; the school could not afford to buy medication for the sick or to pay staff that could cook for students. As a result, students had to withdraw from classes in order to cook.[106] Staff and students received food of poor quality and this was brought to the attention of the school board, which promised to attend to the matter. The issue of food became central to student dissatisfaction and grievances in many missionary schools that later led to some student disruptions, such as at Lovedale in 1947.[107]

Due to the lack of finance for commodities, students were increasingly breaking the property of the school for firewood. As a result, 'four ox yokes' were destroyed, 'part of the institute wagon,

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102 WHP, A letter from D. Opperman to Dr Xuma 10 June 1936 Xuma Papers, AD 843, (undated), AD843.
103 WHP, Committee on Native Education by A.B. Xuma, 1935, Xuma Papers, AD 843.
104 C. Grogman *Wright Beneath the Southern Cross*, p. 44.
105 Ibid, p. 45.
106 Ibid.
107 C. Kros, 'They Wanted Dancing and not Merely the Lambeth Walk: A Reassessment of the 1940s School Disturbances with Particular Reference to Lovedale,' a Seminar Paper presented to African Studies Seminar series, University of the Witwatersrand, 1992; J. Hyslop,'Social Conflicts over African Education in South Africa from the 1940s to 1976.' (PhD thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1990); J.Bolnick, 'Double Cross: Potlako Leballo and the 1946 riots at Lovedale Missionary Institution.' A Seminar Paper presented to the African Studies Seminar Series, University of the Witwatersrand, 1990.

[and] some laundry tables'.[108] Morake and Mr Qupe were blamed by the Wilberforce Club for this act; the members of the club felt that this happened because they 'failed to attend to the reports of Miss Mosaka' who reported this act.[109] Unlike her predecessor, Morake's unpleasant situation was exacerbated by petty politics; she was criticised for lacking drive, initiative and administrative skills. The conditions under which she operated were overlooked. It never gave her an opportunity to relax and take stock. Her effort and initiative was, however, acknowledged and documented by one of her former teachers, Professor Mable Caney, in an open letter to former Columbia students and academics:

> Mrs. Eva Mahuma Morake, or "Miss Mahuma" as we knew her, who is now principal of a school for Native boys and girls near Johannesburg where she is carrying forward a great work even though pitifully handicapped for funds. She inquired eagerly for old friends in America and would be pleased to hear from any of her former acquaintances. Incidentally she could use old clothing of every description, also elementary school texts and library books, children's magazines, extra towels or bedding and almost anything and everything else, not to mention an extra dollar bill now and then. Her address is Mrs. Eva Mahuma Morake, Wilberforce Institute, Transvaal, South Africa, and letter postage is 5 cents a half ounce.[110]

Little is recorded of her positive initiatives on behalf of the school. The series of criticisms levelled against Morake eventually pressurised her into resigning. On the 3rd December 1936, she tendered her resignation letter:

> After taking into account of the whole situation pertaining to my present post, I have come to a conclusion that [to] sever my connection with Wilberforce Institute. I therefore beg to tender my resignation as Superintendent or principal of Wilberforce Institute taking effect immediately you receive my letter. I also beg for the settlement of salary and loan made by me towards the school.[111]

Morake clearly never enjoyed her tenure at Wilberforce. This was evident when Bishop Wright wrote her a letter in connection with her work at Wilberforce.[112]

> I have written Mrs Morake three times and not heard from her. Do you know where I could reach her? I still want her connected to our work. Although I now understand better why she would not accept either position I offered her. But I think the difference she had ...before I came can be ironed out.[113]

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108 WHP, A letter from W.H and F.M Society that formed Wilberforce Club, 25 August 1935, Xuma Papers, AD 843.
109 Ibid.
110 WHP, Rural Education Newsletter: Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1 January 1936. South African Institute of Race Relations, AD1715.
111 WHP, A letter from E.H Mahuma-Morake to the Right Revd R.R. Wright Jr 3 December 1936, Xuma Papers, AD 843.
112 Bishop R.R Wright succeeded Bishop Sims in the late 1930s and he was responsible for reviving Wilberforce Institute.
113 WHP, A letter from Bishop Wright to Dr Xuma, 9 April 1937, Xuma Papers, AD 843.

6.8 The role of Dr Xuma as a treasurer

In this unstable financial situation, Dr Xuma, as the Chairman of the Teachers Committee and Treasurer of Wilberforce Institute, played a very important role. He was determined to do all that he could to keep Wilberforce afloat. For him, the problems at Wilberforce were not the problem of the AME church, the students or the staff members, but an African problem. He saw it as 'an unfavourable reflection on the ability of ... [African] people to manage their institution up to recognised standards.'[114] In his biographical sketch, Gish outlines:

> The events at Wilberforce revealed Xuma's multiple concerns over his own reputation and of his race. He clearly did not want to preside over the downfall of an institution in which he had invested so much time, energy, and money.[115]

He tried to sustain Wilberforce in order to prove that Africans themselves could 'make good' through their own effort.[116] This was evident when he wrote a grouchy letter to Bishop Sims:

> I am sorry you did not fulfil the promise you made repeatedly to me that as Treasurer of the Wilberforce Institute you would leave me with some money with which to carry on while you are away at the General Conference.[117]

As a financial officer, he was trusted by Bishop Sims to see to it that assistant teachers were appointed to the school. When the school was in the midst of its financial crisis, Xuma generously paid debts, particularly teacher's salaries, from his own pocket. He could not allow Wilberforce and the self-help ideal it symbolised to collapse. When teachers were not paid, he comforted them. A letter that he wrote to Mr Petros demonstrates this:

> I regret that there has been such a delay in the final settlement of the balance on your salary I had hope[d] that when the church delegates return from America, there would be a school board meeting…However, so far none of them have worried themselves about such matters as how your salary has been met. My sense of honour does not permit me to keep you waiting any longer for the balance of your salary. I suggest that you call at my consulting room on some convenient afternoon to receive the balance of your salary and I shall have to see the Bishop when he arrives.[118]

After the receipt of his cheque, Petros wrote; 'Let me thank you from the bottom of my heart for the cheque you sent me.'[119] Xuma was, however, frustrated at having to carry the school's financial burden without the help of the Bishop.

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114 Quoted in S Gish, *African American,* p. 81.
115 Ibid, p. 81.
116 Ibid, p. 82.
117 WHP, A letter from Dr Xuma to Bishop Sims, Xuma Papers, AD 843.
118 WHP, A letter from A B Xuma to Mr W Boyse Petros 1 December 1936, Xuma Papers, AD 843.
119 WHP, A letter from Mr W Boyse Petros to A B Xuma 20 April 1936, Xuma Papers, AD 843.

6.9 The Government's attack

During 1935 and 1936, the Inter Departmental Committee for Native Education recommended that Native Education be transferred to the Union Department of Education.[120] The Committee recommended that:

> In as much as Native Education is a national responsibility, and as the bulk of Native revenue is paid into the general revenue of the Union, the responsibility for the financial support of Native Education … should fall upon the Union and not on the Provincial Administrations – the state contribution being made by means of an annual per caput grant per pupil in average attendance to be paid into a Native Education Fund – provided that this grant in any one year be reckoned in respect of not more than 110 per cent of the number of pupils in average attendance in [the] previous year.[121]

At that time, it was not only Wilberforce that was in financial crisis; even the state sponsored missionary schools suffered the effects of the Great Depression. As early as 1932, the Native Affairs Commission reported that the Native Development Fund was bankrupt; it was unable to meet the accepted charges on Native Education.[122] This crisis intensified in 1936 when the Native Trust and Land Act came into effect. The large amount of Native Tax that sponsored the Native Development Account was used by the parliament to purchase 'native land'. This starved 'native education', which experienced an increase in school enrolment from 207,548 in 1925 to 345,440 in 1935.[123] By 1938, the Institute of Race Relations warned the Union government that 'native education will be at a standstill after this year unless further funds are provided'.[124] In that year, the native education budget totalled £888,000.[125] The government was unsure how to act on the recommendation of the Education Committee, whether to transfer 'native education' to the Native Affairs Department or to the Union Department of Education.

The proposal that native education should be under the control of the Native Affairs Department was vigorously opposed by the Committee on Native Education, a team that was formed by educated Africans such as Dr Xuma, Jabavu and some white liberals from the Institute of Race

120 WHP The South African Institute of Race Relations Conference on Finance and Control of Native Education, 3 July 1939, South African Institute of Race Relation (SAIRR) collection, AD 843/RJ/ kb 14,7-14.10, Box 168. File 3.
121 Ibid.
122 WHP, SAIRR, (undated) South African Institute of Race Relation Conference AD 843/RJ/ kb 14,8-14.
123 Ibid.
124 Ibid.
125 Ibid.

Relations. The Committee felt, in Xuma's words, that 'the essence of the state is to include all sorts of people…the sort of beliefs they hold or sort of work they do.'[126] Xuma continued:

> we see no reason why the control of education of the African should not be under the Minister of Education, from where all education is controlled … the idea of Native Affairs Department itself tends to create the impression that the interests of the white man are so different from those of the African that the two may not be conveniently treated as one and the same time. Tradition and race prejudice has brought about differential legislation which has created an apparent difference of interest.[127]

Subsequently, there was a series of inspectorate visits at Wilberforce. In one of the visits, the inspectors asked Dr Xuma 'why the Normal School and Practising School should not be closed on account of [the] unhealthy state of the classrooms that resulted from dilapidated conditions of the buildings.'[128] The school then came under pressure to improve the unhealthy building environment and to provide a satisfactory reply to the TED on improving its conditions. The estimated cost for the renovation of these buildings before the architect completed his evaluation was roughly £1,000.[129] Wilberforce was not the only school pressured by government to upgrade buildings; other poor missionary schools, such as Eshowe Mission School in Zululand, felt similar pressure.[130]

Until the end of 1936, the TED did not receive any reply from the school because Wilberforce could not buy building material and renovate the school. The special collection that was raised during the Easter Rally never reached the school for this purpose. Besides, Xuma indicated that, as a treasurer, 'he ... [had] no knowledge on what happened to the Easter Rally money,'[131] suggesting there was mismanagement of funds within the church circle. In 1936, the school was again 'visited by the Chief Inspector and Inspectors Achterberg and Liebenberg and it was clear that the present condition of the church render[ed] it impossible for satisfactory work to be done in [the] normal department.'[132] The visit was followed by a denial of certification.

> It is therefore, regretted that in these circumstances the Department is not disposed to allow any candidate from this institution to present themselves for the Native Teachers Certificate Examination after June 1937.[133]

126 WHP, Committee on Native Education by A.B. Xuma, 1935, AD 843.
127 Ibid.
128 Ibid.
WHP, A letter from Dr Xuma to Bishop Sims, 8 April 1936, Xuma Papers AD 843.
129 Ibid
130 WHP, SAIRR, A letter from the Superintendent of the Norwegian Mission to Senator J. D. Rheinallt Jones, 18July 1939, AD 843/RJ/ kb 14,7-14.10, Box 168. File 3.
131 Ibid.
132 WHP, A letter from B H Burrough to Revd J.D Taylor 5 December 1936, Xuma Papers, AD 843.
133 Ibid.

This was a huge setback, especially after a long struggle to allow Wilberforce teacher students to sit for the TED examination. The TED also expressed concern about the quality and qualifications of teachers trained at Wilberforce. The teachers' training section of the school was often staffed with instructors who were teaching subjects for which they had little education or training. Most of them merely had certificates, which did not meet the basic requirements for training student teachers,[134] perhaps a consequence of pressure on the AME to produce teachers for its schools that were scattered countrywide. This was impossible educationally. 'If we mean progress … we must be staffed with post matric men … or university graduates … with South African Teachers professional certificate,' said Xuma. 'The TED wanted as a first step the erection of a building to house the Practising School and another for the Normal Department.'[135] The TED concluded that the attempt by the AME church to run a primary, secondary and normal school at Evaton was too ambitious.



The ruins of the Industrial Department (Photograph by the author January 2016)

134 WHP, Untitled biographical document written by Xuma who explained his involvement with Wilberforce, 31 January 1937, Historical Papers, Xuma Papers, AD 843.
135 WHP, A letter from Dr Xuma to Bishop Sims, 8 April 1936, Xuma Papers, AD 843.

Eventually, the school was unable to produce satisfactory results and the Department felt Wilberforce was over-extended because 'none of the training institutions in this province [of the Transvaal] have a secondary school attached to them.'[136] As someone who was committed to African upliftment, Xuma wanted Wilberforce to be recognised by the TED. He tried to understand the requirements Wilberforce would have fulfilled to be recognised by the TED. He had meetings with Mr A.D. Achterberg; Xuma described these meetings as 'frank and helpful discussion[s] on the whole situation of Wilberforce.'[137] Xuma went as far as arranging a series of meetings through Achterberg who arranged a meeting between the Director of Education, Mr Kuchke and Bishop Sims. In one of the meetings, the relationship between the school and the department was discussed and the inspector was of the opinion that 'the school should have a white head or principal [in order for the school to be recognised].'[138] This was not well received by Xuma and the members of Wilberforce Executive Committee who felt that there were many young African university graduates who should be given a chance to administer Wilberforce. They also pointed out that the standard of African teachers could not be judged 'by our present staff whose qualification makes them eligible to teach in primary schools.'[139] The issue of the white principal was followed by the proposal of the TED to close the school because of the dilapidated buildings. This crisis was reported to the authorities overseas.

TED officials increasingly visited the school. They became interested in its activities and pressurised the school to improve its conditions. It was further stipulated that 'should the AME Church find it impossible to carry out the above program, the Department will have no alternative but to withdraw its permission to prepare teachers for the Transvaal Native Teachers Examination'[140] This troubled the church, which had hoped Wilberforce would produce 'a group of well-educated consecrated young people who might scatter themselves over the country as "living examples" of the ability of the black man to assimilate the best of culture.'[141]

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that after the Great Depression, many schools across the country suffered, but it became worse for Wilberforce, which was not subsidised by the state. As an independent school, Wilberforce depended on the church; when the church in America took

136 WHP, A letter from H.M p to Revd J. Dexter Taylor 5 March 1937, Xuma Papers, AD 843.
137 WHP, Untitled document, Xuma Papers, AD 843.
138 Ibid.
139 Ibid.
140 Ibid.
141 I. Yobusa, 'Africa's size and Population,' *The Negro Journal of Religion,* V. (1939), p. 7.

struggled financially, so did Wilberforce. If it was not for Dr Xuma, who saved the school during its financial crisis, the school would have closed down. Xuma also interacted with the TED in a determined bid to save the school from closure. The chapter has also shown that, from its inception, Wilberforce was led by American graduates who tried to uplift the standards of the school. Wilberforce was the first black school in the history of African missionary education to be headed by a woman in South Africa. Her tenure, however, was a very difficult one, in part because of various ingrained prejudices towards women within the church and wider society.

CHAPTER 7

The Reconstruction of Wilberforce, 1938-1946

7.1 Introduction

Clearly, the economic deprivation suffered by Wilberforce Institute after the Great Depression had a serious impact on the school, which nearly closed down. For nearly two-and-a-half decades, the AME church in America struggled to fund Wilberforce, and the local AME churches had to develop a self-help education aid programme to keep Wilberforce open. For many years, the limited funding left Wilberforce with proportionately fewer teachers, more limited curricular offerings and poorer facilities than other state-funded missionary schools. These differences in educational opportunity led Bishop Wright, who took over the office of the Bishop in 1938, to challenge the TED to register the school. He brought in African-American educators to revive the school and he raised new funds. When he arrived, the TED had already threatened to close down the school because of its poor state. The school library had no books, buildings were dilapidated, there were no science labs. The aim of this chapter is to show how Bishop Wright mobilised and used African-American missionaries and educators, particularly Dr Amos White, his wife Leulla and Dr. Josephus Roosevelt, to revive the school.

7.2 Towards the resuscitation of Wilberforce

With the idea of African upliftment in mind, Bishop Wright, who succeeded Sims and became the new Bishop in 1936, was welcomed and congratulated by various church leaders and friends of the AME church. Wright served from 1936 to 1940 in South Africa. He was the eleventh African American Bishop sent to South Africa by the AME Church since it began its work in South Africa.[1] As an advocate of self-help and someone concerned with the social welfare of the

1 Before coming to South Africa, Bishop Wright served as a President of Wilberforce University and editor of the *Christian Recorder*. During the 'Progressive Era,' as a qualified sociologist with a Doctorate from Chicago, Wright played an important role in challenging the inequities that came with industrialisation and urbanisation in America. Through his work with the African Methodist Episcopal Church, he helped thousands of southern migrants in Philadelphia secure employment, develop businesses, invest in their community, and own homes. With this type of activism in mind, he was determined to solve problems that confronted the church in South Africa, and this was to be his first real encounter with the misery of Africans in Africa, particularly in education. See K.F. Modesto 'Won't be weighted down:" Richard R. Wright, Jr.'s contributions to social work and social welfare,' *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*: Vol. 31: 2004; Bishop also spent several years preparing '*The Encyclopaedia of African Methodism*, at the time of its publication, was regarded as the longest book ever written by a Negro.

Negroes in America, particularly among the southern migrants, his appointment as a Bishop of South Africa was highly celebrated and noted in the American press:

> Bishop and Mrs. R. R. Wright, Jr., will sail for Capetown, South Africa, on the S. S. Europa**.** Where the bishop will begin his work under the auspices of the African Methodist Episcopal church for the next four years. Bishop Wright was elected at the last general conference of his church… in May, 1936, after serving for twenty-seven years as editor of the Christian Recorder, four years of which time he also served as acting president of Wilberforce university, America's oldest Negro newspaper and oldest Negro college. Bishop Wright holds the distinction of being the first Negro holding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to be elected to the office of bishop […] Bishop Wright will have nearly five hundred churches in a territory in which there are fifty million Negroes.[2]

In South Africa, he was heartily welcomed and congratulated by African dignitaries, such as Dr Xuma, Ray Phillips and many others. In a welcome letter, Xuma warned Bishop Wright about the problems that awaited him; he noted that Wilberforce was the greatest challenge:

> Kindly accept my congratulation in your election as Bishop of the A.M.E. Church, as well as your appointment as Bishop of S[outh] Africa ... Wilberforce Institute is your greatest and most urgent challenge and yet your best opportunity.[3]

In the context of the church administration in South Africa, the Bishop was not only confronted with the problem of reconstructing Wilberforce; there were other church related problems he had to attend to. This was reflected in Mrs Wright's article in the *Voice of Mission,* published during the absence of Bishop Wright in 1939. Mrs Wright, who acted on behalf of her husband, described the situation:

> There were many letters from our suffering ministers asking financial succour. It was my problem to determine, from the inadequate means on hand, to what extent I could relieve them. It was mine to reply to letters from lawyers threatening foreclosure on church properties unless they received financial satisfaction. I had to contact educational authorities with reference to certain problems arising here and there. I also had to contact government officials about gaining permission for the entrance into the country of a nurse and our son who were to return with Bishop.[4]

Upon Bishop Wright's arrival, the church had seventy-one circuits. In all these regions there were problems, including the need for better trained teachers and personnel for ministers, more funds for minister's stipends, aid for needy churches, and travel allowances for ministers. Above all, the most heart-breaking cry came for schooling. There were not nearly enough schools in the AME circuits.[5] In order for the Bishop to serve and meet these demands, a large amount of money was required, as well as systematic planning. Armed with great energy and a robust

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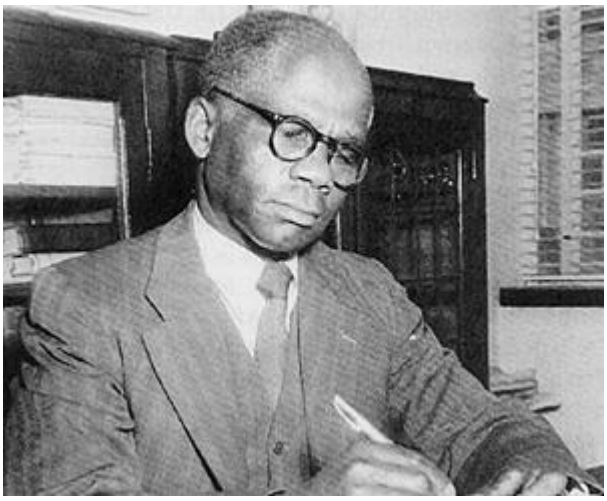
2 *Chicago Defender,* 23 July 1938.
3 WHP, A letter from Dr Xuma to Bishop Wright, 11 December 1936, Xuma Papers, AD 843.
4 *The Voice of Mission* October 1939.
5 SAREU, A letter from the Dr J.R Coan to Bishop Goerge W Barber, Coan Papers, MSS 872 Box 1 File 1/4.

religious faith, Wright was prepared for a tough battle. He commented: 'he that is faithful in a few things will be made ruler over many things.'[6]



Dr Xuma, extracted from the 5th Dr Xuma Memorial Lecture poster (2000)

In undated correspondence, Xuma urged Bishop Wright to improve the standards at Wilberforce. In this mail, he acknowledged that there was a great amount of variation in the quality of education in the country. As an example, he pointed out the huge difference between Healdtown Institute in the Cape, one of the well-resourced schools, and Wilberforce. He emphasised that 'schools so staffed can attract large number of pupils … your task to bring Wilberforce up to standard is a very great one financially.'[7] Xuma also suggested that there should be church funds earmarked for Wilberforce. He recommended this policy during the time of Bishop Sims, but due to the effects of the Great Depression, this never materialised. Dr Xuma was also concerned with the church leadership, which he blamed for rendering an 'unfavourable reflection on the ability of our people to manage their institution up to recognised standards.'[8] He therefore asked the Bishop: 'I would be pleased, if possible, for you to spend as much of your time as you can … so that we can go over certain questions.'[9] Long before he left America, Bishop Wright was aware of all the concerns that Xuma raised. In an interview with the *New Journal and Guide Newspaper*, one of the oldest and most respected African-American newspapers, he acknowledged that:

6 SAREU, AME Mission work by Dr J.R Coan Papers, MSS 872, Box 4 File 4/1.
7 WHP, Xuma Papers, AD 843, Undated Report.
8 WHP, A letter from Dr Xuma to Bishop Wright, 24 August 1936. Xuma Papers, AD 843.
9 Ibid.

> There are many difficulties we will have to overcome. There will be a lack of trained workers, lack of equipment, lack of funds and lack of many things, but there will be great faith and great determination ... I ask for the prayers and consideration of our friends in America.[10]

Before coming to South Africa, then, the Bishop had established a clear picture of the hardship that he would face and the sacrifices he would have to make. Although Wright was aware that there would be serious challenges in South Africa, Xuma's concerns pressurised him to act without any delay. By December 1936, the Bishop replied to Xuma:

> Yours received, thank you. I am calling the Executive Committee on Jan[uary] 19 in order to review the entire work of Wilberforce Institute, educationally, financially and physically. When we adjoin I hope to have a thorough understanding, so that we may devote our energies entirely to building up [the] school. We have a great opportunity and a great responsibility.[11]

The Bishop's reply to Xuma was followed by a letter that instructed J. M. Mokone, the Secretary of the Wilberforce Board of Trustees, to summon a meeting of the Executive Board of Wilberforce in order to discuss questions that Xuma raised. The agenda listed the reports of the treasurer and the bookkeeper; the plan of the building; issues of normal and secondary school; the industrial department; the budget; and other administrative matters.[12]

7.3 The revival of Wilberforce

Despite the financial constraints, the 1930s were not without new developments at Wilberforce. The appointment of Bishop Wright initiated new significant improvements. After less than three months in South Africa, Wright began the restoration of Wilberforce. His first move was to respond to the demand for the improvement of the buildings. On 24 February 1937, he paid a visit to the Chief Inspector's office; the TED seemed to appreciate the Bishop's effort to improve the condition of the school. The school was given a chance to operate for a further two years provided that the secondary department was discontinued. In its terms and conditions, the TED specified that adequate buildings for the primary school should be erected within the next year. Finally, the Department demanded that accommodation, equipment and instruction be improved before June 1939.[13]

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10 *New Journal and Guide* 31 October 1936.
11 WHP, Xuma Papers, AD 843 A letter from Bishop Wright to Dr Xuma, 28 December 1936.
12 WHP, A letter from J.M Mokone to DR Xuma, 31 December 1936. Xuma Papers, AD 843.
13 WHP, A letter from H.M Burrough to Revd J Dexter-Taylor, 5 March 1937. Xuma Papers, AD 843.

At the same time, the Bishop had to address the TED call for a white principal in order for the school to be recognised. As indicated, this was not well received by Xuma and the members of Wilberforce Executive Committee. It also troubled Bishop Wright who wanted to maintain and improve the African leadership and control of the school. Like Xuma and the Wilberforce Committee, the Bishop felt that the TED call for a white leader undermined African leadership and ability. In response, the Bishop proposed a 'native principal,' and 'objected [to] the [TED's] statement that there was no native in South Africa who could be entrusted with this responsibility, but that with the European principal the department might get accreditation.'[14]

Ironically, the TED's call for a white principal reflects a deep prejudice towards missionary-educated Africans and one does wonder why Africans were mission educated at all if they could not be trusted to administer western institutions, such as schools and churches. It is important to note here that by the 1930s South Africans of all colours and classes were anxious about their future. The economic devastation wrought by the Great Depression deepened poverty and raised resistance among workers, mission-educated Africans and the destitute; middle-class whites felt increasingly insecure. This intensified racism, which was on the rise in the 1930s.

In 1939, the *Negro Journal of Religion* commented: 'are you reading carefully? Think of it, there are six million of blacks in South Africa, yet less than fifty of them are college graduates. This is almost incredible.'[15] By 1939, there were no opportunities to study law or medicine, and 'over 6, 000, 000 African natives ha[d] less than a dozen trained lawyers of their own.'[16] Africans were not only deprived of leadership in their own initiated schools, such as Wilberforce, but they were also denied access to professional training and admission to white universities: whites wanted to protect themselves against African competition.[17] With his exposure to racism and the racially divided system of education in the United States, Bishop Wright was well equipped to challenge the TED officials.[18]

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14 C. Grogman-Wright, *Beneath the Southern Cross*, p. 45.

15 The Editorial, *The Negro Journal of Religion* .3 (1939).

16 N. Mobele, 'Education of the South African Native,' *The Negro Journal of Religion*, 3. (1939).

17 B. K Murray, *Wits Early years*. p. 300.

18 Bishop Wright (1878-1967) was a graduate of Georgia St College and the University of Chicago. He completed his PhD Degree at the University of Pennsylvania. Heunderstood the issues of race relations; he lived under a strained racial environment that resulted from the increase of black emigrants from the US south coupled with the huge migration of immigrant groups into the city. These new residents added to the growing job

Wright, clearly irritated by the demand for a white principal asked the Education Department officials: 'is it efficiency you want or color?' The answer was 'efficiency' but that they could not find 'efficient' Africans.[19] The Chief Inspector, Dr Eiselen, said, 'there never had been an African at the head of any training school ... [in the Transvaal] and in other parts of South Africa, and he doubted if there would be any such at any early stage.'[20] In response, the Bishop proposed that: 'If I should get a man, graduated from Harvard University, our greatest American institution of learning, would you accept him?'[21] In a discussion that lasted three hours, the Chief Inspector showed sympathy towards the proposal, saying: 'If he had experience.' The Bishop responded, 'I'll get a black man named White [with a] B.A from Harvard, M.A. from Ohio State University with twenty years successful teaching." All smiled.'[22]

The Bishop cabled Dr Amos White, then a teacher at Wilberforce University, Ohio, begging him and his wife to come. The Bishop was unsure of the response he would get because he was aware that some African-Americans were still immersed in western stereotypes of Africa as a 'dark continent'. He felt that White's acceptance of the post would mean more to the church than if he remained in America.[23] After thirty days, Dr White replied, agreeing to come to South Africa.[24] As a lecturer at Wilberforce University, White had almost daily contact with students from Africa. He attributed his decision in part to his father who was an AME missionary minister in

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competition and their arrival coincided with an economic depression. To add to these problems, racial hostilities escalated because of the increased political power given to black people. For his analysis of South Africa see 'South Africa has its own Color' *Opportunity* (1939) See also R Edgar *an African American in South Africa: The Travels of Ralph J Bunche*, (Johannesburg, 1992); R.R. Wright 'Wilberforce in South Africa' *Opportunity* (1937).

19 C. Grogman-Wright, *Beneath the Southern Cross,* p. 45.

20 A. J. White and L. G. White, *Dawn in Bantuland: An Account of Missionary Experiences and Observation in South Africa*, (Boston, 1953), p. 12.

21 C. Grogman-Wright, *Beneath the Southern Cross,* p. 45.

22 Ibid, p. 45.

23 It is important to note that some African American senior members of the AME, such as, Bishop Reid, refused to come and serve as Bishop in South Africa. As a result, Dr Roosevelt Coan had to serve as a church superintendent, while playing the role of the Bishop for eight years. See J. R. Coan *The Flying Spark*; J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion.*

24 A. J. White and L. G White, *Dawn in Bantuland,* p. 13.

Virginia who had prepared him for service as a missionary abroad .[25] He was also encouraged by his wife, Luella, who later reminisced:

> I had longed for this opportunity since those days at Edward Waters College … there President and Mrs John A Gregg talked daily of their happy missionary experiences in dear old Africa … upon each return visit from across the sea … we received them in our home and heard again the story of the land and people we long to see and serve.[26]

The Bishop made the necessary arrangement by cable with the leaders of the AME in America. Among them were Bishop Sims, Ransom and Bishop Gregg, who were asked to arrange fares to South Africa. In South Africa, Dr White became the second 'Negro' principal in South Africa after Revd Attaway, the former principal of Bethel School in Cape Town.

7.4 Dr White and new improvements

On the afternoon of 14 June 1937, Dr and Mrs White prepared to leave Wilberforce University in Ohio for Wilberforce Institute in Evaton. Upon arrival in Table Bay, Cape Town, the American couple was welcomed by Dr Gow, the former principal of Wilberforce Institute and Bishop Wright. The church members at Bethel, where Dr Gow was working, also warmly received them. Fine speeches were made and music followed. The couple was impressed by 'a quartet trained by Dr Gow [that] sounded much like an American Spiritual Quartet,' making Dr and Mrs White feel at home.[27] While in Cape Town, they were told about the unpleasant conditions of Evaton, which was considered by the people of the Cape as a 'dark' part of the subcontinent where there small pox and other diseases were rife and medical assistance impossible to secure.[28] As Christians they were, however, assured that God would assist them in overcoming these difficulties. They went ahead with a profound desire to uphold the ambitions, hopes and aspirations of native Africans.[29]

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25 Ibid, p. 55.

26 Ibid, p. 55.

27 A. J. White and L. G White, *Dawn in Bantuland, p.56.*

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid.

Upon their arrival in Evaton, Dr and Mrs White found Wilberforce Institute in a dilapidated state. The Bishop had made them aware of the situation before they reached Evaton and, as missionaries, Dr and Mrs White were willing to sacrifice their own comfort and face the hardship. They consoled themselves 'that doing something in which one finds interest and enjoyment is never considered sacrifice.'[30] In order to make the Whites comfortable, the Bishop and Mrs Wright went to Johannesburg to purchase a few cheerful draperies, kitchen linoleum, a few scatter rugs, a modest living room suite, a dining room suit, a kitchen stove and a few small stoves for other rooms, dishes and other small articles.[31]. Although this turned the house into a cosy domestic space, 'none of the modern conveniences, such as gas, electricity, and bath [were available], but we entered it with a cheerful spirit...we and our friends came to consider [it] a real home.'[32] The Whites' water came from a hand-dug well.

After the Whites arrived, Bishop Wright purchased a windmill that was placed in the principal's yard.[33] Once the Whites settled, the principal's cottage gradually became the Mecca for minister's wives, community members, teachers and students. The house was also visited by white academics from Wits University and from Institute of Race Relations.[34] The Whites then had to turn their attention to their responsibilities. They had to acquaint themselves with teachers, learn how to spell and pronounce the names of the students, and research the educational system of the Transvaal.

On 26 July 1937, Dr and Mrs White were inducted by the trustees into office. Mrs White was initiated as a secretary of the school and her husband as the principal of the school. As a principal, Dr White realised that some teachers were overloaded with work. In his own words, he outlined: 'It did not take long to discover that one teacher in the high school was trying to teach two and sometimes three classes at the same time. This was both physically and academically impossible.'[35] He relieved this situation by teaching Latin and English himself. Mrs White

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30 Ibid, p.46.

31 Ibid, p.46.

32 A. J. White and L. G. White, *Dawn in Bantuland* , p. 78.

33 Ibid.

34 Among the liberals that visited Evaton were Senator J.D Rheinallt Jones, Clara Bridgman, Mrs Dexter Taylor of the American Board, and Mrs Phillips, the wife of Dr Ray Phillips.

35 A J White and L. G White, *Dawn in Bantuland* , p.67.

became busy with administration of the school. She registered students, particularly those who were returning to school. In addition, she had to administer the school procurements and the purchase supplies necessitating long trips to the city of Johannesburg or Vereeniging.[36] Since Evaton was a freehold settlement, with no clinic, no doctors or chemists, and the township had only *muthi* shops.[37] Mrs White and other school members had to attend to the petty ailments of the students. 'Mother White', as she was known to her students, would inspect and attend to those who were sick in the dormitories. In one incident, Mrs Wright narrates how she spent a strenuous day shopping for the school with Mother White, and on their return, they

> noticed a couple of school boys one of whom had been ailing, sitting in the kitchen keeping company with the boy who helped … Henry has fainted again … up Mother White jumped, going to her medicine chest and then to the kitchen to administer to the boy.[38]

In the late 1930s, the school did not only administer medicine to students; 'parents and children in the village [of Evaton] ...came to tell [of] their illness in order to get some medicine.'[39]

7.5 New developments

When the Whites arrived, part of the campus land was bleak, stony with no flowers or vegetable gardens; 'it was dark as ink at night'. The situation as described by the Bishop was discouraging and disheartening.[40] As a result, the Bishop had to collaborate with Dr White to restore the confidence of the people and the TED. After four years of the Bishop's tenure as the head of the AME church in South Africa, Wilberforce changed dramatically and its reputation was restored. The first move that the Bishop took was to persuade Dr White to respond to the government proposal that buildings should be improved. As the head of the church, Bishop Wright initiated a drive to raise $13,000 from the United States for the erection of twelve rooms for the teachers' training department. These rooms were completed within seven months.[41]

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36 Ibid, p. 67.

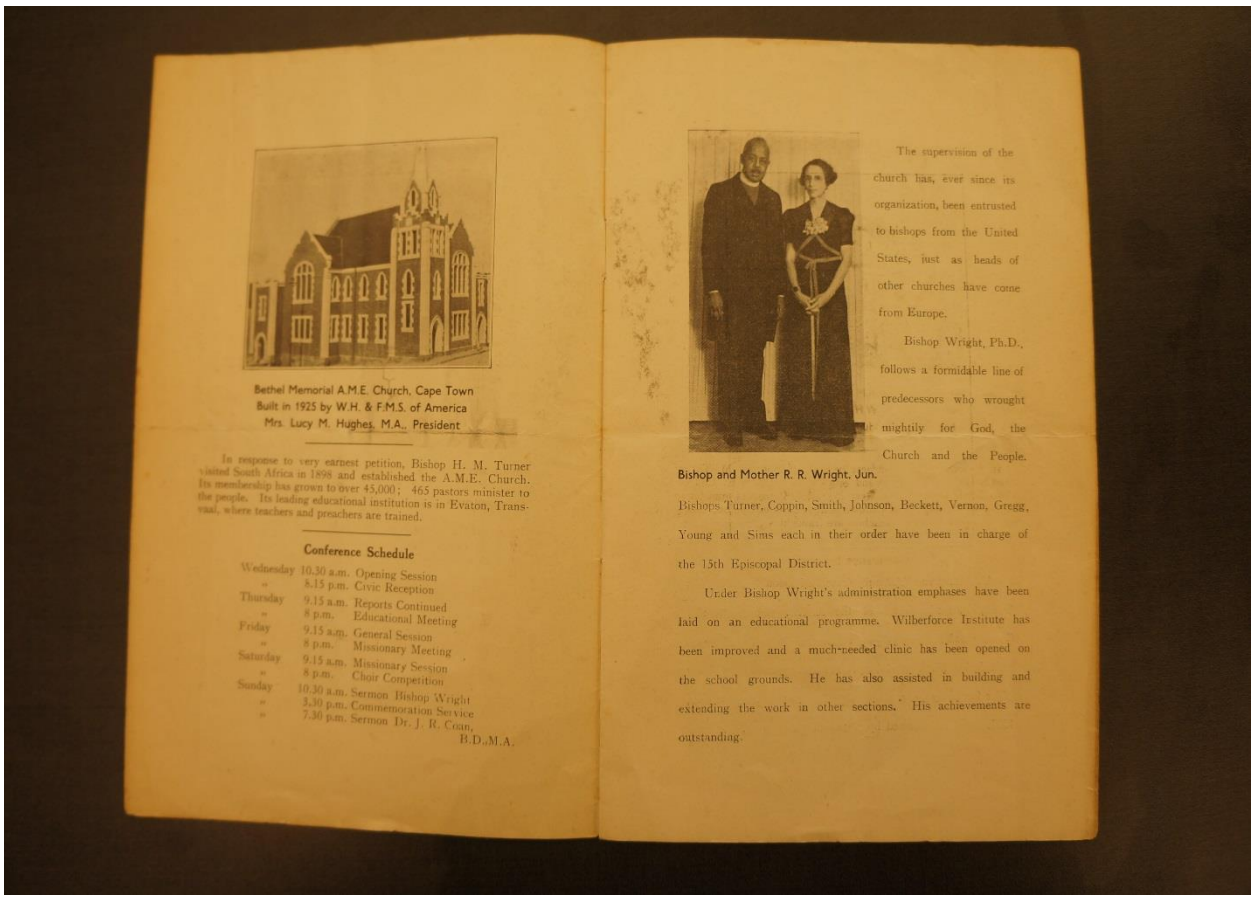
37 *Muthi* is a term for traditional medicine in Southern Africa as far north as Lake Tanganyika. In South African English, the word *muthi* is derived from the Zulu word *umuthi,* meaning 'tree', or *Umthi* in isXhosa. In an African cosmology, roots and some parts of different trees are used for healing of certain diseases. Because of the lack of western medicine in Evaton, African local medicine to flourished.

38 C. Grogman-Wright, *Beneath the Southern Cross*, p.48.

39 A. J. White and L. G White, *Dawn in Bantuland,* p. 68.

40 Ibid, p.45.

41 A. J. White and L. G White, *Dawn in Bantuland*, p.45.



Bethel Memorial A.M.E. Church, Cape Town
Built in 1925 by W.H. & F.M.S. of America
Mrs. Lucy M. Hughes, M.A., President

In response to very earnest petition, Bishop H. M. Turner visited South Africa in 1898 and established the A.M.E. Church. Its membership has grown to over 45,000; 465 pastors minister to the people. Its leading educational institution is in Evaton, Transvaal, where teachers and preachers are trained.

Conference Schedule

Wednesday	10.30 a.m.	Opening Session
"	8.15 p.m.	Civic Reception
Thursday	9.15 a.m.	Reports Continued
"	8 p.m.	Educational Meeting
Friday	9.15 a.m.	General Session
"	8 p.m.	Missionary Meeting
Saturday	9.15 a.m.	Missionary Session
"	8 p.m.	Choir Competition
Sunday	10.30 a.m.	Sermon Bishop Wright
"	3.30 p.m.	Commemoration Service
"	7.30 p.m.	Sermon Dr. J. R. Coan, B.D., M.A.

Bishop and Mother R. R. Wright, Jun.

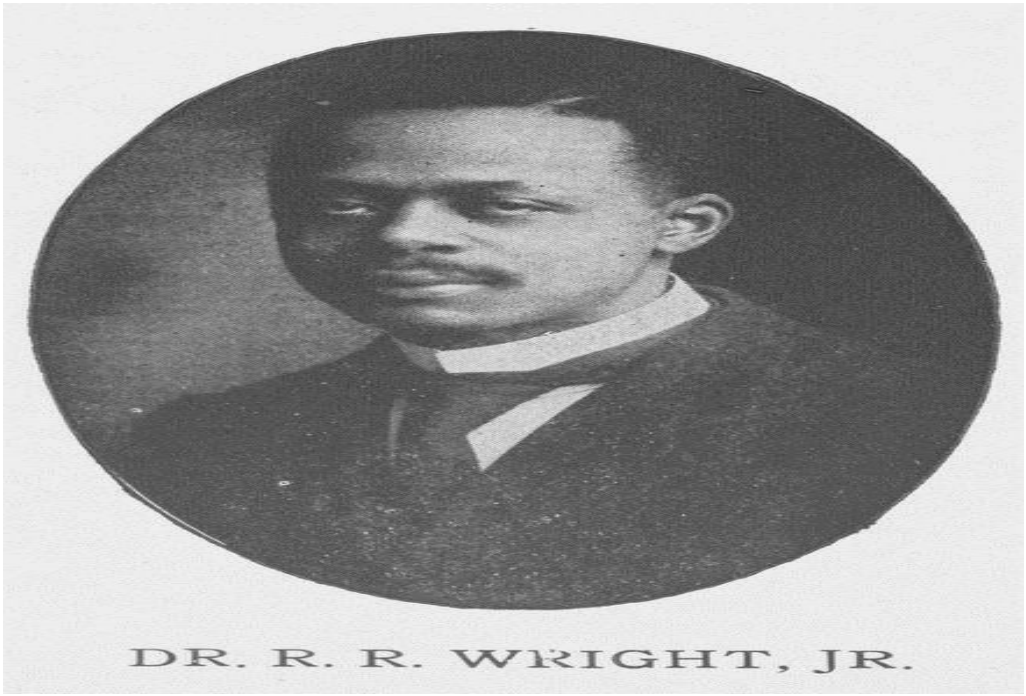
The supervision of the church has, ever since its organization, been entrusted to bishops from the United States, just as heads of other churches have come from Europe.

Bishop Wright, Ph.D., follows a formidable line of predecessors who wrought mightily for God, the Church and the People.

Bishops Turner, Coppin, Smith, Johnson, Beckett, Vernon, Gregg, Young and Sims each in their order have been in charge of the 15th Episcopal District.

Under Bishop Wright's administration emphases have been laid on an educational programme. Wilberforce Institute has been improved and a much-needed clinic has been opened on the school grounds. He has also assisted in building and extending the work in other sections. His achievements are outstanding.

Bishop R.R. Wright and Mrs Wright and Bethel Memorial Church in Cape Town, Coan Papers Emory University



Dr R. R. Wright a photo from Armstrong Association of Philadelphia, New York Public Library

Before the construction began, the Bishop had to deal with a problem, which he experienced when Dr White was appointed: this was the involvement of white people in the affairs of the school. When building plans were tabled to the department for approval, the TED officials demanded that white labour be employed for the erection of the building, but the bishop, a true 'race man' insisted that 'native' and coloured men could erect a building that would meet all the requirement of the educational officials.[42] After a long discussion with the educational authorities, permission was reluctantly granted to the Bishop to employ non-white labour. This was the second racial victory for the Bishop after the appointment of Dr White. The building was successfully built and later dedicated by Bishop Wright in 1938. On the dedication platform were Senator Rheinallt-Jones from the Institute of Race Relations, N.D Achterburg, the Inspector of education, Selope Thema, Dr and Mrs Phillips, Dr and Mrs Dexter Taylor, and many other dignitaries of the AME and other churches.[43]

During Dr White's term of office, two more buildings were built: the Mokone Gow Hall, named after Father Mokone and Dr Gow, pioneers in the educational and religious work of the church, and the Lydia Wright building, named in honour of Bishop Wright's mother. This block was used for Teachers' Training Classes.

As indicated, the church realised that there was a need for medical care at Wilberforce and Evaton, and opened a clinic, Crogman Community Clinic, in a building adjacent to Wilberforce. This health centre, named after Dr W.H. Grogman, Bishop Wright's father in law, was opened on the 16 April 1939.[44] Senator J. D. Rheinallt-Jones and the American Consul-General, Mr. W. Earl Russel, were among those who attended the ceremony.[45] Bishop Wright conducted the opening service. He introduced a young American 'Negro woman', Miss Grace Wares, who was brought to South Africa to run the clinic and to instruct teachers in health education.[46] On the

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42 Ibid p.56.

43 A. J. White and L. G. White, *Dawn in Bantuland* , p. 68.

44 *The Wilberforcean*, 1964, p.6.

45 *Rand Daily Mail* 31 July 1939.

46 The *Voice of Mission* October 1939.

same occasion, Dr White said that the erection of the clinic was a refutation of the statements continually being made that the 'natives were doing nothing for themselves'.[47] He said proudly:

> In less than three years…three large buildings, including the clinic, have been built largely through the sacrifices of a poor people. Today marks one of the greatest days in native educational history in this country for we are embarking on another and greatly important aspect of our work - health instruction. For the first time a trained nurse has been brought to this country from America to instruct the Bantu teachers.[48]

When the clinic began its operations, two registered nurses were employed and Dr Liebenberg from Vereeniging was appointed as the physician in charge. At one stage, Dr Xuma also served as a physician there.[49] It is important to note that in the 1930s, Evaton was essentially poor and there was no other medical assistance aside from the Crogman Clinic. For medicines and the daily operation of the clinic, Bishop Wright raised funds from the AME church and from his friends in America. He also received a grant of £250 from the Native Affairs Department.[50]

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid.

50 Xuma Papers, AD 843 A from Dr J.R. Coan to J Pienaar, 22 March 1941.



Dr R. R. Wright, photograph (Photograph by the author. 7 July 2015)

Bishop Wright's development programme attracted the government's attention and eventually the government accredited Wilberforce and its clinic. Under the Jan Smuts government between 1939 and the mid-1940s, social services were greatly reformed and expanded. Although the government's main focus was on tackling white poverty, it did include an extension of social services to the black population. This had a positive impact on Wilberforce.[51]

We should remember that for more than two decades of its existence, Wilberforce had been deprived of the privilege that other missionary schools enjoyed; the school was not subsidised and had to pay teachers from its own coffers. In addition, the teacher course was not recognised, but because Bishop Wright's addressed so many of the difficulties faced by the school, the TED made the decision in a very short time and the student teachers could sit for their examination. All this happened within five months of the Whites' arrival. In response, Dr White happily said, 'we began earnestly to get our students ready for the examination, which were to be held in the following June.'[52] Dr Eiselen and the Department even agreed to take over the responsibility of

51 See J. Seekings, 'Vision, hopes and views about the future: The radical moment of Southern African welfare, 'S. Dubow and A. Jeeves (eds.), *South Africa's 1940s: Worlds Possibilities'* (Cape Town, 2005).
52 Ibid, p. 70.

paying teachers.[53] This did result in structural changes to the teachers department, which was overstaffed, and some teachers were transferred to other AME schools. The institute had no choice but to adhere to the rules of accreditation but, in the words of the Dean of Howard University, 'it was good to learn of the bright prospect for a successful school year at Wilberforce.'[54] During the term of Dr White, the first floor of Eliza Gregg Hall was refurbished from being one big hall into several smaller and more comfortable bedrooms. The Native Affairs Department began to subsidise the school to improve its water, sanitation and lighting. At the same time, a modern Post Office was erected and Mr Opperman installed as Post Master.

Since the school expanded to more than 700 learners, there was a need for the extension of its programmes. As a school that was founded by the AME, there was a dire need for a Theological College that would train religious leaders. In 1938, Bishop Wright visited America where he gave talks about the progress of Wilberforce Institute. When he left the country, he had already decided to have a Theological College at Wilberforce that would be open to all who wished to be prepared for preaching of the gospel irrespective of denomination.[55] While the Bishop was in America, he was invited to preach the annual sermon to the council at Montgomery, Alabama, during which he made an appeal for work in Africa. Thirteen theologians in the Alabama audience volunteered to go back with him to South Africa, but funding permitted only one.[56] Bishop Wright chose Revd Dr Josephus Roosevelt Coan, who had a rich academic and professional background.[57]

Upon his arrival in 1938, Coan, motivated by a desire to uplift Africa, organised the student boys to improve the bad roads on campus. Together, they turned a small neglected two-room structure into a dormitory for a theological seminary. Because of his industrial training, he could work with his hands and he became an exemplary role model to many boys at Wilberforce. He was

53 J.M. Nhlapo, *Wilberforce.*

54 SARUE. A letter from the Dean of Howard University, Charles Wesley to Dr Coan, 14 June 1939, Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 1 File 1/4.

55 J.M. Nhlapo *Wilberforce*. p. 14.

56 C. Grogman-Wright, *Beneath the Southern Cross*, p. 50.

57 Josephus Roosevelt Coan (1902-2004), was an African-American clergyman, missionary, and educator. He served the AMEas a teacher, pastor, missionary, and acting Bishop in South Africa and then pursued a lengthy career as a pastor and a scholar and teacher of Christian education, based mainly in Atlanta, Georgia. Born November 26, 1902, in Spartanburg, South Carolina, Coan earned a B.A. from Howard University (1930), a B.D. (1933) and an M.A. in Christian Education from Yale University (1934), and a PhD from Hartford Seminary Foundation (1961). From 1934 to 1938 before coming to South Africa, Coan taught at Morris Brown College and Turner Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia. From 1940-1948, he was also the acting African Methodist Episcopal bishop over an area that included the areas covered by the modern nations of South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, Namibia and Malawi. See, SAREU, R Coan, Personal Biography, Papers MSS 872, Box 1 File 1/4

multi-skilled and his industrial skill, which was needed by Wilberforce, was invaluable. It impressed some of his American colleagues with whom he corresponded in the USA, evident in one of the letters written by Charles Wesley, the Dean of Howard University: 'I was also interested in your comment concerning the value which you find that your knowledge of bricklaying and carpentry has been to you'[58] It is clear that Booker T Washington's self-help and industrial education ideas had a major influence at Wilberforce under Coan, Gow and White. Although industrial education might have been criticised by the Du Bois clique, Coan had an opportunity to exhibit its practicality when it came to the self-help programme, he made 'improvements here and there where things were falling apart' at Wilberforce.[59]

7.6 Dr Coan and the school of religion

Due to a shortage of ready-trained and consecrated ministers, Bishop Wright opened the ministerial department at Wilberforce under Dr Coan's leadership. Coan, who was to spend nine years of his life at Wilberforce, introduced an entirely different type of religious institution at Wilberforce. As a model seminary, this school catered not only for the AME student priests but for all denominations, including African independent churches that were deprived of formal training. Although independent churches became attractive to Africans, they experienced problems, such as a lack of funds and education, and preachers from these churches were marginalised by the mainstream churches. Those who wanted to further their religious training had no place to go as they were denied access to mainstream seminaries.[60] Wilberforce training school emerged as the solution to these problems. The school received more than three hundred applications in the opening term of 1939 from all over southern Africa, written in English, Afrikaans, isSotho, isiZulu and in other African languages. Coan said: 'I had to get help in translating the letters [of] application written in languages other than English.'[61] The admission

58 SAREU, A letter from the Dean of Howard University, Charles Wesley to Dr Coan, 14 June 1939, Coan Papers MSS 872, Box 1 File 1/4.

59 C. Grogman-Wright, Beneath the Southern Cross, p. 51.

60 For details, see P.M. Makamba, 'African Independent Churches and TEE,' *International Review of Mission*, LXXI: (1982), pp. 2-4. The non-AME prominent priests that graduated from the school of religion included Bishop Petrus Tjijombo, the founder of St. John's Apostolic Faith Mission in Namibia, and Archbishop Tieho Ralentsoana Nku the son of the late Christina Nku, who was popularly known as, 'me MaNku' the founder of St John Apostolic Church. Because of close proximity of the St John headquarters in the Small Farms of Evaton and Wilberforce Institute, St John's trained its ministers at Wilberforce, R. R. Wright School of Religion, commonly known as the Wilberforce Theological Seminary in Evaton. See V. Molobi, 'The AIC and Theological Training: With Special Reference to the St John Apostolic Faith Mission of Ma Nku' *uir.unisa.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/4424/molobi_3_.pdf?sequence=1* accessed on the 7 July 2017.

61 SAREU, Adventures in South Africa by Dr J.R, Coan Papers, MSS 872 Box 4 File 4/1.

criteria of the school required a student to have completed Standard VI. Applicants from the AME church were to be recommended by the presiding elder or the annual conference. Applicants from other denominations needed a recommendation from their respective head of the church. The application of each student was assessed by the Presiding Elder and by the Dean of the school. From this list of the 1,939 applicants, 40 students were admitted.

The emphasis of training in the school was on Christian unity rather than denominational division, as was common in the mainstream churches. Various members of different churches, particularly the African independent churches, applauded the opening up of this type of religious institution. According to the *Bantu World*:

> Under the administration and Right Reverend R.R. Wright Junior, Bishop of the AME Church in South Africa, this Christian body has entered a new era. Supreme among the items in his programme of religious educational advancement and improvement is the inauguration of a school for ministerial training. This school is organised and is operated as one of the coordinated branches of Wilberforce Institute. The programme of this ministerial training school is built upon the needs for Christian ministers for times like these … The problem to be solved demand not only a completely consecrated ministry, which, to be sure is absolutely indispensable, but they demand a thoroughly trained ministry. Among these contemporary problems of South Africa which call forth the very best the Christian church can offer in the way of leadership in … interracial, industrial and economic relations.[62]

Unlike other seminaries, the R. R. Wright School of Religion trained its students to focus on strategies to improve human suffering and misery, particularly the pain of the neglected 'non-European group.' It aimed at developing tolerance among its graduates. The curriculum of the school provided both theoretical and practical training for pastoral work and covered the following fields of theological study: the Bible, Church History, Systematic Theology and Pastoral Theology (which included Homiletics, Missions and Religious Education).[63] The fees were £3.10 per term and did not cover boarding and lodging; students had to perform some form of manual labour to pay for boarding. This made it access to the school easier for poor students. Initially, Dr Gow became a teacher in this new school. He kept up his musical passion and maintained the Institutional Band, which he founded while serving as principal.[64]

62 *Bantu World,* 5 November 1938.
63 SAREU, Adventures in South Africa by Dr J.R Coan Papers, MSS 872 Box 4 File 4/1.
64 Ibid.

7.7 Building up the library

Upon the Whites arrival, the Wilberforce school library comprised of dusty cupboard, one Holy Bible, and twenty-five books.[65] The Whites were struck by the lamentable state of the school library; they felt that no school could thrive without a suitable library. Unlike the recognised missionary schools in the Cape, where fifty per cent remission of scholars' textbooks was granted and the ordinary teachers' textbooks were supplied freely, Wilberforce did not enjoy that state benefit.[66] The Whites introduced the Wilberforce Institute Book Week,[67] but the school lacked a trained librarian and there were few appropriate books in their meagre collection. The Whites requested friends of the church and education in South Africa and abroad to donate books of different disciplines, ranging from Latin to philosophy. Many white academics, missionaries, particularly from the American Board, rich philanthropists and government officials began to assist Wilberforce, donating hundreds of books.[68]

In addition to the collection that Dr Coan brought with him on his arrival in 1938, the school library received large donations of books from the Carnegie Library in Germiston, the Johannesburg Public Library, Wilberforce alumni, pastors, and the AME church. Clara Bridgeman of the American Board donated a 'very useful set of the Encyclopaedia Britannica'. Prominent missionaries such as Ray Phillips and his wife and the Dexter Taylors gave numerous volumes, many of which were useful to the students in the preacher training school.[69] A number of academics donated books, among them Dr Clement Martyn Doke, a linguist and a professor of Bantu Languages at the University of the Witwatersrand, and Professor Williams, the former principal of Johannesburg Normal College.[70] Some volumes were received from Miss Lillian Jason and other AME friends of America. The library also received a pile of newspapers sent from America through the Bishop and Mrs Wright. These newspapers were inspirational to Wilberforce students, exposing them to the vibrant voice of the American 'Negro' community.[71] Students also enjoyed reading American magazines and annual reports and publications of

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65 A. J. White and L. G. White, *Dawn in Bantuland*, p.73 He was later replaced by Revd H. D. Sello, who received his training from the Dutch Reformed Church. Sello was succeeded by Revd Sidlai who tragically died of a heart attack; other succeeding teachers were Revd Dixon Sebolao, the first graduate of the school of religion and Revd Modisapodi.

66 WHP, A letter from the Inspector of Cape Native Education, H.R Story to Rheinalt-Jones, (undated). South African Institute of Race, Collection, AD 1715. It is not clear from the records whether the TED practised the same system of book subsidy

67 A. J. White and L. G. White, *Dawn in Bantuland*, p.73.

68 Nhlapo, *Wilberforce Institute*.

69 Ibid, p.74.

70 Ibid, p. 74.

71 Ibid, p. 73.

Wilberforce University and Morris Brown University. By the 1950s, the library boasted over one thousand volumes.[72]

7.8 Academic achievement

Dr White and his wife raised Wilberforce to the standard of the prestigious missionary schools of Natal and the Cape Province. By 1938, the Whites reported that the pass rate 'nearly doubled the highest percentage previously shown.'[73] Before the arrival of the Whites, the school had a very limited industrial education. After the TED accredited the school, Dr White made an effort to recruit a good woodwork and carpentry teacher. According to the Whites, there were a number of good teachers for woodwork and carpentry, but most had limited schooling.[74] This prompted Dr White to employ Mr B.T. Sihlahla who had passed his Standard VI examination. As indicated in the previous chapters, the literature on industrial education is complex and controversial, particularly in the American context. In the case of Wilberforce, it could be argued that industrial education was essential for the self-help programme and perhaps for general 'racial upliftment'. The industrial department under Sihlahla, for example, supplied new churches that Bishop Wright established with pulpits and furniture.[75]

During the reconstruction of Wilberforce, Sihlahla's department became instrumental in repairing the school and in school furniture. On the one hand, the training of Wilberforce students in industrial education allowed the school to draw upon them to maintain its facilities, which helped to minimise school expenses. On the other hand, the school raised a considerable amount of money through student labour; for instance, the financial statement of 1940 reveals that 'from the 1 November 1940 to 31 March 1941 student wages amounted to £61, with the advent of this curriculum many destitute students managed to earn income.'[76] In addition to carpentry and woodwork, by 1940 Wilberforce boasted a Tailoring Department, Shoemaking Department, Masonry Department and Domestic Science Department. Aside from expanding its curriculum, this was economically useful.

With the arrival of Dr Coan all male students were required to devote two hours per week to brick masonry. Just before the Whites left in 1940, the demand for industrial education increased. This is evident from the recruitment of J.J. Meyer, B Mokoko and G.G. Magau, who

72 J. M Nhlapo, *Wilberforce Institute,* p. 74.
73 Ibid,p.74.
74 Ibid, p.75.
75 Ibid, p. 75.
76 WHP, Wilberforce Financial Statement of 1940, Xuma Papers, AD 843.

were appointed as instructors in leatherwork, tailoring and building courses. According to Jacob Nhlapo, a former principal of Wilberforce who succeeded White, these courses were carried out without government subsidy for the whole year of 1940; the instructors were paid out of the profits earned from the work of their departments.[77]

They were, however, absorbed into the government payroll after Dr Eiselen, along with other inspectors, visited Wilberforce in 1941. In South Africa, where white capital sought to gain control over African labour, the idea of industrial education was important for African economic independence and self-employment. As Dr White noted in the *Negro Journal of Religion* in 1939: 'Wilberforce ... [had] a unique opportunity, that of helping the native to evolve his special type of training and to make an educational contribution that others will be glad to accept.'[78] In their memoirs, the Whites emphasised that an African 'must learn to improve, through his own effort, his social condition. And practical training must be given to the rank and file, so as to help raise the economic standard.'[79] Wilberforce, it could be argued, had the unique vision of empowering Africans to challenge the process of proletarianisation.

The type of training that the institute introduced may perhaps be interpreted as a visionary educational movement aimed at liberating Africans from what an American historian John Curl referred to as 'wage slavery'.[80] It is important to note that within segregated African communities large numbers of skilled artisans were needed for the local market. With the increasing demand for education and a need to cater for those who had been deprived of opportunity to attend school, Wilberforce introduced short industrial courses and evening classes in 1939. .[81]

The work of the Whites and other staff members was noteworthy. In Evaton, it drew the attention of the Indian population. Mr Jada, a local Indian merchant, approached Dr White to assist Indian students by giving them examinations. By the 1930s, the schools were already separated on racial lines in South Africa, and Indians had their own separated curriculum and different schools from those of Africans. In Evaton, however, there was no provision for Indians.

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77 J.M Nhlapo, *Wilberforce*, p.16.

78 A.J White, 'Wilberforce Institute and the Native Education in Transvaal,' *Journal of Negro Religion* No3.4 1939, p. 5.

79 A. J. White and L. G. White, *Dawn in Bantuland*, p. 76.

80 See J. Curl, *For All the People: Uncovering the Hidden History of Cooperation, Cooperative Movements, and Communalism in America, (*Berkeley, 2012).

81 A.J White 'Wilberforce Institute and the Native Education in Transvaal,' *Journal of Negro Religion* No3.4 1939, p. 5.

As a result, Mr Jada and other Indians of Evaton opened a school in Jada's yard, but the educational authorities did not recognise the school.[82] This small school had two teachers that Dr White had to capacitate, one Coloured and one Indian. 'It was the pupils taught by these men that I was to examine,' said Dr White.

Although Wilberforce received applications from other parts of southern Africa in the 1920s, the improvements that Bishop Wright introduced, as well as the travels of the Whites to different parts of southern Africa, attracted students from further afield. Subsequently, Wilberforce received applications from as far as South West Africa (SWA), Uganda and Tanganyika.[83] This means that the student population of Wilberforce tripled and the administration and academic responsibility became heavier.[84]

7.9 The role of white friends

It is interesting to note that Bishop Wright and Dr White attracted the interest of white friends, particularly from the University of the Witwatersrand, the Institute of Race Relations and the American Missionary Board. As the Whites noted, 'we cannot write of Wilberforce Institute without thinking of those loyal Christian missionaries from America who always stood by our side. They were Dr and Mrs Dexter Taylor, Mrs Clara Bridgeman, Dr and Mrs Ray Phillips;[and] Mr Johnson.'[85] Another important figure who became a close friend of Wilberforce was Senator Rheinallt-Jones of the South African Institute of Race Relations, who frequently visited the school. He spoke at numerous school ceremonies, including the dedication of new buildings, such as the Crogman Wright clinic. The *Voice of Mission* reported:

> [The] Institute of Race Relations [was] one of the most significant of all the organisations in South Africa. With patience, intelligence and a desire for the best good, this Institute seeks to approach and solve the most difficult racial problems that confront us… [Senator Rheinallt-Jones also] paid tribute to the work the Wilberforce Institute was doing in bringing the benefits of civilisation to the native people. The Government of the Union was sympathetic and he personally would strive to persuade the State to devote funds so as to allow the great work undertaken by Bishop Wright and his colleagues to continue.[86]

Before the Bishop's incumbency, white people did not seem to associate themselves with Wilberforce. There does not appear to be one example of a white person who visited Wilberforce

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82 A. J. White and L. G. White, *Dawn in Bantuland*, p.78.
83 Ibid, p.100.
84 C. Grogman-Wright *Beneath the Southern Cross*, p.51.

85 Ibid, p.91.

86 The Voice of Mission, October 1939.

before 1936, aside from the official visit of the Pass Officer from Vereeniging in 1919. It is possible that the relationship between the principal of Wilberforce, the Bishop and the members of the American Board was cemented by their American citizenship, though this does not apply to Rheinallt-Jones who was born in Wales. There is some evidence that the Bantu Men's Social Centre (BMSC) in Faraday, Johannesburg, became a meeting point for educated Africans and white sympathisers. It is where white liberals from the South African Institute of Race Relations collaborated with Africans to solve racial problems. The BMSC reported in 1937,

> From the figures supplied by our Treasurer, we are pleased to note a steady increase in our kitchen takings. The mid-day meal experiment has been a success from the point of view of service to members if not of financial profit. We have had the honour to supply meals to prominent men, such as Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, of American Research Work on Social Science, Professor D. D. T. Jabavu, Dr. J. L. Dube, the Right Revd Bishop Richard Wright, Professor and Mrs. White, R. G. Baloyi, M.R.C., and other African notables.[87]

Although the white friends of Wilberforce lived in the exclusive white suburbs of Johannesburg, they regularly invited the likes of the Charlotte Maxeke, the Whites and Bishop Wright to their homes. In a letter to his wife in 1938, Coan wrote that on 'new year's day and the few days to follow I shall be with Dr and Mrs Ray Phillips, two lovely Americans.'[88] When Bishop Wright collapsed in Alexander Township, Dr and Mrs Phillips insisted that he should be brought to their home, where he was cared for for ten days.[89] For school entertainment, the Phillips showed moving pictures to students. Along with others, the Phillips sponsored other extra-curricular programmes of great interest.[90] When Coan left South Africa in 1947, Dr Phillips wrote him a reference letter that reads as follows:

> Professor Coan is most highly respected by the representatives of churches and government in the Union of South Africa. He is [a] full member of the Christian Council of Churches and of the Transvaal Missionary Association. He is entitled to all concessions granted to clergymen and missionar[ies] by railroad and steamship line.[91]

87 WHP, Annual Report 1937, Bantu Men's Social Centre Records, (BMSC) A1058 B9.

88 SAREU, A letter from Dr Coan to his wife, 29 December 1939, Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 4 File 4/1, letter from Dr Coan to his wife, 29 December 1939.

89 A. J. White and L. G. White, *Dawn in Bantuland*, p. 91.

90 Ibid, p. 92.

91 SAREU, A testimonial letter from Ray Phillips on behalf of Dr Coan 15 August 1947, Coan Papers MSS 872 Box File.'

7.10 Mother White, girls and domestic work

It is important to examine the role that Luella White as a female teacher played in the lives of African girls at Wilberforce. As an educationist, Luella White was committed to the education of African children in general. She worked with her husband and other teachers to revive Wilberforce and, although she worked under conditions that may be interpreted as substandard, she devoted herself to the upliftment of African children under her care. Mother White, as she was affectionately known, frequently lectured on the importance of humility, character, self-denial, and dedication to the race. She educated her students, as well as local women from the community. She took a deep interest in her students, particularly the girls.

In the 1930s, girls' industrial training was officially limited to domestic science. Mrs White introduced the Domestic Science Department for girls. At first, this project started on a very small scale and it was not even part of the school curriculum. It was not recognised and subsidised by the government. Luella White took this on voluntarily to help the girls learn to make dresses and prepare balanced food for themselves.[92] After two years of her voluntary work, the government began to recognise the significance of her initiative. White, who was by then a secretary of the school, was transferred to the government payroll and she was paid the equivalent of £45.[93] The Domestic Science Department then expanded and Mrs Qupe and Miss Wares joined and assisted her in teaching. She trained girls in making school uniforms, aprons, cooking caps, and simple dresses. Female missionaries in America supplied a large percentage of the material used by the girls.[94] She also trained students to cook and keep the house in order. Her aim was for the girls to transfer these skills into their homes. She felt that:

> If these girls could be taught to make dresses for mother and sister...and assist ... in preparing a well-balanced and tasty meal to the family and friends who from time to time called … they would be performing a worthwhile work.[95]

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92 A. J. White and L. G. White, *Dawn in Bantuland*, p.69.

93 Ibid, p.69

94 C. Grogman-Wright *Beneath the Southern Cross*, p.47.

95 A. J. White and L. G. White, *Dawn in Bantuland*, p.69.

White also focused on the intersection between beauty, body image, and the hair of girls at Wilberforce. While all cultures have had, and continue to have, various standards of beauty and body decoration, African girls at Wilberforce had short hair and some, particularly those from BaSotho origins, wore a clean-shaved head. Mrs White came from a background where female beauty was bound to racial stereotype and socially constructed. In this context, African-American features were considered to be less beautiful and Mrs White therefore saw it as important to introduce 'beauty sessions' for girls. In these sessions, girls would use a little backroom in the principal's cottage to wash, press and arrange their hair.[96] Her beauty training was backed up by American magazines, which influenced local girls to imitate their American cousins. Her initiative was supported by the Women of America, an African-American women organisation that sent sewing machines, material, a variety of sewing material, embroidery floss, knitting needles and several bolts of blue material out of which they made attractive uniforms.[97] White's educational approach promoted a stereotype of femininity customarily regarded as a strengthening family stability during the Victorian era and was heavily influenced by the domestic ideology of Christian evangelism. This approach has been critically condemned by feminist historians who interpret it as confining women to the domestic space as wives and mothers while isolating them from industrial activities.[98] Erlank, for example, notes 'not all African girls agreed with the stereotypes of feminity ideas but they acquiesced for want of educational alternatives.'[99] There is much scope for further research on the issues of gender in the AME church in South Africa.

7.11 Agricultural initiative

While the economically depressed Wilberforce sought solutions to its problems, the Whites introduced agriculture as part of their self-help programme. These Whites were driven by the spirit of Booker T. Washington's who concluded 'that the great body of the Negro population must live in the future as they have done in the past, by the cultivation of the soil, and the most helpful service now to be done is to enable the race to follow agriculture with intelligence and

96 Grogman-Wright *Beneath the Southern Cross*, p.47. For a scholarly discourse, African-American beauty and hairs see M. Wallace, *Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman*. (New York: 1979), p 158; T.O. Patton 'Hey Girl, Am I More than My Hair?: African American Women and Their Struggles with Beauty, Body Image, and Hair' *NWSA Journal,* 18,, (2006), pp. 24-51.

97 Ibid.

98 See J. Addams, *Second Twenty Years at Hull House*, (New York 1930), p. 196-99; also J. Addams, "*A Feminist Physician Speaks*," a review of Modern Woman and Sex by Rachelle S. Yaxros, M.]:)., Survey LXX, 2, eb., 1934), 59. B. Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York, 1963).

99 N. Erlank, 'Gender and Masculinity in South Africa' p.659.

diligence.'[100] When they arrived at Wilberforce, they were depressed by the gardens, which looked shabby. In their account, they describe the school's potentially arable land as follows:

> The soil on the school campus is fairly fertile. There the school gardens have been for many years. On the campus facing the road leading to Johannesburg and Vereeniging, I was told good crops of mealies (field corn) were raised; and, of course, there are the garden plots of the students –about one-half acre. It seems to us that the main campus should have an artistic as well as practical touch.[101]

The land adjacent to the school and the principal's house was stony and gravelly and had not been used for any agricultural purpose. With the help of James Gazoba, who became a student at Wilberforce during the term of the Whites, this land was made arable. The aim of the agricultural practice was to supply the school dining hall with vegetables. According to the Whites, Gazoba had been a gardener for an English family in the Cape Province for fifteen years[102] and became central to the development of agriculture. Along with some teachers, he organised a gang of boys to prepare the field. The project started with the clearing of stones, which was not easy: pick axes, hoes, rakes, and wheelbarrows were constantly in use as the boys removed stones from the soil every afternoon. It took students the whole of the winter of 1939 to clear the soil of its rock encumbrances.[103] This exercise was mocked by some members of the community and passers-by who laughed at students, and said: 'we were wasting our time on that land; nothing had grown there for years.'[104] The soil was, however, eventually judged to be in a fair condition for planting. As a result, the Native Affairs Department granted the school a large bag of seeds, and the cleared land was planted. The school's effort was rewarded: varieties of vegetables were harvested and students began to eat from the garden.[105] Apart from vegetables, the Whites introduced a culture associated with flowers, not only at Wilberforce but in the whole village of Evaton. They also planted many trees on the school grounds. .

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100 F. B. Simkins, *A History of the South* (New York,1958), p. 506; see also Booker T. Washington, *Working With the Hands* (New York, 1904), p. 135.

101 A. J. White and L. G. White, *Dawn in Bantuland*, p. 71.

102 Ibid, p. 71.

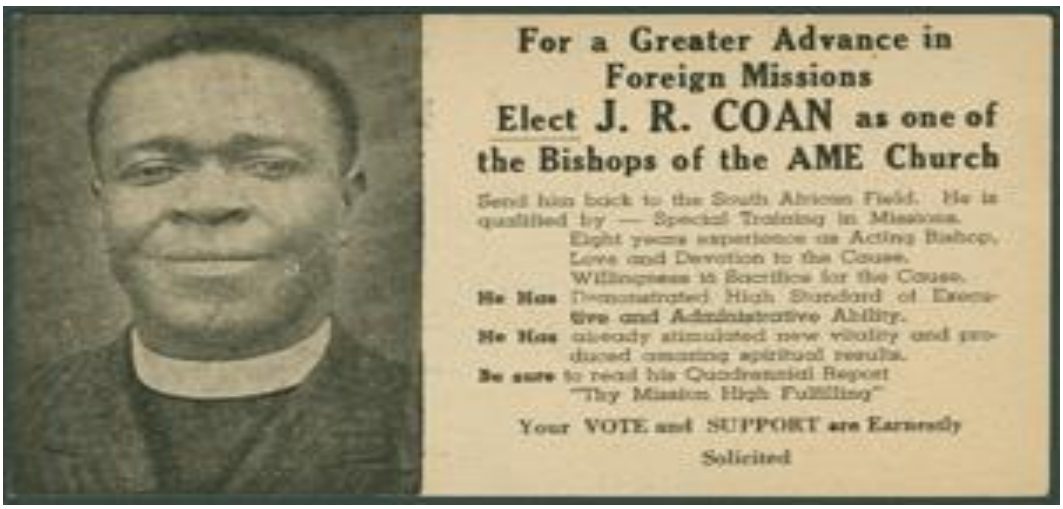
103 Ibid, p. 71.

104 Ibid, p. 71.

105 Ibid, p.72.



Dr Jacob Mfaniselwa Nhlapo, the new principal who succeeded Dr Amos White in 1940. South African History online http://www.sahistory.org.za/people/dr-jacob-mfaniselwa-nhlapo last accessed on 27 December 2017



Dr Josephus Coan, an African American who spent nine years working at Wilberforce Institute. Sourced from Coan Papers (Emory University)



Dr Nhlapo's House outside Wilberforce. This house is not part of AME property. Photograph by the author. 2015

7.12 After Bishop Wright

After Bishop Wright and the Whites left in 1940, Jacob Mfaniselwa Nhlapo became the first principal who was not a member of the AME church. He was inaugurated on 23 May 1940 at Inchane Hall at Polly Street in Johannesburg. Born in 1903 to Isaac Hulumeni and Catherina Maseko, Nhlapo received primary schooling at his birthplace, Reitz, a town in northeast of the Orange Free State province. After his primary schooling, he gained a first class pass for his Lower Primary Teachers' Certificate at Bensonvale Institution in the Eastern Cape.

Nhlapo was the first African in the country to gain a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism, and the first black South African to be awarded a Bachelor of Arts by the University of South Africa. Nhlapo became the first black South African in the Orange Free State province, which was still, according to *Bantu World*, 'a wilderness', to qualify at this level.[106] While working as a principal at Wilberforce, he obtained his doctoral degree in the field of psychology in 1945. Before coming to Wilberforce, he worked as a teacher at Moroka Institute and after resigning from Wilberforce in 1953, he became the editor of the *Bantu World*.[107]

When Bishop Wright left, the AME headquarters commissioned Dr Coan to take over the Bishop's duties. Coan was left with what he described as 'undreamed [of] tasks' entrusted to him. Not only did he become the Superintendent of Wilberforce Institute, he became the General Superintendent of the AME in South Africa, effectively assuming the position of the acting Bishop. He held this position for some time as the prospect of the arrival of Bishop Reid, who was to succeed Bishop Wright, 'looked dark.'[108] It is not clear from the records why Bishop Reid did not come to South Africa. Nevertheless, Coan was given general oversight over the work of the church. Along with his work as a Head of the R.R. Wright School at Wilberforce, he had to give direction to the work of the South African AME church from 1940 to 1945. According to

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106 *The Bantu World of 1 June and 8 June 8, 1957*, TD Mweli-Skota, *The African Who's Who.*

107 T.D. Mweli Skota, *African Yearly Register.*

108 SAREU, Adventures in South Africa by Dr J.R. Coan, Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 4 File 4/1.

Coan, 'these three major positions if met with thoroughness, would have taxed the … [strength] of six good men.'[109] After feeling the pressure of his work, Coan wrote in his diary in 1941:

> This heavy load has been sacrificial to me, sacrificial in that I have been over taxed ...I was on the point of a nervous breakdown several times. But the greater sacrifice was that of thoroughness in all that I was doing. I get no joy in doing things inefficiently.... [110]

At that time, the church supported eighty schools. In most of these schools, salaries, buildings and equipment were hopelessly inadequate. In Rhodesia, for instance, and in the neighbouring protectorates, there were many AME congregations with no buildings at all.

Wilberforce's enrolment increased dramatically in 1940; the school had its biggest ever enrolment in the teacher training, secondary, industrial and ministerial departments.[111] The post-primary classes increased from 52 to 426 within four years, which showed that the desire for education was constantly increasing among Africans. From 1940 onwards, many parents were keen to send their children to school and enrolment continued to grow. In 1946 for instance the total number of students in the post primary classes was 414, divided as follows: the School of Religion had 15, normal school had 116, the technical and vocational section of the school, which included masonry, carpentry shoemaking and other vocations including domestic science, had 117. Of the 414 students, 322 were boarders. The enrolment of the post-primary department showed an increase of 48 over that of the previous year.[112] Due to the lack of space to accommodate these students, 300 applications were refused in 1946. In the primary school department, 644 students were enrolled. Owing to the lack of accommodation, 125 primary

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109 Ibid

110 SAREU, Dairies, Diaries J.R Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 21 File.

111 SAREU, A letter from Coan to his wife, 21 February 1940 Dr J.R Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 3 File 3/10.

112 *The South African Christian Recorder*, 2 November 1946.

school applicants could not be admitted.[113] Despite the rapid development that Bishop Wright introduced at Wilberforce, the increase of student enrolment required yet more buildings.

The increase of the number of students in missionary schools is evident in the testimonies of parents interviewed by Hellen Hellmann in her 1940 investigation of the 'problems of urban Bantu' children. Hellmann argues that the urban African desire for education had increased, that many parents were considerably distressed when their children, either because of illness or because of poverty, were not at school. They were driven by the belief that education secured economic benefits and better jobs.[114] She found that many parents were still caught in gender stereotypes when it comes to education for girls. Many denied the value of education for girls, 'who they say will later marry and so not use education.'[115] Very few urban parents failed to see the significance of education. They considered knowledge of 'three Rs' absolutely essential for the successful conduct of everyday affairs. Several children in Hellmann's study pointed to the helplessness of those who could not read and write.[116]

As the newly appointed principal, Nhlapo felt that the school grounds should expand. He unofficially went to the Secretary of the Heath Committee in Evaton to negotiate the prospects of acquiring more land on the eastern side of the school. He was advised to make a formal application and include a rough plan of the school site.[117] The application was then prepared by Nhlapo working with Coan and Charles Demas, who was by then the head of the primary school at Wilberforce. On 28 February 1943, Coan visited Allen Snyman & Pohl, a law firm, on the subject of the purchase of land.[118] After the application was approved, the school acquired an extra three morgen (a morgen is a measure of land equal to about 0.8 hectare or two acres), later increased to seven. The money used was raised from the church collections, parents and the local community that was becoming a little more prosperous in the context of war era growth. This was only possible in the context of the war era reformism under the Smuts government as I

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113 Ibid

114 E. Hellman, *Problem of urban Bantu youth,s* (Johannesburg 1940), p.23.

115 Ibid, p.23.

116 Ibid, p.24.

117 J.M. .Nhlapo, *Wilberforce.*

118 SAREU , Diaries J.R Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 21 File.

discussed earlier, that was more sympathetic both to the expansion of African education and African urban stabilisation. On this new piece of land, a larger garden was laid out and a new windmill was purchased.[119] On the same piece of land, industrial buildings were erected. One of these buildings was officially opened by Bishop Gregg who arrived by air from Khartoum, Sudan.[120] In his fund-raising letter to America, Coan told Bishop Barber: 'our shortage of buildings is an acute problem.'[121] His main concern was to build the same quality of buildings as other training colleges and secondary schools, such as Amanzimtoti and Adams College, which was in line with the requirements of the TED school development plan.[122] The estimated cost of the material was £40 000, which the AME church in South Africa did not have in its coffers.[123]

The issue of space and accommodation had become critical by 1940.[124] As the school expanded, teachers' accommodation also became a problem. Some teachers were inclined to leave Wilberforce because there was no suitable accommodation for them.[125] There was also concern over the unhygienic condition of the primary school lavatories. In his diary, Coan described toilets as 'most unhygienic [,] a public nuisance.'[126] Students at Wilberforce used pit toilets and one of the first priorities in school sanitation was that toilets were structurally safe. If pit latrines were not built properly or lacked slabs, (which had become rusted, rotten or broken), they were

119 SAREU , Diaries J.R Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 21 File.
120 Ibid.
121 SARUE, A letter from Coan to Bishop Baber 23 June 1945 J.R Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 3 File 3/10.
122 Ibid.
123 Ibid.
124 Ibid.
125 Ibid.
126 SAREU, Diaries J.R Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 21 File 1.

at risk of collapse. The school administration felt that the condition of the school lavatories at Wilberforce not only posed a danger to students but also to the surrounding community.[127]

Apart from the lavatories, there were other unsafe health conditions resulting from insufficient water supply and refuse that piled up next to the water source.[128] The campus was dirty 'with rags, papers and other rubbish. The dining hall and the kitchen were neglected. The water in the reservoirs was open and breeding places for mosquitos.'[129] The girls' lavatory was filthy and neglected. For this, Coan blamed the Boarding Master who 'seem[ed] to have not encouraged the students to work.'[130] On 24 February 1943, Dr Miller and Dr Thom, the District Surgeons from the Health Authorities visited the school. They threatened to prosecute Coan, who was humiliated and embarrassed, for criminal neglect. Coan tried to be as 'nice and gentle to them as... [he] could.'[131]

On the same afternoon Coan organised a group of boys and started cleaning up the place and he insisted that: 'the boys' lavatory should be looked after ... and the place should be kept [clean].'[132] After a few days, the school received a letter from the magistrate, which stated that there should be improvement within six weeks. A notice was also received from the TED that warned Wilberforce administration that if the aforementioned requirements were not met, the grant for

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127 Ibid.

128 SAREU, Diaries J.R Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 21 File 1.

129 Ibid. p.5

130 Ibid. p.7

131 Ibid.

132 Ibid.

the school would be cut off. With more students the cleaning and renovation was undertaken day and night and the government grant was retained. Through the aid of the government, which showed generosity to Wilberforce during this period, the school was able to improve its electric plant and install electric lights in dormitories. The water system was improved through the installation of two windmill pumps, all made possible with an £1100 grant from the government. With this money, more books were purchased and rooms were added in the boys' vocational section.

Following in the footsteps of Bishop Wright, Coan was diligent in his efforts to improve the school infrastructure. After receiving an amount of £10,050, described in the records as 'the largest grant … [ever] received from the government' in 1944, a vocational building was erected.[133] During his tenure as a Superintendent, there was an urgent need for a new high school building at Wilberforce, fuelled by the rapid growth of students who wanted to acquire matric and further their education at Fort Hare.

7.13 The improvement of financial management

Another important contribution made by Coan was the improvement of financial management. He commissioned a qualified accountant to assist him in developing a budget for the school. In a letter addressed to the Board of Trustees attached to the 1941 balance sheet, he wrote:

> It should be clearly understood that this FIRST ATTEMPT is not to be the FINAL STEP, but is the starting point of a series of useful business and administrative developments. They cannot all be introduced at once, but must be brought in gradually[134]

For the 1941 balance, as well as for the new system of bookkeeping already initiated, the school was advised, counselled and guided by J. Ramsay Thomson, a chartered accountant whose service became invaluable for the healthy financial administration of the school. The school became heavily indebted to him for his patience, pain and care in examining the documents and

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133 SAREU, A letter from Coan to L. L. Berry 31 July 1944. J.R Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 1 File 1/6 .

134 WHP, A letter from Coan to the Wilberforce Board of Trustees, 1941 Xuma Papers AD843.

vouchers for accuracy.[135] He also suggested constructive changes in the school's system of bookkeeping and banking. The school was also grateful to Mrs Opperman, a secretary faithfully kept the records of the school's income and expenditure. The preparation of the new system was tiresome; 'it meant long days and nights of painful labour... [for Mrs Opperman] which she had done willingly and cheerfully.'[136] A detailed report of 1945 acknowledges that the Transvaal AME Conference donated £400, the missionary Convention of Transvaal bestowed £300, the Cape Convention contributed £25, the Orangia £25, and Natal £10. The salary payroll for teachers amounted to £4,744 18s. 9d.

135 Ibid.

136 Ibid.



WILBERFORCE INSTITUTE

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

FOR PERIOD 1 NOVEMBER, 1940, to 31st MARCH, 1941.

To Conferences—Net Amount Received	£112	1 5
„ Grants from Transvaal Education Department	463	5 11
For Domestic Science	£34 13 7	
„ Practicing School	79 8 6	
„ Training School and Carpentry	58 19 0	
„ Rent	37 2 6	
„ Library	6 12 4	
„ Capitation Grant	246 10 0	
„ Grant from Native Affairs Department for Water and Sanitation	131	7 11
„ Students' Fees	462	5 4
„ Receipts from Sundry Departments for the Institute	50	10 1
Tailoring Department	16 17 10	
Shoemaking Department	6 0 9	
Uniforms and Sports	10 3 6	
Book Store	9 8 0	
Profit on Concert	8 0 0	
„ Contributions re Founders Day and New Post Office	19	19 6
„ Other Income	48	14 3
„ TOTAL INCOME FOR THE PERIOD	1,488	4 5
„ Balance as at 1st November, 1940, as per previous Cash Statement	116	15 7
	£1,605	0 0

I have examined the above Statement of Receipts and Payments of the Wilberforce Institute, together with the relevant original vouchers and documents. I have, in the absence of other confirmation, accepted the statement of the Superintendent of the Institute that the balance of £116 15s. 7d. at 1st November, 1940, as shown by the previous Cash Statement, is correct. In my opinion the above is a correct statement of the Receipts and Payments of the Wilberforce Institute for the period 1st November, 1940, to 31st March, 1941, according to the vouchers and documents I have seen and explanations I have received.

J. RAMSAY THOMSON, B.Com., C.A. (S.A.)

By Teachers' Salaries	£321	8 1
„ Students' Wages	61	1 6
„ Books and Sports	38	17 4
		£421 6 11
„ Hostel and Boarding	140	5 8
General Equipment	339	8 1
Provisions	301	10 3
		781 4 0
„ Stationery and Office Expenses	97	2 3
Annual Report	26	18 6
Transport and Travelling Expenses	26	6 3
Postages, Telephone, etc.	22	18 5
Bank Charges	2	1 7
		175 7 0
„ Loan to Teacher		4 0 0
„ Expenditure in Sundry Departments (Net)		136 16 1
Tailoring Department	41	18 7
Shoemaking Department	15	5 4
Masonry Department	20	17 8
Domestic Science Department	58	14 6
„ TOTAL PAYMENTS FOR THE PERIOD		£1,518 14 0
„ Balance as at 31st March, 1941		86 6 0
		£1,605 0 0

The 1941 Balance Sheet Coan Papers, Emory University

7.14 Students' concerns

Until 1945, when F. H. Gow took responsibility as a new AME Bishop of the Fifteenth District that covered the Cape and SWA, Coan was overworked.[137] As a Dean of the ministerial school, he had to attend to the concerns of students who, individually and collectively, approached him expressing a concern about their future career in ministry. The church had a variety of mission points in different circuits, some were well organised, particularly those that were located in urban areas, others disorderly and less organised. Some were really poor with no church

137 SAREU, AME Missionary Work by Dr J.R Coan Papers, MSS 872 Box 4 File 4/1.

buildings; they held their church services in living rooms, under trees or in the open air. Some were in distant places that required long walks and plenty of hill climbing.

The mission work in SWA was started in 1928 and, until 1943, the church had 'done little good' there. The church was poor; it did not have money and 'manpower' to make this field prosper.[138] From 1928, there had never been more than two elders in this territory. 'For the past 12 years there was but one elder without assistance of a deacon or licentiate'; this was Revd J Molahloe.[139] In such regions, ministers were often bitterly disappointed, terminated their service, and it was hard to replace them. These challenges posed a serious challenge for Coan who had to train ministers and place them under these conditions. He outlined that 'the young pastors repeatedly made known to me the way they felt [about this situation].'[140] When placed in these regions they confronted extreme hardship. They asked Coan:

> why men of our calibre be assigned to starvation. Did we spend all the years studying theology to be thrown away? Does the church despise us by sending us out to starve. Our people are too poor and few to feed us and our families. They tell us how the general church of other denominations helps the struggling members to build churches and mission houses, how they pay their ministers, evangelists and catechists monthly salaries with increments. [141]

It is important to note that ministers in the mainstream churches were paid relatively well, enabling young and old ministers to devote full time to evangelisation, teaching and service. Inevitably, young AME ministers compared themselves with the mainstream church employees. But, as the acting Bishop, Coan was faced with the problem of budgeting for subsidising the work of the rural churches while encouraging youngsters to study under him at Wilberforce.

As a man who left his comfort for mission work in Africa, a continent that was considered 'backward', Coan sacrificed his family life by leaving his wife behind for nine years. He spent his entire South African tenure living in Evaton, a location with no electricity and other conveniences of modernity. Considering his own background and sacrifice, Coan was troubled by the response of young ministers who felt that going to serve in poor rural areas was 'being thrown away'. In his diary, he wrote: 'they recite how much they have suffered for the church [in the remote areas of southern Africa]. Some wrote that the doctor said: 'they must be on the

138 SAREU, Diaries J.R Coan Papers, MSS 872 Box 21 File 3.
139 Ibid, this was Revd J Molahloe.
140 Ibid.
141 SAREU, AME Missionary Work by Dr J.R Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 4 File 4/1.

Reef.' [142] In his own view, Coan concluded that these pastors were less committed and they demonstrated the signs of 'un-consecrated ministry.'[143]

The AME church was embedded in a wide geographical area of southern Africa. However, until 1940 the church failed to build great churches and influential missionary centres. The church also failed to strengthen the existing schools in rural areas. These criticisms were flung at African Methodism; they embarrassed and humiliated church leaders who were looked down upon by their counterparts from other churches. Despite all problems that the church and the students experienced, under the superintendence of Coan the church was able to raise money for matriculants who performed well in their final exams to further their studies at Fort Hare. This was evident when Coan, who raised money from Bishop Wright, wrote:

> The Bursar at Fort Hare sent me his accounts. I paid it for the whole year. Since I understand that you have been sending direct to Fort Hare. I have been wondering if Fort Hare is charging doubly for Oliphant. I shall be pleased to hear from you on this subject. Oliphant is inquiring as to whether he will be helped again with his fees this year. Also there is son of the Revd L.N. Lethoba about whom I called your attention for 1943. He was successful in his matriculation. Consequently he did not go. But he desire to go this year. He too will make a good worker for us if he can get his degree. I am getting the conference here to help two young men this year. One is Revd Ndimande's son Phillip, who because of illness at the beginning of last year did not return.[144]

There were other students, such as Champion Ngoma, a student in the Wright School of Religion who wanted to further his studies at Fort Hare, and Coan promised that: 'I shall help him personally as [the church was] greatly in need of such men of his type for Northern Rhodesia'.[145]

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142 SAREU, Diaries J.R Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 21 File 3.

143 Ibid.

144 SAREU, A letter from Coan to Bishop Wright 27 January 1945, Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 4 File 4/1.

145 Ibid.

7. 15 Discipline

Like any other missionary education institutions, Wilberforce provided an environment in which positive teaching and learning occurred. Wilberforce had a strong commitment to student integrity. Truthfulness was a core value that required students to conduct themselves in a reasonable and proper manner at all times, both on and off campus. Despite the school code of conduct, it is understood, students often conducted themselves badly. In 1943, twenty male students were found drunk and the Disciplinary Committee recommended that they should be expelled from the school. All the members agreed that Coan as a Superintendent of the school should take the final decision. He then reported this matter to Nhlapo and Dr Eiselen who visited the school accompanied by Mr Endemann.

After this meeting, the assembly was called at 3pm and four students among the drunken students, possibly the ringleaders, were expelled. The others were given corporal punishment. Much of the traditional culture that surrounds this type of punishment in school, at any rate in the English-speaking world, derives largely from British practice in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, particularly as regards the caning of teenage boys.[146] The records reveal that during this period the school handled many cases of mischief, which included disorderly conduct in the dining hall and kitchen, as well as being out of the bounds of the school premises while under the influence of alcohol. Although it was part of regulation that students should not go out of school bounds without permission, students were increasingly ignoring this regulation by 1945.[147] It appears as if drunkenness was becoming a big problem. A student by the name of Cornelius, for example, was found drunk in 1943. The records reveal that it was not the first time this student was found drunk; initially the learner was warned, but later he was again found helplessly drunk and there was no other alternative but to expel him in 1945.[148]

For boarders, the Boarding Master and Matrons who ensured that female and male students were kept separate from each other enforced school regulations. It is recorded that there were many other cases of mischief that were reported. These cases included the use of abusive language and theft.[149] On 15 April 1946, for instance, a student by the name of Peter Mashabela used vulgar

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146 See UK Parliament. *Education (No. 2) Act 1986;* Privy Council of the United Kingdom; *Education (Corporal Punishment) (Northern Ireland) Order 1987*.

147 SAREU, A letter from Coan to Ephraim Sakge, Papers,13 October1945 MSS 872 Box 1 File 1/6.

148 Ibid.

149

words while criticising the type of food that was dished up during the lunch time in one of the dining hall tables, and he said: '*moer skont* what they have cooked is soft porridge.'[150] Other students defied teachers and refused to do their work, one of those students was Benjamin Molelekwa from Olifantsfontein. In a letter written to his mother, Coan wrote:

> His misbehaviour was brought to my notice on Tuesday. I informed him that we cannot have that sort of thing. I instructed him to report to the Agricultural teacher for special assignment of work. This he refused to do [so]. A student who conduct himself like that, and withdraw rather than do it, in the best interest of the good discipline, he should be expelled. I hereby do so. I am very sorry that Benjamin like so many other ill-advised youth heedlessly go astray. We have tried to save him.[151]

Tladi who investigated the cause of this odd behaviour discovered that the acceptance of expelled boys from other schools was the main source. These boys came with troublesome ideas, teaching others what they used to do in their previous schools.[152] It was concluded that there should be strong control of movement for boarding students so that these problems should not arise again. The problem of discipline was also associated with poor examination results. By 1946, the records indicate that the situation at Wilberforce was 'stormy' and some elements on the staff were taking advantage of Coan's absence on church duties. Things were increasingly running down.

As the acting Bishop, Coan also had to solve issues of discipline in the church. Most of the serious cases involved drunkenness. In 1945, Coan received a letter from a church member who complained about a minister who sexually harassed his wife while drunk. In that correspondence, the complainant stated: 'he went to my place and he was drunk and he was asking if we haven't got any drink … after that he began to touch and feel her … I must say that I am not satisfied

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Ibid.

150

SAREU, A letter from E.E Tladi to Coan undated Coan Papers, MSS 872 Box 1.

151

SAREU, A letter from Coan to Mrs M. Molelekwa 5 April 1946, Coan Papers, MSS 872 Box 1.

152

Ibid.

with that nonsense of him and he is one that must lead us to the right way.'[153] As a result, this church member was forced to resign from the AME church because of his misconduct. It appears from the 1943 Natal church records that the consumption of alcohol was becoming a disappointing problem within the church circles. Coan recorded that 'one of the most disappointing experiences of the conference was the tendency of the brethren to indulge in strong drink. This is a weakness that will destroy usefulness of many good men.'[154] According to the report, priests who were affected by alcohol abuse were Revds M.M. Makuvile, M.S Meintjies and S Yokwe.

This was one of the aspects that frustrated Coan and other religious staff of Wilberforce; the church advocated temperance. The control of body, greed and lust was all part of temperance teaching initiated at Wilberforce long before the 1940s. This was carried up to the 1960s, and is evident in *The Wilberforcian*, a school magazine that was published in 1964. In one article D.M. Matebesi, a teacher, wrote: 'Temperance the power of saying No, does not only mean temperance in strong drinks, but can be applied by each one of us to whatever is our pet indulgence.[155]

7.16 Poor results

At the same time, both Coan and Nhlapho were concerned about the examination results of the school. Students' pass rates were disappointing. From the time Coan and Nhlapo became administrators of the school, the results were getting worse each year. This troubled Coan, who failed to understand the reason behind this failure. The school had better qualified teachers and it was now receiving a grant from the government, yet the results were disappointing. He concluded that, 'there is something radically wrong with the teaching. When we had fewer and less qualified teachers our results were better.' He then instructed the Head of the Departments to investigate the source of the trouble. There is, however, no report on this investigation in the

153 SAREU, A letter from S.A. Legoho to Coan, Coan Papers, 13 October1945 MSS 872 Box 1 File 1/6.

154 SAREU, Diaries J.R Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 21 File 3.

155 *The Wilberforcean*, p.17.

school records. The question of poor results persisted up to 1945 when the school received a report from the TED, which indicated the Department's disappointment. Both Nhlapo and Coan reported this to the School Board. In his own judgement, Coan felt that the principal and the staff had let him down.[156]

Education is a complex process based on mutual interaction of many factors, Wilberforce's failure was based on different and versatile reasons that could perhaps be linked to the decline of discipline, as well as to the sheer size of the school and the difficulty of ensuring consistent quality of students and teaching. It is important to note that it was much easier to micro-manage Wilberforce as a small school during its humble beginning than it was in the period under review. When the school reopened in 1946, all the efforts were made to improve the results of that year.

The situation was, however, aggravated by school strikes countrywide that took place in 1946. Most African schools in South Africa experienced some unrest at this time, covering a wide range of incidents from class boycotts to arson in different mission schools. These disturbances started in Lovedale and spread to other schools. Wilberforce was also affected, a small group of students unsuccessfully tried to stage a boycott and riot. Coan said 'we had to work with all of our powers to suppress it'[157] and fourteen students who were leaders of the Wilberforce unrest were expelled. There is, however, no account kept in writing on the impact of the unrest in the school records. As the situation worsened, the government appointed a Commissioner to investigate the cause of the strikes.[158] In its findings, the Commission reported that the cause of

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156 SAREU, Diaries, J.R Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 21 File 3.

157 SAREU . A letter from Coan to Dr LL Berry undated Coan Papers MSS 872 Box 1 File 1/7.

158 See J. Hyslop Food, 'Authority and Politics: Student Riots in South African Schools 1945-1976.' A Seminar Paper presented at African Studies Seminar at the University of the Witwatersrand 1986; C Kros, They wanted Dancing and not merely Lambeth Walk; J Bolnick 'Double-Cross: Potiako Leballo and the 1946 Riots at Lovedale Missionary Institution., A Seminar Paper presented at African Studies Seminar at the University of the Witwatersrand 1986; *South African Outlook* 1 February 1947; B Hirson, *Year of Fire Year of Ash, The Soweto School children's revolt that shook apartheid* (London 1979) .

protest was the quality and quantity of food and living conditions in missionary schools.[159] Wilberforce is, however, not mentioned in this report.

Conclusion

It is clear that without Bishop Wright's intervention Wilberforce would have closed down or it would at least have lost its autonomy by the late 1930s. His achievement should be celebrated. It is also interesting to realise the role that the African-American community played in reviving the school and helping it meet the required standards to receive government subsidy. Bishop Wright did not only focus on the AME congregants but also uplifted the standard of the surrounding community. He built a clinic and he also brought a qualified nurse from America to serve the community. The chapter has also shown that Coan, who was left behind by the Whites and Bishop Wright, sacrificed his American comforts, committing himself to the upliftment of his fellow Africans. Rather than return to better conditions and his family in the United States, he chose to battle on in South Africa.

159 For a fuller argument see, C. Kros, They wanted Dancing and not merely Lambeth Walk.

Conclusion

After Coan left in 1947, Rev P.N. Selepe was appointed as Superintendent of Wilberforce Institute. In the same year, Mr A. T. Habedi, a teacher from Ohlange Institute, took up the principalship. At the beginning of 1949, Rev J. L. Makhene briefly became the Superintendent of the Institute before being succeeded by Rev C. Nthoba in 1950.[1] This period also saw the arrival of Bishop Isaiah Hamilton Bonner, who was accompanied by his wife, from the United States where he had served as one of the trustees of Payne University in Alabama. Upon his arrival in 1949, he met the Wilberforce Institute Board of Trustees to learn from them the problems and needs of the college, as well as to share with them his own ideas and aspirations about the future of Wilberforce.[2] His arrival brought some infrastructural improvements at Wilberforce; for instance, Eliza Gregg Hall was refurbished from being one big hall into several smaller comfortable bedrooms that accommodated students.

In the same year, the Nationalist government appointed a Commission to inquire into different aspects of 'Native Education' and report on what it was pleased to call 'Bantu Education,' the system of education that was formulated for 'natives' as an independent race. In the newly appointed Commission, missionaries, liberals and competent Africans were excluded. After three years of intensive work, the Commission presented its report. The report recommended 'the transfer of administration and control of 'Native Education' from different provincial administrations to the government of the Union.'[3] From 1952 onwards, various missionary schools were willing to welcome the new system of education on condition that full subsidy continued.[4]

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1 *The Wilberforcean*, p.7.

2 J Nhlapo, Wilberforce, p. 24-25.

3 G.C. Grant, *The Liquidation of Adams College* (Durban, Undated), p.5.

4 Ibid, p.18.

Revd G. C. Grant, the former principal of Adams Mission and a prominent critic of Bantu Education, described this new educational system as follows:

> [Bantu Education Act] may contain a vast amount of good, but it is determined not so much by educational ideals as by political ideas. It is not designed primarily to provide better education for Africans or to enhance his [or her] status in our multi-racial community.[5]

The new Bantu Education system brought shocking changes to black education. As we shall see, this era deprived Wilberforce Institute and other missionary schools of their autonomy. In liberal educationist Edgar Brookes' words: '[missionary schools were] butchered to make an ideologist's holiday.'[6]

The first missionary institutes that were targeted were teachers' training colleges. The government made it perfectly clear that all teacher training offered by missionary schools would be managed by the state only. Wilberforce had no alternative but to hand over the teachers' training department to the state in 1953.[7] There was further dismay when the AME authorities found that the Act provided that Wilberforce and other missionary schools could retain autonomy only with a substantially reduced subsidy. The government further announced that the subsidy would be reduced to 75 per cent of the teachers' salaries for the first year, with the possibility of diminishing rates in later years. This was devastating to the AME church, which had become increasingly dependent on state subsidy during the 1940s. The situation deteriorated when subsidies for teachers' salaries were further reduced by as much as 25 per cent in 1954.[8]

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5 Ibid.p.11.

6 E. Brookes, *A South African Pilgrimage* Johannesburg 1977, p. 53, cited by T. Couzens, *Life and Work of H African Couzens I.E. Dhlomo* (Johannesburg, 1985), p. 354.

7 Interview with Dwight Seremi, conducted by Vusi Khumalo, Evaton, 2011.

8 M. Horrell, *A Decade of Bantu Education* (Johannesburg, 1964); Native Affairs Department. Bantu Education Bulletin 1957 (P r e t o r i a 1957); G.C. Grant, *The Liquidation of Adams College*.

As a result, 'the Bishop devised that payment due to staff and students be advanced from available funds and that these amounts would be repaid by the church.'[9] Unlike the Roman Catholic Church mission schools, which launched a successful campaign to secure funds required for its independent educational work,[10] it became clear for the AME that Wilberforce would not be able to sustain itself financially without subsidy. The AME recognised the inevitability of change in the control and administration of Wilberforce brought about by the Bantu Education Act. Although the church disliked the decision of the Nationalist government, the school had no alternative but to make concessions and accept the conditions with the intention of making the best of a bad bargain.[11] As a result, power of school management was transferred from the AME to the Department of Bantu Education (DBE). This compromise, however, prevented Wilberforce from closing down, or having to lease or sell its building to the DBE and the AME was able to maintain ownership of the buildings and grounds of the school.

The Department now took responsibility for maintaining competent staff, and putting the school in a sound financial position, as well as the administration of the curriculum, examinations and resource development. More specifically, it had to replace old buildings and erect new ones to meet demands. This led to the erection of Jordan High School, a new wing of Wilberforce that was built by the DBE on the premises of Wilberforce in 1954. This new high school was dedicated together with the Artishia Jordan Library on the 23 October 1955. In addition, two wings were added to Bonner Hall, a school hall built by Bishop Bonner in 1952. The DBE's view was that this relationship imposed both legal and moral obligation upon the AME church to relinquish autonomy in perpetuity. The change frustrated some teachers, such as Joyce Seroke, a formers teacher at Wilberforce, who resigned in 1953. According to Brooks, Seroke 'feared that

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University of Western Cape, Alexander Kadalie Papers, The Minutes of Wilberforce Institute (undated), Wilberforce file.

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The Roman Catholic schools desired that Roman Catholic children should be educated in Catholic schools staffed by Catholic teachers. It is important to note that the government was willing to accept that Catholicism was different enough from the 'official' state religion of Protestantism to warrant religious autonomy.

11

Interview with Dwight Seremi. Conducted by Vusi Khumalo, Evaton , 8 July 2011.

the top-notch instruction that she and other teachers were providing for their students would become compromised.'[12]



The stone at Bonner Hall laid by Bishop I. H. Bonner in 1952 (Photo by the author 5 July 2012)

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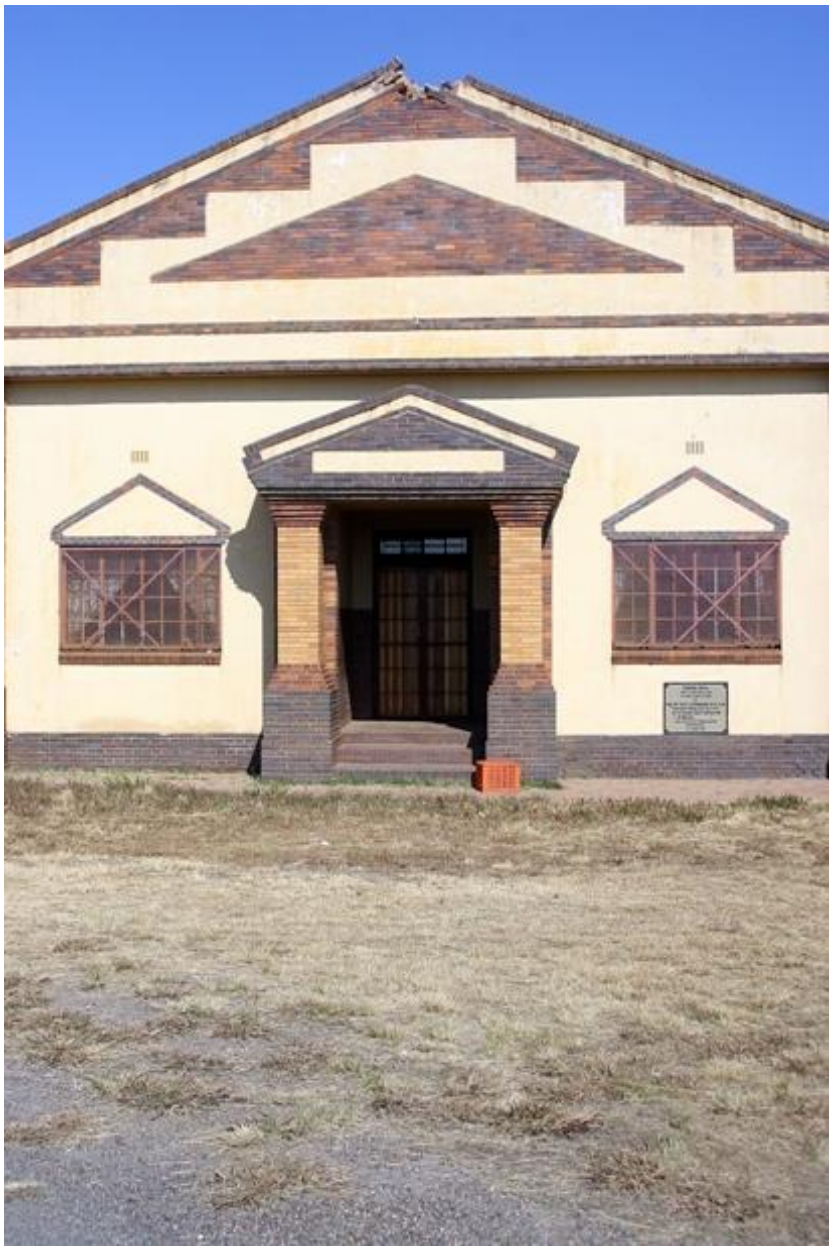
P.E. Brooks, *Boycotts, Buses, and Passes: Black Women's resistance in the US South and South Africa* (Massachusetts, 2008), p. 39.



Bonner Hall (Photo by the author, (Photo by the author 5 July 2012)

The DBE did allow the AME church authorities to retain control of the R. R. Wright School of Religion, which continued with its training programme of evangelists and other church workers. At the school level, the church concentrated on religious activities by giving assistance to the school authorities through chaplains and other auxiliaries. The church also focused on the development of Christian literature through the Wilberforce printing and publishing house.[13]

13

The Wilberforcean.

The direct involvement of the DBE relieved the AME of all financial and administrative responsibilities. It is important to note that when the TED began to subsidise Wilberforce in the early 1940s, the school was already carrying a heavy load of debt. If the school had remained autonomous, it would have had to raise annual sums of between £5,000 and £7,500 towards the operation of the school. In addition, this would have been dependent on the ongoing support from largely poverty-stricken church members and parents who faced low wages, housing problems and increased transport fares, culminating in the Evaton bus boycotts of 1955 and the rise of trade unionism in the 1950s. In addition, the maintenance of autonomy would have required the church to make provision for pensions, the payment of non-teaching staff, and other expenses.

In terms of self-help programmes, this change impacted negatively on the community support and the spirit of attachment that the community enjoyed in the past decades of the school growth. It is important to recall that the AME church guided the opening of Wilberforce and also provided teachers and managers of its schools, all achieved without government help. This implied that Wilberforce received the constant assistance from the community whenever it was faced with difficulties in the past. As indicated in this thesis, the self-help philosophy that the community embraced was embedded in the realities of the era. The community had to provide for the effective operation of Wilberforce, fuelled by the belief that African education was the responsibility of community and, importantly, the rejection of mainstream white missionary control.

While the imposition of Bantu Education in the 1950s has often been portrayed in literature as a destructive act of the Nationalist government, it should be noted that African leaders in the Transvaal actually called for the state to control 'native education' after the Anglo-Boer war. As indicated in earlier chapters, the Ethiopianist movement and other African members of the mainstream churches stressed that Africans were taxpayers who provided revenue for a state that supported white schooling but not African schooling.[14]

Thus, the intervention of the state to provide broader education in the 1950s may perhaps be interpreted as the answer to this call. From 1904 until the 1930s, there were a series of African protests about the fact that African tax contributions were not set aside for African education. By

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14 J. Campbell, *The Songs of Zion*, p. 153-160.

1955, the sum of £6,500,000 a year was set aside by Parliament for Bantu Education from the consolidated revenue account, while another £2,000,000 was sourced from Bantu taxation.[15] In his study Shepherd notes, 'the highest sum ever given by the State for Bantu education under the Smuts Government was £4,689,272. (In 1924 the sum was only £340,000.)[16] Despite the great improvement in financial investment, Bantu Education was designed to limit African aspiration. The deprivation of Wilberforce's autonomy was a very significant blow to an institution that had fought so fiercely over decades for autonomy from white control. DBE control meant that the department could hire and fire teachers, shape curriculum, and send inspection teams. While some good may have come of DBE financial support, this represented a desperately sad loss of autonomy. The AME called for state financing in the 1940s, but it never imagined that it would come with such draconian administrative control based on a clearly racist ideology.

This study has presented the neglected aspects of education in the historiography of missionary education in South Africa. It demonstrates how the long history of formal schooling in South Africa, extending back to the nineteenth century became a contested terrain. This work also established how men and women who staffed the mission stations in the Cape Colony in the early nineteenth century, and those who came after them in the later period, had different perceptions of African education. The challenge was the type of education that should be taught to African children. While some missionaries perceived each African as a 'soul to be saved and a brother and a sister to be cherished', the colonists and many mainstream missionaries saw Africans as labourers, very often an enemy, usually lazy and dangerous.[17] Subjectively, some missionaries shared (perhaps subconsciously) the widespread conviction that African people were deficient in organisational and executive skills. This group feared that African schooling might produce men and women who might refuse to accept the colonial values inculcated in the class-room.

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15 R.H.W. Shepherd, 'The South African Bantu Education Act,' *African Affairs,* 1955, p. 141.

16 Ibid, p.141.

17 Ibid, p.9.

I argue that this way of thinking influenced the government to call for the alteration of the content of African education from liberal education to industrial education. This was the system by which the government attempted to produce labour that would meet the needs of the colonial public works and economy. The scheme also benefitted self-supporting mission stations by cultivating farms, training and employing carpenters and masons. Such a curriculum was noticeably oriented towards 'shaping character', thereby contributing to social control. This study has described how this syllabus, along with the patronising attitude often expressed in the missionary rationale for African education, was disliked by much of the educated African elite and how it injected a new note into the debate on the meaning of education for Africans. This debate subsequently launched a long and bitter struggle for independent African education that culminated in the foundation of schools, such as the Wilberforce Institute.

I have argued that the questions of landownership and education are inseparable. Prior to 1905, discriminatory land tenure laws prevented Africans from purchasing land where they could build schools in the urban Transvaal. This implied that Africans who aspired to independent education could not buy land on which to build their own independent schools. I have also shown how the issue of land changed the mood of the struggle for independent education among the urban educated Africans in the Transvaal, particularly the Ethiopinainsts. It prompted them to challenge the land tenure laws of the Transvaal. Tsewu's legal victory in 1905 was essential to the founding of the Wilberforce Institute, a victory that opened up new avenues for the subsequent struggle that took the African independent school movement forward. Since the quest for independent African education was driven by the AME, this zeal was driven by faith and the unquestioning belief that through education Africans could obtain intellectual, social, economic, and moral equality with white people. This led many Africans to embrace Wilberforce as a vehicle that would assist them to advance within the colonial economy.

This thesis has shown how Africans struggled for access to control of schooling and emphasises the importance of African 'self-help' ideology in the education sphere. Without government financial support Wilberforce survived only with the help of the local AME church and the American AME community, which committed most of its foreign assistance to Wilberforce, and the local Evaton community which invested enormous energy and talent. Even though the local community lacked the financial resources to sustain major school projects, through local contributions Wilberforce grew to make significant contributions to African society and to provide educational opportunities for academically disadvantaged students who would have

otherwise been denied education. Even the better off ones could have chosen mainstream mission schools but deliberately chose to support an autonomous African project.

The South African education historiography has accorded famous 'mission institutions' such as Lovedale, Healdtown and St. Matthews much attention yet little is known about African independent educational institutions, particularly in the Transvaal. Through the story of Wilberforce this study contributes directly to our understanding of these institutions. I hope to add to our understanding of an important dimension, which students of history of education and other social historians have rarely touched upon, particularly the relationship between resistance, education and social lives of African people before 1950s.

Wilberforce has succeeded in spite of segregation, inadequate funding, and other major challenges. Up to the 1960s, the school continued to educate financially and academically disadvantaged students of all African ethnic groups. Many of its alumni have become community, business, scientific, and political leaders. Some became doctors, journalists, preachers and other holders of power or formers of African opinion.[18] In conclusion this thesis has presented how the contradictory role that schooling played in the attempt to consolidate colonial hegemony led to the foundation of Wilberforce Institute.

18

A list of the most prominent of these alumni includes the late Rev. Motlalepule Chabaku, a female ANC activist who served under Lillian Ngoyi Executive Committee that led 20,000 strong 1956 Women's March, against apartheid era pass laws. 'Mama Chabaku' served in two South African regional parliaments in Gauteng. Vusumuzi Maake, a former South African civil rights activist and lawyer who later married African-American writer and poet Maya Angelou Alfred 'Alf' Kumalo, a legendary photographer and a journalist, Sam Motsoenyane, the founder of National African Federation Chamber of Commerce NAFCOC, Elijah 'Ellis Brown' Mokone, a former featherweight boxing champion and many others. Maake was a professor at the University of Liberia in Monrovia, Liberia from 1968 to 1974. When Potlako Leballo, Chairman of the Pan Africanist Congress, was forced out of the position, Make joined a Presidential Council consisting of David Sibeko,Ellias Ntloedibe, and himself. Several months later, Make became the sole Chairman.[6] He resigned from the chairmanship in January 1981 to make way for John Nyathi Pokela, who had been recently imprisoned on Robben Island. Under Pokela, Make served as deputy chairman of the PAC

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