

**MISSION AND CHURCH IN MALAWI**  
**THE HISTORY OF THE NKHOMA SYNOD**  
**OF THE CHURCH OF CENTRAL AFRICA, PRESBYTERIAN**  
**1889 - 1962**

by

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**Promoter: Prof. Dr N J Smith**

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## FOREWORD

It is with much gratitude that the results of this study are hereby presented. While it would be impossible and perhaps superfluous to mention every single body or individual, whether relative, friend or even complete stranger who at some stage or other had rendered assistance in one or more ways, indeed, sometimes invaluable assistance, a few instances should be singled out.

In the first place financial assistance from the Human Sciences Research Council towards the cost of the research for this study is hereby gratefully acknowledged. Notwithstanding this, opinions expressed in this work or conclusions arrived at are those of the author and should in no way be regarded as representing the opinions or conclusions of the Human Sciences Research Council.

To my promoter, prof. NJ Smith sincere thanks is due for patience, help and guidance rendered over the considerable length of time it took to complete the study, particularly as this involved communicating over long distances. Likewise acknowledgement is due to the internal examiner, prof. E Brown, as well as the external examiner, emeritus professor Bengt Sundkler of the University of Uppsala, Sweden for their valuable and essential share in finalising this work. In addition, the author cannot but mention the name of emeritus professor WJ van der Merwe under whom preparations for this study were initially begun and whose encouragement and concern motivated the decision to undertake it.

Acknowledgement is also due to the Synod of Nkhoma of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian in Malawi and to the General Mission Committee of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa for permission to consult a wide variety of documentary materials either in their possession or housed respectively in the Malawi National Archives, Zomba, and the Archives of the Dutch Reformed Church in Cape Town. The staff of both these Archives also rendered every possible assistance, especially in Cape Town where many months were spent in research.

It is sincerely hoped that this work will be of value, not only by contributing, albeit in a small way, to the study of the history of the Church

in Africa, but also more particularly in fulfilling in a long-felt need of making available a history of this particular Church which grew out of the work of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission in Malawi.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALC	African Lakes Corporation
AMEC	African Methodist Episcopal Church
ANC	African National Congress
ARC	African Reformed Church
CBFM	Consultative Board of Federated Missions
CCA	Cape Church Archives (of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa)
CCAP	Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian
CCAR	Church of Central Africa in Rhodesia
CRCCA	Council of Reformed Churches in Central Africa
DC	District Commissioner
DK	Die (De) Kerkbode (Organ of the DRC in SA)
DRC(M)	Dutch Reformed Church (Mission)
FMC	Foreign Mission Committee (United Free Church)
GMC	General Mission Committee (of the DRC in SA). Afrikaans: <b>Algemene Sendingkommissie.</b>
KS	Kabungwe ka Sinodi (Nkhoma Synodical/Standing Committee minutes numbering code)
LMS	London Missionary Society
MCP	Malawi Congress Party
MMU	Ministers' Mission Union (of the DRC). Dutch PZV
MNA	Malawi National Archives (Zomba)
NBSS	National Bible Society of Scotland
NSTA	Nkhoma Synod Teachers Association (originally Mkhoma i.s.o. Nkhoma)
OFS	Orange Free State
PC	Provincial Commissioner
PIM	Providence Industrial Mission
PZV	Predikanten Zendingvereniging (later Predikante Sendingvereniging)
RC	Roman Catholic
RCZ	Reformed Church in Zambia
SAGM	South Africa General Mission
SCOM	Student Christian Organisation of Malawi
UCCB	Union Churches of the Copperbelt
UMCA	Universities' Mission to Central Africa
ZIM	Zambezi Industrial Mission



## PREFACE

he decision to undertake this study was taken in response to a long-felt and often expressed need for producing a systematic and comprehensive history of the Synod of Nkhoma and of the Mission of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa in Malawi out of whose work it has grown. Although a number of earlier publications have appeared, these deal mainly with the work of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission as such, cover only the earlier years of the history of the Mission, are written in a more popular style, and are all written in either Dutch or in Afrikaans, except one translated work, a biography.<sup>1)</sup> Otherwise, very little has to date appeared in English on this Church, with the result that in its own country, Malawi, historians and others interested in its history have very little to go by. The problem is aggravated by the fact that in virtue of the Dutch Reformed Church being an Afrikaans-speaking Church, by far the most of the archival materials, i.e. correspondence, reports, minutes of Home Committees and of the Mission Council and other publications are written in Afrikaans or, initially, Dutch. Again, the Nkhoma Synod's own source materials, i.e. minutes of Church courts, correspondence and other documents are mostly written in Chewa, which is its official language.

Another problem, common to virtually all young Churches in Africa which have grown out of the Mission work of foreign Churches, is that much of such documentary material, so essential in a research of this nature, was sooner or later removed to the Home Base for archival storage. In the case of Nkhoma Synod very extensive and comprehensive records are housed in the DRC Archives in Cape Town,<sup>2)</sup> although a fair amount of material is also housed in the Malawi National Archives in Zomba under the name of Nkhoma Synod.<sup>3)</sup>

The opportunity of serving for eight years under the Synod of Nkhoma made

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1. MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland. For further literature see Bibliography.
  2. The archives for the DRCM in Malawi have been very well sorted and classified and consist of over 100 bulky files, apart from a number of personal collections and other records such as minutes of Home Committees as well as more general materials.
  3. These are fairly well sorted into 40 boxes (1976), but there is an obvious need for someone conversant with Afrikaans to classify the records more fully.

it possible for the author to become well acquainted with this Church and with the country, so that when a suitable occasion presented itself in 1973 it was decided to embark upon this study. The real preparation for writing took place during 1974 and the first half of 1975. All available literature, books, pamphlets, magazines and other published and unpublished records concerning the topic were studied, both from private libraries and from the library of the Theological Seminary, Stellenbosch. Extensive research was furthermore conducted over a period of about five months in the Archives of the DRC in Cape Town. At the same time all available minutes, reports and other documents pertaining to all bodies concerned were carefully studied.<sup>4)</sup>

After taking up an appointment with the Reformed Church in Zambia and moving to Lusaka in 1975, several short visits could be made to Malawi during the next year or two in which some interviews were conducted, but mainly with the purpose of doing research in the National Archives.

The actual writing of the dissertation could only begin during the second half of 1978 when an extended leave made it possible for the major part of the work to be completed. The remaining part was completed while at Lusaka during 1979 and 1980.

The findings are presented in six chapters. The first chapter is of an introductory nature, giving a geographical and ethno-historiographical survey of the country, followed by a brief historical review of the older Christian Missions in the country and the Churches which developed from their work.

In order to gain proper perspective and for the necessary background as well as for the sake of placing its history on record, the second and third chapters deal rather extensively with the history of the DRCM in Malawi, beginning with a survey of the DRC and its missionary work in general. The second chapter further deals more particularly with the establishing, growth and work of the DRCM in Malawi from 1889 up to 1962. Extension of its work into certain other countries is briefly dealt with and the chapter concludes with some observations on the relationship

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4. See Bibliography for a detailed list of such records.

between the DRCM and the traditional leaders of the people on the one hand and the Colonial Government on the other hand. The third chapter deals more particularly with different aspects of the work of the DRCM in relation to the concept of the so-called "Comprehensive Approach" in mission work.

Both these chapters conduct the survey up to 1962 in which year the DRCM ceased to exist as an official and independent body in Malawi and the Synod of Nkhoma took over all property formerly held by the Mission and assumed full responsibility for all the work. The DRC was henceforth to work in partnership with the Synod of Nkhoma.

While it was endeavoured, wherever relevant, to relate the work of the DRCM to the Church which was developing out of this work, the real study of the history and growth of this Church follows in the last part and forms the subject of chapters four, five and six. Chapter four reverts to the very beginning and traces the origin and early development of the Church from its inception, through the period in which it functioned under a Council of Congregations, up to the stage when the first men were ordained to the ministry and the Church was established as a constituent Presbytery under the Synod of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian in 1926.

Chapter five deals with the growth and development of the Church between 1926 and 1962, during which period it functioned largely under the guidance of the DRCM while progressing towards the stage when it would take over the work of the Mission as a fully autonomous Church.

The last chapter consists firstly of a review of the relationship between Nkhoma and the CCAP and the developments which culminated in 1956 in the former Presbyteries becoming Synods under a General Synod. This in turn opened the way for Nkhoma Synod to enter the final phase towards assuming full responsibility as an autonomous Church. The second part of this chapter deals with facets of this final stage and the negotiations which took place between the Synod and the DRC concerning this matter.

In a final paragraph certain observations are made, by way of conclusion, concerning the DRCM and the Church which grew out of its work.

## CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTORY SURVEY OF MALAWI

## 1. General

## 1.1 Geographical review

Lying roughly between ten and seventeen degrees south of the equator, Malawi is a small, landlocked country, a long, narrow strip of land, lying from north to south and bounded by Zambia to the west, Tanzania to the north and Mozambique to the south. In fact, the entire southern part of the country is surrounded by Mozambique and for many years its only rail route to the sea was southwards to the Zambezi and on to the port of Beira. In 1970 another single track line to Nayuci on the Mozambique border was completed. This line linked the country's rail system to the port of Nacala, also in Mozambique. Nacala has established itself as a more convenient outlet for Malawi's goods.<sup>1)</sup>

Altogether Malawi is about 520 miles long, varying in width from 50 to 100 miles. Its most outstanding feature is Lake Malawi which, at 8 900 square miles comprises nearly one fifth of the total area of Malawi (45 747 square miles). At 355 miles long and from 10 to 50 miles wide, the Lake is Africa's third largest and eleventh largest in the world.<sup>2)</sup> It reaches a depth of over 2 000 feet (600 metres).<sup>3)</sup> It contains 220 species of fish and the majority of these occur nowhere else in the world.<sup>4)</sup> Although much of the economic and agricultural development in Malawi has in the past been in areas away from the Lake, more and more attention is today being paid to the development potentials of the Lake itself and its surrounding areas. The

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1. Department of Information: The year in review, p. 18.
  2. Ibid., p. 3.
  3. Africa Institute: Africa at a glance, no. 9: Malawi, p. 1.
  4. EL Williams: Malawi, profile of an in-between country (Optima, September 1972, p. 112).

construction of the 534 mile Lakeshore road, from Mangoche in the south right to Karonga in the north will further stimulate development. The Lake and its outlet, the Shire River has an altitude of 1 550 feet. Starting at Matope, the Shire flows through a series of falls and rapids to an altitude of 140 feet at Chikwawa. Several hydro-electric schemes, notably at Nkula falls (24 MW) and at Tedzani falls (20 MW) have been established on this part of the Shire and provide for most of the country's requirements. A second project at Tedzani is to provide a further 20 MW, while plans have been made to construct five more 18 MW machines at Nkula falls.<sup>5)</sup> From Chikwawa the Shire drops only by 30 feet to 110 feet at the southern border more than a hundred miles further on.<sup>6)</sup> Whereas the Lake lies in the Great Rift Valley, much of the rest of the land is considerably higher in altitude with fertile plateaux at 3 000 to 4 000 feet, rising to several thousand feet higher on the mountain plateaux. The highest of these, the Nyika plateau in the north lies at over 7 000 feet, with its highest peak at 8 551 feet. The highest mountain however is found in the south where Mulanje mountain towers over the surrounding plains and reaches a height of 9 843 feet.<sup>7)</sup> Here around Mulanje the highest annual rainfall is registered, namely between 90 and 130 inches (2 250 and 3 250 mm). The country as a whole is divided into seven rainfall regions, varying from parts which have an annual rainfall of 30 to 40 inches to those in the vicinity of Mount Mulanje mentioned above.<sup>8)</sup>

The country is divided into three Regions, namely the Southern Region (12 234 square miles), the Central Region (13 714 square miles) and the Northern Region (10 376 square miles). These three Regions vary considerably as far as population density is concerned. Respectively it is 169, 108 and 48 per square mile. The country as a whole has a population density of 111 persons per square mile.<sup>9)</sup> These figures are based on the 1966 census which fixed the total population at 4 042 412 of which 4 023 193 were Africans, 7 046 Europeans and 10 880 Asians. The remaining 1 293 persons were classified as

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5. Department of Information: The year in review, p. 20.

6. A. MacGregor Hutcheson (Editorial Adviser): Atlas for Malawi, p. 5.

7. Ibid., p. 11.

8. Africa at a glance, op. cit., p. 1.

9. Department of Information: The year in review, p. 4, 15.

'others'. At that time the growth rate was estimated to be 3,3% per year so that the projected figure for 1975 was 5 410 000.<sup>11)</sup> In fact, a population change survey conducted in 1970-72 revealed that population growth then stood at 2,6% per year, so that by mid 1976 the population was estimated to have reached 5 175 000.<sup>12)</sup> With its density of 111 per square mile, Malawi is rated the fourth most densely populated country in Africa, after Ruanda (270), Burundi (237), and Nigeria (150). By comparison,<sup>13)</sup> in 1966 Zambia was stated to have a density of twelve per square mile, Zimbabwe 25, Mozambique 22, Tanzania 25, and South Africa 35.<sup>14)</sup> The most densely populated area is the Chiradzulu district, to the north-east of Blantyre, with 481 persons per square mile. The agriculturally rich Lilongwe district in the Central Region has a density of 211.<sup>15)</sup> Some 92% of the population live in traditional villages and only 5% in what can be called urban areas. Only Blantyre (which includes Limbe), Zomba and Lilongwe really provide an element of urban living. It is estimated that not more than 2,8% of the population can be regarded as disassociated from rural living in their day to day lives. In 1966 the four largest urban centres were Blantyre (109 795), Zomba (19 616), Lilongwe (19 176) and Mzuzu (8 176).<sup>16)</sup> With the establishing of the nation's new capital at Lilongwe, its population increased tremendously. By 1975 it was estimated to be 102 000 (more than five times higher than in 1966), while that of Blantyre had risen to an estimated 193 000. Zomba however, had hardly changed, reaching an estimated 22 500 while Mzuzu's population had risen to 14 675.

The moving of the new capital to Lilongwe, the construction of which was begun in 1969, has not only halted the lopsided economic and industrial development which had been taking place mainly in the Southern Region, but has also given new stimulus for development in the Central and Northern Regions with the provision of a better infra-structure. It has also halted the southward migration of the population.<sup>17)</sup>

11. Ibid., p. 4.

12. Dept. of Information: The year in review, p. 3.

13. Cf. FE Read: Malawi land of promise, p. 15.

14. Thirty years earlier Malawi had a population density of 42,6; Zambia 4,7; and South Africa 20,3 (see JM Cronje: En daar was lig, p. 37).

15. National Statistical Office: Malawi Population Census, op.cit., Table V.

16. Ibid., p. 7 and Table IV.

17. Dept. of Information: The year in review, p. 4.

The economy of Malawi has, by and large, always depended almost entirely upon agriculture. However, the development of the country prior to independence was of a relatively low rate. In 1964 total exports amounted to twenty-three million kwacha of which tobacco and tea comprised over fifteen million kwacha.<sup>18)</sup>

During the early Colonial era, ivory, coffee and rubber took the lead, with tobacco becoming the major earner of foreign exchange during the first decades of the century, followed by cotton and tea. These three commodities remained important export items throughout.<sup>19)</sup> The major agricultural product of the country however, is maize, grown on 75% of the land under cultivation but most of it is consumed locally.

With the attainment of independent status, Malawi entered into a new economic period,<sup>20)</sup> with tremendous development taking place in all economic and industrial spheres. Per capita income had reached K36 in 1966, more than double the figure of five years earlier. Domestic exports rose from K23 000 000 in 1964 to nearly K136 000 000 in 1976<sup>21)</sup> while all agricultural products increased. The following table gives an indication of the increase in agricultural production.<sup>22)</sup>

TABLE 1: INCREASE IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION 1964 TO 1976.

Crop	1964	1976
Tobacco (million lb.)	33,1	80,9
Tea (made tea-million lb.)	27,3	62,4
Sugar ('000 short ton)	-	94,7
Groundnuts <sup>+</sup>	19,5	35,9
Seed Cotton <sup>+</sup>	14,9	19,7
Maize <sup>+</sup>	30,8	71,5
Pulses <sup>+</sup>	16,8	18,8
Paddy rice <sup>+</sup>	3,7	27,0
+ Admarc purchases ('000 short tons)		

18. Ibid., p. 16.

19. See CA Baker: Malawi's exports: an economic history (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds): Malawi past and present, pp. 88-113).

20. Ibid., p. 106.

21. Dept. of Information: The year in review, p. 16; CCA S5 15/6/11/8 Annual general report 1966.

22. Ibid., p. 8-10 for figures in the following Table and subsequent paragraphs.

For 1976 it was estimated that agriculture contributed more than 46% of the Gross Domestic Product while agricultural produce accounted for more than 94% of total exports. There are almost 6,6 million acres of arable land altogether. Sugar has become the third largest export earner after production was started only in 1965. Other important industries are fishing and forestry. Timber is produced in different parts of the country, while the Viphya Pulp and Paper project is to produce 150 000 tons of dry pulp a year.

The manufacturing sector in Malawi is still small, but has expanded at an average rate of 13% per annum since independence bringing about a reduction of imported consumer goods from 49% of the total imports in 1964 to 30% in 1976.<sup>23)</sup> The Malawi Development Corporation established in 1964<sup>24)</sup> is the mainstay behind most of the country's development. By the end of 1976 it had a share capital of K3,51 million and had invested more than K12 million in a variety of manufacturing enterprises.

## 1.2 The People of Malawi

The early history of Malawi can be characterised in three broad periods: the pre-Bantu period, the proto-Bantu period and the Bantu period.<sup>25)</sup>

The pre-Bantu period covers man's existence from the earliest times. Various stone-age sites have been excavated in Malawi. The inhabitants were of pigmoid origin, though apparently slightly larger than the Bushman (or San), and were basically a hunting people. In Malawi various names are used to describe them, such as Abatwa, Akafula and others. Early Portuguese writers tell of finding Bushmen on roughly the fourteenth degree latitude i.e. the southern end of Lake Malawi.<sup>26)</sup>

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23. Ibid., p. 13.

24. For a review of the Malawi Development Corporation see Malawi: ten years of Progress (reprinted from: Progress International, February 1974, pp. 15-17).

25. See B Pachai: Malawi: The history of the nation, chapters 1 to 3, pp. 1ff. from which most of the material for this paragraph has been taken.

26. AL Hofmeyr: Het land langs het meer, p. 19.



Round about 1300 AD the first of a series of Bantu invasions took place. Coming originally from West Africa<sup>27)</sup> and from the shores of Lake Tanganyika they either killed, displaced or absorbed the Akafula. These proto-Bantu or pre-Maravi migrants moved southwards with their cattle, some settling in Malawi, others crossing the Zambezi.

By the 16th century AD most of central and southern Malawi was settled by Bantu speakers. They formed part of a widely settled community of Maravi peoples.<sup>28)</sup> The Maravi empire gradually dispersed as more and more subdivisions took place. In this decentralisation we find the origin of tribal names such as Chewā, Mang'anja, Nyanja, Chipeta, Nsenga, Chikunda, Mbo, Ntumba and Zimba. These are merely regional or geographical designations of people who belonged to the same cultural and language group. Of these the Chewa are numerically the strongest, and Chichewā is regarded as the main language of the Maravi.<sup>29)</sup>

Meanwhile, in what is now northern Malawi, a great number of more or less related tribal groups were formed, their ancestors arriving in Malawi over five hundred years ago. Dominant amongst them were the Tumbuka and the Tonga peoples who developed their own languages, cultures, political and economic histories.

However, two more major invasions were still to take place, disrupting and changing much of the tribal structure of Malawi. These were the Yao invasions coming from the east coast of Africa, especially the Rovuma river area, and the Ngoni invasions originating from Natal in South Africa. Both invasions took place during the nineteenth century. During the same period the Arabs from the east coast moved in towards Malawi and the slave trade began to develop to an almost unbelievable extent.

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27. EL Williams: Malawi, Profile of an in-between country (Optima, Sept. 1972, p. 112).

28. For a discussion of the meaning of the word Maravi and the identity of the Maravi see JM Schoffeleers: The meaning and use of the name Malawi in oral traditions and precolonial documents (in B Pachai (Ed): The early history of Malawi, pp. 91ff). See also further articles on early and pre-colonial history of Malawi in same collection

29. On 21 September 1968 the Government of Malawi proclaimed Chichewa as one of its two official languages, the other being English.

Long before the Yao<sup>30)</sup> moved into Malawi, they were already established traders. By the mid-nineteenth century they began to settle in Malawi, mainly around the Lakeshore and by the 1860s most of them were trading in slaves, acting as middle men between slave trading tribes to the west and the Arabs east of the Lake. The Yao worked in close co-operation with the Arabs, more correctly, Afro-Arabs. These were the descendants of what were originally Persian and Arabian coastal settlements. As far back as 975 AD a prince from Persia with his six sons settled on the coast of East Africa trading and intermarrying with the Africans. Swahili, the trade language of East Africa, is one of the products of their presence.<sup>31)</sup>

After the coming of the Portuguese as well as the Arab 'Uman (Oman) Dynasty, one of whose rulers, Sa'id ibn Sultan (died 1856),<sup>32)</sup> built his capital at Zanzibar in 1832, trade in ivory and slaves (as the carrying medium) began to strike further inland. Swahili Arabs or Arabised Africans were already in Malawi by the middle of the nineteenth century, with such well-known potentates as Jumbe Salim bin Abdallah establishing himself in the 1840s at Nkhota Kota and building up a flourishing trade both eastward and westward. The Jumbes ruled for half a century before the establishment of British rule. Amongst others, the Jumbe dynasty succeeded in introducing aspects of Islamic culture into Malawi which spread rapidly mainly amongst the Yao people. Yao Islam's real spread accompanied and followed the dominance of colonial powers.<sup>33)</sup> This corroborates with what Sir Alfred Sharpe, governor of Nyasaland, wrote in 1910:<sup>34)</sup>

Twenty years ago when I first came to know Nyasaland, Muhammedanism was almost non-existent except at one or two spots where it had been brought in by Arabs. Since then, it has spread greatly, particularly during the past eight or ten years. The Yao are the tribe who have adopted Moslem teaching mostly. On the other hand among the Yao to the west of Lake Nyasa, there is hardly any Mohammedanism... All through Yaoland, that is to say from Lake Nyasa to the east coast there is in every village a mosque and a Moslem trader.

30. Cf. B Pachai: Malawi: The history of the nation, pp. 50ff.

31. Ibid., p. 41.

32. JS Trimmingham: The influence of Islam upon Africa, p. 32.

33. Ibid.

34. Quoted by B Pachai: Malawi: The history of the nation, p. 49.

Since then Islam has continued to spread amongst the Yao also south and west of the Lake, aided by the Islamic influence of the Jumbe dynasty, so that today a considerable percentage of the Lakeshore population is Muslim. During the 1960s local informants in the Salima area said that at least half of the non-Christian population was Muslim, while in some of the large villages it was found that Muslims made up at least 95% of the inhabitants. Of the entire population 17% are Muslim, as against 23% Christians.<sup>35)</sup>

Apart from Nkhota Kota, Swahili Arab presence also came to northern Malawi, notably in the person of a trader by the name of Mlozi. He settled at the present Karonga in the 1880s and soon tension and rivalry erupted between the slaver and another trading interest which arrived about the same time. This was the African Lakes Corporation, then known as the Livingstonia Central Africa Company Ltd. It was formed in Glasgow on 21 June 1878 and opened a branch at Karonga in 1884 under Monteith Fotheringham.<sup>36)</sup>

The horror and extent of slave trading in Central and East Africa during the middle and second half of the nineteenth century led David Livingstone to speak of the "open sore of Africa". Almost unbelievable savagery marked the bitter years of the slave trade as slaving parties spread fear all around the Lake. The road from the south of the Lake to Nkhota Kota became Central Africa's road of suffering and despair, it's Via Dolorosa. For some years at least, 10 000 slaves were annually shipped by dhow across the Lake.<sup>37)</sup> Fred Moir, joint manager of the African Lakes Corporation describes a slave caravan which he observed at Kasakalawa in about 1883 when he calculated that the slaves, chained and roped together in groups, carrying loads of ivory, food or camping gear, numbered three or four thousand.<sup>38)</sup> AC Murray, the first missionary of the Dutch Reformed Church from South Africa, relates how in 1888 he and some companions travelled through Wankonde (Ngonde) country which was then prosperous and well populated.<sup>39)</sup>

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35. Nuusbrief uit Malawi:, June 1967.

36. FLM Moir: After Livingstone, pp. 7-8.

37. EL Williams: Malawi Profile of an in-between country (Optima, Sept. 1972, p. 112).

38. FLM Moir: After Livingstone, pp. 82-85.

39. AC Murray: Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen aldaar, p. 122.

Upon passing through the same area shortly afterwards, they **found several** of the large and prosperous Ngonde villages totally destroyed by **the Arabs**. Where formerly everything was life and happiness, where they had been amicably received and amply supplied with milk, they now found nothing **but** burnt down huts and remnants of destroyed gardens and cattle enclosures.<sup>40)</sup> Elsewhere<sup>41)</sup> he refers to Deep Bay (Chilumba) from where it was estimated that five thousand slaves were being shipped across the Lake annually.

Pressure of missionaries and the trouble the African Lakes Corporation was experiencing, led to an attempted treaty with Mlozi in 1889 by Harry Johnston the British Consul at Mozambique. The treaty failed, as did another attempt by Johnston in 1895 to negotiate, with the result that a large force was sent to Karonga in November 1895. Mlozi was captured, tried and hanged in December 1895.<sup>42)</sup> Within a few years all slaving activities in the country were virtually brought to an end.

The last invading group to appear on the scene also deeply influenced the life and history of the people of Malawi.<sup>43)</sup> These new-comers were a number of factions of the Ngoni migration which took place between the 1820s and the 1860s and traversed almost half a continent from Natal in South Africa to Lake Victoria in Central Africa. Finally the majority of the various Ngoni groups settled in Malawi and eastern Zambia. The main group, under Zwangendaba, seeking to flee the ravages of the Zulu king, Shaka, left North Zululand shortly after 1820, gradually moving northwards and assimilating various groups as they went. On 19 November 1835, the day of a solar eclipse,<sup>44)</sup> they crossed the Zambezi and moved up through Malawi, never staying for more than a few years at one place. When Zwangendaba died in 1848 they

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40. For other references to slavery and incidents of slavery see *ibid.*, pp. 22ff., 102f, 109f, 110, 141f, 146, 147-8, 149, 169, 208, 220, 224-5, 228, 242ff, etc. Prof. H Drummond in his book *Tropical Africa*, referring to this destruction of the Wankonde (pp. 72-74) spoke of an "atrocious carnage".
41. AC Murray, *op.cit.*, p. 102.
42. B Pachai: *Malawi: The history of the nation* pp. 51f; see also HW Macmillan: *Notes on the Arab was* (in B Pachai (Ed.) : *The early history of Malawi*, pp. 263-82).
43. B Pachai: *Malawi: The history of the nation*, pp. 22-40 gives a good overall account of the Ngoni. See also his paper: *Ngoni politics and diplomacy in Malawi: 1848-1904* (in B Pachai (Ed.): *The early history of Malawi*, pp. 179-214).
44. Some older works give the date as being 1925, but the later date is now generally accepted.

were already in Fipa country near Lake Tanganyika. After his death, the Ngoni split up into various groups because of leadership wrangles. One group went north towards Lake Victoria while other groups again moved south into Malawi and east of the northern tip of Malawi to the Songea region of Mozambique. Mpezeni moved westward and finally settled in the present Chipata district of eastern Zambia. In Malawi one group under M'Mbelwa I and Mtwalo I established itself in northern Malawi. A second group under Chiwere Ndhlovu moved even further south finally settling in the Central Region of present day Malawi. Chiwere himself settled at Kaso Hill near Mvera where the Dutch Reformed Church Mission set up their first station in 1889, while two other factions set up chieftainships under Msakambewa at Kongwe Hill where the Dutch Reformed Mission set up a station in 1894, and under Vuso Jere in the present Ntchisi district. Here, too, the DRCM subsequently set up a station. A last group to be formed was an offshoot of the Mpezeni Ngoni in Zambia which settled in the Mchinji area under their leader Magwambane Jere who assumed the name of Zulu I.

All these various Ngoni groups emanated from the original movement under Zwangendaba and they also carry the name of Jere. But apart from the Jere Ngoni, another group known as the Maseko Ngoni<sup>45)</sup> also left the south with Zwangendaba but a leadership quarrel broke out and they separated under Mputa Maseko also known as Mgoola.<sup>46)</sup> The Maseko faction crossed the Zambezi shortly after Zwangendaba but moved in a more easterly direction to avoid contact with their more powerful compatriots. Thus, when reaching the area of Domwe Mountain to the south of Dedza they did not stay long but left again in about 1837 moving eastwards around the southern part of Lake Malawi and then northwards as far as modern Songeya beyond the Rovuma River in Mozambique. Here they were joined by a breakaway group of the Northern Ngoni in about 1850 and when trouble broke out the Maseko Ngoni moved southwards, retracing their footsteps and reaching the Domwe area once more, thirty years after leaving it the first time. Mputa's son Chikusi became paramount chief, settling in the area between Dedza and Ncheu where once again DRCM work was subsequently set up. The successors of Chikusi are the Gomanis I, II and III.<sup>47)</sup>

45. See B Pachai: Malawi: The history of the nation, pp. 36ff. for an account of their history.

46. AL Hofmeyr: Het land langs het meer, pp. 20f.

47. For further details of the Maseko Ngoni see Ian Linden: The Maseko Ngoni at Domwe: 1870-1900 (in B Pachai (Ed.): The early history of Malawi, pp. 237-51).

### 1.3 Colonial and post colonial history

The colonial era in the history of Africa begins with what is popularly called the "scramble for Africa", when different Western colonial powers sought to assert their authority over the vast regions of Africa.

One of these powers, Portugal, had in fact been present in South-Eastern Africa for three and a half centuries by the time David Livingstone journeyed from the Zambezi up the Shire to "discover" Lake Malawi in September 1859.

As far back as 1505 the Portuguese had already settled at Sofala, on the east coast. Soon they extended their trade far into the interior, particularly into the famed kingdom of Monomotapa. Here they encountered rivals whose ships were known to have sailed the Zambezi long before. These were the east coast Arab traders.<sup>48)</sup> By the 1630s active trade was also being carried on between the Maravi peoples and the Portuguese. Yet, although the Portuguese appear to have known about Lake Malawi and did venture into the lower Shire region, Pachai asserts that "there is no proof that the Portuguese actually journeyed to the Upper Shire region as far as the Lake"<sup>49)</sup> Even less was there any notion to establish some form of colonial rule or administration over this area.

The position changed with Livingstone's Zambezi expedition of 1856-64, sponsored by the British Government, to find a "navigable route from the east coast to the interior of Africa, to investigate scientifically the geography and resources of the region and to open up legitimate trade to replace the slave trade".<sup>50)</sup> After finding his route up the Zambezi blocked by the Kebrabasa rapids, he turned back to the Shire, a large tributary of the Zambezi, following reports of a great inland water at its source. Travelling overland from the Murchison Cataracts, so named by

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48. B Pachai: Christianity and commerce in Malawi: some pre-Colonial aspects (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds): Malawi past and present, p. 39). Other versions of the name Monomotapa are Mwene Motapa, Benomotapa, Munhumutapa, etc.

49. Ibid.

50. PA Cole-King: Cape Maclear, p. 5.

him after Sir Roderick Murchison, the then president of the Royal Geographical Society, he reached the South-eastern tip of Lake Malawi on 17 September 1859. Although he did not investigate the Lake at that time, he returned in 1861, sailing up the Shire in the Pioneer and bringing with him the first group of missionaries of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa. On 2 September Livingstone and his party, which included his brother Charles, entered Lake Malawi. After passing and naming Cape Maclear<sup>51)</sup> the party proceeded to explore over two hundred miles of the western shores of Lake Malawi. Upon their return journey they actually spent a night at Cape Maclear, a natural harbour with which Livingstone was most favourably impressed.<sup>52)</sup>

Livingstone's famous appeal in the Senate House at Cambridge on 4 December 1857: "I go back to Africa to try to make an open path for commerce and Christianity. Do you carry on the work which I have begun? I leave it with you", and his subsequent death in 1873 were the two major factors contributing to the coming of Christian Missions to Malawi. First came the UMCA in 1861, but it failed to establish a Mission, withdrew and finally settled again in 1885 on Likoma Island on the Lake. Then, shortly after the death of Livingstone, came two Missions from Scotland, known as the Livingstonia Mission and the Blantyre Mission in 1875 and 1876 respectively. Two years later a Christian trading association under the name of the Livingstonia Central Africa Company was formed (later known as the African Lakes Corporation). With this, the stage was set for formal British administration to be established.

Two factors persuaded the initially somewhat reluctant Great Britain to assume control of the Nyasa region. The one was the Arab war of 1887-1889. The other was the moves of Portugal to extend its sphere of power to the Lake regions.

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51. After Sir Thomas Maclear, the then Astronomer Royal at the Cape of Good Hope.

52. PA Cole-King, *op.cit.*, p. 8.

The Arab war emphasised the growth of Arab power in East and Central Africa and the directors of the Livingstonia Company informed the British Government that it was "defending at considerable risk and loss the interests of British Missionary Societies and the African inhabitants of the Nyasa area".<sup>53)</sup>

Although Britain had shown interest in establishing its authority in Malawi since 1865 two factors again stood in the way. The one was finance, the other the attitude of Portugal who controlled the territory through which all traffic to the Nyasa regions went.<sup>54)</sup> Both these problems were solved in 1889. DJ Rankin discovered the mouth of the Zambezi at Chinde in April 1889.<sup>55)</sup> This made it possible to travel to Malawi without setting foot on Portuguese territory, instead of having to travel via Quelimane up the Kwakwa and then crossing to the Zambezi at Vicenti, an overland journey of about three miles.<sup>56)</sup> Secondly, the intercession of Cecil John Rhodes provided Harry Hamilton Johnston, later the British Consul in Nyasaland, and the African Lakes Corporation with £17 500 in cash and kind to develop British Central Africa. Johnston was free to use up to £10 000 of this for the administration of Nyasaland.<sup>57)</sup>

Meanwhile Portugal was seeking to extend her territorial authority. In 1882 the Governor of Quelimane travelled to the Shire and formally proclaimed the land up to the Ruo as Portuguese.<sup>58)</sup> Subsequently, treaties were made with chiefs in southern Malawi and Portuguese expeditions into the interior increased further by 1888. At this stage Britain was actually considering abandoning Malawi to Portugal but intense agitation by the Church of Scotland forestalled a settlement negotiated by Harry Johnston which would have given the Shire Highlands to Portugal.<sup>59)</sup> Finally, in 1889 an expedition under Serpa Pinto to the Shire areas provoked reaction.

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53. B Pachai, op.cit., (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds): Malawi past and present, pp. 56-57).

54. AL Hofmeyr, op.cit., pp.72f .

55. B Pachai: Malawi: The history of the nation, p. 77.

56. Cf. AC Murray: Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen aldaar, p. 55.

57. B Pachai, op. cit., (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri(Eds): Malawi past and present, pp. 57-59).

58. See PR Warhurst: Portugal's bid for Southern Malawi 1882-1891 (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds): Malawi past and present, pp.20ff). See also E Axelson: Portugal and the scramble for Africa 1875-1891; and RJ Hammond: Portugal and Africa 1815-1910.

59. PR Warhurst, op.cit., pp.31,32.



Treaties were negotiated with various chiefs and on 21 September 1889, John Buchanan Acting Vice Consul proclaimed a Protectorate over the Shire Highlands.<sup>60)</sup> On 11 January 1890 the British Government issued an ultimatum to Portugal to withdraw its expedition.<sup>61)</sup> Negotiations followed and the treaty of 11 June 1891 established the boundary between British and Portuguese territory at the Shire- Ruo confluence. Johnston was appointed as Commissioner and first Consul-General of the territory, He declared Nyasaland as a British Protectorate on 14 May of the same year<sup>62)</sup> and on 22 February 1893 the territory was officially named the British Central Africa Protectorate.

The first phase in the history of the Protectorate, 1891-1896, was characterised by repeated military activities against local authorities and slave-traders. At the same time District rule was established with a Collector appointed over each district, while a hut tax of six shillings was introduced in 1892. The tax was reduced to three shillings in 1894. It was particularly the imposition and manner of collecting this tax whereby literally thousands of natives were forced to go and seek employment in the towns and plantations of the Shire Province, which was the cause of considerable tension between the Administration and various Missions.<sup>63)</sup> Johnston was succeeded by Alfred Sharpe in 1897 by which time the financial support of Cecil Rhodes had been withdrawn. During Sharpe's period of administration two important changes took place.<sup>64)</sup> A new Order, known as the Order-in-Council of 1907, was proclaimed, changing the name of the Protectorate from British Central Africa to Nyasaland and replacing the Commissioner by a Governor to be assisted by an Executive Council. Sir Alfred Sharpe became the first Governor.

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60. Malawi National Archives (hereafter MNA): Short Administrative history, Inventory of Public Archives, Vol. II.

61. AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, pp. 34-5.

62. B Pachai: *Malawi: The history of the nation*, pp. 79, 81.

63. B Pachai, *op.cit.*, (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds): *Malawi past and present*, pp. 60-61., also: B Pachai; *The history of the nation*, pp. 113-114

64. ZD Kadzamira: *Constitutional changes in Malawi 1891-1965* (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds): *Malawi past and present*, p. 82).

The second important development during this time was the expansion of the civil service and the establishment of a defined legal system. The provision for a Legislative Council remained basically in force until it was revoked in 1961 to make way for the new constitution. However, some important amendments did take place. In 1949 for the first time two Africans, KE Mposa and A Muwamba were nominated to the Legislative Council,<sup>65)</sup> while in the same year the Governor was empowered to nominate members to the Council representing all communities. From its inception one of the members was always a missionary who was to represent African interests.<sup>66)</sup>

In 1956 indirect elections of African representatives was introduced and in 1961 Nyasaland was granted a responsible government under the Lancaster Constitutional Agreement. Ten ministers were appointed of whom four were Malawians: Dr HK Banda (Natural resources and Local Government), MWK Chiume (Education), AW Bwanausi (Labour and Social development) and M Mkandawire (Minister without portfolio). Dr Banda was leader of the majority party in the Legislative Council.<sup>67)</sup>

Meanwhile, apart from various organisations and associations representing European interests, Africans were also beginning to find opportunity to express themselves.<sup>68)</sup> Several Native Associations were formed from 1912 onwards and in 1924 a Representative Committee of the Northern Provinces Native Associations was formed in Zomba. Mr Levi Mumba was appointed chairman. This committee eventually became the forerunner of the Nyasaland African Congress formed in 1944 with Levi Mumba again in the chair.<sup>69)</sup> From the very beginning, Dr Hastings Banda, then practising medicine in England, played an active role in giving guidance, advice and financial assistance to the Congress.

65. B Pachai: Malawi: The history of the nation, p. 239.

66. Z D Kadzamira, loc.cit.

67. MNA: A short history of Administration, Inventory of Public Archives, foreword to Vol. I.

68. B Pachai: Malawi: The history of the nation, pp.225ff; RK Tangri: The development of modern African politics and the emergence of a nationalist movement in Colonial Malawi, 1891-1958.

69. See Pachai, op.cit., pp. 231-4 for events leading to the formation of the Congress. See also his Index under Malawi Congress Party for further references.

Following appeals from different leaders in Malawi, Dr Banda returned to Malawi on 6 July 1958 from Ghana where he had subsequently set up a practice.<sup>70)</sup> The following month he was elected President General of the Congress at its annual congress at Nkhata Bay and immediately instituted steps to develop a well knit nation-wide movement to oppose the Government. Opposition concentrated negatively on the imposition of Federal rule on Malawi and positively on the attainment of political autonomy.

The Central African Federation comprised of the then Northern and Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. It was established in 1953, but from the beginning Africans in Malawi, as was the case in the other two countries, were strongly opposed to the entire concept of Federal rule. In December 1963 it was brought to an end.<sup>71)</sup>

The activities of the Nyasaland African Congress led to the declaration of a state of emergency on 3 March 1959, which later was to become a Malawi Public Holiday known as Martyrs' Day. Dr Banda and his followers were arrested and the Nyasaland African Congress banned. Subsequently on 30 September the Malawi Congress Party was formed and by the end of the year it had a membership of 30 000.<sup>72)</sup>

Dr Banda was released from detention on 1 April 1960 and from 25 July to 4 August 1960 the Nyasaland Constitutional Conference took place in London. A new constitution was agreed upon and on 15 August 1961 the first general elections took place with three parties contesting. The Malawi Congress Party gained an overwhelming victory.<sup>73)</sup> This gave the Party considerable control in the Legislative and Executive Councils and by the beginning of 1962, Dr Banda was de facto Prime Minister. At the second constitutional talks held at Marlborough House, London in November 1962, a programme for

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70. See Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism: Biography of His Excellency the Life President (pamphlet).

71. See B Pachai: Malawi: The history of the nation, pp. 256-266 for a review of events leading to the Federation, its rise and its fall.

72. Ibid., pp. 234.

73. Ibid., pp. 241-3.

internal self-government was worked out and on 1 February 1963 the Executive Council was replaced by a Cabinet, led by the country's first Prime Minister, Dr HK Banda. On 3 May of the same year the Legislative Council was renamed the Legislative Assembly, and finally, after further negotiations towards national independence, Nyasaland became the independent state of Malawi on 6 July 1964, under a monarchical constitution. In 1966 Malawi became a one-party state and on 6 July of the same year adopted a republican constitution. Dr Banda became President, being both head of state and of government. He became Life President on 6 July 1971.<sup>74)</sup> The last general elections were held in 1976.

## 2. Christian Missions in Malawi

The Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian (CCAP), which is the subject of this study, is but one of the branches of the Christian Church which grew out of the work of the various Mission enterprises. The different Missions and subsequently the various Churches in the country are related or interrelated in many different ways. It would hardly be possible therefore, in making a study of one, not also to take note of the others. In fact the very history of modern Malawi is so interwoven with that of the coming of Christianity to the country, that the one could hardly be studied without the other. Christian Missions have played no small role in shaping the history of the country and few national leaders today cannot trace much of their history to the work and influence of Christian Missions.

The Christian community in 1964 was estimated at over one million.<sup>75)</sup> This would mean that roughly one quarter of the population adheres to a Christian Church. In this survey note will be briefly taken of the establishment and development of the various older Missions and Churches as well as some of their joint achievements.

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74. Ibid., pp. 243-5.

75. YR Musopole: The Church in Malawi. (no page no.).

## 2.1 The Universities' Mission to Central Africa<sup>76)</sup>

As already mentioned the UMCA was formed in direct response to David Livingstone's appeal in 1857.<sup>77)</sup> In this respect they were the first to actually set foot in Malawi with the intention of beginning mission work.

The party under the leadership of Bishop Charles Frederick Mackenzie included three priests and three laymen. They met Livingstone at the mouth of the Zambezi and he accompanied them in search of a suitable Mission site in the Shire Highlands. On 19 July 1861 they settled at a place called Magomero,<sup>78)</sup> north-east of Blantyre near the present-day Nasawa Young Pioneer training base.

The story of this first attempt of the UMCA was short and sad. Shortly after arriving in the country they encountered and forcefully set free a group of 84 slaves. Magomero was in fact right on the path of the slave trading route. Soon the Mission found itself committed to an armed campaign against Yao slavers and Magomero became something of a slave refugee camp.<sup>79)</sup> Within three months the Bishop had nearly 160 liberated slaves under his care.

Barely six months after arriving, Bishop Mackenzie died of fever and three months later, on 25 April 1862, ill health and renewed tribal warfare had brought about the final evacuation of Magomero. They removed to Chibisa's, the present Chikwawa, and stayed there for fifteen months. The new Bishop, William Tozer arrived in June 1863 and they withdrew to Morambala in August and finally to Zanzibar in the following year. Much criticism was levelled against Mackenzie and his party for the use of weapons and for interfering in inter-tribal disputes and the UMCA lost some influential support. Later Missions were careful to avoid similar mistakes.

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76. A considerable amount of literature exists on the UMCA. The standard work is one published in three volumes: *The History of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa*, by AEM Anderson-Morshead (Vol. I, 1859-1907); and *AG Blood* (Vol. II, 1907-1932 and Vol. III, 1933-1957). See also: *Supplement to the history of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa, 1957-1965, and 1965-1969*. For a brief summary of the UMCA history see *MNA: Inventory U N 1, UMCA historical note*.
77. See GH Wilson: *The history of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa*, pp. lff. for reasons for this response and for the initiating of the UMCA; also P Bolink: *Towards Church union in Zambia*, pp. 95ff.
78. P Elston: *A note on the Universities' Mission to Central Africa: 1859-1914* (in B Pachai (Ed.): *The early history of Malawi*, pp. 345-6).
79. B Pachai, *op.cit.* (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds.): *Malawi past and present*, p. 43).

Tozer established the UMCA firmly at Zanzibar and his successor Edward Steere began investigating the possibility of a new route to Malawi, following the Rovuma river. The person who actually once again established the UMCA in Malawi was William Percival Johnson who came to Lake Malawi in 1881 and stayed until his death in 1928. He soon saw the need for a small steamer which could be used as a Mission ship and as a training home for African teachers.<sup>80)</sup> In 1884 he returned from Britain with the steamer Charles Janson in 380 separate packages. It was launched on 5 September 1885 and served the Mission for the next fifty years.

It was now possible to select a suitable site for a permanent basis in Malawi and Likoma Island became the UMCA headquarters, it being not only the centre of a missionary effort that embraced both sides of the Lake, but also providing a much needed refuge against the attacks of slave raiders. The headquarters were moved from here to Likwenu at Mponda's in 1952, a station which was opened in 1896. Two years prior to this, on 2 September 1894, a station was also opened at Nkhota Kota where a school started the following year.<sup>81)</sup>

A boarding school for boys was started at Likoma in 1885 and for girls in 1896. Three years later a boarding school for girls was opened at Nkhota Kota. By that time the UMCA had a whole number of schools to the east, the west and on the Lake itself. St Michael's College, founded on 29 September 1899, provided higher education up to the level of training teachers and from 1905 training for the priesthood was also provided for.

It is interesting to note that a fairly strong evangelical emphasis was sounded in respect of the early educational work of the UMCA. Elston notes that "the primary objective of the Missions's educational work was the conversion of people to Christianity, to which the demands of secular learning took second place". Thus the function of these schools was "religious, rather than educational", and further, quoting Canon Duncan Travers, " ... what the child is taught of religion, is vastly more important than that he should know how to read and write".<sup>82)</sup>

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80. P Elston, op.cit., p. 349.

81. B Pachai: Malawi: The history of the nation, pp. 46f, 87.

82. P Elston, op.cit., pp. 356, 351.

he question can be raised as to why the UMCA sought to evangelise predominant-ly Muslim areas like Mponda's and Nkhota Kota where there could be little hope of many conversions. Two reasons are offered as explanation:<sup>83)</sup> the success of the Scottish Mission in the Highlands and the animistic parts of the country had left a vacuum along the Islamic Lakeshore which the Mission, with its Zanzibar background, felt able to handle; secondly, it saw itself as being at war with Islam in the battle for people's souls. The UMCA however did not feel itself bound to restrict itself to areas not covered by other Missions and in due course difficulties concerning separate spheres of work and boundaries did arise with various other Missions.<sup>84)</sup>

In the closing years of the nineteenth century an African ministry began to emerge and the first person to be ordained was a Yao, Yohanna Abdallah who became a priest in 1898. The first Malawian to be ordained first as a deacon in 1902 and subsequently as a priest in 1909, was Leonard Kamungu. He, like his predecessors, was trained in Mozambique and later pioneered work in the Eastern Province of Zambia.<sup>85)</sup>

The first discussions towards creating an autonomous Ecclesiastical Province took place in 1921. From that time the Diocese came under a Synodical government but had no written constitution until 1954. The constitution was drawn up by Bishop Thorne who was Bishop from 1936 to 1951. In 1955 the Province of Central Africa was constituted, with the Diocese of Malawi forming part of it. The new constitution extended the Synod to include a house of laity and the new Synod met for the first time in 1955.<sup>86)</sup>

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83. Ibid., p. 353.

84. See for example p.89 below.

85. B Pachai: Malawi: The history of the nation, p. 202. For Kamungu's story see JC Weller: The priest from the Lakeside.

86. MNA Inventory UN 1: UMCA historical note.

## 2.2 The Livingstonia Mission

The next to arrive after the initial attempt of the UMCA was the Livingstonia Mission. Livingstone died at Chitambo's in the Ilala country, now North Eastern Zambia, in 1873. The news of his death and the fidelity of his two followers Juma and Suze,<sup>87)</sup> who carried his embalmed body over 600 miles to Zanzibar, as well as his burial in Westminster Abbey in April 1874, sent a wave of missionary zeal throughout Britain.

A month after his burial the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland heard an appeal from James Stewart of Lovedale, South Africa,<sup>88)</sup> for a Mission in the region of Lake Malawi to be called Livingstonia Mission. Stewart had already been in Malawi in 1861 when he had gone to join Livingstone and to enquire about a suitable site for a mission enterprise for which he had procured sufficient financial backing, mostly from businessmen and manufacturers. Although the area around the Lake appeared most suitable, Stewart came to the conviction that the time was not yet ripe. In 1866 he came to Lovedale.<sup>89)</sup>

In 1874 however there were no further obstacles and the Free Church resolved to give effect to Livingstone's plea.<sup>90)</sup> Under the guidance of ED Young, who had led the Livingstone search expedition in Malawi in 1876, a party of six young men sailed from London on 21 May 1875. In this party was the Rev. Dr Robert Laws,<sup>91)</sup> Medical Missionary, whose services were placed at the

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87. For biographical details of Juma and Suze see PA Cole-King: Cape Maclear, p. 22, n. 1.
88. For his life and work see J Wells: Stewart of Lovedale: the life of James Stewart.
89. AL Hofmeyr: Het land langs het meer, pp. 63-4.
90. J Johnston: Robert Laws of Livingstonia, pp. 21f.
91. PA Cole-King, op.cit., pp. 16ff. For the life and work of Laws see: J Johnston: Robert Laws of Livingstonia; WP Livingstone: Laws of Livingstonia. He was born on 28 March 1851 and worked for 51 years in the Livingstonia Mission, almost all the time as head of the Mission, until ill health forced his departure in 1927. He died in Scotland on 6 August 1934.



disposal of the Mission Board by the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland. At the request of the established Church of Scotland, which was also planning to open a Mission in Central Africa, Henry Henderson accompanied the party with the intention of finding a suitable site for such an enterprise.

In July 1875 they reached the Zambezi after stopping over in Cape Town and adding four recruits originally released from slavery in the Shire Highlands by Livingstone and the UMCA of Bishop Mackenzie and subsequently educated at the Cape. Amongst them were Tom Bokwito and Sam Sambani.<sup>92)</sup>

After reaching the lower end of the Murchison Cataracts, the Ilala, a small steamer designed by Young and constructed in sections, was dismantled, carried past the Cataracts and reassembled. The Lake was reached on 12 October 1875. After exploring the coast for some days, Young felt that Cape Maclear was the most suitable site and on Sunday 17 October 1875 they dropped anchor opposite what was to be the first site of Livingstonia Mission.<sup>93)</sup>

Reinforcements, led by Dr James Stewart who was to take over the leadership from Young, arrived in October 1876. The party included five men from Scotland and four teachers and evangelists from Lovedale in South Africa, namely Shadrach Ngunana, William Koyi, Mapas Nthintiri and Isaac Wauchope. Also in the party were six missionaries of the Church of Scotland on their way to join Hendry Henderson on the Shire Highlands.<sup>94)</sup>

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92. A Hetherwick: The romance of Blantyre, pp. 164-5.

93. For a record of the building of the station and the activities of the first months see PA Cole-King, op.cit., pp. 23ff.

94. Ibid., pp. 29-30; of. also CP Groves: The planting of Christianity in Africa Vol. II, pp. 308, 314 and n. 3 on p. 308.

A year after arriving, the first school was started while medical work also got under way. Yet, doubts were soon to arise as to the suitability of Cape Maclear as a Mission site. Stewart and Laws explored the coast for a permanent site and finally decided on Bandawe whence the Mission was transferred in 1881. Stewart returned to Lovedale in December 1877 and in due course Laws was appointed head of the Mission. The work at Cape Maclear had in five years cost £20 000 and left five missionary graves, one of which was that of Shadrach Ngunana and another that of a missionary from Blantyre Mission. There were 90 pupils in two schools and one baptised convert. This was Albert Namalambe who came to Cape Maclear in 1876 as a personal attendant to a son of Ramakunan (Kasisi), a Kololo chief brought to Malawi by Livingstone. Namalambe, a Mang'anja, soon excelled at school and on the eve of their departure for Bandawe on 27 March 1881 he was baptised by Laws to become Malawi's first Christian. He went with the Mission to Bandawe, but was sent periodically to Cape Maclear to supervise the school work until he was transferred there permanently in 1885. Subsequently he was instrumental in negotiating the opening of the new Mission station at Livlezi in Chikuse's land by Dr George Henry in 1887 from where the work at Cape Maclear could henceforth be supervised.<sup>95)</sup> When the work in this region was transferred to the Dutch Reformed Mission in 1894 Namalambe was transferred as well<sup>96)</sup> and continued to serve faithfully and labour fruitfully at Cape Maclear and from 1896 at Malembo, some miles to the south, for many years. By 1899 he was looking after a network of fourteen schools, forty-eight teachers and 1300 children and led a band of twenty-one baptised members and fifty-nine hearers.<sup>97)</sup> He had the joy of seeing a congregation established at Malembo in 1904 and when it became a Mission station in 1907, there were already 250 Christians under his care.<sup>98)</sup> He died in 1908.

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95. Cole-King: Cape Maclear, pp. 40, 43, 45f., 50-53.

96. AC Murray: Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen, p. 258.

97. JL Pretorius: An introduction to the history of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission in Malawi, 1889-1914, p. 36) (reprinted from B Pachai (Ed): The early history of Malawi).

98. For an appraisal of his work see AL Hofmeyr: Het land langs het meer, p. 94-97; Kuunika, Vol. 46 no. 8, 1964.

Whilst at Bandawe working among the Atonga, one of the Lovedale evangelists, William Koyi, began work amongst the Angoni of Mombera. In 1885 he was joined by Dr Elmslie<sup>99)</sup> and after initial problems the work got under way.

Once more it became clear to the leaders of the Mission that they should shift their headquarters. This time it was to Khondowe, a plateau shelf overlooking the Lake north of Bandawe. The new Livingstonia was begun in 1894. In the following year a tremendous revival broke out throughout the Mission field and thousands of people turned to Christianity.

The work of the Mission was launched mainly in four spheres: Evangelisation, Education, Industrial work and Medical work.<sup>100)</sup> Of these Livingstonia gained particular renown for its educational institution set up at Livingstonia and called the Overtoun Institution after Lord Overtoun whose gift of £5 000 helped to build it. In due course it grew into one of the best educational institutions to be found in modern Missions.<sup>101)</sup>

With the spiritual break-through of the 1890s came the first steps of organising an indigenous Church. On Good Friday, 1895 the first six elders and six deacons were ordained at Bandawe while the first congregation with sixteen elders was constituted amongst the Ngoni at Ekwendeni in March 1899.

On 15 November 1899 the first Presbytery of a "Native Church" was constituted by the Livingstonia Mission Council to be called the "Presbyterian Church of Central Africa". It is clear, as Bolink pointed out<sup>102)</sup> that the missionaries did not intend making the young Church an appendix of the far away home Church, nor did they want to limit its scope to the sphere for their particular Mission. The whole of Central Africa was envisaged. In this respect

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99. For an account of this work see WA Elmslie: *Among the wild Angoni*.

100. AL' Hofmeyr, *op.cit.*, p. 84.

101. For a critical evaluation of the work done at the Institution see J McCracken: *Politics and Christianity in Malawi 1875-1940*, pp. 132-156; also J du Plessis: *The Evangelisation of Pagan Africa*, pp. 297f.

102. P Bolink: *Towards Church union in Zambia*, p. 30.

Dr Laws played a major role, not only in his own Mission, but also in other Missions, notably Blantyre Mission and the Mission of the Dutch Reformed Church, in promoting such a Church. At about this time he wrote: "I have always held very strongly that in the Foreign Field the native Churches should grow up on their own lines and in their own surroundings if they are to be strong and healthy and should not be presbyteries of any of our home Churches ....."<sup>103)</sup>

The following decade saw the emergence of a Native ministry. When the Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Central Africa met at Livingstonia on 13 March 1903 it licensed Charles Domingo.<sup>104)</sup> Laws believed that ordination should be postponed for a considerable period and by 1907 when Domingo was appointed to take charge of an African congregation he was still, albeit by then no longer the only one, awaiting ordination. Possibly certain unorthodox views he held accounted for this delay because later he came under the influence of David Booth, an American missionary whose teachings were instrumental in creating an Ethiopian movement in Malawi.<sup>105)</sup> He left the Mission and joined the Seventh Day Baptists, claiming in 1911 to have over five thousand followers.<sup>106)</sup>

On 17 May 1914, thirty-nine years after the Mission commenced its work, the Church ordained its first African ministers: Yesaya Zerenja Mwasi, Hezekiya Tweya and Jonathan Chirwa. The policy was laid down by Laws and recorded in the minutes of the Livingstonia Presbytery of 1907 that licentiates and in due course ordained Native pastors, should remain under the care and supervision of European missionaries. The inevitable tension and dissension this could and did cause should be seen as the reason why the missionaries planned such a long period of probation after theological training. When the Living-

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103. Ibid., quoted from WJ Jack: Daybreak in Livingstonia, p. 312.

104. The Aurora, 1/6/1903, p. 24. Domingo originally came from Quelimane, was brought to Livingstonia in 1881 and later sent to Lovedale before completing his theological studies.

105. Notably this movement culminated in the Chilembwe rising of 1915.

106. B Pachai: Malawi: The history of the nation, pp. 204-5, 210.

stonia Mission celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in October 1925 there were ten ordained Malawian ministers.<sup>107)</sup>

Meanwhile an important development was taking place. This was namely the taking of the first steps towards forming a greater Church of Central Africa. Negotiations with the Blantyre Mission and the Dutch Reformed Church Mission began as early as 1900 and culminated in the formation of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian, initially in 1924, with Nkhoma joining in 1926.<sup>108)</sup>

### 2.3 The Blantyre Mission of the established Church of Scotland

Henry Henderson came out with the first Livingstonia party to look for a suitable site to establish a Mission. After a journey together with Tom Bokwito he decided upon a spot in the Shire Highlands which David Livingstone had years before noted as a likely site for a Mission.<sup>109)</sup> When the first Mission party, under the leadership of Dr Macklin, arrived in October 1876, a site was chosen near Ndirande Mountain on Chief Kapeni's land. It was named Blantyre after Livingstone's birthplace.

The Mission did not start off very well and by the end of the year an appeal to Livingstonia brought Laws and Stewart over to help get things going. It was only in 1878 that the first clergyman, the Rev. Duff Macdonald, was sent out to take charge of affairs. During this stay the Mission became involved in what has become known as the Blantyre Scandal. The instructions given to Henderson "to act as the General Director and a Christian Magistrate of the settlement"<sup>110)</sup> were taken rather literally and members of the Mission staff became involved in several cases of flogging, and one of capital punishment. Although Macdonald himself, as a clergyman, did not actively

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107. Ibid., pp. 205f.

108. See further chapter four.

109. A Hetherwick: The romance of Blantyre, pp. 18-19.

110. J McCracken: Politics and Christianity in Malawi, p. 65-68; B Pachai (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds): Malawi past and present, p. 50ff).

exercise civil jurisdiction, he was held ultimately responsible for the whole episode by a Commission of enquiry. In 1881 Macdonald and his colleagues were recalled. Thus the experiment of a "colonial settlement" ended in failure.

A new beginning was made when the Rev. David Clement Scott took over the Blantyre Mission in 1881. He defined his objective as follows: "Our purpose we lay down as the foundation of all our work that we are building the African Church - not Scottish nor English - but African".<sup>111)</sup> Two years later he was joined by Dr Alexander Hetherwick and ten years later other stations had been opened at Domasi, Zomba and Mulanje. By then the Blantyre Mission had "become a moral and religious force in the Shire Highlands, which made its influence felt over both natives and Europeans".<sup>112)</sup>

When Scott retired in 1899 he had laid a strong foundation for the African Church. He also left two tangible monuments: the magnificent church of Blantyre Mission completed in 1891, the first permanent church building in Central Africa,<sup>113)</sup> and the Cyclopaedic Dictionary of the Mang'anja Language, which in enlarged form still remains a standard work to the present day.

Another of Scott's legacies was the training of African helpers as evangelists who were to form the nucleus of a future Church. Some of them he sent for further education at Lovedale and in Scotland.<sup>114)</sup> By 1904 there were seven ordained deacons including Harry Matecheta (1870 - 1962) who was subsequently one of the first two men to be ordained as ministers on 9 March 1911. He eventually became the first African to be elected as moderator of the Blantyre Presbytery in 1939.<sup>115)</sup>

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111. Quoted in: The Blantyre Centenary 1876 - 1976 (no page numbering).

112. J du Plessis: The evangelisation of Pagan Africa, p. 304.

113. See A Hetherwick: The building of the Blantyre church, Nyasaland 1888 - 1891.

114. B Pachai: Malawi: The history of the nation, pp. 90, 203.

115. Ibid., p. 204; and Hetherwick: The romance of Blantyre, p. 169.

Hetherwick took over from Scott as head of the Mission in 1899 and the next few years saw the beginnings of a young Church. The Presbytery of Blantyre was formed in 1902 "to serve the interests of the Mission Council as well as the African Church".<sup>116)</sup> It was however, a Presbytery of the Home Church and included, initially, only European elders. In contrast, the Presbytery of Livingstonia was entirely African.<sup>117)</sup> Kirk sessions had already been set up in Blantyre, Domasi and Zomba in 1901. The first African elders were appointed to the Presbytery in 1903.<sup>118)</sup> By 1906 the Presbytery had grown to include thirteen kirk sessions. Hetherwick retired in 1928 after a lifetime of service to the Church and to Malawi, having seen the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian come into being.

One other aspect of the work should be mentioned, namely the setting up of an institute for furthering education. After several years of planning it was finally approved in 1908 and the Henry Henderson Institute came into being. It involved "a scheme of concentration of the main Industrial and all the branches of Technical, Commercial, Medical, Educational and Theological training ...".<sup>119)</sup>

The work of the Blantyre Mission continued alongside that of the Church until 1959 when the Mission Council was finally dissolved, and the Blantyre Synod became fully autonomous. The Scottish missionaries were by then full members of the Synod.

#### 2.4 The Dutch Reformed Church Mission

Chronologically the coming of this Mission fits in at this point, but as it forms part of the study of the history of Nkhoma Synod it will be dealt with in greater detail further on. At this stage a few cursory remarks will suffice. The Mission of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa arrived on the scene in the person of the Rev. Andrew Charles Murray in 1888. The following

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116. B Pachai, *op.cit.*, p. 203. Pachai gives the date as 1900, but this is presumably wrong, see: *The Blantyre Centenary*, *op.cit.* (no page no.)

117. P Bolink: *Towards Church union in Zambia* p. 193.

118. B Pachai, *loc.cit.*

119. JL Pretorius: *The story of Education in Malawi* (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds): *Malawi past and present*, p. 73).

year he was joined by the Rev. TCB Vlok and they set up the first DRCM station at Mvera in the highlands of Central Angoniland. To the north the Livingstonia Mission was occupying the field and to the south the Blantyre Mission. AC Murray was succeeded as head of the Mission by the Rev. WH Murray in 1895, which position he held until his departure from Malawi in 1937.<sup>120)</sup> Together with Robert Laws of Livingstonia and Alexander Hetherwick of Blantyre Mission, William Murray played a decisive role in the shaping of the history of the Church in Malawi. From the beginning the formation of an African Church was envisaged and the Dutch Reformed missionaries were involved throughout in discussions on the formation of such a Church together with the Scottish Missions. The first congregations with elders and Church Councils were formed by the turn of the century and a body set up in 1903 which was for all practical purposes a Presbytery. When the Blantyre and Livingstonia Presbyteries united to form the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian in 1924, Nkhoma representatives were present, only awaiting final approval from their Home Church, which was given the following year, the same year in which the first three African ministers were ordained. When the CCAP Synod met for the second time in 1926 the Presbytery of Nkhoma became its third constituent Presbytery. The growth of the CCAP as far as communicant members are concerned, can be seen from the following table:

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120. For an account of his life and work see MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaaland; also WH Murray: Op pad, for a record of some of his own experiences.



TABLE II: NUMERICAL GROWTH OF THE CHURCH OF CENTRAL AFRICA, PRESBYTERIAN.<sup>121)</sup>

Year of Synod Meeting	Livingstonia	Blantyre	Nkhoma	Salisbury	Total
1932	25 564	24 049	15 146	-	64 759
1936	31 851	30 251	17 931	-	80 033
1945	34 143	37 626	33 789	-	105 558
1948	30 409 <sup>122)</sup>	42 208	42 788	-	115 405
1952	30 514	45 149	53 334	-	128 997
1956	31 793	50 247	60 965	-	143 005
1960	36 522	62 410	70 319	-	169 251
1964	35 907	69 243	83 632	-	188 782
1968	44 678	100 805	88 171	5 800 <sup>123)</sup>	239 454
1972	47 056	129 329	105 786	6 472	288 643
1977	50 902	143 432	137 899	8 555	340 788

## 2.5 The Industrial Missions<sup>124)</sup>

Before the end of the century several Industrial Missions had established themselves in Malawi. These Missions were independent of any particular denomination and were the product of the conviction in certain circles in England and elsewhere that Missions should be self-supporting. The missionaries sent out were non-ordained industrial missionaries and the principles along which the work was conducted were based on the views that the Gospel could best be brought to the people by non-ordained men who teach them industrial skills and work manually with them, that the missionaries should through their work keep both themselves and their work without support from the home base and that the spiritual work should be done by the same men who are involved in the industrial side of the work.<sup>125)</sup>

121. Figures denote the number of communicant members. Compiled from the minutes of the meetings of the CCAP (General) Synod; and from Extracts of minutes of the CCAP Synod 1924-1945.

122. Drop in numbers is due to the separation of churches in Zambia formerly residing under Livingstonia but later forming part of the Church of Central Africa in Rhodesia. See CCAP Synod 1945, min. 28; 1948, min. 12.

123. Figures for Salisbury Synod formerly included in those of Nkhoma.

124. Unless indicated otherwise, details for this and following paragraphs are from J du Plessis: *The evangelisation of pagan Africa*, pp. 309ff.; and MNA S2/49/19: Governor to Secretary of State, Despatch no. 68, 6/3/1916.

125. See AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, pp. 28f.

The first and largest of these was the Zambezi Industrial Mission. Its home office was in London and it was started in 1892 when Joseph Booth was sent out to Malawi at the head of a large party of industrial missionaries. They secured a tract of land called Michiru estate a mile or two from Blantyre and Booth's methods of proselytising soon brought him into conflict with Blantyre missionaries. Booth was eventually dismissed<sup>126)</sup> after which the work progressed more smoothly and relations between the two Missions as well as with other Missions continued more harmoniously.

Stations were opened at several places both in Blantyre district, such as Mitsidi, Chipande, Ailsa Craig and in Ntcheu district such as at Ntonda, Chiole and Dombole. By 1915 the Mission was described by Du Plessis as a "remarkable enterprise". Many acres of forest were cleared and in 1910 the coffee crop averaged 80 tons. The people who were trained at these stations were also highly regarded for their spiritual and moral stance.<sup>127)</sup>

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126. Booth subsequently founded the Nyasa Baptist Industrial Mission, but had later to sever his connections with this Society as well. He then settled in Natal, South Africa where he disseminated views which gave a powerful impetus to the separatist Ethiopian Movement. Later he moved to Cape Town where he was identified with a branch of the Watch Tower Society at Clifton. From the point of view of other Missions he generally was seen as something of a nuisance, proselytising and encroaching upon the spheres of others and spreading discontent amongst the people. He later played an influential role in the life of John Chilembwe and his Providence Industrial Mission, as well as Elliot Kamwana Chirwa who in 1908, with Booth's encouragement returned to Malawi and started the Watch Tower Society. By 1916 Booth was again involved in seditious activities in Malawi, this time describing himself as Seventh Day Adventist (CCA S5 15/6/2/9: Kirby-Green to AL Hofmeyr, ref. 30/5, dated 31/5/1916). On the other hand Booth's views on "Africa for the Africans" and his role in the expressing of nationalist feelings, notably the Chilembwe rising of 1915, though discredited and condemned by the then Colonial Government, is today praised and appreciated in Malawi as that of a man, one of very few, who gave priority to the concern of the Africans and their interests (See G Shepperson and T Price: *The independent African*, pp. 18-36).
127. J du Plessis: *Thrice through the Dark Continent*, p. 344.

However, the inherent weakness was that little attention, theologically and practically, was paid to the actual formation and building up of a Native ministry and subsequently an indigenous Church.<sup>128)</sup>

The ZIM was followed by the Nyasa Industrial Mission. This Mission was originally an enterprise of the Australian Baptists, who in 1893 sent out a couple named Deeth to start work in Malawi. Joseph Booth was also involved in the starting of the work. The Mission was established at Likubula. After financial problems hit the Australian Home Board, it was transferred in 1894 to a council of Baptist ministers and laymen in London. In 1898 a second station was opened at Thyolo, and in 1921 at Nkate in the Lower Shire.

The third Industrial Mission was established by Booth in 1895 with its head office in Scotland. This was the Baptist Industrial Mission which opened stations at Gowa in the Ncheu district and Dzunje in the Upper Shire. A fourth Industrial Mission should be mentioned here. This is the Providence Industrial Mission which was started early in 1900 at Mbombwe, Chiradzulu by John Chilembwe on his return from the United States of America. Although inspired and encouraged by Joseph Booth and with initial financial support of the National Baptist Convention in America, this was an independent Mission entirely run and controlled by Chilembwe and fellow Malawians. They started a school at Michiru, later extending to other centres. An attempt by Alexander Hetherwick of Blantyre Mission to draw Chilembwe's work into the Blantyre Mission in the form of a merger was finally rejected after consultation. Hetherwick had been impressed by the qualities of Chilembwe as a leader and sought in this way to counter the enlargement of scope of Chilembwe's church and school activities.<sup>129)</sup>

The well known rising of 1915, which broke out on 23 January and resulted in the death of several Europeans ended in failure for Chilembwe. He was killed and a large number of his collaborators executed while his impressive church building was completely demolished.<sup>130)</sup>

128. AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, pp. 28f .

129. B Pachai (Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds): *Malawi past and present*, p. 115).

130. For an account of this incident see G Shepperson and T Price: *The independent African*; B Pachai: *Malawi: The history of the nation*. pp. 214-224.

The Mission was reopened, reorganised and later extended by the Rev. Dr Daniel Malekebu who had left the PIM in 1905 to study in the USA and returned in 1926 as a fully qualified Medical Missionary. He led the Mission for more than thirty-five years.<sup>131)</sup>

## 2.6 Other smaller Missions<sup>132)</sup>

Several smaller Missions also entered the country at the turn of the century and during the first decade of the 20th century.

The first to come was the interdenominational South Africa General Mission. It had its headquarters in London, with an executive office in Cape Town. In 1898 work was commenced in the Lower Shire near Port Herald and in due course stations were also opened at Chididi and at Luiwe where a school for the blind has gained considerable repute. In 1966 the Mission's name was changed to the Africa Evangelical Fellowship while the Africa Evangelical Church has grown out of their work.

The Seventh Day Adventist Mission established itself in Malawi in 1902. The superintendent was from England and he brought with him a family of American negroes. It was controlled by the Seventh Day Adventist Church in the USA. Stations were opened at Malamulo and Matandane. The Mission gained repute with its medical work. To some extent they created difficulties amongst other Missions by encroaching on their spheres of work and by the confusion caused by their teachings notably concerning the Sabbath.<sup>133)</sup> Their work has continued to the present day and they have a well established Church.

In 1900 another Mission was established, once more by Joseph Booth. This was the Seventh Day Baptist Mission which was formed at the instigation of the

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131. On the PIM see Pachai, op.cit., pp. 179, 212, 132-3, and his cited article in Malawi past and present, p. 120.

132. Cf. J du Plessis: The evangelisation of pagan Africa, pp. 311f.

133. AC Murray, op. cit., p. 29.

**American Sabbath Tract Society.** An English branch had its headquarters in London. They opened **stations** at Shiloh, Dzunje, Mombera, and **West Nyasa**. Several of its early **African associates** were later involved in the **Nationalistic rising of 1915**. Charles Domingo, a licentiate of **Livingstonia Mission** left that Mission shortly after 1907 and joined the **Seventh Day Baptists**.<sup>134)</sup> The Mission has continued to the present day, with the **Seventh Day Baptist Church** growing out of its work.

One more Mission, that of the Churches of Christ, was established in 1909 at Namiwawa, near Zomba and at Likabula near Mulanje. Later they took over the work at Gowa Mission near Ntcheu. It was controlled by local missionaries, the superintendent being a certain Hollis, and stood under a foreign Mission Committee of the Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Ireland. The Churches of Christ still continue to the present day in Malawi.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church was started near Kasungu in 1924 by the Rev. Hanock Msokera Phiri who had been licensed by the AMEC in South Africa. In 1968 its headquarters were still at Kasungu, but the Bishop was resident in Lusaka, Zambia. Although the parent body was American, it had no expatriate staff in Malawi.<sup>135)</sup>

## 2.7 The Roman Catholic Missions<sup>136)</sup>

The history of the mission work of the Roman Catholic Church in Malawi goes back to 1889 when three priests came to Mponda's on the south-western Lakeshore, but left again for Zambia after some months.

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134. See also B Pachai: Malawi: The history of the nation, pp. 209-10.

135. Ibid., pp. 134-5; Christian Council minute no. 890, entry for 14-16/5/1968.

136. Compiled from J Bouniol: The White Fathers and their mission, pp. 263-78; and articles in The African (Jubilee issue) 1/7/1952.

It was not until 1902 that this Church really started its work in Malawi. In that year both the White Fathers and the Montfort Marist Fathers began their work, the latter opening a station and school at Nzama near Ntcheu. From there they expanded particularly in the sphere of education in which they "today play such a prominent role ... in Malawi".<sup>137)</sup> Their schools and educational training centres are found in many parts of the country.

The White Fathers settled in the same year after Fr Guillemé from Zambia had explored the Nyasa area in 1901 and selected a site at Chiwamba not far from Mvera "where the Boer Calvinists made their first foundation."<sup>138)</sup> In June 1902 two priests arrived, one of them by the name of Fr Sebastian. Shortly after the Resident of Lilongwe, MacDonald, advised them that there was a good site with many people around where Likuni is today and in 1903 they left Chiwamba and settled at Likuni. Meanwhile another group moved on to the southern Lakeshore and opened a station at Mua where a leprosarium was started in 1927. The White Fathers were by then planning to set up a chain of stations across Malawi from the Lake into Zambia.<sup>139)</sup> Thus Mua, Likuni, Kachebere (started in 1903) were all to be part of this chain, continuing on to several stations in Zambia. Other stations which were opened are Ntakataka (1908), Bembeke (1910), Kasina (1925), Nambuma (1928), Guillemé (1935), Chiphabo (1935), Mpherere (1939), Mtendere (1941), Ludzi (1942), Salima (1946) and Mlale (1951).

In 1907 the first group of converts received baptism. A seminary was begun at Mua in 1912 and transferred to Kasina in 1927. An African ministry began to emerge first in 1929 when the first four Malawian girls took their vows as nuns in the order of the Children of Maria Thereza. The first Malawian

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137. J.L. Pretorius: *The story of Education*, op.cit. (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds.): *Malawi past and present*, p. 72).

138. J Bouniol, op.cit., p. 263.

139. Ibid., p. 265.

to be ordained to the Priesthood on 5 September 1937 was Cornelius Chitsulo who was also the first Malawian to be appointed Bishop in 1957. By 1967 there were 64 Malawian born priests and in 1971 they numbered 70.<sup>140)</sup>

Meanwhile the White Sisters had come to the country in 1911 and later the Grey Nuns were called in as well. A printing press was set up at Bembeke in 1932 and moved to Likuni in 1949. Medical and educational work as well as community development projects were undertaken. During the 1940s the work extended into the Northern Region while the Marist Brothers were invited by Bishop Julien (1935-51) to work in the field of education at Likuni and Mtendere.

The work of training men for the priesthood took a step forward when in 1939 the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith decided to set up a Major Seminary at Kachebere for the vicariates of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia. In November of that year the first fifteen students arrived of whom five completed their training for the priesthood ten years later. By 1952 there were 59 students and eight teachers. The first Malawian to head the institution was Fr Patrick Kalilombe who served in this capacity from 1969 until 1972 when he was appointed Bishop of Lilongwe in the place of the retired Bishop Fady who had served in this capacity from 1951 to 1972.<sup>141)</sup> While the total Christian community in Malawi was estimated in 1964 to be over one million, the following statistics for some of the Churches were published (figures denote full or communicant Church members): Assemblies of God: 3 500; CCAP Blantyre Synod: 70 000; CCAP Nkhoma Synod: 83 000; CCAP Livingstonia Synod: 35 000; Churches of Christ: 5 000; Diocese of Malawi (Anglican): 40 000; Nyasa Evangelical Church: 4 000; Seventh Day Adventist Church: 20 000; Seventh Day Baptists: 2 500; South Africa General Mission: 1 000; Zambezi Evangelical Church: 10 000.<sup>142)</sup>

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140. B Pachai: Malawi: The history of the nation, p. 207.

141. See further *ibid.*, pp. 208-209.

142. YR Musopole: The Church in Malawi (no page numbering). More recent statistics are apparently not readily available (General Secretary of Christian Council of Malawi to author, 1/2/1980).

Comparable membership figures for the Roman Catholic Church are difficult to obtain and claims are made that as many as fifty percent of the total Christian community adhere to this denomination. However, a survey conducted by the author in 1966 in the Central Region in all secondary schools and other post-primary institutions revealed that while over 60% of the students belonged or adhered to the CCAP only 25% indicated that they were of Roman Catholic persuasion. As these institutions represent a fair cross-section of the entire community for the whole country, due to the system of posting students to schools anywhere in the country, these figures ought to be fairly indicative of the actual percentages of denominational adherence.<sup>143)</sup>

## 2.8 Co-operation between Missions and Churches

One of the more significant features in the life and history of the Church in Malawi is the degree to which Missions, and later Churches, have always shown a willingness to co-operate and to work in relative harmony. This can be seen for instance right from the start when Scottish Missions and the Dutch Reformed Mission agreed to work in different spheres rather than in the same areas. These and other Missions and later the Churches which grew out of their work continued to co-operate in many respects. A few significant developments should be noted.

The first is the series of General Missionary Conferences which took place between several Protestant Missions. Altogether six such Conferences were held, the first being in 1900 at Livingstonia, the second in 1904 at Blantyre, the third in 1910 at Mvera, the fourth in 1924 at Livingstonia, the fifth in 1926 at Blantyre, while the last one was held more than twenty years later, in 1949 at Nkhoma.

The aim of these General Missionary Conferences was to bring Protestant Missions together to discuss matters of joint concern and to plan together.

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143, Cf. Nuusbrief uit Malawi, Sept. 1966.



The initiative was taken by the Livingstonia missionaries and when the first meeting took place, all the Protestant Missions, including the Industrial Missions by then on the scene, took part. The Universities' Mission, although invited, did not accept, neither did the Seventh Day Adventists who came to the country in 1902. Important agreements as to spheres of work and reciprocal recognition of membership and on matters such as education were made both in the first and second conference. At the second conference an educational committee was appointed and instructed to draw up an Educational Code. A translation committee was formed to work on a translation of the New Testament and later the whole Bible in Chichewa. The conference also agreed to act in unison in matters of mutual concern which needed to be brought to the attention of the authorities.<sup>144)</sup> Thus several deputations did in due course see the Government, particularly concerning the welfare and development of the people.<sup>145)</sup>

Of very great importance was the conference held at Mvera in 1910.<sup>146)</sup> The work had reached a crucial stage. The pioneer stage in mission work was coming to an end and a new period was dawning in which the young emerging Church would have to be built up, both as regards its organisation and also spiritually.<sup>147)</sup>

Seventy-six mission workers attended, representing the Livingstonia Mission, Dutch Reformed Church Missions of both Malawi and Zambia, Blantyre Mission, Zambezi Industrial Mission, South Africa General Mission, Nyasa Industrial Mission and Baptist Industrial Mission. Matters discussed included the relationship of the Church in Africa to certain doubtful traditional practices, the preparing and upbuilding of the young Church and the position of the missionary in this Church. One danger was that the young

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144. See Report of the Second General Missionary Conference, Blantyre, 1904.

145. AL Hofmeyr: *Het land langs het meer*, pp. 88-9.

146. Report of the Third General Missionary Conference, Mvera, 1910; see also DK, 29/9/1910, pp. 206-8.

147. AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, pp. 205-7.

Church might be shaped too much in a European form and not be free to develop on its own and grow in line with indigenous characteristics. On the other hand the danger of Ethiopianism could not be ignored, particularly where certain individuals had already emerged whose aim it was to get rid of Mission control and to drive in a wedge between Christians and missionaries.

Another matter which received serious attention was the growing problem of migrant labour. Thousands of men were going annually to work in Johannesburg, Salisbury and elsewhere. It was agreed to co-operate in sending a missionary to Salisbury to care for Christians and converts from Malawi.<sup>148)</sup>

A strong emphasis was also placed on work amongst women and girls and their education. The Educational Code was further revised for general adoption. A committee was set up to meet the Government concerning Christian marriages. Attention was paid to Bible translation work and to the provision of Christian literature in the vernacular as well as to the publication of a Christian magazine.

An important step taken by this conference, was the formation of a Consultative Board of Federated Missions.

The General Missionary Conferences of 1924 and 1926 continued along the same lines as the 1910 one. At both these, Livingstonia, Blantyre and the DRC Missions all had African representatives present. After 1926 no such conferences were held until 1949. This last conference was prompted by the realisation that a new and important stage was approaching which called for Missions and missionaries to review and plan in view of the emerging young Church. The theme was formulated as "The growth of the Indigenous Church". Papers read at the conference dealt with the divisions in and unity of the church, the dangers it faces, the presentation of the Gospel, Christian marriage and family life and the task which lay ahead.<sup>149)</sup>

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148. Ibid.

149. Report of the Sixth General Missionary Conference, Nkhoma, 1949.

The General Missionary Conferences thus played an important role not only in stimulating and co-ordinating Mission activities, but also in providing a very significant basis from which missionary and later Church co-operation and also unity could grow. From it grew the Consultative Board of Federated Missions which later spawned the Nyasaland Christian Council. The ideal of the Church for Central Africa was also thoroughly dealt with in the General Missionary Conferences.

The second important sphere of co-operation began with the formation of the Consultative Board of Federated Missions at the General Missionary Conference in 1910. The basis of this federation of the Churches and Missions of Nyasaland was the following:

The Holy Scriptures as the supreme rule of faith and practice;

the Apostolic Creed as the baptismal symbol;

the due administration of the two sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper;

the recognition of each other's membership and discipline;

a common standard of religious instruction and knowledge required for the catechumenate and for baptism;

agreement as to each other's sphere of work.<sup>150)</sup>

For entrance to the catechumenate it would normally be required that a person could read a Gospel in the vernacular and had reached the age of puberty. A minimum of two years' religious instruction before receiving baptism would be the general rule. They had to know by heart at least the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and the Apostolic Creed. A common catechism would be drawn up if possible.<sup>151)</sup>

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149. Report of the Sixth General Missionary Conference, Nkhoma, 1949.

150. Report of the Third General Missionary Conference, Mvera, 1910, Resolution no. 18, p. 79.

151. Ibid., Resol. no. 1, p. 76; see also CCA S5 15/6/2/7: AL Hofmeyr to AC Murray, 16/1/1912.

Presbyteries and Mission Councils which agreed to these conditions and wished to become members of such a Federation were to give information of their agreement to the Convenor of the Consultative Board. Six Missions joined in due course, to wit the Livingstonia Mission, the DRCM, the Blantyre Mission, the Zambezi Industrial Mission, the Nyasa Industrial Mission and the South Africa General Mission.

The Consultative Board was to consist of four members. Matters affecting the general missionary position in the country, the condition of the people and such questions as might have relation to the Church and missionary work in the country could be referred by any missionary society or agent for advice or counsel. The Board was to act until the next General Conference of which it would be the convening committee. Four persons were appointed on the first Board, Dr Robert Laws, Dr A Hetherwick (Convenor) Rev. WH Murray and Mr A Hamilton of the Zambezi Industrial Mission.

The Consultative Board continued to function for many years meeting sporadically at first but at least once a year from 1924 onwards. It became the mouthpiece of the Missions when addressing the Government and in course of its meetings dealt with a wide variety of problems and practical aspects of Mission and Church work and matters of mutual concern. It paved the way for the formation of an indigenous Church in Malawi and closely co-operated in matters such as Bible translation.<sup>152)</sup>

When the CBFM agreed in 1939 to form a body which would more widely represent the Churches and Missions in Malawi, it decided that it would continue for the time being alongside this Nyasaland Christian Council. It was felt that although the Council was a more widely representative body and had in a sense grown out of the CBFM, there were some aspects which could not be adequately covered by the Christian Council.<sup>153)</sup> Close ecclesiastical co-operation between Churches of similar background could also be better promoted since in the Christian Council even Churches like the Seventh Day

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152. CCA S5 15/6/2/23: JD Stegmann to Mission secr., 6/8/1942.

153. See Report of Sixth General Missionary Conference, Nkhoma, 1949, Introduction.

Adventists or Roman Catholics could become members and this meant that matters of a more general character would be dealt with there, while matters concerning the life and work of the Churches in the CBFM would continue to be dealt with by the Board.<sup>154)</sup>

The Board continued to function, meeting from time to time. At the sixth General Missionary Conference which it organised in 1949 it was agreed to recommend that the Consultative Board of Federated Missions be a Board of Churches and Missions associated with them and to have very full African representation.<sup>155)</sup> At its meeting of 22 May 1962 it was agreed to change its name to the Consultative Board of the Fellowship of Christian Churches in Nyasaland. It was finally disbanded at a meeting held on 18-19 May 1967.<sup>156)</sup>

One of the lasting legacies of the Federated Missions to the Churches of Malawi is the hymn book Nyimbo Za Mulungu, which was first published in 1916 as fruit of the 1910 Missionary Conference. In course of time it underwent various revisions and expansions. In 1967 the Fellowship of Christian Churches handed it over to the Christian Council of Malawi, which in turn gave the jurisdiction over it to the Christian Literature Association in Malawi.<sup>157)</sup>

The third sphere of co-operation was created when in November 1939 the Consultative Board met at Nkhoma. The question of a Christian Council was discussed, some other Mission bodies being present as well, and it was agreed to form the Nyasaland Christian Council. A draft constitution

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154. CCA S5 15/6/2/23: JD Stegmann to Mission secr., 22/1/1940.

155. Report, p. 13.

156. See Nkhoma Synodical Committee minute KS 861, entry for 6/6/1967.

157. See Preface to the various editions of Nyimbo za Mulungu as included in the preface to the latest edition.

was drawn up and it was envisaged that apart from the Missions already co-operating in the CBFM all other Missions and Churches in the country would be invited to join. This would include the Seventh Day Adventist Church, the Roman Catholic Church and the Universities' Mission.<sup>158)</sup> As such it would create a widely representative and overarching body which could deal with matters of general concern, inter alia education, medical work and representation to the Government.

The important distinction was that whereas in the CBFM it was a federation of Missions, the Nyasaland Christian Council would mainly bring together the Churches growing out of the work of these and other Missions. The Seventh Day Adventists agreed to join, as well as the Universities' Mission but the Roman Catholic Church declined. Initially the South Africa General Mission also did not join, but later it did. The Dutch Reformed Mission after some hesitancy on the part of the Home Committee, joined in 1942. All the other members of the CBFM joined. By 1966 it had, apart from the three constituting Synods of the CCAP, nine other Church bodies as members with three more joining in the next few years.<sup>159)</sup>

After the name of the country was changed, the Council became known as the Christian Council of Malawi. It has a full-time secretary and includes as members, apart from Churches several other organisations which are active in Christian work in Malawi. It co-ordinates the work of different Churches in fields such as hospitals, youth and student work, marriage and family life, literature, broadcasting, education, Christian service and greater union between Churches.

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158. CCA S5 15/6/2/23: JI Stegmann to Mission secr., 11/12/1939, also appendix attached to this letter.

159. See Christian Council minute no. 8 (revised no. 763), entry for 11-12/5/1966, and minutes of subsequent meetings.

## CHAPTER TWO

## THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH MISSION IN MALAWI

The Synod of Nkhoma of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian, humanly speaking grew out of the missionary enterprise of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa. Therefore a brief introduction to this Church and its Mission enterprise is called for.

## 1. The Dutch Reformed Church and its Mission enterprise

## 1.1 A brief historical survey

The Dutch Reformed Church is the Church the Dutch colonisers brought with them to South Africa in 1652. The first congregation was established at Cape Town thirteen years later in 1665. However, this congregation and several more established during the next nearly century and a half, resorted under the Presbytery of Amsterdam in Holland. It was, in other words, a Colonial branch of the Church in Holland. When British Colonial rule was finally established in 1806, Holland reluctantly granted "autonomy" to the congregations in South Africa and the first Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa took place in 1824 with only fourteen congregations constituting.

In a sense this marks the beginning of the independent activities of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa, including its missionary activities. Prior to this date, sporadic and individual attempts to bring the gospel to people of other races, Hottentots, slaves and later to the Blacks, did take place,<sup>1)</sup> but several factors played a restrictive role as far as a more permanent official Mission enterprise was concerned. Such factors were, for example, the fact that the Church was still under the guardianship and even control, not only of the Church in Holland but also of the State. Political Commissioners were present at all Church Assemblies and even the British Government held the right of veto on any resolution passed by the Synod. It was only after an Ordinance was passed on 8 November 1843 that the Church became free of State control and interference.<sup>2)</sup>

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1. See WJ van der Merwe: *The development of missionary attitudes in the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa, Part I*, pp. 5-69.
  2. *Ibid.*, pp. 93-4. For the effect this also had on the missionary enterprise of the Church see GBA Gerdener: *Reguit koers gehou*, pp. 29ff.

A second factor was the difficulties the Church faced in having to cope with a chronic shortage of ministers to serve its own congregations. The fact that this shortage was alleviated when the Cape Governor Lord Charles Somerset sought to recruit ministers from Scotland to serve in the DRC, is of considerable importance for the later missionary enterprise of the DRC.<sup>3)</sup> Somerset's ulterior aim was to anglicise the Dutch speaking section of the community at the Cape, but in this he did not succeed.<sup>4)</sup> Between 1821 and 1836 a total of thirteen ministers as well as a number of teachers came out from the Church of Scotland.<sup>5)</sup> Of these, "many ... belonged to the Evangelical movement of the Church of Scotland" and were to "champion the cause of orthodoxy", as well as play a powerful role in the Church's struggle against liberalism during the 1860s.<sup>6)</sup>

A third factor detrimental to missionary enterprise in the DRC was the antipathy generated amongst many colonists by the actions and attitudes of certain foreign missionaries, notably of the London Missionary Society.<sup>7)</sup>

The arrival of the Scottish ministers is of particular importance for the missionary enterprise of the Dutch Reformed Church, notably in Malawi. Here the name of the Murray family deserves particular mention. One of the original group of Scottish ministers was Andrew Murray (1794-1861) who arrived in Cape Town on 1 July 1822, never to return to the country of his birth. The Murrays mostly belonged to the "Old Light Presbyterians", or "Auld lichts", a section of the Scottish Presbyterian Church which was very sincere and devout. Andrew Murray, like most of his compatriots, belonged to the Evangelical Group of the Church of Scotland. When his elder brother, John, also a minister, left the Church of Scotland to join the Free Church at the Disruption of 1843, it made a very deep impression not only on the Murrays in South Africa, but also on the other Scots in the Dutch Reformed Church. Andrew Murray became minister at Graaff-Reinet and later two of his sons John and Andrew spent their student days in the Aberdeen home of

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3. For a study of this topic see FW Sass: The influence of the Church of Scotland on the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa.

4. WJ van der Merwe, op.cit., pp. 93-4.

5. FW Sass, op.cit., pp. 13, 18, 21-48.

6. Ibid., p. 253; cf. J du Plessis: The life of Andrew Murray, p. 61, also ch. XVII.

7. IJ van der Walt: Eiesoortigheid in die sending, p. 400.



their Uncle John.<sup>8)</sup>

In this way links with the Free Church were forged which were later to be taken up again by another Murray, Andrew Charles, grandson of the first Andrew Murray, when he studied in Scotland in 1887 prior to his departure for Malawi. He made contact with the Foreign Mission Committee of the Free Church of Scotland which extended to him a hearty welcome to come and start a mission enterprise in the regions of Lake Nyasa where they had begun work in 1875.<sup>9)</sup>

It was to be Andrew, son of the first Andrew Murray who, like his father, became a minister, who was to play a most significant role in the life of the Dutch Reformed Church.<sup>10)</sup> He was born in 1828, and studied in Scotland between 1838 and 1845 where he attained a M.A. Degree at Marischal College at the age of seventeen. Then he studied Theology at Utrecht in Holland for three years. He was ordained in May 1848 and returned to South Africa towards the end of that year.<sup>11)</sup> The first congregation in which he served was that of Bloemfontein in the Orange Free State.

Of the many facets in the life and work of the DRC in which he played a role, his role in its mission work deserves mention here. At the Synod of 1857 he was appointed a member of a committee for Foreign Mission work which later became the General Mission Committee of the Synod. He remained a member of this committee for virtually half a century, until his retirement in 1906. He was instrumental in the establishing of a Missionary Training Institute at Wellington in the Cape in 1877 and took the initiative in opening the way for the DRC to start work in Malawi. From its inception in 1886 he was chairman of the Ministers' Mission Union, the body which initiated the work in Malawi and which bore full financial and administrative responsibility for it for fourteen years until 1903 when the DRC Synod took over responsibility for the field and placed it under the control of a newly created General Mission Committee. Andrew Murray was appointed chairman of this committee.<sup>12)</sup>

8. J du Plessis, op.cit., pp. 22f ; FW Sass, op.cit., pp. 21f .

9. 'AC Murray: Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen aldaar, p. 15.

10. FW Sass, op.cit., p. 119.

11. For his studies in Scotland and Holland see J du Plessis, op.cit., p. 34-77.

12. Ibid., p. 373-80.

Furthermore, he had the joy of seeing not only his nephew AC Murray becoming the first missionary to Malawi, but also of several other Murray nephews and nieces going to this field including WH Murray cousin of AC Murray. Later two brothers and two sisters of AC Murray also came to Malawi. Between 1886-1916 the Murray family gave inter alia fifteen clergymen's sons to the foreign mission field, most of them going to Malawi.<sup>13)</sup>

As has been noted, the first Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa took place in 1824. Missionary fervour had already been stirred up at the Cape through the work of men like HR van Lier who ministered from 1786 till his death in 1793, and MC Vos, who became minister of Roodezand (Tulbagh) in 1794. The arrival of clergymen from Scotland with their moral sincerity and spiritual depth "gave an impetus to the movement which had been initiated by Van Lier and Vos"<sup>14)</sup>

The Synods of 1824 and 1826 dealt with various matters relating to the proclaiming of the gospel to people of other races and the first missionary of the DR Church was ordained on 14 November 1826 at the Synod.<sup>15)</sup> At these and subsequent Synods,<sup>16)</sup> taking place in 1829, 1834, 1842, 1852 and especially 1857, discussions continued to take place and gradually the concept of a separate ministry to people of other races emerged, which would eventually lead to the formation in 1881 of a separate church organisation for believers of the Coloured population. This concept of creating what was to become autonomous, independent church bodies amongst believers of various racial groups within South Africa and also in its spheres of work elsewhere in Africa, became one of the mainstays of the mission policy of the Dutch Reformed Church.<sup>17)</sup> This will later on be illustrated in the case of the Synod of Nkhoma as well.

13. Ibid., p. 374. For a genealogy of those of the Murray family involved in mission work see MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, p. 196.
14. Cf. WJ van der Merwe: The development of missionary attitudes, pp. 80-83, 92-93; FW Sass: The influence of the Church of Scotland ..., p. 253.
15. This was L Marquard. For personal details see DK, 6/6/1918, pp. 543f.
16. For a brief review of this aspect see IJ van der Walt, op.cit., pp. 402-10.
17. A considerable number of studies and dissertations have appeared in recent years concerning the aspect of the planting of separate Churches in the DRC. A few are mentioned here: JM Cronje: Die selfstandigwording van die Bantoeerk; JF Durand: Una sancta Catholica in sending= perspektief; PJ Robinson: Die verhouding van die N.G.Kerk tot sy Bantoe-Dogterkerke; NJ Smith: Die planting van afsonderlike kerke vir Nie-Blanke bevolkingsgroepe deur die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Afrika.

The Synod of 1857 had significance for the Church's missionary enterprise for another reason as well. The Home Mission had continued to grow over the previous thirty years and at that stage the Church was faced with tremendous needs in view of the opportunities in its Home Mission. It appeared as if it did not have the means to cope with these opportunities. In spite of this, a motion was carried that the Church expand its mission work beyond its own borders. The Synod appointed a Foreign Mission Committee, missionaries were recruited from overseas and the first "foreign" Mission was started in Northern Transvaal at Soutpansberg in 1863 and in Western Transvaal at Saulspoort in 1864. From the latter the work extended into Botswana at Mochudi in 1877. This was the beginning of an extensive Foreign Mission enterprise of the Dutch Reformed Church.<sup>18)</sup> Its work extended into Malawi (1888), Zimbabwe, (1891), Zambia (1899), Mozambique (1908), Nigeria, in Tivland (1911) and Kenya (1944). The work in Nigeria was handed over to the Christian Reformed Church of the USA over a period of several years. The hand-over was completed in 1963. The work in Kenya was handed over in 1961 to the Gereformeerde Zendingbond of the Netherlands. In all the other countries the DRC continues to work in close co-operation with the Churches which grew out of its work. Work has also extended into neighbouring Lesotho and Swaziland from the Orange Free State and Transvaal respectively, as well as in South West Africa/Namibia and in the Caprivi. On the home front the DRC has established a widespread work amongst all the population groups of the country, so that Churches exist today amongst the Coloureds (racially mixed), Asians and Blacks.

Thus there exists today a Dutch Reformed family of Churches spread over the whole of Southern Africa. To this family belong the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (Coloured) the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (Black), the Reformed Church in Africa (Asian), all within South Africa, Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland, as well as the African Reformed Church (Zimbabwe), the Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian (Malawi), the Salisbury Synod of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian (Zimbabwe), the Reformed Church in Zambia, the Evangelical Reformed Church in Africa (SWA/ Namibia)

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18. See WL Maree: *A Century of Grace for the Dutch Reformed Church in Botswana*, p. 2. For a review of the Foreign Missions of the DRC see PES Smith: *Vyftig jaar in die Buitelandse sending van die Ned. Geref. Kerke en die ontwikkeling van selfstandige inheemse Dogterkerke: 1910-1960* (Unpublished manuscript).

and the Igreja Reformada em Mozambique. The latest available figures<sup>19)</sup> for these Churches reveal a total communicant membership of 1 458 271, of whom 866 000 belong to the Dutch Reformed Church, and 592 271 to its younger "daughter"<sup>20)</sup> Churches.

All these Churches are united on a federal basis in the Federal Council of Dutch Reformed Churches which meets biennially while the four Churches within South Africa itself are currently involved in discussions to seek ways of achieving closer unity. But the DRC General Synod of 1978 has turned down, at least for the time being, the prospect of organic union in the form of one overarching General Synod for all the Churches in the Reformed family of South(ern) Africa.

## 1.2 Development of a policy on Mission

It is expedient at this stage to draw attention to the main lines laid down in due course by the Dutch Reformed Church concerning its Mission work and its relationship to the young Churches which grew out of this work. As is often the case in such matters, this policy evolved over a long period and was born out of the practical situations and problems with which the Church was faced. While seeking to found its policies on Scripture there were also various other influences which played a role when the Dutch Reformed Church finally came to the point of spelling out its aims and policies concerning its Mission work. A detailed statement of policy is first found in the minutes of the Synod of 1932 but it was in 1935 when the Council of Dutch Reformed Churches produced an official policy statement which was subsequently adopted by the Cape Synod as well as other Synods.<sup>21)</sup> This policy was to form the basis of the Mission enterprise of the Dutch Reformed Churches for years to come. It gave expression to the conviction that Mission work forms an essential part of the life of the Church because "the expansion of God's Kingdom is an essential part of Christianity and ... is rooted in the decision,

19. Die Sendingblad, October 1978. p. 333; cf Agenda Gen. Synod DRC, 1978 p. 487

20. While the term "sister Church" is to be preferred to the term "daughter Church" so as to give expression to the autonomy of each Church as well as the quality in status one towards the other (cf. JJF Durand: *Una Saneta Catholica in Sendingperspektief*, p. 122), the DRC General Synod of 1978 determined that the particular affinity between itself and those Churches which grew out of its mission work was better expressed by the term "daughter" rather than "sister." The younger Churches in South Africa do not entirely appreciate this view.

21. See DRC Acta 1936, pp. 286, 339; GBA Gerdener: *Reguit koers gehou*, pp. 84-5.

promise and command of the Almighty".<sup>22)</sup>

From this premise the 1935 policy statement sought to lay down the principles and methods of its Mission work.<sup>23)</sup> In it much emphasis fell on the method, in which the various steps of Mission work are laid down. To begin with, the task was seen as the proclaiming of the Gospel and the gathering in of souls for the Kingdom of God. Then follows the need to establish a Church and to build up this Church so that it will develop into a self-supporting and self-governing Church and eventually a self-expanding Church, when it can take its place amongst other Christian Churches as a completely autonomous Church.<sup>24)</sup> Whereas the preaching of the Gospel is central to the work, other valid and well proven auxiliary methods also have their place. Furthermore, whereas the Gospel arouses the desire to further development in every sphere of life, the Mission is not to oppose or hamper the natural aspirations of people, but to lead them in the right direction, guiding and supporting through counsel and action. Nevertheless, evangelism does not mean denationalisation. Christianity must not rob the nation of its language and culture. Rather, Christianity is to permeate and purify nationalism. Therefore traditional customs which do not specifically go against the Gospel should not be condemned but rather be retained and purified.

These concepts were reiterated in the paragraph on Education and Teaching. While education aims at developing a person's mind and preparing him for the demands of Christianity, civilization and his environment, education should in the first place and above all be in the Christian truths and according to the principles of the Word of God. Where the State carries the cost of secular education the Church should co-operate to guide it in a religious

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22. Translated from GBA Gerdener, op.cit., p. 125. Italics by Gerdener. This threefold foundation of mission is from the early Dutch Theologian, G Voetius. See HA van Andel: De Zendingleer van Gisbertus Voetius, ch. II.

23. For the full text see DRC Acta 1936, pp. 339f.

24. The term "autonomous" has been chosen to translate the word "selfständig", from the German "selbständig" or its derivative noun "Selbständigkeit". "Autonomous" or "autonomy" may in itself not be quite satisfactory, but even less do other possibilities such as "independence" or "responsible selfhood" satisfy. P Beyerhaus and H Lefever define autonomy or responsible selfhood as "the Church's power, readiness and freedom to follow its divine call within its sphere of life". (Beyerhaus and Lefever: The responsible Church and the Foreign Mission, pp. 17-18, n.l.).

direction. All along it should be kept in mind that education should help a person not to become merely an imitation of the whites, but he is to take up his place in his country and among his own people. As such, education should also be based upon traditional culture. The language, history and culture of the people should have their place; education must not denationalise. At the same time it should prepare people for citizenship and help the individual to know the official language(s) of his country, in addition to his own. At the same time it is recognised that each people or nation has the right to be itself, to develop and raise itself also economically. In this the people need to be helped as well.

Relationships with other Churches and with Governments were also spelt out on the principle that co-operation with other recognised Protestant Churches and Missionary Societies could take place as long as this did not mean the abandonment of principles laid down in religious matters, taking into account the recognised views prevalent in the DRC, always with the interests of the Kingdom of God in the foreground. Co-operation with non-recognised Protestant and other religious bodies likewise had a pragmatic emphasis, namely that the Church would act in the spirit of Christ according to particular circumstances, place and time.

Concerning co-operation with Governments, it was recognised that Governments in Africa had definite policies for educating people. In this the Mission should co-operate where possible. Also definite action should be taken, if necessary in co-operation with other sympathetic bodies, when it concerns matters of moral or religious principle.

While it falls outside the scope of this study to enter into a detailed analysis and discussion of this policy, the main emphases mentioned above are important in so far as they were reflected in the work of the DRC in Malawi. Therefore a few analytical remarks are necessary.

Certain authors have pointed out<sup>25)</sup> that the policy of the DRC concerning Mission as it evolved towards the end of the previous century and during the first decades of the twentieth century, was not purely Reformed in the narrower sense of the word. Various concepts from other quarters imbued the thoughts of leading missiological figures in the DRC. In shaping its Mission policy the DRC was influenced from three quarters, namely German- Lutheran concepts,

25. See WJ van der Merwe: *Gesante om Christus wil*, pp. 48-53; JM Cronje: *Die selfstandigwording van die Bantoekeerk*, pp. 53-70.

Anglo-Saxon concepts and Pietism, as embodied in various Mission Societies which laboured in South Africa. This influence has been clearly illustrated in the person of Prof. J du Plessis (1868-1935) who through his writings<sup>26)</sup> and activities in the DRC played a dynamic role especially in the furtherance of the cause of Missions.<sup>27)</sup>

Du Plessis was by his own admission<sup>28)</sup> a great admirer of the leading German Missiologist Gustav Warneck (1834-1910) whose magnum opus, Evangelische Missionslehre<sup>29)</sup> he followed to some extent in his own book on Missiology.<sup>30)</sup>

From this quarter the concepts of "Volkskirche" or "Church of and for the people," as well as "Volkseigentumlichkeit", in which the cultural identity of a people and the indigenisation of the Church was emphasized, found a response in the DRC policy's emphasis on national identity and preservation of cultural and national qualities of a nation and the erection of national Churches.

The second influential factor was the concept of autonomous Churches as developed in Anglo-American missionary writings. Of particular importance were the ideas developed by Henry Venn, secretary of the Church Missionary Society

26. See bibliography for some of his more important works.

27. For his biography see GBA Gerdener: Die boodskap van 'n man. Du Plessis was one-time secretary of the Ministers' Mission Union which initiated the work in Malawi. He visited this country on two occasions, in 1903 and again in 1915, and was a very close friend of WH Murray, head of the DRC Mission in Malawi for many years. When the Synod formed its General Mission Committee in 1903, he was appointed first General Mission Secretary until he resigned in 1909 to take up the full-time editorship of the influential DRC magazine Die Kerkbode, which position he had held part-time since 1905. In 1915, while on his epic missionary journey through Africa (described in his book: Thrice through the Dark Continent), he was called as Professor at the DRC Theological Seminary at Stellenbosch where he was inducted in 1916. One of the subjects he taught was the Science of Mission. Sixteen years later his professorship was terminated by the Synod, following a long and painful ecclesiastical and legal process involving certain charges of unorthodox teaching. In spite of this, his influence, particularly in Mission circles, prevailed (Gerdener, op.cit., pp. 50-52, 63-4, 132, 217-231).

28. In his book Een toer door Afrika, p. 298, he calls Warneck "the greatest student of Missions who has lived in our times" (translated). Cf. also his Preface in: Wie sal gaan?

29. G Warneck; Evangelische Missionslehre. Vol. I-V, 1892-1903.

30. J du Plessis: Wie sal gaan? This book appeared three years before the DRC defined its policy in 1935. The policy echoed many of the ideas put forward by Du Plessis.

from 1841-1872. His well-known formula of self-supporting, self-governing and self-extending native Churches was not only fully accepted in DRC Mission policy, but was literally echoed in the 1935 policy and in practice could be said to have become virtually a criterium for granting autonomy to young Churches.<sup>31)</sup>

The third influential factor in the formulation of its policy came through the presence of so many independent Mission Societies in South Africa. A tendency revealed by many of them, was that of Pietism, with its stress on an inner, personal faith, and an emphasis on the saving of souls, with resultant weaker emphasis on the planting and building up of Churches.<sup>32)</sup> This pietistic attitude motivated more than one person to devote his or her life to mission work within the DRC.

The sum total of these influences as regards the DRC policy on Mission is threefold: Firstly there can be found an emphasis on soul winning and implanting of individual faith. Secondly there is an emphasis on planting a Church which must grow towards autonomy through a long process of being guided by the parent body in becoming self-supporting, self-governing and self-extending. Thus particular emphasis was laid, especially formerly, on the demand for self-support.<sup>33)</sup> Hence the emphasis came to be placed on the process of becoming autonomous and not of being an autonomous member within the body of Christ from the beginning.<sup>34)</sup> The young Churches had to be guided towards autonomy, a gradual process in which the indigenous leaders had to grow in status and authority while maternal guidance had to become gradually less.<sup>35)</sup> Thirdly, one finds an emphasis on nation-centered Church planting.<sup>36)</sup> Thus the concept of

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31. See NJ Smith: Die planting van afsonderlike Kerke (etc), pp. 228-9. So for example the General Mission Committee once noted the following in reference to the DR Mission Church which could not yet attain full autonomy because of financial dependence upon the parent body, lack of leadership and inability to fulfil its responsibility towards the heathen within its boundaries: "In general terms the GMC regards a completely autonomous church (volkome selfstandige kerk) as a church of which it can be said that it is self-supporting, self-governing and self-extending". (CCA S5 1/1/6, p. 238-9: Minute I and II of special committee meeting of GMC, entry for 21-23/2/1939. Transl. from Afrikaans).

32. Cf. NJ Smith, op.cit., pp. 215f, 220 ff.

33. GBA Gerdener: Reguit koers gehou, p. 80; NJ Smith, op.cit., p. 241.

34. Ibid., p. 242; cf. IJ van der Walt: Eiesoortigheid en die sending, p. 422.

35. GBA Gerdener, op.cit., p. 121.

36. NJ Smith, op.cit., pp. 243ff; JM Cronje: Die selfstandigwording van die Bantoeckerk, p. 60.



a Church of the people for the people, almost that of the German "Volkskirche" idea was developed,<sup>37)</sup> with an accompanying emphasis on the importance of preserving national heritage and not "denationalising" the people. In spite of this emphasis on national and cultural identity, Churches formed through the work of the DRC carried a clear DRC stamp. The link with the parent body has been retained in all cases.

In conclusion it should be noted that these concepts, particularly that of the self-supporting, self-governing and self-extending Church, were not new concepts when they were written into the official DRC policy. They merely reflected what had already become established in practice. In reporting to Synod in 1909 on the development of the work in Malawi the General Mission Committee already stated the following:<sup>38)</sup>

Your committee does not lose sight of the fact that the aim of all mission work is to plant a Christian Church amongst the heathen which will support itself, govern itself and expand itself.

Progress was reported in respect of all three aspects. In similar vein the Executive Council of the DRCM in Malawi was reminded at that time that this was the ideal for which they were to strive in connection with the formation of a Native Church.<sup>39)</sup>

In Malawi itself this concept was well known also from the side of the Scottish Missions. In fact it can be assumed that there was a considerable degree of 'feed-back' from the mission field to the Home Church and that policies evolved not only in the offices and assemblies of the Home Church, but were influenced by the developments and experiences in the mission field.

## 2. The establishment of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission in Malawi

### 2.1 Developments on the home front

The history of the DRC Mission in Malawi goes back several years prior to

37. There is some difficulty here in translating the German-Dutch-Afrikaans word "volk" which can be used in a number of meanings. Basically in the context in which it is being used here it refers to a group of people bound together by a common socio-cultural heritage, with, usually, racial delimitations. In the Southern African context the racial aspect is usually dominant.

38. DRC Acta 1909: Appendix 13, p. 28. Transl. from Dutch.

39. CCA S5 1/1/2: GMC minute no. 6, entry for 10/2/1909.

its inception in 1888.<sup>40)</sup>

Reference has been made to the significance of the Synod of 1857 when Foreign Mission work was first decided upon. The beginning of this work in the Transvaal virtually coincided with a revival which took place in many congregations of the Cape during 1860 and had as a result that Missionary interest began to awaken. However, it was the spiritual awakening during the years 1884-1885 which really gave impetus to Mission work. A new fervour for Mission was growing. During this time Rev. A Murray visited the DRC Mission work in Transvaal and on his return addressed a ministers' fraternal of the Presbytery of Tulbagh at Worcester in July 1885. He urged the Church to look for a new field because the Transvaal region was virtually covered by the DRC and other Missions. He there made mention of the possibility of work in the vicinity of Lake Malawi where the Free Church of Scotland was working.<sup>41)</sup> There was considerable interest and the idea developed of creating a Ministers' Mission Union in which ministers would take out shares or subscriptions. At a ministers' conference which took place in Cradock in September 1885 this matter was again discussed. Several of the twenty-one ministers who attended<sup>42)</sup> expressed willingness to contribute the sum of ten pounds annually towards such an undertaking. It was decided to raise the matter again at the next meeting of the Synod. A circular was sent out suggesting the formation of such a Union. In it the possibility of starting work in China was also mentioned.

Meanwhile, amongst Theological students at Stellenbosch, missionary interest was also stirring and on 26 November 1884 a Students' Mission Union was formed at the suggestion of the Theological professors. The aim was to arouse interest in and acquaint students with Missions, as well as to support the work in any possible way. The first secretary was AC Murray of Graaff-Reinet. A few months later, in March 1885, a similar Union, the "Opleidingschool Zendingsvereniging" was formed at the Missionary Training Institute at Wellington.<sup>43)</sup>

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40. There are several descriptions of how the work in Malawi began, notably AC Murray: *Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen aldaar*, pp. 5-15; *Ibid.*, *Ons Nyasa-akker*, pp. 9-18; AL Hofmeyr: *Het land langs het meer*: pp. 116-120; MW Retief: *Verowerings vir Christus*, pp. 19-24.

41. See DK, 7/8/1935, pp. 360-2.

42. For a group photograph and brief description of each one's work, see DK, 26/5/1926, pp. 705f., 2/6/1926, pp. 741ff., 9/6/1926, pp. 771ff.

43. DK, 9/1/1885, pp. 7-8, 10/4/1885, pp. 164-5, 18/12/1885, p. 555.

In 1866 the Students' Mission Union at Stellenbosch wrote to Dr James Stewart of Lovedale asking for suggestions for supporting work somewhere in a foreign region. In a lengthy telegram he answered, suggesting the possibility of beginning by lending support to a station in Malawi in connection with the Livingstonia Mission. The work could then later develop into a Central African Mission, which however would be too costly to start with. He further suggested that his brother-in-law who happened to be in Cape Town, John Stephen of Glasgow, a member of the Free Church Foreign Mission Committee, could come and address the students. In concluding, Stewart expressed great joy at the prospect of the DRC or their association doing such a work or taking part in it. Co-operation would truly be a gain seeing that the DRC and the Free Church were so closely connected in creed, way of government as well as historically. In a letter which followed he further pressed the possibility of taking up work in Malawi since there was an open field around the Lake. The Free Church would support such a decision, he assured them. When Stephen visited the Students' Mission Union shortly after, he urged the DRC which was so close to the Free Church to send men to Malawi where there was unlimited space.<sup>44)</sup> As member of the Foreign Mission Committee he assured them of the support of the Free Church in such an undertaking.

During these days AC Murray was coming to the conviction that God was calling him to work in an unevangelised area. He offered his services to his Foreign Mission Committee, informing them that he wished first to study medicine for eighteen months in Europe. After completing his Theological studies he left for Edinburgh, Scotland in September 1886. The DRC Synod met in November of the same year and the idea of a Ministers' Mission Union was again discussed. On 11 November 1886, while Synod was still in session, it was founded with forty-six ministers subscribing £300 forthwith. Rev. A Murray was elected chairman and Rev. GF Marais, secretary. A field was discussed and in a circular sent out to members two weeks later, reasons were mentioned why a field such as Malawi would be desirable.<sup>45)</sup> Meanwhile

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44. Reported in DK, 25/6/1886, pp. 203-4.

45. Ministers' Mission Union (MMU) Circular in DK, 26/11/1886, pp. 387f. The English rendering of Ministers' Mission Union for "Predikanten Zending Vereniging" was the official translation as used on MMU letterheads.

a letter was sent to the Rev. S Hofmeyr, missionary in the Soutpansberg region of Northern Transvaal enquiring about the possibilities of work there, but he answered that with such an upsurge of interest a large enough sphere would not be had there.<sup>46)</sup>

The MMU Committee met again on 19 July 1887 to discuss the choice of a field. With a letter of AC Murray before them specifically stating that he was willing to go to Malawi, it was agreed to send out such a recommendation to the members. The text of the circular read as follows:<sup>47)</sup>

The Committee met at Wellington on Tuesday the 19th July, and on its behalf the undersigned desire to put you in possession of the following facts:...

The Committee was of opinion that it is time to suggest to the members of the Union a possible sphere of work. We had before us a map of the Transvaal with the openings in that territory, and also a map of the country to the west of Lake Nyasa, where a field of labour is offered us by the Free Church of Scotland. Note was made, too, of a letter from the Theological candidate Andrew Murray, Charles' son, who is now further preparing himself in Edinburgh for mission work, in which he gives expression to his readiness to undertake the work on Lake Nyasa...

... the Executive Committee has decided to recommend that our Union shall undertake work on the shores of Lake Nyasa, and for the following reasons:

1. The extent of the field

The sphere offered us by the Free Church is hundreds of miles in extent. From Bandawe, a station of the Free Church on the west coast of the Lake, it is a distance of three hundred miles westward to Lake Bangweolo, from where it is two hundred and fifty more to Makuru, the station of Mr. Arnot - the first mission one reaches after travelling more than five hundred miles ... on the shores of Lake Nyasa we should participate in the great work of preaching Christ to those who have never heard of Him.

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46. See *ibid.* for text of letter; and DK, 11/2/1887, pp. 42-3 for his answer as well as pp. 43-4 for quotation from personal letter from Hofmeyr. In the same report reference is also made to a letter of AC Murray to Hofmeyr in which he mentioned that he had offered himself for foreign mission work.
47. DK, 28/8/1887, pp. 269-70, Transl. from Dutch as in J du Plessis: *The life of Andrew Murray*, pp. 375-77.

## 2. The arousal of greater interest

Our congregations are tolerably well acquainted with the particulars of mission work in the Transvaal, while a mission undertaken at such a distance will bring us into contact with a new heathenism, wholly outside the influence of Christianity. New difficulties will arise. The whole work will have to be arranged upon a new scale, and we shall learn how great the kingdom of Satan is, and how small in proportion is the work which is being done for the Kingdom of God. Our views will be enlarged as to the extent of the need and the nature of the work that must be undertaken. This must of necessity have a beneficial effect upon our interest, our enthusiasm, our prayers and our faith.

## 3. The remarkable opening

We should not venture to recommend that a single missionary be sent to a new sphere of work situated at such a distance, were it not that the Free Church of Scotland is prepared to receive him as a brother in the midst of its missionaries, as though he were one of them. There he would be our missionary, and at the same time enjoy the support and the advice of the brethren around him. Further arrangements would be made only after we have decided to enter into relations with the Free Church. In his journey to his new field, too, our missionary would have the advantage of the steamers and other means of communication which the Scotch Mission at the Lake employs.

To the opportunity which thus offers in the providence of God must be added the fact that our young brother feels a strong desire towards this work and offers himself for it ... . We are of opinion that we could very well send an artisan missionary with our brother, in order to assist him on his station and afford him the needful companionship.

The Committee requests each member of the Union to take this matter into prayerful consideration. Let us ask the Lord to give us a wise and understanding heart in this question, that we may know His will and have faith and strength to follow where He leads

Meanwhile the committee wrote to AC Murray to obtain more details concerning the costs, equipment and other requirements involved in sending out a missionary to Malawi. After consultation with, among others John Stephen, by then also a director of the African Lakes Company, Murray sent back the required information and also suggested three possible ways of liaison with the Free Church Mission. Either he, AC Murray, could go as a medical missionary of the Free Church, but supported by the DRC, as was the case with Dr Laws himself who was of the United Presbyterian Church; or he could temporarily join the Mission; or else they could start an independent Mission right from the beginning and only request the

Free Church to recognise their missionaries as co-workers and allow them as members of the Mission Council.<sup>48)</sup> As it ensued, the third was the way which was followed for the first ten years until the Dutch Mission set up its own Council in 1898.

By November all the responses to the Committee's proposal to start work in Malawi were in hand and the Committee could report to its members<sup>49)</sup> that there was great unanimity over the issue. Plans would go ahead to start the work and AC Murray had been informed that he was officially appointed as their missionary. The Foreign Mission Committee of the DRC had agreed to regard the work of the MMU in Malawi as being under its supervision, provided no financial obligations were involved, regular reports were given and no important decisions were taken without consulting the Committee. The Committee also agreed to second AC Murray to the MMU. Further, the circular issued an urgent appeal for much prayer for the enterprise. Official contact had also been made with the Free Church Foreign Mission Secretary, George Smith, while AC Murray would personally negotiate with them as well. He met members of the Foreign Mission Committee shortly afterwards and had a cordial discussion with them, they expressing joy at the prospect of the DRC starting a Mission in Malawi. A possible field was suggested as being at Chikuse's headquarters, in the region immediately south-west of the Lake. He had already asked for a missionary.<sup>50)</sup>

Shortly afterwards AC Murray returned to South Africa. He was ordained in his father's Church at Graaff-Reinet on 6 May 1888 and after a farewell meeting in Cape Town on 31 May, he sailed for his new destination on 4 June 1888.<sup>51)</sup>

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48. Quoted in DK, 23/9/1887, pp. 299-300.

49. MMU Circular (DK, 25/11/1887, p. 374); AC Murray: Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen aldaar, pp. 10, 14f.

50. AC Murray to A Murray, 15/12/1887 (DK, 17/2/1888, pp. 52-53).

51. DK, 11/5/1888 and following issues, pp. 150, 153, 183. For date of departure see CCA P3, Diary AC Murray: entry for 4 June 1888.

## 2.2 Commencement of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission in Malawi

### 2.2.1 Early experiences and choice of a field

AC Murray's journey by sea to Quelimane and then up the river to Malawi took nearly two months to complete.<sup>52)</sup> His destination was Bandawe where he was to meet Dr Robert Laws and decide about an area where the DRC could work. While waiting at Blantyre for the Ilala to come to Matope to take him northwards, he got to know the Rev. and Mrs Scott. He experienced much kindness and cordiality at their manse, but felt somewhat perturbed at Scott's lack of enthusiasm to evangelise and convert people. He would mention no figures of converts or church members but informed Murray that his aim was to civilize the native in a Christian way by exercising influence on marriage, social, moral and political life. Even the beautiful church being built had to contribute to this aim by cultivating a concept of beauty in the minds of people. Murray's comment on this emphasis on seeking to elevate the people in a general sense rather than seeking specifically to win them as members of Christ's Church,<sup>53)</sup> was that although he would not condemn this method, he differed entirely from such. He wrote:<sup>54)</sup>

We are not sent out, I think, to civilize peoples, but to convert them. Not to give them a high secular education, but to "teach them to keep all things" which our Lord and Master has commanded. Let those who will be our helpers as evangelists, catechists or teachers, learn what is necessary for their work, but as far as the people in general are concerned, let us impress the Word of God upon them in all possible ways, and furthermore teach them to read the Bible for themselves in their own language.

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52. For a detailed description of this journey see his book: *Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen aldaar*, pp. 33-98.

53. CCA P3 3/1: AC Murray to G Marais (Secr. MMU), 7/8/1888.

54. AC Murray: *Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen*, p. 79 Transl. from Dutch:

This remark is important for in a sense it reflected a kind of policy statement which would characterise the work of the DRC in the years to come.

A more sobering experience for Murray was when some days later he visited the deserted Cape Maclear and stood at the small desolate grave yard, observing the bronze plaque behind Dr Black's last resting place on which are written the words "Faithful unto death". "How soon," he remarked, "would not perhaps also our grave be dug in Nyasaland. ... if we can do no other, let us at least then be 'faithful'. Lord! help us to that end through Thy Grace!"<sup>55)</sup> Twice during his time in Malawi he was to come very close to death's door.

Shortly after his arrival at Bandawe where he was heartily welcomed by Dr and Mrs Laws, he had the opportunity of visiting the country which lies to the north of the Lake, in view of looking for a suitable site.<sup>56)</sup> The Rev. Bain who manned a station at the North End of the Lake happened to be at Bandawe and at Laws's suggestion Murray accompanied him. At Karonga they were delayed a couple of weeks because of getting caught up in the Arab war against Mbozi, and then continued onwards to the North End. This time Dr Cross, a medical doctor also accompanied Murray and Baines. This was Ngonde country and shortly afterwards the three men set out on an overland journey which took them forty miles inland as far as the village of Kararamuka. Here they erected a hut to stay in and Murray began to consider the place as a suitable one to start a Mission. The Livingstonia Mission was very willing to let the DRC have this field. However it was not to be.<sup>57)</sup> After a little more than a month at the village of Kararamuka, on 12 November, Murray became severely ill of what was described as sunstroke. He was in a coma for several days, his condition so serious that his companions had already selected a site for his grave, but he miraculously survived. In December they abandoned the idea of opening a station and returned to the Lake from where Dr Cross sent him back to Bandawe. On 23 December he arrived there. Laws considered invaliding him back to the Cape but subsequently his condition improved to such an extent that it was decided he should remain.

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55. Ibid., p. 96. For a photo of the plaque see PA Cole-King: Cape Maclear, Plate 4.

56. AC Murray, op.cit., pp. 101-126.

57. In later years this territory came under German control, today part of Tanzania. The Moravian and Berlin Missions worked in the Ngonde area, one of the Moravian stations being actually at Kararamuka's village; *ibid.*, pp. 116-7.



A month later Laws sent him to Njuyu, the highland station of Dr and Mrs Elmslie, to recuperate in a healthier climate. At the same time Laws wrote to the MMU in the Cape suggesting that they send a companion for Murray. The Committee had by then already been in contact with a student completing his studies at the Missionary Training Institute at Wellington.<sup>58)</sup> It was here at Njuyu that Murray had the opportunity to closely observe the work of a Mission station. He later came to regard his illness as providential because through it he was enabled to gain an insight into the methods the Livingstonia Mission was so successfully employing. He could learn of their methods, their experience and their mistakes. Thus, when he began his own work, he could apply these lessons in practice.<sup>59)</sup>

A few of Murray's early impressions of the Livingstonia Mission's work are of interest. Shortly after first arriving at Bandawe he noted that the work done there was of a more spiritual nature than at Blantyre. At Bandawe they sought to lead people to conversion and already there were encouraging fruits.<sup>60)</sup> The real breakthrough however, came some years later when a wide-spread spiritual movement took place throughout the field of the Livingstonia Mission .

Another impression he gained was the importance of concentrating on children and schools. "The hope of Mission work of the future lies in the children," he wrote.<sup>61)</sup> The Bandawe Mission already had seventy teachers employed and after teaching in the morning they would go out to surrounding villages in the afternoon to teach reading and writing. At Bandawe itself he found over three hundred children at school. Eight years later he noted that there were three thousand eight hundred children in the Bandawe schools.

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58. DK, 1/3/1889, p. 70.

59. JL Pretorius: An introduction to the history of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission, p. 366; AL Hofmeyr: Het land langs het meer, p. 122.

60. CCA P3 3/1: AC Murray to Secr. MMU, 7/8/1888.

61. DK, 10/5/1889, pp. 147-8. Transl. from Dutch. See also his remarks in: Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen aldaar, p. 100.

Both these impressions reflected what the DRC would also regard as priorities: a spiritual emphasis with the aim of drawing people to conversion to Christ, and concentrating on a system of station and village schools whereby as many young people, even older people, as possible could be reached by the teacher-evangelist.

By the middle of 1889 Murray was only waiting for the arrival of his companion before setting out on another journey to find a suitable area where to start working. He had in mind going south and west of the Lake towards the country of Chiwere. Dr Laws had been through that region in 1878 and was of the opinion that a suitable site could be found near Chiwere's headquarters.<sup>62)</sup> At this stage, Murray had given up any idea of working in the Ngonde area, for several reasons: The Livingstonia Mission was already working there, it was an unhealthy part of the country and tribal raids and the Arab War made it currently too unsettled for opening new work.<sup>63)</sup>

The Rev. Theunis C Botha Vlok completed his training at the Wellington Missionary Training Institute in March 1889. A year before he had met AC Murray and heard him speak. This experience was decisive for the young student's future. He came to the conviction that he should offer himself for the work in Malawi. The outcome of this was that on 7 May 1889 at the age of twenty three he departed for Malawi as the second missionary of the DRC to that country.<sup>64)</sup>

AC Murray was at Bandawe when Vlok arrived on 8 July and they immediately made preparations to go on the planned journey. A week after Vlok's arrival they departed on foot, planning to take the overland route southwards and return along the Lakeshore.<sup>65)</sup> Two weeks later they were at the headquarters of chief

62. CCA P3 3/1: AC Murray to A Murray, 17/1/1889; PA Cole-King: Lilongwe: a historical guide, pp. 15-16.

63. CCA P3 3/1: AC Murray to A Murray, 25/4/1889.

64. Vlok was born in 1866 and served in Malawi for 23 years before volunteering to go to Salisbury to serve the Malawians working there. There he worked for another 24 years until his death in 1936. See TCB Vlok: Elf jaren in Midden Afrika, pp. 3-6, also DK, 9/9/1936; 23/9/1936.

65. For a description see CCA P3 2/1: AC Murray Travel Journal, 1888-89; and AC Murray Diary no. 2, entries for 15 July onwards.

Mwase where the town of Kasungu is situated today. Laws had suggested this as a possible place to settle, but they were not too favourably impressed with the prospect of making this their first starting point. By the end of the third week they were at Chief Msakambewa's village, three miles from where Kongwe Mission was later established, but since he was but a sub-chief they decided first to go on to the regional chief, Chiwere. On 6 August they arrived at the village of chief Chidomai, about four miles from Chiwere's headquarters. After waiting for a few days Chiwere agreed to receive them.

The young chief made a favourable impression on them.<sup>66)</sup> He was quiet but appeared sensible and sincere. Upon hearing the purpose of the visit he was very willing to receive a Mission near his village. Murray and Vlok spent some days there and on the Sunday, 11 August, Murray tried his hand at preaching his first Chewa sermon to a gathering of people. The following Sunday Chiwere summoned about two hundred people to attend a service where Murray preached from Romans 10 and spoke about the Ten Commandments, as well as from Lk. 18:35-19:10, about the blind man and about Zacchaeus.<sup>67)</sup>

The return journey was relatively uneventful. They followed the Lakeshore, making acquaintance with several chiefs, including Pemba, Ndindi and further north Kazembe and later Jumbe at Nkhota Kota. Ndindi's offer to serve as forwarding agent for goods delivered by the Ilala in the event of them settling at Chiwere's place was later gratefully made use of. On 17 September they were back at Bandawe, bringing with them two young boys from Chiwere. They attended school there for six weeks before returning with the missionaries and were subsequently of great help to them in gaining the people's confidence.<sup>68)</sup>

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66. AC Murray may have underestimated his age when he states that he was about 26 years old (CCA P3: Diary, entry for 11/8/1889; DK, 7/2/1890, pp. 46-7), although his mother was a Chewa which may mean that he was born round about the time his father Chiwere Ndhlovu settled there, in Chewa territory, some thirty odd years before. Yet Chiwere II was already ruling when Laws visited him in 1887 (PA Cole-King: Lilongwe, p. 16). The assumption that this was still the old Chiwere (B Pachai: Malawi: history of the nation, p. 33), is therefore contradictory to Murray's explicit statement that it was Chiwere II who was ruling, his bloodthirsty father being providentially out of the way before the missionaries arrived with the Gospel (Nyasaland en mijne omdervindingen aldaar, pp. 170f; Chiwere II's photograph, p. 172). He died in 1902 (WH Murray: Mbiri ya Misyoni ya D.R.C., p. 52).

67. CCA P3: AC Murray Diary no. 2, entries for 11 and 18/8/1889.

68. CCA P3 2/1, : AC Murray Travel Journal, p. 142.

## 2.2.2 Mvera Mission established

After further consideration and discussion with Laws, the decision was finally made to settle in Chiweres' area and Murray could write to the Home Committee asking for approval of this decision.<sup>69)</sup> After the necessary preparations, they set out with a group of eleven young men of Bandawe who would help them. They arranged with the UMCA to use their boat, the Charles Janson, and so had the opportunity of visiting Likoma Island and observing some of the work of the UMCA. They attended the communion service on the Sunday and to their chagrin they were instructed to sit with the catechumens behind a trellis and not with the other communicants. The Charles Janson dropped them at Cape Maclear where they had to wait a couple of weeks before the Ilala turned up and took them over to Ndindi's where they disembarked with all their luggage. On Monday 25 November they set out with a large group of porters, travelling slowly. On Thursday morning 28 November 1889 they pitched their tent near Msongandeu, Chiwere's village, at the edge of the Msungudzi stream under a large wild fig tree. This date is taken as the foundation day of the DRCM in Malawi. The next few days were spent in scouting round to look for a suitable site and after further negotiations with Chiwere it was agreed to build the Mission on a broad ridge about two miles to the north of Chiwere's village. Near this ridge ran a small stream, the Chetsa and on the third of December they moved camp to this stream, a couple of hundred yards from where the first buildings of the Mission were to be erected. It is at this spot where a stone cairn stands today commemorating the day of the Mission's beginning.<sup>70)</sup>

Meanwhile a name for the Mission was decided upon. Out of several possible local names such as Chetsa (the stream), Kaso, a high hill nearby and Mvera, an adjacent hill, the last was chosen because of the significance of the meaning of the Chewa word, mvera, to obey. Cole-King maintains that this hill was thus called as the place of "hearing" or "obeying" the call to arms drummed out to his warriors from Chiwere's headquarters. Another explanation offered by some

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69. CCA P3 3/1: AC Murray to A Murray, 2/10/1889.

70. CCA P3: AC Murray Diary no. 2, entries for 28/11/1889 and following days. There appears to be a generally accepted but erroneous view that the cairn actually marks the spot where Murray and Vlok pitched their tents on 28 November. It is quite clear both from his Diary and Travel Journal that this is not so, but that the first place was two miles to the south of where the cairn stands. It has not been possible so far to establish the precise location of this spot. For a photograph, see WH Murray: Op pad, p. 59. The cairn was pronounced a National Monument in 1974.

Local people was that a certain type of excellent pottery clay was to be found nearby, clay which was very "obedient" in the potter's hand.<sup>71)</sup>

Without further delay Murray and Vlok set about erecting a small wattle and daub house before the rains set in. The rains were very late that year, and while fortunate for them, this was threatening the crops of the people. Near the middle of December Murray was summoned to a meeting with Chiwere and his headmen. He was accused of causing his God to hold back the rains until his house was finished. Murray tried to explain that this was not so, but he promised to pray for rain, although he could not guarantee the outcome. Not satisfied with this, those present, believing that he could make absolute demands to his God, set him a time limit for the next day. Murray and Vlok, realising how much could depend on this, prayed earnestly that night and the next day. That evening it began to rain abundantly. Murray believed "this incidence contributed much to assure our safety in this country, and to give us a place in the favour of the people". An entry in his Diary for 13 December noted "plenty rain" that day.<sup>72)</sup>

Although Chiwere had so eagerly invited the missionaries, he evidently still had his doubts as to their motives. On the whole he treated them cordially but sometimes he apparently would have preferred to be rid of them. They later learnt that Chiwere had not really wanted them there, but had feared the unlimited magical powers they were thought to possess. By inviting them he merely wished to protect himself. Whatever the case may be, on several occasions in those early days the missionaries found themselves in serious predicaments, even deadly danger. On one occasion Chiwere accused Murray of being a mfiti, a witch, but on insisting that the sub-chief Mtereni who had brought in this charge come and lay it in person, Mtereni dropped the matter. On another occasion Chiwere actually ordered them out of his country, but when confronted in person by Murray he denied having sent such a message.<sup>73)</sup> Peace was restored by exchanging a blanket for a goat. The most serious incident was when they were informed one night of a plot by Chiwere and several of his headmen and their warriors to kill them that night. It ensued that this had really been the case. After a long debate in which some of them had expressed strong doubts as to the wisdom of such an action, Chiwere had finally found himself alone and dropped the plan.<sup>74)</sup>

71. PA Cole-King: Lilongwe, p. 17; Nuusbrief uit Malawi, January 1974.

72. AC Murray: Nyasaland ..., pp. 161-63; CCA P3: Diary no. 2.

73. Both Murray and Vlok noted in their Diaries that he had apparently been very drunk the day before, already early in the morning, from wine or brandy allegedly obtained from a Portuguese hunter. He told them he knew nothing of what he had said the previous day, was very remorseful and explicitly asked them to stay (CCA P3: ACM Diary entry for 20/6/1890; and P24 1/1(a): Vlok Diary, entry for 19/6/1890).

74. AC Murray: Nyasaland ..., pp. 171f, 183f, 185f.

Gradually the relationship improved and a healthy friendship grew between Chiwere and the missionaries. During the turbulent years of 1895-97 his friendship and trust, won by Murray and Vlok, meant much to Murray's successor, WH Murray who also regarded him as a personal friend.<sup>75)</sup> A later paragraph will deal with the aspect of relationship between the Mission and chiefs.

Murray and Vlok set about getting the work of the Missions going. A school was started early in 1890 with Tomani, who had come from Cape Maclear and was originally trained by Rev. Bain, as first teacher. Visits were made to surrounding villages and on Sundays a white flag was flown from the highest tree at the station to inform people that it was God's day. They were summoned to church with a native trumpet, a long reed with a calabash at the end. Initially attendance at services on the station and in different villages was very high, but then it dropped for various reasons. A rule was laid down that all employees, as well as all who wished to come for medicine or for selling their products had to attend morning prayers. Thus many were able to hear the Word of God and gradually responded to the message. AC Murray reports that in these days he often preached the theme of the Unknown God, Acts 17:23, or that God had created all men out of one blood, vs. 25, in order to emphasise that they, the azungu were no different from the people to whom they were bringing the news of salvation of mankind. All alike were in need of this salvation. Because of encountering very little sense of sin and wrongdoing amongst the people, they also found it necessary to lay much emphasis on the Law. Every Sunday the Ten Commandments were read and often expounded in order to expose individual as well as national sins, and from there to bring the Good News of forgiveness and salvation through the blood of Christ.<sup>76)</sup>

Soon they also introduced a system of receiving offerings at the Sunday morning service, believing that it was necessary to teach people to give to God, each according to his ability. At the same time the importance of witnessing was stressed by arranging for men in their employ to go out to different villages on Sunday afternoons after they had been briefed the

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75. WH Murray: Op pad, p. 67.

76. AC Murray, op.cit., pp. 190f.

previous day on the message they could bring. The missionaries themselves regularly went out early on Sunday mornings to preach before returning for the main service at the station.<sup>77)</sup>

These aspects, the emphasis on the need to know and recognise personal sin through knowing the Law, the importance of Christian giving, and of personal witnessing, are significant as they reflect aspects which were constantly emphasized and which are to this day reflected in the life and work of the Church which grew out of the DRC Mission.

The station itself soon acquired several buildings, including a school building, a workshop and sleeping accommodation for the assistants from Bandawe. The first church building was begun in August 1890 and completed in February the next year.<sup>78)</sup> A new, permanent dwelling for the missionaries was completed by the end of 1891. This house was later used as a ladies' home and was destroyed by fire in 1903.<sup>79)</sup> In 1892 a small store with an iron roof was completed. Plans got under way for a new, larger church, but did not materialize for several years. The new church, which still stands there today was built during 1898. The builder was Irish born Samuel McClure (1870-1901) who joined the Mission in 1897 as its first artisan. After building the Kongwe church as well, he died of blackwater fever while building at Nkhoma.<sup>80)</sup>

At first the school work grew slowly due to fear and suspicion on the part of many that the children might be captured and sold into slavery if they were sent to school.<sup>81)</sup> Soon these fears were dispelled and numbers grew. Books from Livingstonia Mission were used. A number of boys were given boarding facilities at the station (twenty by November 1890)<sup>82)</sup> and when the

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77. Ibid., pp. 192f.

78. DK, 5/12/1890, pp. 389-90; CCA S5 15/6/11/4: Mvera Mission Log Book. The first service was held in it on Sunday 8/2/1891.

79. Council minutes 11/1903, p. 42.

80. AC Murray, op.cit., p. 309; for sketch plan Mvera church and copy letter to building consultant in Port Elizabeth see CCA P3 3/2: AC Murray to Dwer, 29/12/1897; also AC Murray to Laws, 5/7/1898. This building has also been declared a National Monument.

81. AC Murray op.cit., pp. 219ff. A good looking, fat girl would fetch two pounds from the slave dealers in those days.

82. DK, 10/ 4/1891, p. 119.

first lady workers arrived in 1893 a girls' boarding home could be opened. Schools were gradually opened at outlying villages. In July 1890 Albert Nama-lambe visited Mvera from Cape Maclear and brought two teachers from there to start a school at Chief Ndingi's village on the Lakeshore. The first schools around Mvera were served by teachers staying at the Mission and going out daily to teach. In the afternoon the teachers would return to continue their own training. Four of these were later sent to Livingstonia for further training as teachers. By 1894 there were five such schools around Mvera.<sup>83)</sup>

A small medical work began to develop and Murray treated 200 patients during the four winter months of 1890 (May to August). This emphasized the need for a qualified doctor.<sup>84)</sup> At the same time various journeys were undertaken in different directions to meet chiefs and to get to know the land. To the south Murray visited the Yao chieftain Tambala in 1890, as well as his old acquaintance Msakambewa to the north. The following year he travelled to chiefs Mganga and Pemba on the Lakeshore to negotiate a peace treaty between these chiefs and Chiwere. In this he was successful. Shortly afterwards in June 1891 he travelled to Bandawe to attend the Livingstonia Mission Council and to consult with Dr Laws and the Scottish colleagues. In October that year Laws reciprocated the visit and his advice and encouragement was greatly appreciated. The following year, 1892, Vlok travelled towards Nkhoma mountain to meet the Chewa chief Mazengera and look for a possible site for a future station.<sup>85)</sup>

Meanwhile the work of evangelising was slowly beginning to bear fruit. Catechumen classes were started, at first using a catechism translated by Mrs Laws. Later AC Murray used the Heidelberg Catechism, translating its "Kort Begrip" into Chewa. In February 1892 three men registered as catechumens and three years later the first two were baptised - Moses Kamadia and Paulos Maondze, both at the age of eighteen. The real breakthrough came two years later. The death and funeral at Nkhoma in 1897 of the Rev. JF du Toit who had arrived two years before, made a deep impression on the hearts of many. A direct result was a small revival which broke out at Mvera shortly after. This was the prelude to the Mission's red letter day in October 1897 when a group of nineteen converts, thirteen men and six women, were baptised by AC Murray and his

83. AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, pp. 79-81. One of these four was Amon Phiri Ndiwo who was later trained for the ministry and was ordained in 1929.

84. DK, 5/11/1890, pp. 389-90.

85. AC Murray: *Nyasaland ...*, pp. 204ff.; 234ff.; TCB Vlok: *Elf Jaren ...*, pp. 18-19. Older forms of spelling were Mkoma and Mkhoma. Since 1965 the official spelling is Nkhoma. This form will be used throughout.



cousin WH Murray who had come to the country in 1894. Amongst these persons were some very outstanding Christians. Men like Simioni Gora (45 years of age) Davide Tzirizani (35), Izake Kapologulani (33) and Solomon Kambere (28) served for many years as evangelists and lay preachers. Two of the women were older but of the four girls, all inmates of the first girls' home at Mvera, three were 20 years of age while the youngest was Sarai Msumwa (15) better known as Sara Lingodzi Nabanda who in due course was trained and served in the Mission for many years as a midwife. She became the last living of that first group and died at her home near Nkhoma on 24 October 1973.<sup>86)</sup> By 1900 the Baptism register for Mvera contained 151 names. Amongst these, men were considerably in the majority. The first children of Christian parents were baptised on 13 November 1898.<sup>87)</sup> Thus the embryo Church began to emerge. This aspect shall be dealt with in a later chapter.

## 2.3 Expansion of the work

### 2.3.1 The pioneer years 1889-1899

More workers from South Africa began to arrive. First came Robert Blake in 1892. The following year JS Cridland and the first lady worker Miss Martha Murray arrived. With them was AC Murray returning from furlough, bringing his bride, as well as the bride of Blake. Another important arrival was in 1894 when the Rev. (later Dr) William Hoppe Murray came, accompanied by the first agricultural missionary, Albert WG van der Westhuizen. The second lady worker came in 1895 but during the same year AC Murray had to return home to recuperate after being mauled by a leopard and barely escaping death. Several

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86. AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, pp. 99ff. Murray and several writers after him give the date as 14 December, saying that fourteen men and five women were baptized. This does not agree with official records. See CCA S5 15/6/11/4: Mvera Mission Log Book, entries for 18/2/1892, 3/3/1895 and October 1897 (no day): for names of these candidates see in loc.; also MNA Nkhoma Papers: Baptism Register for Mvera 1895-1913. Several sources quote a figure of 21 converts while a photograph shows fourteen men and seven women. Presumably this figure and photograph included two persons, a man and a woman baptised at Nkhoma the previous month (MNA Nkhoma Papers: Baptism Register for Nkhoma; cf. MW Retief: *William Murray of Nyasaland*, p. 50; WH Murray: *Op pad*, pp. 139-40ff., photograph, p. 97). On Tzirizani and Kapologulani see also SJ Ntara: *Namon Katengeza*, pp. 45-47; On Sara Nabanda see *Nuusbrief uit Malawi*, Jan. 1974.

87. CCA S5 15/6/11/4: Mvera Mission Log Book, entry for 13/11/1898.

workers arrived during the next few years and by 1899 the small band of missionaries counted fourteen but there were already three missionary graves in Malawi, those of Mrs Vlok at Livlezi (1895), Rev. du Toit at Nkhoma (1897) and JS Cridland at Kongwe (1898).<sup>88)</sup>

With the coming of extra workers, work could expand in various directions. During the first decade the Lakeshore received some attention, while two new stations, Kongwe and Nkhoma were opened and a third, Livlezi, taken over from the Livingstonia Mission. Already in 1891 AC Murray had selected and bought a site at Mtsala near Chief Maganga on the Lakeshore for a future Mission. Several flourishing schools soon existed in the area. When Blake arrived one of his first tasks was to erect a small dwelling at Mtsala. However, developments elsewhere and shortage of staff caused the plans for opening a Mission there never to materialise.<sup>89)</sup> The Mvera missionaries continued to visit the area and JS Cridland in particular felt deeply committed to work there. He even built himself a boat at Mvera for this purpose. His death cut short a planned tour of the Lakeshore in 1898 but WH Murray went in his stead and reported most satisfying results.<sup>90)</sup>

In 1894 the UMCA extended its work to Nkhota Kota on the western shore of the Lake. This was an area which the Livingstonia Mission regarded as its region and Laws had already urged the Home Committee to make good its hold on the west side. When this seemed impossible, Laws turned to the DRC and strongly urged the MMU to open work at Nkhota Kota. This would have been an important link between the Livingstonia and Mvera Missions. There were various practical difficulties however and the Dutch Missionaries could not recommend it. When Bishop Maples died and was buried there, Laws wrote that presumably the Universities' Mission would now want to continue there and the matter was dropped. In 1897 Laws and Maples' successor, Bishop Hine agreed that the UMCA would restrict itself to the Muslim enclave of Nkhota Kota. Livingstonia Mission occupied the Kasungu district shortly afterwards.<sup>91)</sup>

88. Blake originally came as a "religious instructor" and was only approved for ordination in 1897. This took place on 18/2/1898 (CCA V/9: 1/1: MMU minutes, entries for 31/5/1893, 25/2/1897, 21/12/1897. For a complete list of workers who came to the country between 1889 and 1954 see Council minutes 77/1954, pp. 1063-66.

89. CCA S5 15/6/11/4: Mvera Mission Log Book: entry for 28/9/1891; DK, 1/7/1892; p. 212; AC Murray: Ons Nyasa-akker, p. 108.

90. See for a description, WH Murray: Op pad, pp. 149-53; Bolink: Towards Church union in Zambia, pp. 98-100.

91. See correspondence in CCA V9 2/1: WH Murray to JR Albertyn, 30/9/1895; AC Murray to Albertyn, 26/12/1895; S5 15/6/2/15: AC Murray to WH Murray, 5/12/1895; 15/6/2/16: Laws to WH Murray, 11/2/1896. Cf. P Bolink: pp. 99-100.

In 1893 a visit to Msakambewa's area resulted in the selection of a site three miles from his village. This site was to become Kongwe Mission. After negotiating with Rhodes of the British Central Africa Company, first 500 and later 1000 acres were bought from the Administration and on 16 April Robert Blake and his wife pitched their tent on a ridge just below the present station on the banks of the Lingadzi stream.<sup>92)</sup> Soon a provisional dwelling was erected, and later used as a school, as well as other buildings. In 1900 a large church seating 1 100 was built and inaugurated on 13 January 1901.<sup>93)</sup> This building was replaced by the present church which was inaugurated in 1951.

The work progressed well. On 4 December 1898 the first group of ten converts were baptised, amongst them three women.<sup>94)</sup> Considerable success was also gained at an outpost, Chibanzi, where work was started by Blake and Cridland in 1896. This was the village of a young chief Msyamboza<sup>95)</sup> whose support of the work of the Mission contributed to Chibanzi later becoming one of the most flourishing of all the outposts. It was especially during the ministry of evangelist Andreyka Namkumbwa, who later became the first Malawian to be ordained in this field in 1925, that this work progressed.<sup>96)</sup>

Meanwhile negotiations were in progress to take over Livlezi station situated in Chief Chikuse's domain. It was opened by the Livingstonia Mission in 1886 following Albert Namalambe's visit to the chief the previous year to negotiate. The first missionary was Dr Henry whose wife as well as another worker, a Mr Aitken died at Livlezi. When Henry himself died in 1894, Dr Laws began exerting strong pressure on the DRC to take over the work. From correspondence it is clear that the missionaries were not anxious at all to do so at that stage. Some of the reasons for this attitude were the following:<sup>97)</sup> An earlier idea of linking the DRCM in Mashonaland (Zimbabwe) to that in Malawi with a line

92. AC Murray: Nyasaland ..., pp. 267ff. See also CCA V9 2/1: AC Murray to JR Albertyn (Secr. MMU), 15/9/1894.

93. For an account by Blake see DK, 21/3/1901, p. 176; 30/12/1931, p. 1197. A native smith by name of Zawi was shown by Blake how to make nails out of old muzzle-loader guns which slave dealers had formerly exchanged in that district for slaves. Later records which give the date of inauguration as 1903 are obviously wrong since Blake already left the country in 1902. Likewise the later notion that the nails were from Ngoni assegai points appears to be erroneous (MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 23: Kongwe Station report, 1950).

94. MNA Nkhoma papers: Membership register for Kongwe.

95. For his life story see SJ Ntara: Man of Africa; also JA Retief: Ontdekkings in Midde Afrika, pp. 225-9. He was finally baptised on 16 July 1914.

96. CCA P15 1/1 (Liebenberg file): Report Chibanzi, 5/10/1907.

97. CCA V9 2/1: AC Murray and WH Murray to Albertyn, 5/11/1894; see also several letters from other missionaries in same file.

of stations was no longer being cherished by AA Louw in Mashonaland and since he no longer intended extending the work northward, there appeared little point for the DRCM in Malawi to extend southward. Meanwhile extension had already taken place towards the west, at Kongwe; and on top of that general conditions in Chikuse's country were not very conducive to mission work at that stage. In addition to this they preferred to begin new work rather than take over old work "which has been begun and carried on on lines so different from ours". Further reasons stated were the low state of funds, the shortage of staff and the interest of other Missions, notably the ZIM and Blantyre Mission to extend into that field.

In spite of these objections the MMU Committee decided to keep their options open and agreed to send a new arrival, Rev. WH Murray to work at Livlezi together with Mr Govan Robertson of Livingstonia Mission. Subsequently it was agreed to take over the work entirely. This was effected on 26 July 1895 when Rev. and Mrs Vlok, returning from furlough, arrived there. Vlok found both the ZIM and the Baptist Industrial Mission of Booth active in the area, the latter opening work during that time very close to existing Livlezi schools.<sup>98)</sup> During the closing months of 1895 trouble began to brew between Chikuse and the Administration. At the same time Vlok was finding it difficult to work with Robertson.<sup>99)</sup> It was clear that Vlok was not very happy at being there and when the MMU met early in 1896 it was decided to give up Livlezi as a Mission centre, mainly because it was deemed too unhealthy. Vlok was instructed to seek a site on the plateau or, if Chikuse was not agreeable, further away, possibly near Nkhoma or Chilenje mountains.<sup>100)</sup> The death of Mrs Vlok at Livlezi on 2 March settled the matter. In spite of a strong plea to the MMU by Robertson not to do so, Vlok and Du Toit who was then with him, left Livlezi for good in May 1896.<sup>101)</sup> After that Livlezi became an outpost like Cape Maclear, first under Nkhoma and later under a new station, Mlanda, which replaced Livlezi as Mission station in that area.

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98. CCA S5 15/6/12/2: Half yearly report of the Livingstonia Mission, 1895; 15/6/2/30: Vlok to WH Murray, 7/12/1895 and 16/12/1895.
99. Ibid., Vlok to Murray, 30 August, 29 October, and 7 and 9 December 1895.
100. CCA V9 1/1: MMU minute 1-3; entry for 22/2/1896.
101. CCA V9 4/1: Robertson to Albertyn, Report on Livlezi, 30/4/1896. For an account of Vlok's stay at Livlezi see TCB Vlok: Elf Jaren ..., pp. 7-16.

The first Christians at Livlezi were baptised in about 1890 by Dr Henry. Thereafter the congregation grew steadily and in 1900 during one of Vlok's visits from Nkhoma 87 communicants attended the communion service. On that occasion a Church Council was formed with three elders and three deacons.<sup>102)</sup>

When Vlok and Du Toit left Livlezi in 1896, their destination was a new site at the foot of Nkhoma mountain about twenty-eight miles south of Mvera. Four years before, Vlok had already met the Chewa chief Mazengera who with his people were living on Nkhoma mountain, driven there by continuous Ngoni and Yao raids. The chief was desirous to have a Mission near him, more for political and protective reasons than other. Thus, when Vlok and Du Toit arrived at the mountain on 28 May 1896, following further negotiations with the chief six weeks before, they were received with great enthusiasm.<sup>103)</sup> They encamped on the northern slopes of the mountain and the following days were spent in selecting a site. A journey around the mountain and a climb to the top in the company of WH Murray who had come over from Mvera to help in making the choice, convinced them that the best site would be on the south-eastern slopes. Mazengera was agreeable to this. On Sunday 31 May six to eight hundred people gathered at the tents for the first service at Nkhoma<sup>104)</sup> and on Thursday 4 June they shifted camp to the new site, pitching their tents close to where the stone obelisk stands today in a small park in front of the church.

Those were days of uncertainty throughout Angoniland as the Administration sought to establish its authority. Some time after the arrival of the missionaries Mazengera was apprehended and died in custody. At the same time the imposition of the three shillings hut tax with the tragic effects

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102. MNA Nkhoma papers: Membership Register for Livlezi; The Aurora, 1/10/1900, p. 47.

103. See Vlok: *Elf jaren ...*, pp. 19-23, 31-39 for arrival and beginning of work.

104. CCA V9 4/1: Annual report Nkhoma 23/6/1897. Vlok estimated that about 5 000 Achewa were then living on the mountain.

it brought with it, affected the Mission almost from the first day.<sup>105)</sup> They had hardly arrived when Mr Codrington, then tax collector for the region also turned up at the station and called all the chiefs together informing them that they must pay the tax or give 130 men to go and work for a certain person. This the people did not understand and when Codrington set up his table the following Monday to write the names of workers, the chiefs offered various excuses. Codrington lost his temper and banging with his fist on the table shouted: "The men today or else I burn your villages down tomorrow!" Pandemonium broke loose and ended in a mass flight back up the mountain. Failing to establish any further contact Codrington departed, leaving the missionaries in a dilemma. Bristling with suspicion, Mazengera sent a message saying that if Vlok was a friend he should come up to them the following day. He did so and, surrounded by warriors armed to the teeth, he tried to explain what the tax issue was all about. Friendship was restored and the outcome was that Mazengera agreed to send sixty-five workers and the balance in maize.<sup>106)</sup>

This kind of incident gives an insight into the difficult position the missionaries found themselves in in those days. Often through no fault of their own they were placed in positions of mistrust both from the side of the chiefs and from the side of the Administration. A later paragraph will deal with this aspect again.

Work and building at Nkhoma soon got under way, following much the same pattern as at other stations. A 1 300 yard furrow brought water onto the station, creating an opportunity to develop agriculture. The station was laid out in streets and avenues of trees were planted. The first school stood near the north-eastern corner of the present church. The old parsonage stood near by.<sup>107)</sup>

105. Vlok, op.cit., pp. 19, 36. According to one account Mazengera was killed by the askari escorting him after an attempted escape. The askari subsequently reported to Zomba that he had committed suicide (Memoirs of a DRC Mission teacher, Manayin, written 1935. Chewa ms. in author's possession, loaned from Mr MC Toerien, Pretoria).

106. Report in DK, 1/10/1896, pp. 631f.

107. It was named "Goudini house" after the congregation which gave the money for building it. There was a lower-level floor as well, accommodating workshop, store and medicine room, (CCA V9 4/1: Annual report, 23/6/1897).

Work on building a church was delayed by McClure's death in 1901 but later Mr C Minnaar who arrived in 1903 continued the work, but did not live to see its inauguration on 13 May 1905. Over a thousand people attended his funeral in the near completed church on Christmas day, 1904. It had cost £236 to build and could seat one thousand people. This building stood until 1937 when it was pulled down to build a new one in 1939. This new "Jubilee church" was consecrated on 8 September 1940 and could seat 1 400 people. Approximately one third of the total building cost of £1 261 was raised by the local congregation.<sup>108)</sup>

The first two converts were baptised on 19 September 1897, two months after the death of Rev. JF du Toit. Three years later in 1900 there were twenty-one baptised members with fifty-nine attending catechumen class. Over thirteen hundred children were being taught on the station and in thirteen village schools. A Church Council had also by then been formed.<sup>109)</sup> Nkhoma became the head station of the Mission in 1912 and in the course of years was built up to become the biggest station of all the Dutch Reformed Church's Mission enterprises in different parts of Africa.

One further and significant extension took place during this period. Already in 1897 the missionaries became aware of a desire on the part of the Ngoni chief Mpezeni, living over hundred miles to the west, to receive missionaries. The military activities of the Chartered Company in that area delayed entry, but after further negotiations with Rhodes and Mpezeni the first missionaries, Revs PJ Smith and JM Hofmeyr, set out from Mvera in 1899 to found Magwero Mission on 5 July of that year. The DRC Synod of the Orange Free State had undertaken to support the work in Mpezeni's land and within the next ten years four more centres were opened at Madzimoyo (1903), Chipata (1905), Nyanje (1905) and Nsadzu (1907). More stations were opened later. Initially, the same pattern was followed as with Livingstonia Mission in that the work was first conducted under one Mission Council, that of Mvera, until the work there had been sufficiently established to form its own Council. The first meeting of the "Executive Council of the DR Church Mission of the Orange Free State in North-Eastern Rhodesia" took place in October 1909.<sup>110)</sup>

108. CCA V9 2/1: Vlok to J du Plessis, 2/1/1905, Die Koningsbode, Oct. 1940, pp.302f.

109. MNA Nkhoma papers: Membership register for Nkhoma, 1897-1919; Vlok, op.cit., p. 39.

110. For a history of the work of the DRC in Zambia see JM Cronje: En daar was lig; idem: Kwayera; P Bolink: Towards Church union in Zambia, pp.84-9.

### 2.3.2 A separate Mission Council

As has been noted the first DRC missionaries came out to Malawi to work in close conjunction with the Livingstonia Mission. During the first eight years of its existence the missionaries formed part of the Livingstonia Mission, regularly attending meetings of their Council until 1897.<sup>111)</sup> In many ways the new work of the DRC benefitted from the support of the older Mission; the first teachers, artisans and evangelists were Livingstonia-trained. They could make use of their school materials and other books such as catechism, hymn book and a Nyanja version of the New Testament translated by Laws. The Log Book of Mvera Mission had as inscription on the first page "Brief account of the Mission work done at Mvera station, Chiwere's country being that department of Livingstonia Mission supported by the Dutch Reformed Church of the Cape Colony". Mvera letterheads during the early 1890s merely stated "Livingstonia Mission" and then the Mvera address. Livingstonia Mission during those first years included reports from Mvera and Kongwe. AC Murray wrote about Laws in April 1891: "We can never express our indebtedness to him"<sup>112)</sup>

The result was that basically the same methods and the same "comprehensive approach" was followed, although emphasis did differ in some respects. When Dr Laws went home on leave in 1892 he visited the Cape and his description of the work of the DRC Mission aroused renewed interest in many congregations. It was at this stage that the Committee of the Ministers' Mission Union wrote as follows to Laws to express its sincere appreciation for the help it received from the Free Church in founding the DRC Mission in Malawi:<sup>113)</sup>

Allow me, Dr. Laws, on behalf of our Committee to express our deep sense of the obligation under which we are to the Free Church for the way in which they have adopted and helped on our mission. And we owe to yourself a debt of gratitude which we can never repay, which we cannot even express, for the kindness you have shown to our young workers, Murray and Vlok. You have been to them both father and brother and now you have given of your time and strength to help us in leading our congregations to know and take an interest in their work in Nyasaland.

111. WH Murray: Op pad, p. 154.

112. DK, 31/7/1891, p. 244. Transl. from Dutch. See further CCA S5 15/6/11/4 for the Log Book. First entry was made on 28/2/1890. This was a brief account of the beginning of the work of the DRCM in which AC Murray stressed how much he learned during the months spent in the different spheres of the Livingstonia Mission.

113. FW Sass: The influence of the Church of Scotland ..., p. 134 (quoted from The Free Church of Scotland Monthly, 1/3/1893).



In the same spirit the Cape Synod of 1894, after hearing a report from the MMU adopted the following motion with acclamation:<sup>114)</sup>

The Synod expresses her sincere appreciation for the brotherly help and love shown to our missionaries by the brethren of the Scottish mission in Central Africa.

The exact relationship between Mvera and Livingstonia was not so clearly defined in the beginning and at a meeting in May 1893 the Committee of the MMU had before it a letter and memo from Dr Laws with conditions for a union of Livingstonia Mission and Mvera Mission. The Committee raised certain objections and wished to propose certain changes.<sup>115)</sup> The objections were in particular against article XIII of the new General Rules being introduced and in which the DRC Mission was to be brought under tighter control by requesting all decisions of the local missionaries' committee first to be confirmed by the Livingstonia Council. AC Murray however, felt the proposal of the MMU would not be acceptable to the Free Church Foreign Mission Committee. Otherwise they might feel too much as if the DRC section wanted to become independent altogether. He proposed that the DRC Workers Committee should have the right to administer local funds rather than referring all matters to the Livingstonia Council first for approval. Writing to Laws he explained that what the MMU meant was that the local committee at Mvera desired freedom to act in certain respects without requiring decisions to be confirmed but that notice be merely given. Otherwise it would cause too much delay.

Concerning the further stipulation about extension of the work, it was felt that any local extension, i.e. in the Mvera region, should be a matter between the missionaries and their Home Committee, but extension into new areas, e.g. into Chikuse's or Mpezeni's land, would naturally be referred to the Livingstonia Council. This however in no way meant that they wished to "disjoin" themselves from Livingstonia.<sup>116)</sup>

What complicated matters somewhat was that this took place during Laws' absence on leave in Scotland and the Dutch missionaries were not too happy with the attitude of the Livingstonia treasurer, Dr Elmslie, who was acting in Laws' s

114. DRC Acta 1894, p. 46. Transl. from Dutch.

115. CCA V9 1/1: MMU Committee minute, entry for 31/5/1893.

116. CCA P3 3/2: Copy AC Murray to Laws, 11/10/1893 and 27/10/1893.

place at Bandawe. In the same letter AC Murray complained to Laws about this, saying that when he wrote to explain the whole issue to Elmslie, he "in his own usual sharp way ... hints about our having to vacate this district if we wish 'to disjoin ourselves'". That, Murray assured Laws was not the idea at all. He further complained of Elmslie's refusal to supply Vlok with school materials at his request because "we only keep for ourselves". The same happened when Vlok asked for glass panes for sashes actually made at Bandawe to suit the glass they had in stock, because they were "such unreasonable shape of glass". Eventually Murray brought up the glass from Cape Town. In a later letter Murray again complained to Laws that correspondence with Bandawe was "not very profitable to spiritual life" and that a "good deal of grace was needed to get on with the present treasurer". There were several accusations and misunderstandings on Elmslie's side, such as about Murray buying calico from Natal. "This means cutting myself off from Bandawe altogether."<sup>117)</sup> However, Murray was convinced that these were mostly due to misunderstandings on Elmslie's part and looked forward to better relations when Laws returned.

The committee of the MMU did not accept Murray's more moderate proposals, made in view particularly of Elmslie's veiled threat that they might have to vacate the field, and informed the FMC in Scotland accordingly. By 1894 the missionaries already practically had their "own little council in which all of us take part".<sup>118)</sup>

On his way back to Malawi Laws met and discussed with the Committee of the MMU the attitude of his Home Committee concerning the issue. They were offering to hand over all work to the south of the thirteenth degree latitude (i.e. just north of Kasungu)<sup>119)</sup> or roughly a line from Nkhota Kota westward and hence everything to the west and south as far as the Zambezi. This would in-

117. Ibid., also copy AC Murray to Laws, 18/1/1894; cf. J McCracken: *Politics and Christianity in Malawi*, p. 175 who notes that in 1893 "friction over business arrangements and a difference of opinion on the question of church development led the missionaries to break from Livingstonia by setting up their own Executive Council". It is doubtful whether the question of church development played much of a role at this stage. It should also be noted that the Executive Committee was officially only formed in 1898. Until then DRC missionaries were still attending the Livingstonia Council.

118. CCA V9 1/1: MMU Committee minutes entry for 31/1/1894; V9 2/1: AC Murray to A Murray, 19/4/1894.

119. Cf. AL Hofmeyr: *Het land langs het meer*, p. 78.

clude Livlezi and Cape Maclear. However, his committee wished it to be agreed that the DRCM would train its workers at the new Institute to be built at Khondowe. On this the MMU committee would not commit itself until it had obtained the opinion of its representatives in the field.<sup>120)</sup> The work at Livlezi, as has been shown, was taken over the following year after further negotiations. For several years the DRCM did train workers at the Institution but in 1903 began its own training institute at Mvera.

For a few years the Dutch Mission was still regarded as part of Livingstonia Mission and its missionaries still attended the Livingstonia Council<sup>121)</sup> but they formally formed their own Executive Council following a decision to this effect by the Home Committee in 1897.<sup>122)</sup>

The first meeting of the new Council with the four ordained missionaries then on the field, AC Murray, TCB Vlok, R Blake and WH Murray present, met at Mvera on 24 and 25 October 1898. Close relations were still to be maintained with Livingstonia during the first few years by consulting them on various matters.<sup>123)</sup> For some years minutes were kept in English and copies regularly sent to Livingstonia.

The whole issue of the separation of the two Missions should be seen as the natural outcome of the lines along which the work developed from the beginning. It was noted that AC Murray, while going out as a full member of the Livingstonia Mission, had in mind his own sphere of work. He had come to a clear understanding with Laws about this.<sup>124)</sup> With expansion of the work and the time and distance

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120. Circular to MMU members and Committee members (DK, 15/6/1894, p. 634).
121. So for instance the MMU approved a set of Regulations for the "Dutch section of the Livingstonia Mission" in Feb. 1895 (MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 1).
122. CCA V9 1/1, MMU Committee minute no. 4, entry for 25/2/1897.
123. Cf. for example Council minutes 1/1898, pp. 1, 2.
124. CCA P3 3/1: AC Murray to Secr. MMU, 7/8/1888: Laws had given him the choice of either having missionaries sent to various stations or of giving them a particular part of the country for their responsibility. Laws was fully agreeable to the latter and at that stage suggested some-where between Chikuse's land and Bandawe, possibly at Mwase's village (Kasungu).

involved, maintaining regular consultation became more and more difficult and separation became the practical solution. The attempt of the FMC in 1893 to draw the Dutch missionaries under tighter control of the Livingstonia Council and thus under the Free Church, placed the MMU and by implication the DRC as such in the untenable position of being expected to conduct and finance work over which another Church would have the final say. They could hardly be expected to have agreed to such conditions, even though AC Murray did try to find a compromise. It is possible to understand the sentiments of the Livingstonia Mission in this matter, but it is unfair to say as McCracken does that the DRC Mission came in "partially disguised" by the fact that AC Murray was to form as far as possible one Mission with that of the Free Church. Neither should it be seen so much as a matter of the DRC missionaries being led to "break away" as that it was a natural, practical and necessary development at that stage.<sup>125)</sup> When the Dutch Mission was sufficiently well established to be strong enough to go on on its own it would do so. It has been noted that this same pattern was to develop when work was started in Mpezeni's land. This did not mean a total break with Livingstonia since cordial relations and co-operation were to continue in many respects<sup>126)</sup> not the least in the negotiations which eventually led to the formation of the one Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian in 1924/26.

The first meeting of this "Executive Council of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission to Central Africa" provisionally defined for itself its scope of work. Later the General Mission Committee of the Cape Synod was to lay down further regulations concerning the constitution and duties of the Executive Council. All ordained missionaries, and later all medical doctors as well as teachers holding a certain minimum qualification, senior lay workers and two ladies elected by the women members of the staff were to be members. The position of chairman was a permanent appointment made by the Home Committee.<sup>127)</sup>

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125. cf. J McCracken: *Politics and Christianity in Malawi*, p. 175; AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, p. 117.
126. So for example WH Murray accompanied their four students to Khondowe in 1898 and held fruitful discussions with Dr Laws and others, "Gogoyu nandipangira bwino" (and that grandfather gave me good counsel), (WH Murray: *Mbiri ya Misyoni ya D.R.C.*, p. 56). In 1903 the Executive Council agreed to invite Dr Laws to visit their Mission (Council minutes 11/1903, p. 45).
127. Council minutes 1/1898, p. 1; AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, pp. 118-119; cf. also CCA V9 1/1: Minutes of MMU Committee, entry for 6/4/1900.

In the beginning all activities pertaining to all aspects of the work resorted under the Council, but in 1903 it was resolved to form a Council of Congregations, to deal with matters concerning the ecclesiastical development of the work and to advise the Council.<sup>128)</sup>

### 2.3.3 Difficult years 1899-1904

The years 1899-1904 were difficult ones for the Mission. In the two northern provinces of South Africa, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, war clouds were gathering. In October 1899 the Anglo-Boer War broke out. It was to last until 31 May 1902. At the same time and partly as a result of the effects of the War the Mission was faced with a severe shortage of funds and had to turn some offers of workers down in 1900,<sup>129)</sup> even though there was a dire need for more workers on the field. Alleged malpractices by the Nyasaland Government in the collecting of the three shillings hut tax led to a serious deterioration in the relations between the DRC Mission and the Government. In the work itself a spirit of apathy and even rebelliousness set in amongst some of the Christians and teachers.<sup>130)</sup> At the same time the workers were deeply affected by illness, departure of some and death of others. Towards the end of 1900 AC Murray, the pioneer, was forced to finally leave the country due to ill health of his wife and in 1902 Robert Blake had to do the same. The cloak of head of the Mission fell on the shoulders of WH Murray. Two of the lady workers had to go on early leave due to illness and Vlok was reported to be suffering from ill health.<sup>131)</sup> In 1901 the builder S McClure died at Nkhoma.

In view of the dire need for more workers the MMU, in spite of being in extreme financial difficulties, took a courageous decision in April 1899. An appeal was sent out to its members for concerted prayer for more funds and for a doubling of the work in Malawi within the next five years.<sup>132)</sup> In July it resolved to write to AC Murray to select sites for two new stations to be opened in 1900 and 1901 respectively. The new secretary of the MMU, Rev. J du Plessis, wrote to AC Murray: "We have been led to ask definitely of God a doubling of the work within the next five years ... We have therefore embarked on an enter-

128. Council minutes 10/1903, p. 37. See further ch. 4.

129. CCA V9 3/1: Copy Secr. MMU to JH Veldhuizen, 11/9/1900.

130. MW Relief: William Murray of Nyasaland, p. 69; AC Murray: Nyasa-akker, p. 130.

131. DK, 10/5/1900, p. 284.

132. MMU Circular (DK, 27/4/1899, p. 266). There were then fourteen workers.

prise which we call 'Forward Movement in Nyasaland'."<sup>133)</sup>

Three months later the war broke out and prospects looked even worse. In December AC Murray wrote to his uncle, Chairman of the MMU: "We are expecting to hear 'retreat' as a consequence of this terrible war! May God forbid."<sup>134)</sup>

The war had dire and bitter effects for the people of South Africa. Thousands of Afrikaners were totally ruined and many thousands more in desperate straits. Yet, one of the remarkable aspects of this war was the great religious awakening which took place in some of the Boer commandoes and continued in the Prisoner of War camps in India, Ceylon, St. Helena, Bermuda and Cape Town. By August 1902, 175 Boer prisoners had offered themselves for mission work. Thirty-six of these became ordained missionaries of whom seven came to Malawi in due course. Others came as laymen.<sup>135)</sup>

By 1901 the tide was turning and in 1902 the MMU could record that its financial debt was repaid. Nine new workers had gone to Malawi in 1900 and 1901 and by 1903 the number had indeed more than doubled to thirty-four. This included four agricultural missionaries who, together with Van der Westhuizen, were to expand the industrial side of the Mission.

In Malawi itself the war in South Africa was also having its effects, and the DRC missionaries were subjected to both the suspicions of the Nyasaland Government as well as to the afflictions caused by the war upon their own people.<sup>136)</sup> At the same time tension increased over the hut tax issue to such an extent that missionaries of the DRC were on two occasions involved in court cases in which they were accused of inciting the natives against the Government.<sup>137)</sup> The result was that the Mission found itself seriously hampered in its work, particularly in seeking to open new village schools and new stations.

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133. CCA V9 1/1: MMU Committee minute 6-8, entry for 4/7/1899; MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 1: Du Plessis to AC Murray, 5/7/1899.

134. CCA P3 3/2: AC Murray to A Murray, 7/12/1899.

135. CCA V9 1/1: MMU committee minute no. 11, entry for 15/8/1902; AC Murray: Ons Nyasa-akker, pp. 129-130. See also: JW Kok: Sonderlinge vrug: die invloed van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog op die sendingaksie van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Afrika.

136. See below, pp. 138f.

137. The whole issue of the relationship between the Mission, the chiefs and the Government is dealt with in a separate paragraph below.

In spite of such difficulties and in compliance with the MMU decision, a new station, eventually named Mlanda, was opened in 1902 to replace Livlezi as a central station. Although plans had already existed in 1896 to do so, Chikuse had not been agreeable. In 1897 the Administration again turned down an application for opening a station.<sup>138)</sup> In 1900 the Council agreed once more to start a station on the Angoni highlands near chief Mpondera's village and a temporary site was found in 1901. A better site was found at the foot of Mlanda mountain, known as Mlanda Hill Estate. The owners, Messrs Sindram and Walker of Blantyre were willing to sell the estate for £100 and in April 1902 Rev. AL Hofmeyr and AG Murray who had both arrived in the country in June 1901, began building the station.<sup>139)</sup>

Much more difficulty was however experienced before the next station, Mphunzi, could be opened. Already in 1896 Vlok had extended work from Nkhoma into this region. Outposts were founded in Chief Pemba's area but at that stage the Commissioner was not in favour of a Mission station being established on the frontier of Portuguese Angoniland. The following year he again refused on the grounds that the district was not yet sufficiently settled to allow for European settlement.<sup>140)</sup> However when the Roman Catholic missionaries from Njobvulema near Fort Mlangeni tried to enter this field, the Council delegated WH Murray in October 1901 to negotiate with them. This proved fruitless as the Roman Catholics would not accept or acknowledge any boundaries. Then ensued a long, distressing tussle with the Collector of Dedza, Mr Gordon, who, it appeared, was trying to favour the Roman Catholics and keep the Dutch Mission out of the area.<sup>141)</sup> Although Pemba had indicated a desire to have the Dutch missionaries, he later spoke differently to the Collector. Other headmen did the same. Fear of incurring the disfavour of the Administration and even intimidation on the part of officials appeared to be involved.<sup>142)</sup> Eventually a site was selected ten miles away from Pemba's village, but here again

138. Report in DK, 1/7/1897, p. 399.

139. CCA S5 15/6/11/3: Historical review in Mlanda Station book; cf. Council minutes, 5/1900, p. 11, 7/1902, p. 19.

140. CCA S5 15/6/2/16: R Codrington to WH Murray, 26/12/1896; V9 2/1: WH Murray to JR Albertyn, 3/4/1897.

141. MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, p. 58. Retief states that Gordon was himself a Roman Catholic and definitely favoured that Mission. For various and extensive correspondence on the Mphunzi issue, see several files: CCA S5 15/6/2/6, -9, -15, -30.

142. Pemba claimed he was threatened with deposal if he persisted in having a school of the DRCM. (see CCA S5 15/6/2/15: "Spijker" (AG Murray) to "Neef" (WH Murray), 17/2/1903).

difficulties arose. After first agreeing, the Acting Collector at Dedza, Mr Cosgrove, again withdrew permission in October 1902 and in December the missionaries were ordered off the place. Finally the Mission referred the whole matter to the Commissioner, Sir Alfred Sharpe, from whom permission was received in February 1903.<sup>143)</sup> By 1905 some progress could be reported.<sup>144)</sup> In 1906 the first members were baptised. A congregation was established in 1912.

In the meantime there were new developments in the Cape. In 1903 the responsibility for the work was transferred from the Ministers' Mission Union to the newly created General Mission Committee of the Cape DRC Synod.<sup>145)</sup> This was the culmination of a process over several years in which the MMU sought to achieve precisely this.<sup>146)</sup> In 1897 the Synod had already approved the MMU constitution drawn up in 1895 which placed it under full supervision of the Foreign Mission Committee of Synod. All new or extraordinary undertakings had first to be referred to this committee for approval, report of the work was to be given at every Synod (which was already the case) and a financial report had to be presented annually to the General Office of the Church.<sup>147)</sup> Synod also deemed it desirable that in future all transfers of fixed properties should be done on behalf of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa.<sup>148)</sup>

Hence, when the final transition was made in 1903, it hardly made any difference to the work or the administration of it. This was even more so because both the chairman, Rev. A Murray and the full-time secretary of the MMU, Rev. J du Plessis were appointed chairman and secretary respectively of the General Mission Committee. In 1910 Du Plessis was succeeded by Rev. AC Murray who served in this capacity until his retirement in 1928.<sup>149)</sup> Thus from 1903 on, the work in Malawi was to have the full, official backing and support of the entire DRC.

143. CCA S5 15/6/11/3: Historical record of Mphunzi station.

144. CCA V9 2/1 (Frijlink file): Mphunzi report, 1905.

145. DRC Acta 1903, pp. 44, 45, 60, 61, 62. The GMC at its first meeting appointed a Nyasa (Malawi) Mission subcommittee (CCA S5 1/1/2: entry for 1/11/1903).

146. Cf. DRC Acta 1894, p. 46, and MMU Circular (DK, 25/11/1887, p. 374).

147. DRC Acta 1897, pp. 19, 58. For constitution as drawn up by MMU, see CCA V9 1/1: entry for 29/4/1895 and 14/8/1895.

148. CCA V9 1/1: MMU committee minute 13, entry for 25/1/1901.

149. CCA S5 1/1/2: GMC minute 7, entry for 17/3/1910; and 1/1/4: GMC minute 75, entry for 28-29/2/1928.



The MMU continued to function as a supporting body and made annual contributions to the GMC for many years to come.<sup>150)</sup>

#### 2.3.4 A decade of growth 1904-1914

After 1904 there was a marked improvement in relations between the DRCM and the Government. This, together with the enlarged staff, made it possible for rapid expansion to take place, not only in the sense of opening four new stations, but also in various spheres of work in which the Mission saw a cause to serve.

Pretorius has pointed out how difficulties the Mission experienced with the hut tax problems and the accompanying ill effects of migrant labour convinced the Mission of the need to embark on a "mass-literacy campaign as well as a comprehensive community development scheme".<sup>151)</sup> Thus new emphasis came to be placed during this period on developing and expanding medical work, educational work, especially village schools, agricultural work and industrial training as well as work involving the Christian family, with particular emphasis on work amongst women and girls. Alongside of this an intensive literature scheme developed, part of which involved the translation of the Bible into Chichewa. In this Rev. WH Murray was the leader of a work which took up most of his time over a period of many years.

This diversified action of the DRC Mission's work grew over the years into a large-scale enterprise involving hundreds of expatriate workers,<sup>152)</sup> and many thousands of national workers -labourers, artisans, medical staff, teachers, evangelists, ministers -all who played their part in building up not only a Church which was to be self-governing, self-supporting and expanding from its own inner strength, but also of building on this foundation an independent Christian nation with its nucleus being the Christian family. In the next chapter, this "comprehensive approach" in the work of the DRC Mission will be dealt with in greater detail.

150. CCA S5 1/1/2: GMC minute 21, entry for 20-22/8/1918. Thus in DK, 21/7/1910, p. 46 receipt is acknowledged of £93 from MMU, being members' contributions for the Nyasa Mission.

151. JL Pretorius: An introduction to the history of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission in Malawi, p. 372.

152. By 1914, 25 years after the Mission was begun, 107 expatriates had served for longer or shorter periods. By 1939 the total reached 251 and by the end of 1953, 340. See names listed in Council minutes 77/1954, pp. 1063-66.

The period 1904-1914 did have its difficulties. The GMC was continually faced on the one hand with requests for more workers and with an ever growing budget,<sup>153)</sup> and on the other hand had constantly to fight against an overdrawn expenditure account. In 1907 the Executive Council recorded that the opening of the work at Ntchisi and Domira Bay could only begin if workers were found. In addition to that there was need to extend westward, as well as into Mozambique. A doctor was required for Mlanda, as well as a tutor for the training of teachers. In addition to all this, vacancies existed on four stations for various posts.<sup>154)</sup> The missionaries were quite aware of the financial difficulties the Home Committee faced (a deficit of £5 000 in 1905) and voluntarily reduced their salaries in 1904 and again in 1906.<sup>155)</sup> In spite of these difficulties, the work continued to grow to such an extent that WH Murray could inform the GMC in 1912 that the Nyasa Mission was the second largest in Africa, and could be called one of the larger Missions of the world.<sup>156)</sup>

In 1907 another station, Malingundewas opened near Lilongwe<sup>157)</sup> after many delays and protracted negotiations with the authorities. The site had already been chosen in 1903,<sup>158)</sup> the same year in which the Resident at Lilongwe invited the Roman Catholic White Fathers to start at Likuni ten miles nearer Lilongwe. When the work at Malingunde finally was begun it grew slowly due to a fast turnover of staff, but in 1909 Rev. B Frylinck took over and within five years village schools had increased from 12 to 104. In this area friction and even clashes between teachers of the two rival Missions was evidenced more than once. A congregation was formed on 23 April 1916.<sup>159)</sup>

The next station to be opened was at Malembo.<sup>160)</sup> While Albert Namalambe was still at Cape Maclear, he was invited in 1895 by the newly instated chief

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153. In 1906 the annual budget of the DRC Mission Council for the work in Malawi, excluding the salaries of missionaries, was £1 757, in 1910 it had risen to £2 616 and in 1914 to £5 151 (of which nearly £3 200 was for education). See Council minutes, 14/1906, p. 84; 19/1910, p. 121; 29/1914, p. 191 (corrected page number).
154. Council minutes 15/1907, pp. 87-88.
155. CCA V9 2/1: WH Murray to Du Plessis, 17/8/1904; A Murray to Du Plessis, 23/12/1905; S5 15/6/2/9: AL Hofmeyr to Du Plessis, 28/3/1906.
156. CCA S5 1/1/2: GMC minute 23, entry for 12/9/1912.
157. Council minutes, 14/1906, p. 82. See historical survey in CCA S5 15/6/11/2.
158. J du Plessis: Een toer door Afrika, p. 289.
159. AC Murray: Ons Nyasa-akker, pp. 144-5. On formation of Congregation see MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 22: Statistical reports 1902-1918.
160. For a history see CCA S5 15/6/11/2: Preface to annual Report Book; also AC Murray, op.cit., pp. 148-157.

Manzi to move to Malembo. After receiving permission to do so he settled at Malembo in 1896. It was a more densely populated area than Cape Maclear. His work bore fruit over the years.<sup>161)</sup> Eight years later a congregation was formed on 24 July 1904. Namalambe was appointed one of the elders while one of the deacons was Andreya Musa Namkumba.<sup>162)</sup>

In spite of doubts on the part of some missionaries on the advisability of opening an expatriate-manned post at Malembo, the Council upheld its decision of 1904 and appointed Rev. LJ Murray. He arrived on 28 June 1907 and worked there intermittently during the next eighteen years. Shortly after his tragic death in 1925 at which time he was again stationed there the Congregation received its first Malawian Pastor, Andreya Namkumba.<sup>163)</sup> As a station for missionaries Malembo was not permanently manned again until the early fifties but fell under Mlanda Mission. The centre of the congregation today is about five miles south of the old station.

Three years later the next station was opened. This was in the Ntchisi area, about 26 miles north of Kongwe on the heights of the escarpment. The site was selected in 1904 and purchased with a gift from Rev. J du Plessis who had visited Malawi the previous year. The area was initially worked from Kongwe until in 1910 when Rev. CJH van Wyk began and built up the station. He stayed on until 1946. Originally it was called Ntchisi, but in 1918 after the Government had opened a post a few miles away with the same name it was changed to Chintembwe, a local name which bore reference to a circle of large kachere trees nearby.

A congregation was formed on 6 March 1915 and the next three years were years of spectacular progress.<sup>164)</sup>

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161. In July 1897 Vlok visited Malembo for a week and was most pleasantly impressed by the progress of the work. A church building of 79 feet had been erected by the people, see Vlok: *Elf jaren ...*, pp. 24-30.
162. Report in Council minutes 12/1904, pp. 54-5. Namkumba was later trained as a minister and ordained in 1925 at Malembo, the first Malawian to enter the ministry in this field.
163. Council minutes 12/1904, p. 59; 13/1905, pp. 64, 76-7; 15/1907, p. 87. Murray was again stationed at Malembo in 1919, but tragically lost his life after being attacked by a wounded lion near Golomoti in May 1925. He was buried at Malembo next to the graves of his first wife and child. See for his life, JWJ Hofmeyr: *Louis Murray die leuehart*.
164. For history see CCA S5 15/6/11/1: Station report book; also AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, pp. 158f.

Difficulties of a different nature affected the work in the Ntchisi area right from the time of starting there. As already noted, the UMCA had started work in 1894 at Nkhota Kota on the Lakeshore and in 1897 had reached an agreement with Laws to work only in the Muslim enclave of Nkhota Kota.<sup>165)</sup> In 1903 and 1904 WH Murray and Bishop Trower negotiated concerning a boundary but the Bishop refused to recognise any separate sphere of work. He was nevertheless willing to come to a "friendly agreement" to take the Chia River as a "convenient boundary between us ... as a matter of arrangement between ourselves".<sup>166)</sup> A few years later, in 1907, a UMCA missionary JP Clarke opened a school on the highlands in the Ntchisi area to the south of this boundary and very close to where Rev. AL Liebenberg of Kongwe had just started a school. This was within the area to be worked from the new Mission and Liebenberg protested to Clarke who first refused to negotiate but later agreed to meet him. The outcome was that the matter was referred to the Bishop to whom WH Murray had also meanwhile written. In answer the Bishop stated categorically that he regarded the agreement as terminated having never contemplated being enclosed by a western boundary. Further, pleading ignorance of the geography at the time of making the agreement, and finding that the DRCM line and the one agreed to with Laws met at Chipata and "shut us in into a small triangle", he informed the DRCM that he had unilaterally ended both agreements: "In both cases I subsequently declared the agreement ended on my side." In the same letter he reiterated that the UMCA was committed to work "amongst the tribes about Lake Nyasa and the Upper Shire" and had never receded from this object. Clarke subsequently informed Liebenberg that in view of this "I shall continue to extend our work up there in such places as I think suitable".<sup>167)</sup>

In view of the stated aim of the UMCA that while it had no complaint over other Missions working in the regions of Lake Nyasa it would not recognise any boundaries or restricted spheres of work, it appeared as if a boundary agreement was not possible.<sup>168)</sup> In addition, Dr G Prentice of Kasungu had reservations on coming to an agreement with the UMCA at all. Commenting to WH Murray on the Ntchisi matter, and the conduct of the UMCA, he stated:<sup>169)</sup>

165. See above p. 71.

166. See correspondence in CCA S5 15/6/7/1.

167. Ibid.,: Bishop of Likoma to WH Murray, 22/12/1907; CCA S5 15/6/2/13: Clarke to Liebenberg, 26/4/1908, see also earlier correspondence in same file.

168. See extract from Charge delivered by Bishop of UMCA at Likoma in 1904 (printed copy in CCA S5 15/6/2/13 (Lieberberg file)).

169. CCA S5 15/6/6/1: Prentice to WH Murray, 27/11/1907.

It becomes to be a question whether we have a right to come to an agreement as to spheres with a non-Evangelical Mission.

Apart from once more trying to take up the matter with the UMCA in 1911,<sup>170)</sup> no further agreement was ever reached and UMCA work became established amongst the hill people of Ntchisi district where the DRCM also worked.

The last station to be opened during this period was Mchinji in 1914. The need had long been felt for a station further to the west in the region of the Bua river which would relieve the work of the Kongwe Mission and at the same time provide a link with the stations of the DRC Mission in Eastern Zambia. In 1902 work had started at chief Sante's village and later spread to other centres and in 1907 WH Murray and Rev. AJ Liebenberg, then missionary at Kongwe, undertook a journey to look for a suitable site. They recommended a spot near the Bua river at Mzama<sup>171)</sup> but for health reasons a better site was decided upon in 1910. This site was twenty-five miles further west on the eastern slopes of the Mchinji mountains, about fifteen miles from Magwero Mission in Zambia. Although this was really at the western extremity of the field it was regarded the best place from where to work the Bua plains.<sup>172)</sup>

Lack of workers delayed the opening of the station until 1914 when Rev. S Strydom was posted there. In 1918 a congregation was formed. The church building was completed in 1936.<sup>173)</sup>

During this period there was one other important development. Already in 1903 the Mission Council had discussed an overture of TCB Vlok that the headquarters of the Mission be moved from Mvera to Nkhoma, but turned it down,<sup>174)</sup> mainly because of the financial involvement at a time when the DRC in South Africa was facing many difficulties in this respect. Large sums of money had also been invested in buildings at Mvera. Ten years later circumstances had changed to such an extent that a committee, appointed in 1912, recommended a transfer.

170. Council minutes 21/1911, p. 133.

171. For copy of the committee's report see CCA S5 15/6/8/5.

172. Council minutes 16/1908, p. 95; 17/1909, p. 106; 20/1910, p. 126. See also DK, 27/7/1911, p. 428; De Koningsbode, Oct. 1915, p. 190.

173. See further CCA S5 15/6/11/2: Annual reports.

174. Council minutes 10/1903, p. 33.

Insufficient water supply at Mvera and limited agricultural prospects for gardens for the increasing number of teachers, evangelists and others. being trained at the head station, better climatic conditions at the higher altitude of Nkhoma and the fact that the route to the south was now going overland via Dedza and no longer via the Lake, all made Nkhoma a better prospect. What further brought matters to a head was the advance of an epidemic of sleeping sickness from the Lakeshore.<sup>175)</sup> At that stage there was even a possibility of having to close Mvera as a station.

In view of these considerations and in spite of the tremendous financial implications, the GMC agreed to the recommendation and a building programme was launched to build amongst others seven new dwelling houses, a school, hospital, printing press, workshop and store as well as the new institution for teachers and evangelists to accommodate a new training scheme agreed upon in 1912. By the end of 1913 WH Murray and others could move over to Nkhoma while the rest followed soon after.<sup>176)</sup>

This move gave a new impetus to the work and coincided with a decision to improve the standards of training for both teachers and evangelists. With the field expanding to the west and to the south into Mozambique it could be much more effectively controlled and co-ordinated from the new headquarters.

By the close of this period, as the world was entering into the biggest war it had ever seen to that date, the work of the DRCM in Malawi had reached great heights. An intensive medical, educational, industrial and agricultural program was developing and the printing press was in full production with, amongst others a magazine in Chichewa appearing regularly. Where in 1905 there were five mission stations, 152 village schools with 16 125 pupils and 683 teachers the figure had by the end of 1914 risen to 669 schools supervised from nine mission stations with 43 292 pupils enrolled, being taught by 1 715 teachers.

At the same time and, more important, the young Church was growing. Apart from those in Zambia and Mozambique, there were already six congregations in Malawi with a total communicant membership of 5 071, while 8 370 persons were

175. MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, p. 115. For two years health regulations of the authorities actually barred missionaries from visiting schools on the Lakeshore, although the schools mostly continued to function well (DK, 22/8/1912, p. 674).

176. Cf. Council minutes 22/1912, p. 147; 23/1912, pp. 159-60; 24/1913, pp. 164f.; also CCA S5 1/1/2: GMC Minute no. 7, entry for 13/2/1913.

receiving instructions in catechumen classes. The total church contributions amounted to £352 - 11 - 7 compared to £52 in 1905. In 1905 membership had stood at 1 131 with 2 463 catechumens.<sup>177)</sup> Moreover, discussions between Livingstonia and Blantyre towards the formation of a Central Africa Church were progressing fast and the DRCM was taking due note of these developments. By 1914 it had already recommended to the Home Committee that with the rapid development of the work it was becoming time to establish a "Nyasa church". They requested the matter to be laid before the next Synod.<sup>178)</sup>

These plans as well as many other activities were seriously affected and put back by the outbreak of World War I, and the envisaged Church could not become a reality until ten years later.

### 2.3.5 World War I and post-war expansions of the DRC Mission

The outbreak of the War brought severe difficulties in its wake for the Mission. Apart from the fact that the general economic situation both on the field and in South Africa as elsewhere was adversely affected, a further complicating factor in Malawi was the outbreak of the Chilembwe rebellion in January 1915. The Government reacted to this by revealing a deep suspicion towards the work of Missions in general, particularly concerning the fact that it was felt that there was lack of adequate supervision over Africans and that too much responsibility and freedom was sometimes left in their hands.<sup>179)</sup> Although the inquiry could not find any person connected with the DRCM who was involved in the rising, a general climate of suspicion prevailed. With the proclamation of martial law the Government was empowered to call up any person to do any work or render any personal service in connection with the defence of the Protectorate.<sup>180)</sup> This placed the Missions in a difficult dilemma, but even more so the DRCM which was in a sense an alien Mission in a British Colony. On the one hand the DRC missionaries felt that it was not really their war and moreover that it would create much misunderstanding in the minds of Christians under their care if they were to participate in a war. In addition, the work, already deeply affected by various problems, would suffer. Yet, on

177. Statistics recorded by Council of Congregations, Minutes for Dec. 1914, p. 49 (CCA S5 15/6/1/4). See also statistical tables appended to Council minutes, Book I.

178. Council minutes 28/1914, p. 184(a) (corrected page number).

179. See MNA S2/49/19: Report of Commission of Inquiry, dated 14/1/1916. See also CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual report of DRCM in Malawi for 1916.

180. See CCA S5 15/6/2/16: Circular WH Murray to staff, 5/2/1915; WH Murray to Mission secr., 12/6/1917.

the other hand, if they refused, an untenable situation would arise. The Mission would be accused of being disloyal and it would mean the end of the work.<sup>181)</sup>

Thus, when the Governor began calling up men to assist in transport and other work, Murray wrote to the GMC that they felt "obliged to respond favourably" even though they could barely spare the men.<sup>182)</sup>

More and more men were commandeered as time went by and the work was more and more hampered. At times as many as ten DRC missionaries were enlisted at a time for service in Malawi and German East Africa (Tanzania) mainly for transport work, maize buying and leading gangs of army porters.<sup>183)</sup> In 1918 the Council noted that they had reached a point where it was virtually impossible to continue with the work. On top of that, apart from the thousands of Malawians called from within the area where the DRCM was working, many of whom were members of the Church, whole districts were almost depleted of teachers as the Government enlisted them. Several hundred evangelists and teachers were away by the end of the War and the method of conscription was not always a very happy one. Thus at Malingunde the missionary was ordered to provide a list of a certain number of teachers to be called up and these were then "caught" by Government officials in their villages. This caused a big upheaval and embitterment also against the Mission and a considerable number of teachers left their work, fearing they would be taken too.<sup>184)</sup>

In addition to these difficulties, famine broke out in 1918, worsened by mass buying of maize for the troops,<sup>185)</sup> and a smallpox epidemic followed by the influenza epidemic which swept over the whole of Southern Africa in 1918-19,

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181. There already were such suspicions on the part of the Government (AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, p. 235) and in South Africa a faction of the Afrikaner people were openly in sympathy with the German cause in spite of the fact that the SA Government had aligned itself with the Allies.
182. Council minutes 31/1916, p. 212; cf. CCA S5 15/6/2/16: WH Murray to Mission secr., 18/1/1916.
183. DK, 12/6/1919, p. 577; Council minutes 34/1918, p. 247. The same was happening to other Missions. By July 1917 Blantyre Mission had had to release nearly 50% of their (ordained?) staff (Council minutes 32/1917, p. 226), but if it is taken into account that by November 1917 out of a total of 128 missionaries in the country as a whole, only 31 had been called up, according to Govr. Smith, the DRC's share seems disproportionately high. (CCA S5 15/6/8/1: Copy Smith to Lord Buxton, 8/11/1917).
184. CCA S5 15/6/11/2: Historical survey of Malingunde.
185. For example the Resident in Dowa was instructed to buy 1 000 tons of maize in that district in 1917 and he instructed missionaries to buy all they could get in their areas and send it on to Domira Bay (CCA S5 15/6/2/9: W Kirby-Green to AL Hofmeyr, 25/1/1917).



all contributed<sup>186)</sup> to the difficulties which virtually brought the Mission activities to a standstill in some areas. The effects of this on the work can be gauged from the fact that whereas in other years 1 500 to 2 000 people used to apply annually for church membership, only 600 did so in 1918.<sup>187)</sup> In addition, schools had to be closed, even the evangelist school, for lack of staff. The effects on the life of the Church were equally destructive and widespread relapse in many congregations was the recurrent theme in reports for 1919 and 1920.<sup>188)</sup>

After the War the work slowly recovered and reports became more positive. Signs of new spiritual awakenings were evident and the Mission could begin to extend its work once more. Whereas in 1918 reports were heard from only nine "departments" of the Mission, there were fifteen departments rendering reports ten years later.<sup>189)</sup>

The various sections of the work, such as medical, educational, industrial and training of girls, all expanded further. Training of teachers was constantly improved and in 1924 the first senior evangelists were selected for further training leading to ordination, which took place towards the end of 1925. At the same time development in Church affairs took place. The Council of Congregations was constituted into a Presbytery in 1926 in view of becoming part of the Synod of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian. Church membership which in 1915 had stood at 5 071 for communicants and 8 370 for catechumens, amounted to 10 501 and 7 993 respectively in 1925. There were 50 176 children in 804 schools with 1 648 teachers. Church contributions amounted to £534.<sup>190)</sup>

In the five years after the War the last two stations were opened and a third taken over from Livingstonia Mission. In 1919 the possibilities were investigated to open a station in the populous Lilongwe district somewhere between Mvera, Malingunde and Mchinji. The following year 250 acres were bought at a place about eight miles north of Lilongwe. The following year Dzenza station was opened by the Rev. S Strydom.<sup>191)</sup> An important Girls' Boarding School was later opened at Dzenza.

186. In 1919 4 649 deaths from influenza were reported in Lilongwe District alone, with an estimated 1 500 more not reported (PA Cole-King: Lilongwe, p.85

187. DK, 12/6/1919, p. 577.

188. See reports in CCA S5 15/6/11/8.

189. Council minutes 34/1918, p. 247; 48/1928, p. 391.

190. Minutes of Council of Congregations, 1925 (statistical tables).

191. Council minutes 36/1919, p. 259; 38/1920, pp. 268, 273.

It has been noted that from the beginning the challenge of work amongst Muslims was felt. Work on the Lakeshore was always a matter of concern to the Mission, but for various reasons plans which developed from time to time to open a station on the Lakeshore never materialised. However, one group of the Muslim Yao people under Chief Tambala lived on the highlands east of Nkhoma. Contact with Tambala had already been made and maintained since 1891. In 1909 the Council heard a report by the Rev. AL Hofmeyr on a survey of the Muslim areas.<sup>192)</sup> Four important areas within the region worked by the DRCM were defined: Malembo district (the Phirilongwe area was strongly considered for a new mission station, but subsequently handed over to the ZIM), Mvera district (the Lakeshore around Salima), Nkhoma district (Tambala's land) and Chintembwe (Ntchisi) district (Jumbe's people around Nkhota-Kota). In all, about thirty to forty thousand Muslims lived in these areas, the majority in the district of Mvera, and the report proposed a station at or near Kulunda's village just south of Domira Bay. This was regarded as the nerve centre for Islam in the whole region. A station had already been planned for Domira Bay in 1907,<sup>193)</sup> but the plans did not materialise and instead Malembo Mission was opened further south. In 1910 the Council requested a medical doctor and an ordained missionary for work in this area,<sup>194)</sup> but the outbreak of sleeping sickness,<sup>195)</sup> followed by the War, thwarted these plans as well. It was only in 1920 that the Rev. MG Uys could be set aside for this work. But at that stage it was decided to concentrate on the Yao in Tambala's land where a few schools had already been opened. At first the area was worked from Nkhoma but on 2 August 1923 Chitundu Mission was opened. After Uys's departure in 1926 the work continued both there and on the Lakeshore but without a missionary. The vacancy could be filled again when the Rev. AC van Wyk arrived in 1929.<sup>196)</sup> The work progressed slowly and a congregation could only be established on 30 December 1939 with 426 members.<sup>197)</sup> But not many of these were converted Muslims. Van Wyk left the following year and although the work was carried on, the Muslim field proved a most difficult one to work.<sup>198)</sup> There was yet another attempt to start medical work in the Salima

192. For text of report see Council minutes 18/1909, pp. 112-3; see also AL Hofmeyr: *Het land langs het meer*, pp. 105-114.

193. Council minutes 15/1907, p. 87.

194. *Ibid.*, 19/1910, p. 119.

195. Half yearly report for 1911 (DK, 3/8/1911, p. 443).

196. For a brief account of work in Muslim areas see DK, 29/1/1929, pp. 199-200; AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, pp. 276-282.

197. Nkhoma *Presbytery* 1940, pp. 2, 10.

198. Cf. MW Retief: *William Murray of Nyasaland*, pp. 62-3. For further details see below ch. 5.

Lakeshore area in 1936,<sup>199)</sup> but nothing came of this either.

The last station to be occupied by the DRCM was Kasungu.<sup>200)</sup> In 1897 WH Murray and Dr G Prentice then of Bandawe were delegated by the Livingstonia Mission Council to select a site in Mwase's area. They left seven Atonga evangelists to start the work so that when Dr Prentice arrived in 1900 to open the new station, there were already some results and the first eleven converts could be baptised three years later, on 13 September 1903. Dr Prentice built up the work and the station over a period of 23 years. An initial agreement by the two Mission Councils in 1900 for the work to be handed over to the DRCM was vetoed by the FMC in Scotland and it was only by 1919 that negotiations were resumed.<sup>201)</sup> Several factors prompted this. Dr Prentice was approaching retirement and there was no one to replace him; Livingstonia Mission had been burdened with new responsibilities for taking over work of the German Missions in the North Nyasa German territories because of the evacuation of the Germans during the War;<sup>202)</sup> and Kasungu fell geographically and linguistically more within the sphere of the DRCM. Negotiations were somewhat drawn-out for various reasons. The DRC at first saw no possibility of finding men to man the station<sup>203)</sup> and Prentice was very concerned about the work being handed over but possibly not properly continued. However, the closure of the DRC work in Mozambique in 1922 released workers for other tasks and negotiations were reopened.<sup>204)</sup> Then again Dr Prentice was distinctly undecided about whether he really wanted the work to be handed over or not, and kept on changing his mind, to the exasperation of the DRC missionaries.<sup>205)</sup> Finally Dr Laws himself in the end tried to hold back the handover until he

199. General Mission Committee report to Cape Synod, Acta 1936, p. 71.

200. For brief history of Kasungu see MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 6 (Correspondence file with General Mission Secretary); also CCA S5 15/6/6/1. See also annual reports for Kasungu from 1901 onwards in 15/6/11/1.

201. In 1915 Dr Prentice had already raised the matter in several letters to WH Murray. See CCA S5 15/6/6/1: Prentice to Murray, 7/6/1915 and further.

202. CCA S5 15/6/2/9: D Fraser to AL Hofmeyr 3/3/1919; and 15/6/7/1: Fraser to WH Murray, 20/10/1919.

203. Council minutes 41/1921, p. 284.

204. See correspondence between Laws, Murray and Prentice on reopening negotiations in CCA S5 15/6/3/3 (August 1923).

205. CCA S5 15/6/2/9: D Fraser to AL Hofmeyr, 3/3/1919; 15/6/2/17: WH Murray to Mission Sec., 19/1/1922; 13/2/1922.

had guarantees that the DRCM would also come in on the Church union scheme, so that the Kasungu Church would not by chance be excluded in the end. <sup>206)</sup> The DRC was not prepared to commit itself, maintaining that the two issues should be kept apart. <sup>207)</sup> Finally agreement was reached and on 8 October 1923 delegations from the two Missions met at Kasungu to hand over the work and work out the terms of transfer. <sup>208)</sup> The whole issue was conducted in an excellent spirit and Livingstonia would not charge anything for the valuable assets included in the handover. The FMC in Scotland confirmed the terms of transfer in December 1923 and in 1924 the Rev. C Murray was appointed at Kasungu. In 1924 the DRC Synod expressed its heartfelt gratitude towards the United Free Church of Scotland for the gesture and spirit it had shown in handing this valuable work over to the DRCM. <sup>209)</sup>

One problem that ensued from the handover arose out of the fact that the Kasungu congregation had apparently not been properly consulted about the matter before the time. <sup>210)</sup> There was some opposition to such a step particularly on the part of some teachers because they felt the standard of education in the DRC work was not as high as that in Livingstonia. A spirit of passive resistance was evident in the congregation immediately after the handover. <sup>211)</sup> As soon as the certificate of disjunction of the Kasungu congregation from Livingstonia Presbytery was received, the Council of Congregations agreed to hold its next meeting at Kasungu itself. <sup>212)</sup> This meeting in September 1925 did much to reduce the feeling of suspicion and antipathy towards the DRC Mission. The ordination by the DRCM three months later of Livingstonia trained Lamak Kasuzi Manda at Kasungu on 20 December further helped to restore peace. When Kasungu was handed over Manda had been offered to the DRC as well since Kasungu was his home and he wished to serve there. It had been agreed that he could first complete his training at Overtoun Institution and be licensed by Livingstonia. <sup>213)</sup>

206. CCA S5 15/6/2/17: WH Murray to Mission secr., 29/6/1923.

207. CCA S5 1/1/3: GMC minute 39, entry for 21-22/8/1923, Council minutes 43/1923, p. 313.

208. See CCA S5 15/6/6/1: Minute of meeting of Commissioners from the Dutch Reformed Church Mission and Livingstonia Mission to deal with the transfer of the station of Kasungu and Tamanda from the Livingstonia Mission to the Dutch Reformed Church Mission, 8/10/1923. Tamanda lies just within Zambia and was handed over to the DRCM in that country.

209. DRC Acta 1924, pp. 32, 74.

210. JA Retief (DK, 10/7/1940, p. 66).

211. AC Murray and JWL Hofmeyr: Dagbreek in donker Afrika, p. 14.

212. Council of Congregations minutes: entry for 28-30/8/1924, p. 4; 17-19/9/1925, p. 2 (Printed minutes).

213. Minute of meeting of Commissioners ..., as cited.

Thus Manda became the third ordained Malawian in the DRCM field.<sup>214)</sup> As a result of these actions the problems at Kasungu were considerably eased, also amongst the teachers who were reported to be showing a much better spirit by 1926/27 than formerly.<sup>215)</sup>

### 2.3.6 The final phase: Consolidation

By the time of the formation of the CCAP and the joining of the Presbytery of Nkhoma in 1926, the Mission of the DRC in Malawi was for all practical purposes fully established. After this time no new stations were opened, nor significant new enterprises begun. The existing work continued to grow and expand. When the Mission celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1939 it had 70 workers, of whom 13 were ordained; there were eight ordained Malawian ministers serving and 21 521 communicant members in fourteen congregations of the Presbytery, 10 867 catechumens, 19 768 Sunday school children and 49 673 school children in 1 082 schools, mostly the small village school type, served by 1 420 teachers.<sup>216)</sup> At this stage new challenges faced the Mission and new opportunities were presenting themselves. A significant economic upsurge was being experienced in the region, due to the growth of the tobacco industry, abetted by the extension of the railway to Salima in May 1934 and the growing importance of Lilongwe as the capital of what was then the Northern Province.<sup>217)</sup> In addition, increasing Government support for education, was to bring great changes in the Mission's educational programmes in the years to come.

On the other hand the Mission was aware of having to face and prepare for a growing nationalism coupled with ideals for greater independence which were becoming more and more evident, while ever increasing labour migration continued to create problems for the work and life of the young Church.<sup>218)</sup> Likewise the War itself and after the War the thousands of Malawians who returned from the services brought about its own particular problems and challenges. During the

214. For details on Manda see below, p. 263

215. AC Murray and JWL Hofmeyr: *Dagbreek in donker Afrika*, p. 14.

216. Nkhoma Presbytery 1939, statistics, pp. 11-13; GMC Report to Cape Synod, *Acta* 1940, pp. 139-140.

217. PA Cole-King: *Lilongwe*, pp. 41f.

218. *Die Koningsbode*, Apr. 1940, pp. 104f.

1940s and 1950s there was a tremendous growth in the work which can partly be illustrated from the following table showing the increase in the annual budget of the Mission Council:

TABLE III: INCREASE IN BUDGET EXPENDITURE OF DRCM COUNCIL 1916-1961<sup>219)</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total budget</u>	<u>Education</u>	<u>Education as % of total</u>
1916	£ 6 840.5.0	3 710.10.0	54.2
1926	9 792.15.0	6 442.10.0	65.8
1936	9 294.8.0	6 906.10.0	74.3
1946	27 345.10.0	21 769.0.0	79.6
1956	80 899.10.0	58 079.0.0	71.8
1961	139 721.0.0	111 987.0.0	80.2

Apart from the drop during the early 1930s, the depression years, (£7 361 in 1933), there was a steady growth, with a tremendous leap forward in the 1940s (the budget increased from £ 10 907.5.0 in 1944 to £58 833.0.0 in 1948). This was especially due to a great increase in teachers' salaries. Throughout, a very high percentage of the budget went to education. In the last year in which the Council drew up a budget (1961) this amounted to over 80% of the total budget.

The size of the mission staff continued to grow, but during the second World War, acute staff shortages were again experienced. Several missionaries served as army chaplains to Malawian troops, going as far as India, and at one stage there were only five ordained men actually on the field. After the War the position again improved and round about 1958-59 the size of the staff reached a peak of over one hundred. This included sixteen ordained missionaries.<sup>220)</sup> The Executive Council of the DRCM continued to take care of a wide variety of ever expanding activities and enterprises, ranging from medical work to education and teachers' training, adult literacy and training of the blind, a widely diversified agriculture and industrial training, work amongst women and girls, youth work and printing and distribution of literature and the Scriptures.

219. Figures referred to in the Table are from the following pages in the Council minute book: 221, 369, 504, 703, 1132, 1314. Other figures from pp. 464, 644, 782. Salaries of expatriate workers were not always included in the budget and were therefore not taken into calculation for the above.

220. Report of GMC to Cape Synod, *Acta* 1949, p. 219; CCA S5 15/6/2/13: Circular AS Labuschagne to Friends, 15/4/1959; 15/6/11/8: Annual general report of Mission, 1958.

helped with preaching at times, a task of which he acquitted himself "fairly well", according to AC Murray in his diary. Although placed under Church discipline in 1895 for making a Livlezi girl pregnant, he was restored, married the girl and henceforth remained in good standing. He returned to Livlezi, presumably as an evangelist, and the names of several of his children can be traced in the Livlezi baptismal register.<sup>10)</sup> AC Murray met him there on two occasions, when revisiting the country in 1910 and again in 1924. Of the second meeting he wrote in his diary: "James Brown comes to see me and falls on his knees, grasping my feet and weeping for joy ...". Two days later the following entry is recorded: "James Brown tells of old times, Drummond, Laws, Black, etc. Very interesting". In 1939 he was able to attend the 50th anniversary celebrations of the DRCM at Nkhoma and was also present at the meeting of Nkhoma Presbytery taking place at the same time. Presbytery recorded his presence with great appreciation, noting that "Moyo wao ukometsa Cikristu cathu" (his life beautifies our Christendom). His death some time prior to April 1948 was recorded in the DRCM Mission Council minutes. He was buried at Livlezi alongside the graves of several missionaries who had died there in earlier times. His descendants still live at Livlezi today.

As the work continued at Mvera during the initial years, the first child to be baptised there was a son of AC Murray's, Charles Leonard Lauré, on 4 November 1894. He later returned to Malawi to serve for some years as a medical doctor at Nkhoma (1923-1927). Murray used the occasion to explain the significance of this ceremony and aroused so much interest that a hearers' class for adults could at last be started with over 30 people expressing interest.<sup>11)</sup> This was seen as one of the first real breakthroughs. The second child to be baptised was James Sadala's son, Timote, at Kongwe on 19 May 1895. The first baptism of the child of a local Christian took place at Mvera on 13 November 1898. This was Enoke, son of Paulos Maondza. Maondza and Moses Kamadia were the first local converts to be received into the Church when they were baptised on 3 March 1895.<sup>12)</sup> Murray was not keen to baptise people until they specifically requested it and had acquired sufficient knowledge concerning God and the way to salvation and had proved through their lives that they sincerely endeavoured to follow Christ. Even so, both these men

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10. Vlok makes mention of an evangelist named Jakobus (i.e. James in English) who in 1900 was in charge of the work at Livlezi. Whether this was, in fact, James Brown could not be fully ascertained, but this is quite likely the case (see: *Elf jaren in midden Afrika*, pp. 73-4).
  11. CCA P3 3/2: AC Murray to Andrew (Murray), 18/11/1894; AC Murray: *Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen*, pp. 282-4. Lauré was the maiden name of AC Murray's wife who had formerly been of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society in Lesotho.
  12. For details on Maondza and Kamadia see AC Murray: *Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen*, pp. 285-7.

The Executive Council of the DRCM had in all these years been under the chairmanship of only three men, excluding those acting in their absence from time to time. The Rev. (later Dr) WH Murray, was the first chairman and served until 1937 <sup>223)</sup> when he was succeeded by the Rev. JJD Stegmann. He again was succeeded by the Rev. GF Hugo in 1955. <sup>224)</sup> It was under his chairmanship that the last meeting of the Council took place in April 1962 and with the disbanding of the Council the post of both Superintendent of the Mission and of Chairman of the Council fell away. All functions of the Chairman and head of the Mission were taken over by various officers of the Synod, while the DRC would henceforth appoint only a Liaison officer, with certain specified and limited duties within the work of the Church.

#### 2.4 Extension of the work of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission into other areas

It has already been briefly noted that the DRC extended work into the neighbouring field of Eastern Zambia in 1899 following a request from the Ngoni chief Mpezeni. This work was taken up by the DRC Synod of the Orange Free State right from the beginning and although close ties remained for long, it developed as a separate enterprise. A separate Mission Council was formed in 1909. The new congregations formed in that field likewise were at first joined with those in the DRC field in Malawi in one Council of Congregations until 1916. After that a separate Council of Congregations was formed for this Church in Zambia but close ties were maintained. <sup>225)</sup> When Nkhoma Presbytery joined the CCAP there were strong expectations that the Zambia Church would do likewise, but in the end this did not take place. In addition, there were also two other areas into which the DRCM extended and in which the work was done in close connection with the Mission in Malawi.

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223. For a vote of appreciation for his services minuted by the Council see Council Minutes 58/1937, p. 511.

224. CCA S5 1/1/10: GMC minute 45-48, entry for 25/8 - 1/9/1955; Nyasa Mission subcommittee minute 12, entry for 2/3/1956.

225. CCA S5 15/6/1/4: Council of Congregations minute 4, entry for 11-14/12/1915.



#### 2.4.1 Work in the Angonia Province of Mozambique

For thirteen years from 1909 to 1922 the DRC worked in this region, which lies between Malawi, Eastern Zambia and the Zambezi river. The complications, frustrations and problems encountered in this work have been spelt out in a number of studies and papers. <sup>226)</sup>

Already from 1902 onwards the Rev. AG Murray who had just begun work at the new Mlanda Mission in Malawi on the border of Mozambique became aware of the needs of the people across the border. <sup>227)</sup> These were also Chikuse's people and more than ten years earlier when the colonial boundary was drawn along the watershed from the south and west of Livlezi station up to the Luangwa river Laws had remarked that "this will give us a nice lot of trouble in working across these boundaries". <sup>228)</sup> These were prophetic words for no sooner had AG Murray begun to inquire about opening work in that area, than he began to experience the problematics of dealing with Portuguese officialdom.

After a few journeys into the area and several attempts to obtain permission he was advised by local officials to deal with the matter through the South African Government. In 1906 AG Murray referred the case to the General Mission Committee in Cape Town. <sup>229)</sup> The General Mission Secretary and the Moderator of the DRC subsequently appealed to the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony to obtain permission from the Governor-General of Mozambique for the DRC to start a Mission in Portuguese Angonia. The Prime Minister did so through the Portuguese Consulate but no answer was received until 1908. Meanwhile the Mission Council in Malawi had authorised AG Murray to go to Tete to obtain permission. <sup>230)</sup>

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226. See for instance: RB Murray: Die Sendingwerk van die Transvaalse Ned. Herv. of Geref. Kerk in Portugees-Oos Afrika; WC Murray: Die geskiedenis van ons kerk in Portugees-Oos-Afrika; HTS Page: Die NG Kerk aanslag op Portugees-Oos Afrika 1908-1922. See also report by PB Botha: Verslag aan die ad hoc komitee van die Federale Raad van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerke aangaande argiefstukke oor die sendingwerk in Mosambiek, Pretoria, 1969).

227. WC Murray, op.cit., pp. 1-2.

228. CCA S5 15/6/7/1: Laws to AC Murray, 27/10/1891.

229. CCA S5 15/6/2/15: AG Murray to "Uncle" (Dr A Murray), 30/7/1906 in which AGM explained the whole position and requested the Committee to approach the SA Prime Minister.

230. Council minutes 16/1908, p. 93 (Minutes of Council subcommittee, June to December, 1907).

\* This meeting with the Governor Bettincourt took place in September 1907 and the letter of recommendation from Mr R Bivar, Commissioner of Angoniland served to obtain a sympathetic interview, but nothing more. <sup>231)</sup>

Two months later the Mission Council decided on the most suitable site for such a station at Madzo in the midst of a populous area. <sup>232)</sup> On their footsteps arrived a priest, from the three hundred year old Roman Catholic Mission at Tete, in order to open a station at the very same place. It later became evident that Governor Bettincourt had alerted them of the intentions of the Protestants, hence their sudden move. <sup>233)</sup> A few months later, in April 1908, a Government proclamation appeared which proclaimed almost the whole of Angoniland, from twenty miles east of the Mawi river (also known as the Maue or Revugue river) to twenty miles west of the Lifidzi river, closed to all Churches except the Roman Catholic Church. This populous area was inhabited by almost 200 000 people, while outside these boundaries the population was much more sparse. <sup>234)</sup>

Hence, when in June 1908 AG Murray went to see the Govern<sup>or</sup>-General personally in Maputo (Lourenco Marques) he was granted permission to start work provided it was outside this area reserved for the R C Church and subject to the new proclamations issued in the Boletim Oficial No. 50 of 14 December 1907. These proclamations, the "Portarias" No. 730, 731 and 732 dealt respectively with religious instructions, general education and the instruction of teachers. <sup>235)</sup> Strict regulations were laid down concerning the standard of school buildings and the medium of instruction. Of particular importance was the decree that from 1910 onwards only Portuguese was to be used in all schools. No one was to be permitted to teach unless he was proficient in both the native language and in Portuguese and had passed an examination in the latter. It is to be noted that

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231. Bivar was the owner of the entire prazo in Angoniland and gave to understand that he favoured the DRCM rather than the Roman Catholics, cf. CCA S5 15/6/5/2: Copy AG Murray to Mission secretary, Transvaal, 20/7/1909.

232. PB Botha: op.cit., p. 5. Botha unfortunately does not indicate the source of his documents, but most are housed in the DRC Archives in Pretoria, others in CCA (personal information).

233. HTS Page: Die NG Kerk aanslag op Portugees-Oos Afrika, pp. 40-41.

234. PB Botha, op.cit., p. 5.

235. For English text of these notices see CCA S5 15/6/8/4.

the strict application of this regulation was one of the main reasons why the work of the DRC was eventually terminated.

Upon receiving this permission AG Murray accompanied WH Murray in October 1908 to select a new site, Mphatso, just outside the restricted area. No land had yet been surveyed and distance had to be estimated. The head of the newly established RC station at Lifidzi, Fr J Hiller was satisfied that the Protestant site was far enough and he agreed to the watershed between the Lifidzi and the Chibvomozi rivers being the boundary between their respective spheres of work. He signed two statements or contracts to this effect on 15 October 1908.<sup>236)</sup> Apparently the Roman Catholic Church soon regretted this agreement for in July the next year, Mr Bivar wrote to AC Murray that he had recently seen the Governor-General and that he agreed that he had in fact some time back granted permission to the DRC,

but now the fathers of the Baroma Mission are showing great difficulties and are asking that the sphere of the Roman Catholic Church should be extended not only over the valleys of the Mave and Lifidzi rivers, but also over all their tributaries.

This would have meant, Bivar continued, that the Protestants would only be allowed to work to the west of the Luie river. The Governor seemed inclined to grant this request but the documents signed by Fr Hiller "would speak to your favour if known to him"<sup>237)</sup> Eventually when Fr Hiller was succeeded by another the agreement was rejected and when land surveys established the distance of some of the stations including Mphatso to be within the twenty mile limit, this was also eventually used as a reason for terminating the work of the DRC.

Meanwhile the DRC Synod of the Transvaal agreed in April 1909 to assume responsibility for the work in Mozambique and proceeded to call Rev. AG Murray as its missionary.<sup>238)</sup> On 19 May 1909 he arrived at Mphatso on the banks of the Chibvomozi river to start the work. In due course permission was obtained and work opened at Mwenzi, near Fulankhungo (1912),<sup>239)</sup> Chiputu (1914) and Benga

236. For photostat copies of these documents see PB Botha, op.cit., Appendix "I".

237. CCA S5 15/6/5/2: R Bivar to AG Murray, 13/7/1909, copy in AGM's copy book.

238. The GMC of the Cape subsequently agreed to this "request" of the Transvaal see CCA S5 1/1/2: GMC minute 13, entry for 11/8/1909; also Council minutes 17/1909, p. 103.

239. DK, 14/3/1912, pp. 214-5; 16/5/1912, p. 393; 8/8/1912, pp. 634-5.

(1914).<sup>240)</sup> A fifth station was to be opened at Matenje in 1915 but according to all available information it was never actually manned or work actually started there.

In 1911 Portugal had become a Republic and considerable religious freedom was proclaimed. It was declared that all denominations would be welcome, provided the workers knew Portuguese. This was probably one of the reasons why the DRC Mission succeeded initially. Optimism was high and by 1914 plans were already laid for a line of ten stations to be opened from east to west, linking up with the work of the DRC in Zambia near Nyanje Mission.<sup>241)</sup>

Another important event in 1915 was that the Council of Congregations approved the formation of a congregation at Mphatso. This took place on 28 March 1915. There were by then 94 communicant members at Mphatso with 249 catechumens.<sup>242)</sup>

By this time though, several events had taken place which in due course would most adversely affect the work of the DRC in Mozambique. Difficulties were already encountered in the application for Benga station. When progress could not be made, Rev. AG Murray together with the Mission secretary of the Transvaal, Rev. D Theron and General C Beyers signed a petition to the Governor-General of Mozambique, General Machado. Later Murray also had a personal interview with him. In the petition they appealed to the Treaty of 18 June 1891 between Portugal and Britain which guaranteed religious freedom and the rights of missionaries.<sup>243)</sup> The reason for this appeal was that when applying to work at Benga, the Governor at Tete had informed AG Murray and AJ Liebenberg on 27 May 1914 that in the Colonies of Portugal this treaty did not apply as there was no freedom of religion in the Colonies.<sup>244)</sup> This was totally untrue since Clause X of the

240. HTS Page, op.cit., pp. 41-59.

241. Council minutes 26/1913, pp. 175f. (corrected p. no.); CCA S5 1/1/2: GMC minute 19, 20, entry for 25/2/1914; cf. DK, 16/4/1914 and map of planned sites, DK, 2/7/1914, p. 28. The Council at Nkhoma later even saw the possibility of opening as many as fourteen stations, even south of the Zambezi, cf. Council minutes 29/1914, p. 189.

242. CCA S5 15/6/1/4: Council of Congregations minute 8, entry for 10-11/12/1914; DK, 10/6/1915, pp. 544-5. Statistics as recorded in Council of Congregation minutes for 1915.

243. PB Botha, op.cit., (relevant documents in DRC Archives, Pretoria).

244. Letter of AJ Liebenberg (DK, 16/7/1914, pp. 658, 673).

Treaty clearly stated;

In all territories in East and Central Africa belonging to or under the influence of either powers, missionaries of both countries shall have full protection... Religious toleration and freedom for all forms of Divine worship and religious teaching are guaranteed. 245)

Although General Machado affirmed that the DRCM was allowed to work in Angoni=land, the permission for Benga was still not approved by December 1914. The delay was in Maputo. It was then that the Attorney of the Mission in Tete, J Ribeiro, wrote to AG Murray:

I should tell you that it is my impression that the delay is in connection with political matters and the attitude of General C Beyers in the Colony, as he is interested in your Mission. But this is my private opinion which is only for yourself, as I have no official act or information to base it upon. This is the only explanation I can give to the sudden stop of the progress of your application. 246)

The significance of this letter lies in the hint that political motives lay behind some of the difficulties the DRC was experiencing. The DRC tended to blame the Roman Catholic Church for most of its difficulties and continuous problems with the Administration, and no doubt this was true, but only in part. In the difficulties which began in 1915 and culminated in the closure of the DRC work in 1922 political factors played as great a role. In the first place there was the fact that they were an alien Mission and operated from Nyasaland, a territory which had been taken away from the Portuguese largely as a result of the presence of Protestant missionaries on the Shire Highlands. 247) Altogether the Mission remained much too alien for the liking of the authorities: ties with Malawi (even the Missions main bank account was in Blantyre), repeated appeals through the South African Government, too much reliance on the foreign DR Church in the Transvaal or even on the treaty with Britain, made the Portuguese suspect their sincerity "and resent this imposition of foreign pressures".

245. Quoted in letter Miller (ZIM) to Murray, 8/3/1902 (MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 1).

246. Quoted by PB Botha, op.cit., from letter J Ribeiro to AG Murray, 3/12/1914 (in DRC Archives, Pretoria).

247. JL Pretorius: Introduction to the history of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission in Malawi, p. 371. That the Nkhoma Mission Council was aware of these difficulties can be seen from its recommendation, with reasons stated, that a separate Council be formed for the Mozambique work (Council minutes 36/1919, pp. 259 60.).

Hence the accusation contained in a letter written by the Governor-General of the Mozambique Province to the Governor-General of South Africa, dated 21 September 1917 "that these missions generally have anti-national tendencies." 248) Anti-national, obviously, from a Portuguese point of view.

A second factor was the political climate which developed during the War, especially in relations between South Africa and Portugal. Portuguese suspicion and mistrust of South African politicians "rubbed off on the DRC Mission". 249) This was already seen in the reference to General Beyers in the letter of Ribeiro quoted above. The scheme of General Smuts in 1918 to exchange a part of the then Tanganyika for Mozambique south of the Zambezi further alienated the Portuguese. 250)

A third factor which brought the Protestant Missions under suspicion, and increased hostility, was the outbreak of three local rebellions during 1915 and 1917. In January 1915 the Chilembwe rising in Malawi convinced the Portuguese that Protestant Missions exercised a subversive influence. 251) The report of the Committee of Inquiry was obviously misread by the Governor-General of Mozambique in his letter to his counterpart in South Africa where he states that these missions ...

at times stir up the natives to rebellion against the Colonising nation to which the natives owe allegiance. These facts, as your Excellency well knows, were proved by the commission of enquiry, appointed in British Nyasaland ... 252)

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248. PB Botha, *op.cit.*, pp. 9, 37. For a translated text of this letter see *ibid*, appendix "A".
249. JL Pretorius, *op.cit.*, p. 377.
250. WK Hancock: Smuts: The sanguine years, pp. 408, 552-3.
251. A month after the rising WH Murray expressed his fears concerning the effect this would have on the work in Mozambique: "AG Murray will in his enthusiasm want to belittle it as much as possible, but the change is there". (CCA S5 15/6/2/15: WH Murray to Mission secr., 15/2/1915. Transl. from Dutch). In the same letter he complains that all they can get from the Portuguese authorities are verbal assurances, nothing on paper and no documents had yet been issued, even for a single inch of land.
252. PB Botha, *op.cit.*, appendix "A".

The Missions referred to in the report were definitely not such as the DRC Mission.

Albeit, when a second rebellion broke out a month later in February in the Barue area south of the Zambezi, the DRC missionaries at Benga and Mphatso were jailed for a fortnight and all schools closed. It was however not only Protestants who were treated in this way, but also other foreign missionaries such as German Roman Catholic priests.<sup>253)</sup> Likewise a rebellion in February 1917 near Chiputu against a local government post was again regarded by the Portuguese as being instigated by the missionaries. Chiputu was closed down the following year.

The fourth and from a legal point of view the conclusive factor, was that the DRC Mission did not realise strongly enough how essential it was to obey the requirements of the Portuguese laws in every detail. Being used to the more easy-going situation in Malawi, they hoped to follow the same methods in Mozambique by giving a relatively limited training to a large number of evangelists who were to man village schools. The requirements of the 1907 Proclamation that all teachers must have a certificate of knowledge of the Portuguese language were not strictly adhered to. Although seventeen African teachers did obtain such a certificate they, together with nearly fifty others, were taken into custody by the authorities in 1916 and brought to Mozambique Island. The excuse was that since they were not qualified to teach, they were to render military service. Likewise only AG Murray and a lady teacher, Miss Faul procured a language certificate although other missionaries did sit for tests, but apparently failed. This fact was the one condition which the authorities maintained was what was required for the work to continue and when they were not satisfied that it was being fulfilled, the work was stopped.<sup>254)</sup>

Together with this, the other legal point on which the DRC Mission was forced out was the twenty mile limit. When Fr P Jose Antunes Bazilio was appointed as new superintendent at Lifidzi Mission in 1920, trouble began. The old agreement with Fr Hiller held no legal power and Bazilio showed a strong antipathy towards the DRC Mission. In August 1921 he laid a formal charge against the DRC of South Africa before the High Commissioner of Mozambique. He maintained that they were working within the area granted to the RC Church in 1909.<sup>255)</sup>

253. Ibid., p. 9.

254. Ibid., pp. 13-16, 37.

255. Ibid., pp. 17-18. See Appendix "L" for photocopy of this charge in Portuguese from documents in DRC Archives, Pretoria).

Attempts by AG Murray, the DRC of Transvaal and the South African authorities, at the request of the Church, to save the situation were all of no avail <sup>256)</sup> and on Sunday 18 January 1922 as AG Murray came out of a communion service at Mphatso he was given a summons by police to appear with Rev. J Joubert before the magistrate at Vila Mousinho d'Albuquerque. There, in the presence of Fr Bazilio and other witnesses they were presented with a document which they had to sign. This document stated that work at Benga was to stop immediately as it was within the twenty mile limit, and as soon as the Mphatso area was surveyed and if found also to be within twenty miles, it would also be closed. Furthermore, the missionary at Benga was forthwith forbidden to continue with any form of teaching or preaching whatsoever as he had not yet mastered the Portuguese language.

Further attempts and appeals by various Church and State representatives were of no avail and AG Murray finally left Mphatso in December 1922. For several years the Mission secretary of the Transvaal continued to negotiate for a reopening of the work. By 1928 the new Governor-General José Cabral indicated that he would be willing to allow the DRC to start anew but that they had no claim whatsoever to the land on which the former stations had been built as Title deeds were never obtained. By then the Transvaal Church was so heavily committed to new work in the Eastern Lowveld and in Zululand that it could not accept such a great responsibility any more. In 1932 the field was offered to the Cape Mission Committee, but they also did not feel at liberty to take up the work. <sup>257)</sup>

Thus the young Church in Mozambique was left entirely to fend for itself. The 1921 statistics showed the number of communicant members to be 255, with 342 catechumens and 1386 school children. These people were placed under the care of Malawi congregations near the boundary such as Mlanda, Mphunzi and later Dedza and Chilobwe. It was to be fifty years before the Church in Mozambique could once more be re-established and ministered to separately. <sup>258)</sup>

The verdict of the African Education Commission under the auspices of the Phelps-Stokes Fund which visited East Africa in 1924 summed up the situation: <sup>259)</sup>

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256. See for details of negotiations *ibid.*, pp. 22-28

257. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-36.

258. For later contacts between the Church in Malawi and Christians in Mozambique see ch. 5.

259. T Jesse Jones: *Education in East Africa*, p. 305.



Tete, with 400 000 Natives, has only **one** small Roman Catholic mission. Very unfortunately the excellent work of the South African Mission has been excluded from this really needy territory by action of the Portuguese Government. The reason assigned is the failure of the Mission to accept the Government rule requiring the use of Portuguese as the language of instruction. It seems impossible to justify the loss to the Colony of such efficient teachers on such a ground. Through this action the 400 000 Natives are left largely without any educational influence.

#### 2.4.2 Work in Salisbury and Zimbabwe

One of the problems which the Mission encountered from practically the first decade of its work, was the fact that men began going away for work. The imposition of hut tax forced many to go abroad to seek work and soon many were found as far away as Salisbury and Johannesburg. The effects of this on the spiritual and moral lives of the people was such that the need was soon felt to minister to them where they were working. Regular labour migration dates from 1903 and in that year the Mission Council emphasised the urgent necessity to begin work in Salisbury in conjunction with their work in Malawi. This was reiterated in 1905 when the Council again brought to the General Mission Committee's attention the necessity of providing for the spiritual welfare of the large number of Malawians who go annually to Salisbury and Johannesburg. <sup>260)</sup> In the same year a delegation of Malawians working in Zimbabwe walked on foot to Mvera to ask for a missionary, <sup>261)</sup> but four years later someone had not yet been found and the Mission Council once again raised the matter. WH Murray wrote to the Mission secretary that the number going to Zimbabwe (then Southern Rhodesia) was ever increasing and "we shall stand to lose if we continue to do nothing for them". <sup>262)</sup>

Meanwhile other Missions were also becoming more and more concerned and when the third General Missionary Conference took place in August 1910 the following resolution was passed: <sup>263)</sup>

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260. B Pachai: Malawi: history of the nation, pp. 119f; Council minutes 9/1903, pp. 31, 32; 13/1905, p. 75.
261. JL Pretorius: An introduction ... p.cit., p. 375-6.
262. Council minutes 18/1909, p. 114; CCA S5 15/6/2/16: WH Murray to Mission secr., 18/12/1909.
263. Report of the Third General Missionary Conference, Mvera, 1910, Resolution no. 16.

The conference presses on the various missions working in Nyasaland the advisability of settling a European missionary at Salisbury, or other centre of labour in Southern Rhodesia, for the purpose of looking after and ministering to the natives of this Protectorate and of North Eastern Rhodesia who are working on the mines and farms of that country. It suggests to the mission councils the consideration of how far they could co-operate in the support of such an European Missionary.

In view of later developments it is important to note that not only were the DRC missionaries in the Eastern Province of Zambia full participants at this conference, but the resolution specifically included the people from that region (then North-Eastern Rhodesia) working in Salisbury and elsewhere. None of the Missions present were ready to offer a person to go immediately and two months later WH Murray again strongly urged the Home Committee to do something "or the case will be lost for good".<sup>264</sup> The problem he saw was that the Presbyterian Church of South Africa working in Salisbury was fast organising their work so as to move in amongst the Malawians and already some elders had been appointed who were unfit for eldership when in Malawi. He feared confusion and complications. Further correspondence followed but it was a year later before the Rev. TCB Vlok, by then a veteran of twenty-three years' experience in Malawi, offered to go and begin this work. The Mission Council noted this "with joy but also with sadness", but because the need for a worker in Salisbury was greater than ever, the appointment of Vlok was recommended to the Home Committee, which approved this request in due course.<sup>265</sup>

On his way down to South Africa on furlough, Vlok visited Salisbury and found 235 Catechumens on the register and even more Christians. An estimated 5 000 Malawians were in or near Salisbury. The Malawians, particularly those from Blantyre and Livingstonia were being cared for by the Rev. Simpson, minister of the white congregation of the Presbyterian Church and it seemed to Vlok at that time that Simpson and his colleague at Bulawayo would be reluctant to hand over the work to him, preferring to see him working only amongst the Nkhoma people. However, the idea expressed by the 1910 General Missionary Conference was that someone from Malawi would minister to all the Malawians. A letter from Dr Laws received earlier by Vlok made this clear:<sup>266</sup>

264. CCA S5 15/6/2/16: WH Murray to "Brother" (AC Murray), 31/10/1910.

265. Council minutes 21/1911, pp. 136-7; CCA S5 1/4/1: Nyasa Mission subcommittee minute 11, entry for 29/1/1912.

266. CCA S5 15/6/2/30: Laws to Vlok, extract, 29/2/1912. Vlok's report in loc.

I am interested in your going to Salisbury. Already there is a church under the care of the Rev. Mr Simpson of the SA Presbyterian Church which was built I believe chiefly by the lads from here. I wonder if you are going to be in it. I trust at any rate that our SA Presbyterian Church will be united in the work for the natives of Nyasaland. Anything else in the shape of denominational rivalry it seems to me would be suicidal, and was not, I think, contemplated by anyone at the Mvera Conference when speaking of the need for some European to work among our Nyasaland natives.

As matters ensued an agreement was reached with the Presbyterian Church. Vlok would work amongst the Chewa-speaking people in Mashonaland (including Salisbury) and the Presbyterian Church would work in Matabeleland (including Bulawayo).<sup>267)</sup> Thus, when Vlok began his work he did so not only on behalf of the DRC Mission, but on behalf of all the Federated Missions in Malawi. This was how all understood it.<sup>268)</sup> It was also clearly understood that the work would be only amongst the Malawians and not amongst the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. These would continue to be served by local Missions. In a sense, the Salisbury work could be regarded as an outpost of the Malawi work.

Work started and by mid 1913 Vlok could report that at the last Holy Communion a hundred people attended. The majority were from Nkhoma Mission, but there were also Christians from the Blantyre Mission, the three Industrial Missions and a few from Livingstonia Mission. Difficulties were being experienced with the Livingstonia people who still preferred to join the Presbyterian Church.<sup>269)</sup>

The following year Vlok already had five evangelists to assist him. Six hundred people were attending services in Salisbury while large numbers of people also worked on mines and on farms. According to Government statistics there were 33 000 Malawians in Zimbabwe in 1914.<sup>270)</sup> In the years which followed the work continued to expand, even though difficulties arose in 1919 with the Presbyterian Church. These were later amicably settled to the effect that the agreement of 1912 was cancelled.<sup>271)</sup> Vlok could continue his work, now also in Matabeleland, but lack of additional workers resulted in the people

267. See CCA S5 15/6/4/1: Memorandum on native work in Mashonaland, 1919.

268. Ibid., Hetherwick to AC Murray 4/10/1912; Laws to AC Murray, 8/8/1913.

269. Ibid., Vlok to Mission secr., 28/7/1913.

270. CCA S5 1/1/2: GMC minute 25, entry for 25/2/1914; 1/4/1: Nyasa Mission subcommittee minute 3-10, entry for 26/12/1913.

271. CCA S5 15/6/4/1: Memorandum on native work in Mashonaland; 1/1/2: GMC minute 8, entry for 26-28/8/1919.

in Bulawayo being largely neglected. Part of the problem was that although his work was much appreciated by the other Missions in Malawi, none ever got so far as to offer any support or assistance.<sup>272)</sup> The DRC in the Cape had to bear the full responsibility.

In 1923 trouble of a different nature arose concerning the work at Bulawayo where the local Dutch Reformed Church (white) under Rev. HR Barrish began to work amongst Chewa speaking people and appointed an evangelist, Newman Nyirenda. Vlok objected strongly and negotiations ensued between the GMC and Barrish.<sup>273)</sup> In 1925 Barrish relinquished the work.

In 1928 an event took place which was to have radical implications for the work amongst the Malawians in Zimbabwe. In that year the DRC Synod of the Cape agreed to hand the DRC (white) congregations in Zimbabwe and Zambia over to the Synod of the Orange Free State.<sup>274)</sup> At that stage nothing was mentioned concerning the mission work of the Cape Synod in Zimbabwe i.e. the work of the Morgenster Mission amongst the Karanga people, and the work of Vlok.

The following year the recently appointed Mission Secretary of the Synod of the Orange Free State, Rev. JG Strydom, wrote to his counterpart in the Cape that he wished Vlok to be placed under the jurisdiction and supervision of the local DRC congregation in Salisbury as this was in accordance with his Synod's constitution. Eventually they could take over all responsibility for Vlok and his work. To this Vlok strongly objected as he saw his position as an exceptional one under totally different circumstances.<sup>275)</sup> The Orange Free State Synod was demanding the same for all the mission personnel of the Cape DRC working in Zimbabwe.

This was the prelude to a long and painful and in many ways disastrous, if not scandalous dispute between the two Synods which was to last for nearly twenty

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272. See for example CCA S5 15/6/4/1: Hetherwick to AC Murray, 8/2/1922; Holmes (ZIM) to AC Murray, 21/3/1922; and Vlok to AC Murray, 8/6/1922.
273. For correspondence on this matter during 1923 see CCA S5 15/6/4/1; On Nyirenda see *ibid.*: copy Vlok to Chief Native Commissioner, Salisbury, 1/10/1923.
274. DRC Acta 1928, p. 64.
275. CCA S5 15/6/4/1: JG Strydom to Mission secr. (Cape), 28/8/1929; Vlok to Mission secr., 11/10/1929.

years and was only finally settled in 1954. <sup>276)</sup>

The question of the jurisdiction over mission personnel was settled in due course but the demand that all the work falling within the geographical spheres of the local DRC congregations should be handed over to the OFS Synod was such an impossible one that the Cape General Mission Committee could never agree. Equally the Orange Free State was adamant that according to its own constitution all mission work within the bounds of any local congregation must fall under the jurisdiction of that congregation. The matter was carried to the highest courts of the Church and filled more writing space and took more time than probably any other single issue in the DRC has ever done. <sup>277)</sup>

In an attempt to meet the request of the Orange Free State, the work in Bulawayo was handed over to the Orange Free State Mission on 19 April 1936 <sup>278)</sup> with the further understanding that work at Gwelo and Umtali would also be handed over but the people first had to be prepared for this. <sup>279)</sup> The fact was that the Malawians were strongly opposed to the whole idea of being handed over to the Orange Free State Synod and its Mission. One of the main reasons for this was the fact that the Orange Free State Synod had in 1931 rescinded its decision, taken in 1928, to allow the congregations of its Mission in eastern Zambia to join the CCAP - a union which both the Zambian Church and the local missionaries strongly desired. This refusal and the motives behind it should be regarded as the underlying cause of the entire controversy in Zimbabwe. The matter was made even worse when a later request by the Council of Congregations of the Zambian Church to join the CCAP was again turned down in 1939. To the Malawian Christians it was unthinkable that they should be handed over to a Church which had rejected union with their Church. This was the case with the Nkhoma Christians but even more so with those from Blantyre and Livingstonia. In fact at a later stage a large group at Bulawayo broke away from the congregation being cared for by the Orange Free State Mission.

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276. For a 58-page documented summary of the course of the dispute see JG Olivier: *Geskiedenis van die geskil tussen NG Kerk Kaapland en die O.V.S. re Sendingaangeleenthede in Suid Rhodesië*, 1952 (unpublished) (Copy in CCA S5 15/6/4/8); and Memorandum of the OFS: *Memorandum van die Ned. Geref. Kerk in die O.V.S. in verband met sendingaangeleenthede in Suid Rhodesië*, 6/11/1945 (unpublished); see also DK, 25/12/1940, pp. 1177-80.
277. In the Cape Church Archives alone there are eight bulky files of correspondence, memoranda and reports dealing with this matter (see S5 15/6/4/1-8). Several other files contain correspondence on it as well.
278. CCA S5 15/6/4/2: Copy Vlok to Mission secr., 24/4/1936.
279. JG Olivier: *Geskiedenis van die geskil ...*, p. 26.

Meanwhile the DRC Mission Council in Malawi also expressed itself strongly in favour of not handing over, with a lengthy motivation,<sup>280)</sup> while the Presbytery of Nkhoma likewise appealed to the Cape GMC not to do so, but rather to establish a congregation at Salisbury which would resort under Nkhoma Presbytery.<sup>281)</sup>

In view of these appeals the GMC in Cape Town decided it could not hand over for the following reasons:<sup>282)</sup>

1. The work was an independent part of the mission activities in Malawi amongst a people who were not residents of Zimbabwe but only temporarily residing there.
2. The work was being done not only on behalf of the DRC but on behalf of the Federated Missions working amongst the Nyanja-speaking people in Malawi.
3. The people of Malawi attached much value to being members of the CCAP and had complete confidence in the DRC Mission. Information on hand left no doubt that handing them over to another Church, even a sister Church would lead to confusion and a break-up.
4. The very clear and motivated opinion of the Council and Council Committee as well as of the Presbytery of Nkhoma was that a separation from the Cape DRC would cause inestimable damage to the work at Salisbury.

At this stage the handing over of the work at Gwelo and Umtali was left as an open matter to be dealt with later, but long drawn-out negotiations ended in an impasse, mainly because the Malawian Christians themselves were strongly opposed to such a move. This was repeatedly expressed by a group of representatives which called itself the "Native Conference". In 1941 the Cape GMC decided to retain the work at Gwelo and Umtali.<sup>283)</sup>

This Native Conference which also referred to itself as "msonkhano wa Akulu a Mipingo" was a Conference of elders representing the various groups of Malawian Christians in Zimbabwe. It originated during the vacancy after the death of Vlok in 1936. It could, according to Vlok's successor, Rev. J Jackson, be regarded as virtually a Presbytery Council called into existence to maintain the unity of the different areas of work after Vlok's death, to care for the spiritual interests of Malawians in Zimbabwe and to try to keep them within their

280. Council minutes 58/1937; pp. 508-9 (Subcommittee minute for 2-3/12/1936).

281. Nkhoma Presbytery 1937; Minute of Standing Committee of Presbytery, entry for 2/2/1936, pp. 2-3, 5-6.

282. CCA S5 1/1/6; GMC minute 83, entry for 23-24/2/1937.

283. CCA S5 1/1/7; GMC minute 54, entry for 18-19/2/1941.

Church connection. They were even responsible to maintain discipline in the various groups and to investigate and act if any problems arose.<sup>284)</sup>

When a delegation from the Cape in the person of Rev. WF de Vos met them at Salisbury in 1937 they stated their desire to remain under the jurisdiction of the Church in Malawi. These sentiments were again expressed in a letter to the moderator of the Cape Synod.<sup>285)</sup>

Meanwhile a conference of Malawian Christians sent a resolution to the moderator of the CCAP and the chairman of the Consultative Board of Federated Missions, stating that they were opposed entirely to being handed over to any other Mission and protested at not being consulted in the matter. The activities of the OFS had, they complained, "destituted the work of the Lord".<sup>286)</sup>

Thus the dispute continued. Differing view points, personality clashes and individual idiosyncracies all played their part. Misunderstandings, suspicion, even open enmity and slandering between representatives of the two DRC Synods working on the field complicated the negotiations.<sup>287)</sup> The matter became more and more painful as time went by and in 1944 the General Mission Committee of the Cape Synod finally agreed to repeated appeals from the Presbytery of Nkhoma, the Mission Council and the Consultative Board as well as the Synodical Committee of the CCAP<sup>288)</sup> to allow a congregation to be established at Salisbury, a matter which it had been postponing since 1937 in view of the difficulties encountered in negotiating with the OFS.<sup>289)</sup> The congregation would include members from other Federated Missions, but would fall under the jurisdiction of Nkhoma Presbytery. Presbytery decided to establish it on 28 October 1944. The

284. CCA S5 15/6/4/8: Report by J Jackson in Salisbury report book, section "M".

285. Cf. CCA S5 1/4/4: Nyasa Mission subcommittee, introductory note, 23/9/1938.

286. CCA S5 15/6/2/23: Copy Resolution of Nyasaland Christian Non European Conference, held at Salisbury, 6/8/1938.

287. See for example a series of letters written in April 1943 from Malawian Christians complaining about actions and statements by OFS missionaries (CCA S5 15/6/11/5), also Evangelist Whitton Banda to Cape Mission secr., 5/1/1943, concerning what they termed the "church war" between the missionaries. In 1949 the Nkhoma Presbytery once again noted with sorrow and shame the "quarrelling and fighting" going on between their missionaries and those of the OFS Church at Salisbury (Presbytery 1949, p. 13).

288. Council minutes 58/1937, pp. 507-9; 61/1940, p. 558; 65/1944, p. 626; Nkhoma Presbytery 1935, p. 8; 1937, pp. 2, 5-6; CBFM minutes, entries for 20/11/1939, 26/8/1940, 19/4/1944; CCAP Synodical committee minutes, 30/11/1939, 7/2/1944.

289. CCA S5 1/4/2: Nyasa Mission subcommittee minute 4, entry for 10/3/1937.

boundaries were to be the entire field of the Malawi Mission in Zimbabwe. Twenty-four elders were elected with the majority in and around Salisbury so as to enable them to form a quorum if others from further afield could not attend. Meetings of elders at other centres were to be minuted and decisions would have power once they were ratified at the main session in Salisbury.<sup>290)</sup> A second congregation was formed at Gwelo on 16 September 1950.<sup>291)</sup>

Meanwhile the controversy between the two DRC Synods continued, and reached a virtual deadlock with the OFS placing workers in Salisbury and various other centres as well. The final solution was only reached in 1954 after it had been agreed that the OFS would withdraw all its workers and place its work amongst the Karanga and the Zambian Chewa (Nyanja)-speaking members under the care of the African Reformed Church (Morgenster DRC Mission) while the Nkhoma Mission would take care of the Malawian Christians all over Zimbabwe. The final transfer took place on 9 July 1954.<sup>292)</sup> For the first time in nearly twenty years Malawian Christians were once more visited at Bulawayo and other centres in Matabeleland by the representative of the Nkhoma Presbytery, the Rev. MS Daneel, who had succeeded Rev. Jackson in 1953.<sup>293)</sup> At Bulawayo a group of over 300 Malawians had broken away from the Presbyterian Church of South Africa and formed themselves into a separate group, worshipping under a tree. A majority were from Livingstonia Presbytery. This group later grew to over 600. In about 1952 in a memorandum they had expressed desire that the OFS should serve only local tribes and immigrants from Zambia while those from Malawi should be served by the CCAP.<sup>294)</sup> Rev. Daneel could also contact this group on his first visit, on which occasion Rev. Doig of the Blantyre Mission flew over from Salisbury to be present. The meeting ended well and opened the way to the regularising of relations with the CCAP. A congregation was formed at Bulawayo the following year on 14 May under the ministry of Rev. HML du Toit. This was the third congregation of the CCAP to be established in Zimbabwe.<sup>295)</sup> In that year the three congregations had a total of 6 350 communicant members.

290. Council minute 65/1944, p. 630; Nkhoma Presbytery 1945, p. 4. See also *ibid.*, pp. 4-6 for report of founding meeting.

291. Nkhoma Presbytery 1951, pp. 5-6, 7-8.

292. DRC *Acta* 1953, p. 53; CCA S5 1/1/9: GMC minute 20, entry for 23-26/8/1954. For details of the final arrangements see GMC report to Cape Synod *Acta* 1957, pp. 486f.

293. See MS Daneel: *Verslag van eerste besoek aan Wankie en Bulawayo*, July 1954 (in author's possession).

294. CCA S5 15/6/1/6: Memorandum drawn up by this group, n.d.(c. 1952); cf. also *ibid.*: MS Daneel to Mission secr., 12/8/1951, 15/11/1952.

295. Nkhoma Presbytery 1955, pp. 7-8, 9-10, 24. See further ch. 5.



## 2.5 The DRC Mission and some socio-political aspects in the early years

When the Dutch Reformed Church Mission began to establish itself in the Central Region of Malawi, a new factor was introduced in the socio-political scene of the time. In addition, the coming of the Mission virtually coincided, though slightly preceded, the establishment of British Administrative authority. Hence the early years of the Mission were years in which three spheres of power and influence had to establish and determine their respective relationships to each of the others. On the one hand there was the traditional tribal chieftom and rule, with, as an additional social factor, the widespread and disruptive slave raiding which was still in full swing. On the other hand the Mission arrived which in due course would deeply affect socio-political relationships. The Mission sought to establish a good relationship with the traditional leaders while at the same time presenting itself as representing an Authority higher than any human power. At the same time the protective, political and prestige value of having a Mission made the traditional leaders willing, even keen to receive missionaries. But then again, a power struggle, even if totally unintentional on the part of the Mission, was inevitable because the teachings of the missionaries and the rules of conduct they laid down for their converts implied a new authority and allegiance for the people.

Into this situation came the third sphere of influence, the Administration. With different aims, often with different methods of approach, it made a demand for a new allegiance to some far-off great monarch in another country. Treaties were sometimes virtually imposed upon the traditional leaders while strange new regulations such as the hut tax were introduced, using methods which often deeply upset both the people and the missionaries. To the people it was not always clear what the difference between the two groups of azungu was, nor could they understand the relationship between them. It became a question whether to please or to support one, both or none. The Mission found itself likewise in a difficult sort of in-between position. On the one hand they were seeking to establish friendship with chiefs and leaders and to recognise their authority, often also acting as advisers to them, and on the other hand they owed an allegiance to the temporal rulers of the country. Being themselves a foreign Mission their actions and attitudes were more than once viewed with suspicion. At the same time the people sometimes suspected them of collaborating with the Admini=

stration in a way which to them seemed like betrayal.

### 2.5.1 Relationship between the DRC missionaries and the chiefs

It has been noted that the first Mission stations were all established only after negotiating with local chiefs and obtaining their approval. It was the aim of the Mission to establish good and friendly relations with them.

The motives of the chiefs in receiving them usually did not coincide with those of the missionaries. Of this the missionaries were quite aware.<sup>296)</sup> Pretorius notes a threefold motive on the part of the chiefs.<sup>297)</sup> Firstly, they saw the missionaries as valuable instruments in their "foreign" policies, both as protection against neighbouring tribes, as with Mazengera at Nkhoma,<sup>298)</sup> or as valuable advisers and go-betweens in the chiefs' dealings with the steadily expanding British influence. Secondly, the chiefs saw in the presence of the missionary a valuable insurance against the plotting of ambitious councillors especially amongst the warlike Angoni. This was much in evidence especially around 1896. The presence of a missionary could serve to enhance the prestige of the chiefs. Thirdly, the missionaries were seen as persons who had power to manipulate supernatural forces and hence it could be both prudent and advantageous to have them close by.<sup>299)</sup>

It was the policy of the missionaries to uphold the authority of the chiefs and to co-operate with them. Hence they were reluctant to get involved in local disputes and tribal politics. Yet, as was the case with the Livingstonia missionaries,<sup>300)</sup> they sometimes found it "quite impossible ... not to interfere in local disputes". Thus in 1891 AC Murray found himself travelling as an envoy and go-between to negotiate a peace treaty between the Lakeshore chiefs Pemba and Maganga and Chiwere.<sup>301)</sup>

296. Cf. TCB Vlok: *Elf jaren in Midden Afrika*, p. 19.

297. JL Pretorius: *An Introduction to the history of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission in Malawi, 1889-1914*, pp. 366-7.

298. See above, p.96.

299. This was the case at Mvera with the rain episode and Chiwere's fear that if he rejected them it could bring trouble to him. (see above, p. 66).

300. B Pachai: *Christianity and Commerce in Malawi* (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds.): *Malawi past and present*, pp. 48-9).

301. AC Murray: *Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen aldaar*, pp. 227-32.

The same applied to the many incidents of slavery the missionaries repeatedly encountered in the early days.<sup>302)</sup> They felt bound not to act unilaterally but to uphold the authority of the chiefs and to gain the confidence of all classes of people. Thus WH Murray relates an incident of a person fleeing from some Yao slavers where he (Murray) felt it wise not to interfere. On another occasion in 1895 he happened to meet a Sikh sergeant sent by the Government to capture the Lakeshore slaver Pemba. When requested by the Sikh to act as guide to Pemba's house, whom he knew personally, he refused saying, "we cannot have anything to do with the matter, it lies totally outside our profession".<sup>303)</sup>

Moreover, the Administration was not happy to have missionaries getting involved in such matters. Thus the deputy Commissioner Alfred Sharpe warned Mr Govan Robertson at Livlezi when he interfered with a slave caravan in 1895 that missionaries should leave such things to the Administration.<sup>304)</sup> However the Administration did not always act as strongly as the missionaries would have liked them to do and WH Murray on one occasion complained that it was reluctant to deal with slave traders "they don't seem anxious for information into the matter at all", he wrote to his parents.<sup>305)</sup>

Nevertheless, there was more than one incident where missionaries freed slavers or gave fleeing slaves refuge. This usually concerned individuals known to them or persons concerning whom a parent or husband or other relative appealed to them for help. AC Murray and Vlok were both involved in such incidents. Vlok set free a person by name of Nagai together with four others in about 1895. Nagai then accompanied Vlok, first to Livlezi, and later to Nkhoma where he lived to old age.<sup>306)</sup> AC Murray relates of a spell of drought and famine in 1891-92 when many children and even wives were sold. By chance the missio=

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302. Several cases of slave dealing and capturing are related in the Mvera Mission Log Book, entries during 1890, 1891, 1892 (CCA S5 15/6/11/4).

303. WH Murray: Op pad, pp. 40-41, 56-7. Transl. from Afrikaans.

304. PA Cole-King: Cape Maclear, p. 50; see also WH Murray to parents, 24/5/1895 (in private collection of Mrs P Pretorius Stellenbosch).

305. For text of a letter from WH Murray to parents, 9/3/1895 see JL Pretorius, op.cit., pp. 381-3 (original letter in private collection of Mrs P Pretorius).

306. From notes of a personal interview with Nagai by Rev. GF Hugo (in author's possession).

naries obtained a child thrown away in the bush by the slavers and cared for him at the station. In another incident a former employee at the Mission, Dakoma, was later enslaved by Chiwere's wife Mshawashi. All attempts to obtain her release failed but in the end Chiwere let her return to the station. AC Murray paid him the two pound fee for the slave girl and told her she was now free. She elected to remain in the Mission's employ and was later converted and subsequently returned to her people to bring them the gospel message. On another occasion a young boy fled to them because his step-father wanted to sell him to the Arabs as he had already done with his sister. Through the intervention of the missionaries the trouble was averted. 307)

Likewise, WH Murray relates several incidents, such as the saving of a girl, Maunkalulu from Yao slaves. Two other Yaos, whose mother was set free by the slavers when Murray arrived on the scene, later became Mission teachers. 308)

Another very influential person in society was the mapondera, or mwabvi man, the person who applied the poison ordeal to those who were suspected of being witches. Because he often worked in close collaboration with the chief, it was again a matter which the missionaries had to handle carefully. Apart from speaking, even pleading against it and warning that the Administration took very severe action against any person known to administer the ordeal, there was not much the missionaries felt they could do. 309) WH Murray does relate an incident where a person was discovered actually administering the poison on Mission land. He felt obliged to intervene as there was no local magistrate yet. He had the person brought to him, bound him and called for the mwabvi bag, made of baboon skin, containing all the necessary items for preparing and administering the poison. After explaining to him why his action was objectionable, adding that shortly a magistrate's post would be opened in the district and once his activities became known he would be in serious trouble, Murray told him that for his own sake he would keep the bag in safe custody. The mapondera accepted this and they later became good friends. Subsequently, Murray succeeded in persuading several others to hand over their bags to him. 310)

307. AC Murray: Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen aldaar, pp. 245-8; 224-5; CCA P3: AC Murray Diary, entries for 12/3/1891ff. and 17/3/1891ff.

308. MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, pp. 132ff, 176; WH Murray: Op pad, pp. 66-74. The last incident was not known to Murray until the facts were revealed by Rev. Namon Katengeza in 1943.

309. WH Murray: Op pad, p. 101.

310. Ibid., pp. 104-112.

That the missionaries were sometimes viewed with suspicion and fear has already been pointed out. At times the fear and suspicion was greater, such as when AC Murray was mauled by a leopard in 1895. The people and chiefs thought him bewitched by one of their own, hence the attack. But they further came to suspect that he had taken revenge by asking the Government to conquer their land and impose tax, as happened in 1896 during the absence of AC Murray who was recuperating in South Africa. <sup>311)</sup>

During the turbulent years of 1895 and 1896 the Administration was on more than one occasion compelled to use force in order to establish its authority. Mlozi, the slave dealer of Karonga was subdued and hanged, Mwase of Kasungu was attacked, forced to flee and then committed suicide, Gomani was captured and executed, Pemba was captured and deported, as was Mazengera of Nkhoma who was allegedly murdered by his captors. There was much resentment, fear and opposition to these moves on the part of the people and the chiefs. On more than one occasion they sought the advice of the missionaries, a sign of the degree of trust that had already developed. On the other hand much pressure was exerted on a person like Chiwere to get rid of the missionaries, but he consistently refused. The Blakes at Kongwe also experienced a harrowing mid-night vigil when it was one day learned that Msakambewa and his indunas had planned to murder them that night. At the last moment the plans were cancelled. Suspicion increased again when the Administration sent four armed, uniformed policemen to stand guard at night at Mvera. "What are these police in uniform doing on the station"? Chiwere asked, "of whom are the missionaries afraid?" Thereupon he sent messengers to reassure them that they need not fear an attack from him or any other. <sup>312)</sup>

Shortly after, Chiwere and his headmen considered attacking the local Government official. He summoned Vlok, Blake and WH Murray to a meeting to discuss the matter with them. <sup>313)</sup> Chiwere set out the position as follows:

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311. AC Murray: Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen, pp. 263-4.

312. WH Murray: Op pad, pp. 78-81.

313. Ibid., pp. 81-83. Following translations from Afrikaans.

When Sitimali wamkuru (the big Mr Murray, Rev. AC Murray) came into my country, he came and asked me in a decent way whether he and his companion could come and stay in my country to teach my people. I agreed and we lived together well. Now he has gone (to the South because of being wounded by the leopard), and now the strange white man comes in without asking me and I hear he says the country belongs to him and we shall have to pay tax to him, but of that nothing will come. What we now want to know is this: how will it be if I summon my warriors and drive out the white man who wants to come in here now, then only we and you remain in this country? If you say yes, then we can finalise the matter straight away.

It was a difficult moment for the missionaries. It was not a question of what to say, but how to say it so that the people's confidence could be retained and that they would not think them mere Government agents. They pointed out to him that if they did that, many more men with guns and cannons would come from across the water and destroy them.

If we tell you today 'destroy them' then we are not your friends and therefore we advise you to drop that plan of yours.

Disappointed, discussions continued for some time but in the end the advice was taken.

At Kongwe a similar incident occurred between Msakambewa and Robert Blake. The chiefs had plotted to murder all the whites, but Msakambewa confided in his friend Blake and asked for advice. If Blake agreed, he was ready to take up arms against the Administration. Blake's advice was not to do so as the British would merely return with a greater force and crush them. Msakambewa withdrew from the plot and later the others followed suit. <sup>314)</sup>

On various occasions WH Murray was asked to act as go-between between Chiwere and officials of the Administration. One such incident was when Mr Swann, the Resident magistrate of Marimba District (Nkhota Kota) was asked by chief Dzoole to intervene because of being raided by Chiwere's men. Murray was asked to carry Swann's letter to Chiwere and bring back an answer. This letter was preserved and reads as follows: <sup>315)</sup>

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314. TCB Vlok: *Elf jaren ...*, p. 53. See also account by Mrs. Blake, 1944 (photostat copy in Kongwe station book, Kongwe).

315. CCA S5 15/6/8/1: Swann to Chiwere, 17/10/1895. Quotation marks and italics by Swann.

To Tchiwere, Chief of Central Angoniland.  
Greetings.

I beg to respectfully notify to you the fact, that I have made Treaties with "Mwasi Mzungu" and on behalf of H Majesty Queen Victoria, that I have placed Her Majesty's Flag in the villages of Mwasi, Zoli and Kalumo. These chiefs and their people and property and countries now belong to Her Majesty and are placed under Her protection. I have visited in person your Northern Governor "Msakambewa" and plainly told him all milandu of the past are dead and that the Angoni must not raid or kill the Achewa any more. I am glad to say "Msakambewa" does not desire to raid any more and has met the Indunas of the Achewa and made friends, at the same time, he gave me to understand that you are the responsible chief and that all wars come from you. I therefore respectfully ask you to send to Msakambewa and tell him, that you forbid any one raiding the Achewa which would mean taking up arms against the British.

I shall be always ready to hear any complaints you or your people may make against the Achewa living in my District and I trust the most amicable relationship may always exist between H.B.M. Administration and yourself.

Two months later Murray received another letter requesting his assistance in a case involving the murder of a Yao man on the Lakeshore by one of Chiwere's men. Murray was to hand a letter to Chiwere asking for the extradition of the murderer. 316)

Shortly afterwards Chiwere was much provoked by a raid of Government askari on his village. He fled to a small village called Mbindo and felt deeply humiliated and for a long time refused to see Murray because he suspected him of being involved. Rumours of an attack on the Mission became so strong that the two lady workers were sent off to Bandawe for safety.

Meanwhile the Government was becoming more determined to finalise matters in Chiwere's land but they wished to avoid using force if possible. 317) They could however make no contact with him as he constantly refused to see them. Even Murray came under suspicion that he was shielding Chiwere. At the same time Chiwere was planning to attack the European forces. Murray was given a message to Chiwere which amounted to a kind of ultimatum by Mr Codrington, known to the people as Mala. Either Chiwere come to meet him, or else troops would be sent to take his country by force and he would be likely to lose his

316. CCA S5 15/6/2/16: Capt. FT Stewart, Fort Rifu, to WH Murray, 30/12/1895.

317. Ibid., A Sharpe to WH Murray, 16/11/1896.

position.

Murray was again in a very difficult position as Chiwere was his friend and he wished to help him. Chiwere agreed to meet him on a certain day, but he found him anything but friendly. After some talk in a hut full of headmen Chiwere pointed his finger at Murray and said: "You white man, you have betrayed my country." All present clapped hands in agreement. Murray answered that if he was a traitor he was hardly the man to advise Chiwere and prepared to leave. Chiwere's attitude changed and he asked him to stay, as he was only joking. A long discussion followed. The men feared that if their chief agreed to meet Codrington the same fate could befall him as had befallen Gomani, Pemba, Mwase and others. Murray had beforehand been promised by Codrington that no harm would come to Chiwere and so he could assure them: "If they kill Chiwere they kill me as well." This helped to change feelings and it was finally agreed that Chiwere would meet Codrington. The next day Murray accompanied him to Codrington's camp. The meeting was brief and Chiwere returned safely. This was the turning point and in due course relations between the chief and the Government normalised without force being used. In April 1897 Chiwere again met the Government official and agreed to pay the required tax by giving about 300 men to work for a month. <sup>318)</sup>

The Mission policy concerning relations with headmen and chiefs continued on these lines. WH Murray believed in keeping constant personal contact with them. Later at Nkhoma it was practice to invite all headmen regularly for discussions and afterwards a meal. <sup>319)</sup> For many years a regular item on the Mission Council's annual budget was called "gifts for headmen"

In April 1935 WH Murray in his opening speech before the Mission Council outlined several reasons why there was a degree of enmity on the part of the headmen against the Mission in the beginning and how it was gradually overcome. These reasons included an initial mistrust and fear that the schools were merely a trap to catch the children and slaughter them as the Arabs were doing. Further, the Angoni were offended at being told to make and live in peace and asked: "Do they want to make women out of us?" The preaching against sin and the teaching about the new master, Jesus, were other factors which puzzled and even antagonised them, and finally, the missionaries' attitude against such a thing as the poison ordeal upset the

318. WH Murray: Op pad, pp. 89-94; Mbiri ya Misyoni ya DRC, pp. 50-52; CCA V9 4/1: Half yearly report, 24/6/1897. For further correspondence re tax matters, 1897-1898 see CCA S5 15/6/8/1.

319. MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, p. 132.



headmen. This enmity was in due course overcome by building up personal relationships with them. As more and more village schools were opened, mistrust decreased and the motives of the missionaries became clear. People began to notice and understand the difference between Government and Mission.

So successful had these attempts been that by 1935 there were ninety-eight Christian headmen with a further nineteen in catechumen class. A further sixty five had been Christians but had fallen back, but on the whole these were sympathetically disposed towards the Church and the Mission. <sup>320)</sup>

## 2.5.2 Relationship between the DRC Mission and the Colonial Government

In this section attention will focus mainly on the first few decades of British Administration in the Central Region. In March 1896 the first full-time Collector for Central Angoniiland was appointed in the person of Robert Codrington who had entered Government service in British Central Africa as assistant Collector for Zomba district in 1895. <sup>321)</sup> A year later he was transferred and succeeded by Sergeant-major P Devoy who decided to make Dedza his headquarters. In November 1899 his successor AL Reade shifted the headquarters to Dowa, with two assistant Collectors, RK Gordon and HK Green at Dedza and at Chiwamba near Nkhoma. A new Boma was begun in 1902 on the Lilongwe river, and Lilongwe, being more central, became McDonald's district headquarters in 1904 with Dedza and Dowa remaining as sub-bomas. Several other outposts, except Ft Manning in the west (the present Mchinji) were abandoned. McDonald was succeeded by RW Gordon as Resident, the title which replaced that of Collector in 1906. In 1910 Dedza became a separate district and Dowa followed suit three years later while Fort Manning became a sub-district until 1921 when it achieved full district status. Salima subsequently was formed as a district by combining sections of Dowa and Dedza districts. In 1921 Provincial Administration was introduced in the country and Lilongwe became the headquarters of the Central Province, seating a Provincial Commissioner as well as the Resident for Lilongwe district. <sup>322)</sup>

320. Reported in DK, 12/6/1935, pp. 1107f.

321. PA Cole-King: Lilongwe, a historical study, p. 23. See pp. 24-29 for an account of Codrington's work and the establishment of a network of six government posts on the Lakeshore and on the highlands. Codrington was later appointed as Administrator of the British South Africa Company's territory of North-Eastern Rhodesia (eastern Zambia) where his sympathetic attitude and assistance was greatly appreciated by the DRC missionaries who started in that region in 1899. For appreciation expressed by WH Murray see P Bolink: Towards Church union in Zambia, p. 127, n. 14.

322. PA Cole-King, op.cit., pp. 29-34.

The coming of the British Administration meant the introduction of two practices, a hut tax and a labour system, which both for a long time were cause of much resentment. The much disliked hut tax was first introduced in Malawi in 1892 at six shillings per house and lowered to three shillings per house per annum under the terms of the Native Hut Tax Ordinance of 1894. In 1896, after three months, Codrington was able to report that he had collected £202, mainly in tax, although several chiefs, including Chiwere, had not yet agreed to have their people taxed. <sup>323)</sup> The collection of tax presented many problems, in particular because people did not have cash and there was no way of earning cash locally except for the few who were lucky enough to be employed by missionaries and other Europeans. Thus during the first years people were allowed to pay in kind, which again created problems in storing and disposing of the goods.

The problem was partly solved by the introduction of a labour system by which a person who was unable to pay his tax was forced to go to work for three months in Zomba or on the Shire Highlands where the Government and planters were in constant need of labour. One month's wages was kept in lieu of tax and for the other two months he could receive whatever was left in cash or cloth. In addition it meant a gruelling 180 or more miles' journey on foot, often in labour gangs under kapitaos, overseers who recruited labourers and drove them to their place of work, sometimes even in chains.

During the first year of British administration the DRC Mission received liberal treatment. This was partly due to Cecil Rhodes who initially had considerable influence in the country's matters through the British South Africa Company. In 1894 the Acting Commissioner was instructed by his secretary to "deal with the DRCM in as liberal a manner as possible" in regard to the acquisition of more land (this was in connection with land at Kongwe Mission). Rhodes even sanctioned and asked Sharpe to consider free grants of land to the DRCM in separate localities. Without creating precedents for other Missions, he was "anxious to deal in a generous manner with the Dutch Reformed Church". <sup>324)</sup>

But Rhodes soon disappeared from the scene and when British rule was being established in the Central Region, the Government and the DRCM respectively were not quite sure one of the other. At that stage the DRC was the only

323. Ibid., pp. 26, 27.

324. CCA S5 15/6/2/15: Copy Rutherford to A Sharpe, 1894. See also CCA P3 3/2: AC Murray to Rhodes, 28/10/1893; and to Johnston, same date.

Mission in that region and as has been seen, was sometimes the only means by which the Government officials could make contact with chiefs. The role the missionaries played in the negotiations between the British Administration and the chiefs shows clearly enough that they were willing to co-operate. Yet, the Government forces were a disruptive power, and Government troops on more than one occasion caused such havoc to villages that missionaries could not but feel perturbed. Thus, when Robert Blake of Kongwe wrote and complained to Major EG Alston about maltreatment of certain individuals by his men, Alston "a young man of very decided views on everyone"<sup>325)</sup> wrote a sharp letter to WH Murray demanding an apology since "I absolutely deny" the various accusations. "Blake", he added, "really writes as if the whole country belonged to him".<sup>326)</sup> Yet neither Blake nor the other missionaries were opposed to British rule being established. In fact some time later, writing to his Home Committee, Blake referred to the terrible Angoni raids taking place and added, "I cannot but pray that all the Angoni may soon be under English Law"<sup>327)</sup>

This incident illustrates a difficulty which caused tension on many occasions between missionaries and Government officials. Living closer to the people, often understanding them better and being more sympathetic to their complaints, the missionaries often found themselves the recipients of complaints about treatment received from Government officials and their African askari. Their attempts to bring such complaints or malpractices to the attention of the responsible officers was received with due appreciation by some and a promise to rectify any wrongs.<sup>328)</sup> In fact, from correspondence between missionaries and Government officials certain names could be singled out in those early days as being persons who revealed a constant friendly and positive attitude towards the missionaries. Thus there was Major Robert Codrington and the Collector of Nkhota Kota, AJ Swann, an ex-missionary of whom Blake had this to say:

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325. PA Cole-King, op.cit., p. 21.

326. CCA S5 15/6/2/16: EG Alston to WH Murray, 22/1/1895.

327. CCA V9 2/1: R Blake to MMU secr., 5/12/1895.

328. Cf. for example CCA S5 15/6/2/16: R Codrington to WH Murray, 26/12/1896 where he stated: "no doubt, whosoever is in the right, my police are decidedly in the wrong".

If the Commissioner and the rest of his men have as much tact in this time as Mr Swann, I expect to see the Angoni soon under British rule with not a single chance to strike a blow. <sup>329)</sup>

His tact and humane treatment of people as well as friendly dealings with missionaries remained evident in all correspondence throughout the difficult years of 1899-1904. <sup>330)</sup> So evident was his attitude that the Committee of the Ministers' Mission Union requested WH Murray in 1902 to convey to him its gratitude for his sympathetic attitude. <sup>331)</sup>

Complaints by missionaries to other officials however, more often than not elicited violent response. So for example the hostility and suspicion of a person like Captain Stokes of Fort Maguire is very evident in his correspondence, particularly with Rev. Vlok at Nkhoma. His attitude on tax and labour issues is most telling. In a rather hostile response to a complaint from Vlok concerning a teacher who was manhandled when he apparently interfered because of attempts to force holders of tax papers to go to work. Stokes retorted: <sup>332)</sup>

If H M's Commissioner states he requires labour at all cost, I fail to see how a tax paper should exempt people from work... As to people being tied up when being brought for labour you must surely know that if some precautions were not taken by the Askari, they would arrive here with no people.

Violence and force were often part and parcel of the labour recruitment scheme. When a later incident occurred, involving "injudicious" action of Stokes in arresting some teachers at Livlezi, Vlok felt compelled rather to write to the Collector at Fort Johnston "because of the unpolite (sic) and unmannerly way in which he (Stokes) handled matters with us when we meant to do good". <sup>333)</sup> The Collector referred the matter to the Commissioner in Zomba who communicated with Stokes and Stokes "denies in toto the statements made by you" and made counter charges that Vlok had erected schools on the plateau after permission had been refused. This was a blatant lie by Stokes since permission for the schools concerned had been granted by Stokes' deputy, Candy and Stokes had acknowledged this to AC Murray: "As you have Mr. Candy's permission to erect these schools

329. CCA V9 2/1: Blake to MMU secr., 5/12/1895.

330. See letters in CCA S5 15/6/2/1 and -13.

331. CCA V9 1/1: MMU minutes, entry for 3/10/1902.

332. CCA S5 15/6/2/30: Stokes to Vlok, 27/9/1899.

333. CCA S5 15/6/3/1: Copy Vlok to Collector, Fort Johnston 21/2/1900.

there is no need to recall your teachers". This permission had been granted during Stokes' absence and he strongly disapproved of Vlok going to "a young unexperienced collector for permission". AC Murray responded to the charge by asking Stokes to state when this permission was refused and which outschools were started since then. It is not known whether Stokes answered this letter. 334) These incidents illustrate the kind of situation which existed between the missionaries and some of the officials. This does not mean that missionaries were always free of blame. Some did sometimes act in ways which were beyond their rights by taking matters into their own hands. On one occasion Vlok even went so far as to disarm the Askari mail escort from Fort Manning for alleged maltreatment of people. 335) It is also apparent that Mission teachers were not always in the right in their attitudes and actions when Government officials visited their areas and that they assumed powers which were not theirs. Thus even Swann had on occasion to write to Blake to warn him that the action of teachers who in their zeal stop dancing and brewing beer was "utterly illegal". He adds the indictment that teachers seem to have no respect for H M's Officers, which was also a serious offence, reminding him that schools are liable to be removed if at any time a chief so desires. 336)

On the other hand there can be no doubt that, for instance in Dedza District, Government askari did on occasion abuse their position. On a journey through those parts in July 1897 Vlok wrote: 337)

We arrived early at Dedza ... it surprised us and filled us with sorrow to see how the people ran away from us. They thought we were of the Government. Some of the Africans who are soldiers of the Government lord it over the poor wild village Africans. The result is that as soon as they hear travellers approaching, they all hide.

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334. CCA S5 15/6/2/30: Acting Collector, Ft. Johnston to Vlok, 1/3/1900, 27/3/1900; Candy to Vlok, 28/6/1899; Stokes to AC Murray, 5/8/1899; Stokes to Vlok, 27/9/1899; Copy AC Murray to Stokes, 7/4/1900.

335. MNA Nkhoma Papers Box 1 (Correspondence between Govt. officials and Missionaries): McDonald to Vlok, 31/10/1898.

336. CCA S5 15/6/2/1: AJ Swann to R Blake, 11/11/1898.

337. Vlok: Elf jaren ..., p. 26.

People they met on the way all fled from them and several villages they found completely deserted, all having fled, even taking their goats and dogs with them.

Continuing his journey to Malembo, Vlok found he had to sort out some very difficult matters, difficulties caused by the hut tax and misbehaviour of the police. Some time later there was correspondence between AC Murray and the Collector at Fort Johnston concerning allegations that Albert Namalambe had been interfering with the police and telling people they need not pay tax if they belonged to the Mission. These allegations proved false but the Collector warned that he should confine himself to mission work alone. In response AC Murray wrote that he sincerely trusted that there would be no friction between the Mission and the Administration:

Our one desire as far as the Government of the country is concerned is to see justice all round and obedience to those in authority.

Concerning Namalambe he went on to explain:

He is continually applied to by people who have been or consider themselves to have been wronged by the police or others for advice and help. And I think when you know how matters were carried on there last year you will not condemn his trying to help.

On the matter of tax workers deserting on excuse that they belong to the Mission, Murray wrote in a later letter that this was "an old one which we have done our best to remove". He added that they had found that the police also often quote this pretext as the reason why people ran away, while the real reasons are sometimes ill-treatment or lack of food. In the case concerned the policeman was removed from duty.<sup>338)</sup>

The accusations levelled at the missionaries on more than one occasion that they were not co-operative and interfered in matters which were none of their business were hardly fair and should be seen against the background of such incidents where the cause of justice forced the missionaries to react. As a further example could be mentioned an incident involving the killing of one of Chiwere's people. An African policeman had got involved in a quarrel with villagers over a goat he was demanding and shot one man in the head killing him outright, while seriously wounding another. His report to the Boma was such

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338. CCA S5 15/6/8/1: HR Wallis to AC Murray, 26/2/1898, 5/3/1898;  
CCA P3 3/2: Copy AC Murray to Wallis, 17/3/1898, 22/3/1898.

a farce that AC Murray felt compelled to write to the Acting Collector at Dedza that he had "positive proof" of the policeman's guilt and that "the facts of the case are exactly the reverse of what your police told you".<sup>339)</sup> At the same time the assistance rendered by the missionaries at Mvera in arranging tax matters between Chiwere and the Collector at Dedza has already been noted.

The resentment of certain Government officials over the way in which missionaries involved themselves in such matters grew decidedly worse once the Anglo-Boer War broke out in South Africa in 1899. Suspicion and even open hostility on the part of some even at the highest level became so bad that court charges were laid against missionaries on two occasions in 1901 and again in 1904.

What largely contributed to the problem between the Administration and the Mission was the increasingly drastic and injudicious way tax and labour matters were being handled. At that stage thousands of people were being sent to work in the Shire Highlands. From January to November 1899, 8 993 were recruited for labour from Angoniland and in April 1900 the new Collector at Dowa proudly informed AC Murray that he had made a good beginning by sending 3 400 men away in one month. At the same time he had burnt down a certain village at Gala, where the DRCM had a school and had confiscated all the people's goats. "I must stop the people from running away when I approach their villages and will continue burning their villages until they remain in them," he added.<sup>340)</sup> The practice of burning villages was a very common one in those days. Even worse sometimes happened.

By the end of 1900 matters had become so unsettled that WH Murray wrote:<sup>341)</sup>

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339. CCA S5 15/6/8/1: Copy AC Murray to Acting Collector, Dedza, 1/2/1898, 12/2/1898.

340. PA Cole-King: Lilongwe..., p. 29; CCA S5 15/6/8/1: McDonald to AC Murray, 12/4/1900. See also *ibid.*, 13/8/1901: "I burnt Kalolo's village to the ground".

341. Quoted by JL Pretorius: An introduction to the history of the DRCM, pp. 370-1. In the same vein Frylink wrote from Nkhoma (during Vlok's absence on leave) that Morris had taken 500 men, another European 200, in all 700 from Nkhoma, very few men escaping being caught. Women were being captured and when the husbands came to release them, they were taken: "I cannot put on paper what is happening in Central Angoniland ... the destruction of home and property of the natives is something terrible to see" (DK, 7/3/1901, p. 152). Transl. from Dutch.

Things have lately taken place that might shame any savage, if committed by him, and that in the name and by the instruments of the Government. Because men refuse to pay their taxes (on account of the hardships entailed in going to work 200 miles away from their homes, where there is great scarcity of food) women and little children have been ruthlessly shot down by native policemen, and we've still to see what's going to become of it.

Murray was no doubt referring to the tragic Chimbalanga episode which took place a few months earlier. At the official inquiry which followed, the askari maintained that the people of Chimbalanga were instigated by the Dutch Reformed missionaries not to sell their labour to the Collector but to the Mission who would in turn pay their taxes for them. Yet, the Government Capitao John Beswick testified that Chief Chimbalanga had refused to give any more men, stating that he had already "given a lot of men who went down to work at Blantyre. Many of them died on the way. Very few came back. I will give no more. Go away". 342)

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342. B Pachai: Christianity and commerce in Malawi (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds.): Malawi past and present, pp. 61-2). The correct rendering is Chimbalanga, not Chimbulanga as in some records. According to an eye witness account written in 1935, Mbiri za anthu m'dziko la Nyasa (unpublished ms. reportedly written by a DRCM teacher known as Manayin; now in author's possession, loaned from Mr. MC Toerien, Pretoria), this was a punitive expedition against Chimbalanga after a policeman, Manjawira had been killed by Chimbalanga's people in July 1901. The policeman, together with his senior Joni (John Beswick?, cf. Pachai, loc.cit., n. 81) and a third, only known locally as "son of Camdimbo", stayed around Chimbalanga's village for a few days, making quite a nuisance of themselves by burning houses and taking people's property by force, even trying to get Chimbalanga to produce his first wife and give her to them. One day Manjawira came away from a beer party and met a relative of Chimbalanga on the way by name of Kawaye who was being accompanied by his wife and child. A quarrel ensued and the policeman, in anger, grabbed the child from its mother's back and flung it violently to the ground, killing it outright. Fearing reprisal the policeman then also shot and killed the father and thereupon fled but was later followed, found and killed by the infuriated villagers of Chimbalanga. The upshot of this incident was the Chimbalanga expedition of October 1901, which came from Fort Mlangeni under the leadership of Capt. Stokes ("Stokø" in the account), Collector at Mlangeni, and included a number of Sikhs, askari and some of Gomani's Angoni. According to the account there was also a second European in the company but his name is not mentioned. The expedition passed through Nkhoma Mission and then proceeded to ravage village after village to the north and north-east towards the Lilongwe and Chiwere's land. The party split up into three groups and wantonly and at random shot down, bayoneted or clubbed to death large numbers, old and young, men, women and children, every one who tried to run away. All food stores were burned, every goat and chicken they could lay their hands on was killed. The tragedy was that most of these villages had nothing to do with Chimbalanga, being Chewa villages, not Ngoni villages. Subsequently many more people suffered and died from hunger, some remaining fearfully in hiding in the forests for many months.



At the time this inquiry was in process the DRC Mission also became involved in a court case. It needs to be made clear that the Chimbalanga episode and this court case against the Mission were two separate matters.<sup>343)</sup> At Dowa during the second half of 1900, Collector AL Reade with whose office the missionaries felt very happy,<sup>344)</sup> had been replaced by Mr HJ Morris who, allegedly, had also been a member of the Chimbalanga party.<sup>345)</sup> Conditions soon deteriorated and many complaints began to reach the missionaries' ears. Matters became so bad that "it became impossible to remain silent any longer" because of the turbulence and irregularities taking place due to the behaviour of the police.<sup>346)</sup>

The result was that when AC Murray and the others failed to see the Acting Commissioner Lieut Col WH Manning on his visit to Dowa district towards the end of 1900, a letter was drawn up by AC Murray, who was on his way out of the country, bringing a number of formal complaints against the new district Collector and requesting an investigation and even his removal.

In six points the problems were outlined as the missionaries saw them. The first point stated:<sup>347)</sup>

During Mr AL Reade's collectorship the district was settling down and the natives beginning to have some confidence in the Adm. but since Mr Morris has been there, matters have been conducted in such a manner that the natives have lost all confidence and they say the Adm. is worse than the Angoni of old as the latter raided their enemies, but the former raid those who have submitted to them.

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Ironically, Chimbalanga and his entire village allegedly escaped death by fleeing in time and Chimbalanga went into hiding in Portuguese territory at Nyungwi. He did not return before 1909 when the Administration permitted him to take up his chieftainship again. He died in 1929.

343. Pachai in loc. makes it appear as if the charge resulted from the inquiry into the Chimbalanga episode, but this is evidently not correct.
344. Cf letter of WH Murray (DK 9/3/1901, p. 151f).
345. This is according to Pachai, loc.cit., It is probable that this is a wrong assumption, the Collector in this case being Stokes of Ft. Mlangeni. Morris was presumably at Dowa by then, where, according to the eye witness account mentioned above (n. 342), Chiwere had been instructed by the Boma to kill all Chimbalanga people who might come to seek refuge in his territory during the month of October. Chiwere, indignant because of what Chimbalanga had done, being his subordinate, co-operated.
346. R Blake to J du Plessis, 28/1/1901 (DK, 21/3/1901, pp. 176f.). Transl. from Dutch.
347. CCA S5 15/6/8/1: Copy AC Murray to Acting Commissioner, Zomba, 15/12/1900.

Then the letter continued to spell out the difficulties: The people get no justice done to them in cases involving charges against policemen; complaints concerning adultery and even reports of murder (of a villager in the employ of the Mission) were simply ignored by the Collector; in addition to the burning of huts the food stores were now also being burned down; women and children were being captured and kept in prison until the men turned up for work and this was a cause for embitterment and possibly a factor in the murder of the policeman at Chimalanga's. There was, in Murray's opinion, reliable evidence that three women had died in captivity, while others were in a pitiable physical condition. In some cases women were being retained in custody whose husbands were in fact away, working for their taxes. Finally there was the complaint that during the recent attack on Chimalanga's people the askari were allowed to go far beyond the villages in question, without any restraint, and shoot down people including women and children who had nothing to do with Chimalanga. The letter concludes by re-assuring the Acting Commissioner that "it has been our principle to support the Collector in Central Angoniland in the performance of his duties and to urge the people to pay their taxes quietly and to submit to the law" but in view of the serious situation they felt compelled to bring these matters to his notice.

Two days later Manning responded by agreeing that the "state of affairs in that district I did not consider satisfactory and it had been my intention to relieve Mr Morris by another official". Due to certain circumstances which arose during and immediately after his visit he was prevented from doing so. However, he was forwarding Murray's letter to Mr Morris for his remarks.<sup>348)</sup> What Morris response was, is not known, but soon not only Morris but also other collectors knew about the charges and three weeks later the magistrate at Dedza RW Gordon, whose antipathy towards the DRC Mission became more and more evident as time went by, wrote to Morris in an obvious reference to these charges:<sup>349)</sup>

It more than fills me with disgust to hear such gross misrepresentations of facts. The whole version, as rendered is a transparent act of petty revenge on the part of the Dutch Missions for their recent loss of wrongfully assumed jurisdiction over the natives.

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348. Ibid., WH Manning to AC Murray, 17/12/1900.

349. Quoted by B Pachai: Christianity and commerce in Malawi (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds ): Malawi past and present, pp. 61f and n. 82). Pachai's assumption that this is a specific reference to the Chimalanga affair is clearly wrong.

Morris retaliated by laying a counter charge against the Mission and in particular against Blake and Frylinck "for contravention of African Orders in Council to wit Para. 48 and 52" informing WH Murray that he was requesting the Judicial Officer Judge Nunan to take a hearing on "certain charges instituted by me against certain members of your mission namely Messrs Blake and Freylinck" (sic).<sup>350)</sup>

The Mission was charged with trying to hinder the Administration in its work and with using the pulpit at Kongwe Mission (Blake) for the furtherance of their objections to the Administration's policy of labour and taxation.<sup>351)</sup>

The hearing took place on 19 January 1901 in the Consular Court at Blantyre and although the official records of the proceedings are no longer available it is evident that on this occasion the Mission was cleared of any guilt.

"Enough to say that everything went well for us and the judge declared that we were free of all blame," wrote Blake on 28 January 1901.<sup>352)</sup>

It is true that the missionaries did try to provide labour opportunities to people around the Mission stations to enable as many as possible to pay their tax and avoid having to go south for labour, but naturally only a relatively small number could be helped in this way. Nevertheless, this obviously angered the Collectors who, it would seem to appear, were much keener to excel in the number of labourers sent south, than in the amount of cash collected from tax payers. But the charge that they ever assumed any form of jurisdiction over the tribes among whom they worked is just not true. On the contrary, they were instrumental in persuading Chiwere, Msakambewa and Mazengera to accept British rule, to such an extent that their own influence was undermined among many of the Ngoni indunas.<sup>(353)</sup> In February 1899 AC Murray had even appealed to the Commissioner in Zomba for a Collector to be permanently appointed to their district in order to exercise better control. AL Reade moved his headquarters from Dedza to Dowa in November of the same year.<sup>354)</sup>

350. CCA S5 15/6/8/1: HJ Morris to WH Murray, 18/1/1901.

351. Blake to Du Plessis (DK, 21/3/1901, pp. 176f). Transl. from Dutch.

352. Vlok: Elf Jaren ..., pp. 36, 84; R Blake (report in DK, 7/3/1901, p. 152).

353. JL Pretorius: An introduction to the history of the DRCM, p. 371.

354. CCA P3 3/2: Copy AC Murray to Commissioner, Zomba, 9/2/1899; AC Murray to Reade, 11/2/1899.

That from a moral point of view the Mission was operating on firm ground is clear. Much was indeed wrong with the Administration and a letter from AJ Swann, Collector at Nkhota Kota, written two months later is a telling indictment. In it he strongly criticised the labour system, and coming from a person "who had an intimate knowledge of the condition obtaining at that time",<sup>355</sup>) his words carry weight. A lengthy excerpt of his letter is given by B Pachai, from which a few portions are quoted here:<sup>356</sup>)

They were asked by Englishmen (who pride themselves in fair play and justice) to leave their houses at a day's notice, provide rations, and march about 150 miles, then to work one month for his Tax (i.e. nothing in his eyes) then work on another 2 months for wages then walk back another 150 miles for nothing and feed himself. This put him away from home at least four months a year - away from home, and the native has a home... in order to purchase the right to live in his own house in his own land. Weakness, then sickness then death. Verdict. 'Dead from dysentery. Hill people generally get that way.' Sequel, Collectors get a Report: '69 deaths among your people'. A month or so after, a remnant of skeletons return and you hear the repeated statements, 'Died at Blantyre'. Next year, this year the King's loyal natives tell me: 'We don't want to go to Blantyre to die' and knowing there is such a danger I absolutely refuse to send one native against his will ...

If such conditions were prevailing and this was the attitude, people hardly would have needed the "incitement" of missionaries or any one else to refuse to go and work. Swann's words almost literally echoed what Vlok had written the previous year: "... they often return home (looking like) walking skeletons".<sup>357</sup>)

That all was not well on the part of the Administration in the opinion of someone like Judge Nunan himself, was reported by Blake when he passed through Blantyre three months after the court case on his way home on leave. The Judge invited him to lunch and kept him for three hours, showed him some of his reports to the Foreign Office and spoke of not sending the evidence to the Foreign Office unless he was forced to "by the unwillingness of the Commissioner to reform his policy". Blake continued: "He is dead against Sharpe and considers him the most guilty party as he is the author of the bad policy in Central Angoniland".<sup>358</sup>)

355. B Pachai, op.cit., p. 64.

356. See *ibid.*, pp. 62ff.: Excerpt of letter from AJ Swann to Nunan, 15/3/1901 (Original in MNA J2/9/1).

357. Vlok: *Elf jaren ...*, p. 84 Transl. from Dutch.

358. CCA S5 15/6/2/1: Blake to WH Murray, 10/4/1901, written from "Katunga's" (Chikwawa).

After the court case the tone of correspondence between the Collectors and the Mission showed signs of improving relations and more appreciation was being expressed. Nevertheless, tension remained and the Mission had a long struggle especially with Collector Gordon at Dedza and later at Lilongwe in getting stations established at Mphunzi and at Malingunde respectively. On the negotiations with him for Malingunde WH Murray wrote: "He was very nice with me when we were at the Boma, but you could just feel he'd do anything to keep us out". Others like Cusgrove and Byatt and later especially Kirby-Green, who afterwards became Provincial Commissioner in Lilongwe, were much more sympathetic.<sup>359)</sup>

Difficulties continued and the suspicion of the Government towards the South Africans remained. A matter which grieved the Collectors much was what they regarded to be lack of respect and even impertinence shown by teachers of the Mission and that in their opinion the missionaries were not doing enough to teach their people to show respect to their Government officials and that even the missionaries were not as loyal as they should be to the British Government. From the point of view of the Authorities there may have been reasons for this complaints but it is clear that there was not intentional disloyalty on the part of the DRC. During this period another issue complicated matters for the DRC missionaries. It should be kept in mind that all of them were deeply concerned and could not help being affected by what was happening in their home country during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 as the British, failing to subdue the Boer forces whom they vastly outnumbered, reverted to more and more drastic action and a "scorched earth" strategy, while women and children were being forced into British concentration camps where conditions were so appalling that over 26 000 of them (one quarter of the total number put into the camps) died, as opposed to the four thousand Boer forces killed in action<sup>360)</sup> As a result of this war Pretorius states that<sup>361)</sup>

relations with the British government in Malawi grew rapidly worse as the Anglo-Boer War progressed. In 1899 the youngest brother of Dr WH Murray, head of the mission, was treacherously shot dead after he joined the Boer forces, and under the circumstances it was natural for the Protectorate government to view the South African missionaries with suspicion.

The kind of tension brought about by this war in the hearts of the DRC missionaries could be seen for instance when preparations were being made for the

359. CCA S5 15/6/3/3: WH Murray to AJ Liebenberg, 5/8/1903. Special reference to Green's favourable attitude over many years is made in DK, 22/11/1922, p. 1566.

360. I Wilkins and H Strydom: *The Super-Afrikaners*, pp. 37, 38.

361. JL Pretorius: *An introduction to the history of the DRCM*, p. 370.

coronation of the King in 1902. WH Murray and Rev. Liebenberg of Kongwe discussed the matter and Murray felt that "as a loyal subject" he would offer a public prayer but not indulge in festivities "as I'm mourning over the terrible affliction and suffering of the people of whom I am one". He would however send a telegram of felicitation to Zomba on behalf of the Mission.<sup>362)</sup> Nevertheless, there was great appreciation at least from their colleagues in other Missions over the way in which they bore the trials brought on by the war in South Africa. Writing on the missionary awakening in prisoner of war camps on St Helena, The Aurora, published by the Livingstonia Mission had this to add:<sup>363)</sup>

We would also now mention our appreciation for the high Christian spirit of our Dutch colleagues in Nyasaland. In common with many Afrikanders they have known that the sword has struck their own relatives and claimed its victims, and yet they have been to us only as fellow workers with Christ.

Towards the end of 1903 another incident flared up, again involving Kongwe. Liebenberg had complained about three teachers being thrashed by the Assistant Collector at Dowa without a proper hearing, for allegedly taking part in an illicit hunt.<sup>364)</sup> The matter was referred to the official's superior, HC McDonald and ended with Liebenberg having to appear in court at Dedza on Friday 8 January 1904. This time the Mission was found to be in the wrong and received a very sharp reprimand. On the same day the Commissioner wrote a very strongly worded letter to Murray as head of the DRC Mission. From complaints he was receiving from his Collectors it appeared that "wherever one of your branch stations is placed the natives gradually assume ... a disrespectful attitude towards Government representatives in Central Angoniland". As an example he mentioned Collector McDonald passing through Mvera two weeks earlier "where a large number of natives were assembled, not a single one of them stood up. We ... know what this means. It means intentional disrespect".<sup>365)</sup> This, he continued, placed a large question mark over the intent of the Mission's teaching in instilling respect into the natives for the Government and was in marked contrast to the two Scottish Missions and the UMCA where "the respect shown to Government officials in and about Mission stations is quite marked,

362. CCA S5 15/6/2/16: WH Murray to Liebenberg, 15/4/1902.

363. The Missionary awakening in St Helena (The Aurora, 1/8/1902, p. 84). On the religious awakenings in the prisoner of war camps see above (p.83 ).

364. For a series of correspondence on this matter between WH Murray and Liebenberg from 5/10/1903 onwards see CCA S5 15/6/3/3.

365. Commissioner's italics. Anyone with any knowledge of African forms of courtesy and respect would not help but smile at such a statement.

as it should be ". Sharpe felt that there were signs that the Mission's teaching did not appear to "work for political good" and that this could not continue. The Mission of the DRC should endeavour to show their loyalty to Government and he hoped that when he again would visit Angoniland a few months later, he would find evidence that the Mission was taking the "right lines with regard to our native population".<sup>(366)</sup>

Murray fully realised the gravity of the entire situation and replied carefully to the Commissioner pointing out what the Mission had done, in proof of their loyalty and making to him a statement of their attitude to the Government as that of loyal subjects. He also invited him to visit them at Mvera.<sup>367)</sup>

At the same time he instructed his colleagues to let their teachers know how matters stood and urge them to pay the officials all the respect that is their due, and encourage others to do the same. They should consider the court issue finally settled and in future, for the sake of the work, be very careful in their relations to the Government, as well as exercise the utmost caution in their attitude to the Collectors.<sup>368)</sup>

The court case of 1901 and the last developments had a very profound effect on the policies of the DRC Mission. From the beginning it had seen its task as that of "primarily building up an independant Christian nation, built on the formation of a self-supporting, self-governing Church, expanding from its own inner strength".<sup>369)</sup> Now it saw a grave threat to this ideal in the moral decay that afflicted people, particularly when they came into contact with the derelict forms of Western civilization evident in such systems as the migratory labour system and the effect of depraved and non-Christian elements in the Western culture on such migrant workers.

In 1900 Vlok<sup>370)</sup> had noted that the people were "threatened by moral decay" ever since being placed under the hut tax system. What actually caused this moral harm, he noted, was:

366. CCA S5 15/6/8/1: A Sharpe to WH Murray, 8/1/1904.

367. As reported in CCA S5 15/6/3/3: Copy WH Murray to Vlok, 28/1/1904.

368. Ibid., copies Murray to "Brother" (AG Murray?), 10/1/1904; to Frylinck 13/1/1904; to Vlok, 28/1/1904.

369. JL Pretorius, An introduction ..., p. 371.

370. Vlok: Elf jaren ..., p. 84.

the irreligious environment in which hundreds of them are placed. They are influenced by whites who not always set a good moral example and who are quite irreligious ... Christian virtues which they were taught by the mission are undermined and often completely destroyed... To their pagan sins are added the sins of a depraved civilization and the man ends up being worse than he was before, and further from God.

The Mission came to realise that it was of little avail, as a Mission, to fight the "system". Murray wrote home to the General Mission Secretary in April 1904 that "the labour restrictions were very annoying but our best policy is to pacify them by trying to avoid giving offence in any way".<sup>371)</sup> This realisation brought the Mission to see its task in a different way. Whereas up till then it had followed, as far as funds allowed, the methods learned from Livingstonia Mission, a new approach was developed in the years that followed when the Mission not only doubled and later trebled its staff, but could also divert its activities in different directions. This led to "what today would be called a mass-literacy campaign as well as comprehensive community development scheme".<sup>372)</sup> With this the Mission began to launch its educational, medical and industrial work as well as a concentrated effort to build up Christian families by educating Christian wives and mothers,

Through this multiple approach it was hoped to counter the negative moral effects of Western civilization, and to save the people from moral decay. At the same time the ideal of an independent and self-supporting Christian Church could be more effectively realised if people were lifted up socially, morally, mentally and economically. This "comprehensive" approach will be dealt with in the following chapter.

Thus, in a way, the strained relations with the Government during and just after the Anglo-Boer war, helped the Mission to see its task for the future more clearly.

After 1904 there was a marked improvement in relations with the Government, caused evidently by a change of attitude not only on the part of the Mission, but also on the part of the Government. Cordial relations developed, even at the highest level and Murray could state in 1908 that "the Boma attitude

371. CCA V9 2/1: WH Murray to J du Plessis, 13/4/1904.

372. JL Pretorius, op.cit., p. 372.



is undoubtedly very much improved and the relations between us quite cordial<sup>373)</sup>

During and just after the First World War some tension arose again. This was during the Governorship of Sir George Smith (1913-1923) who was serving his last tour before retiring and who developed a strong anti-mission stance during these years. Several factors contributed to the strained relationship which developed, between the Government on the one hand and the DRC Mission as well as all the other Missions on the other hand. Apart from the War situation, the Chilembwe rising had a profound effect. The Governor became openly suspicious of the Missions in general. In the case of the DRC Mission matters were made worse because one of the missionaries Rev. Frylinck had been charged and fined £3.0.0 by a court on a charge of technical assault after tying up a chief who was threatening to close the Mission school at his village because he was not happy with the teacher. This took place near the end of 1913 and the Government took the exceptional action of publishing the trial and findings in the Government Gazette. This was so unusual that Dr Hetherwick of Blantyre Mission wrote to Murray expressing his surprise at the way in which "a case that was technically an assault was pillorised in this way". He thought it possible that it was meant "to intimidate your mission in its efforts to check the advance of the Fathers". When the Governor went even further, and revoked Frylinck's licence as Marriage Officer, Hetherwick was quite indignant: "I am deeply grieved ... it is pushing law to the state of vindictiveness ... and the Governor erred farther in the way of this worst of faults in any man to write you and ask what you were to do".<sup>374)</sup> This incident together with the Chilembwe rising had a cumulative effect on the Government attitude towards the DRC Mission, giving the Governor "a low opinion" of its work.<sup>375)</sup>

As a result of the adverse attitude of the Government the DRCM was refused permission for some time to open new schools even though it had no connection in any way with the Chilembwe rising. The matter became so serious that the chairman of the Consultative Board of Federated Missions, Rev. Reid took the matter up with the Governor on behalf of the DRC Mission since all the regulations laid down by the 1910 Education Code were being complied with. The Governor evaded and ignored the questions by refusing to enter into what he termed a "polemical

373. CCA S5 15/6/2/16: WH Murray to Vlok, 6/8/1908.

374. CCA S5 15/6/7/1: A Hetherwick to WH Murray, 23/10/1913, 1/1/1914.

375. CCA S5 15/6/2/16: WH Murray to Mission secr., 30/3/1915. See also in loc. for other correspondence on these matters between Murray and the Mission secr. between 1913 and 1915.

controversy with the CBFM", adding the overt threat that "at the present juncture the interests of the missions ... in educational matters will be best served by an acquiescence in his (the Governor's) views and a sympathetic co-operation with him". This was in Reid's opinion "entirely unsatisfactory" and seemed to him "to be the answer of a man who has no proper defence for the position he has taken". His advice was now to appeal to the Colonial Office but it would not be of much use to send the appeal through Smith because of "the known unsympathetic attitude of the Governor" but the respective Missions should rather approach the Colonial Office through their Home Boards.<sup>376)</sup>

Added to these difficulties was the strain of having a large number of the mission staff called up for military service during the War. When the Governor tried to go even further by introducing a Defence Bill in 1921 which would provide for compulsory military training and service for all Europeans including missionaries, the DRC Mission as well as all the other Missions strongly opposed it and the Mission Council minuted its unwillingness to agree to such peace-time military service because it was entirely counter to their vocations as missionaries. The CBFM likewise strongly opposed the Bill.<sup>377)</sup> When it was passed by the Legislative Council in November 1922, an appeal was made through the Home Committee of the Scottish Mission to the British Government with the result that Governor Smith was sent a despatch disallowing the Bill.<sup>378)</sup> Likewise Smith's attempt to obtain extensive powers over Missions through the Missions Ordinance no.12 of 1922, was vetoed by the Home Government and repealed by the Legislative Court on 16 April 1923.<sup>379)</sup> Shortly after, Governor Smith left the country "unhonoured, unwept and unsung".<sup>380)</sup>

This brought to an end a period of tension between Government and Mission and relations soon greatly improved. Several factors contributed to this. The new Governor was very sympathetic towards the work of the DRCM.<sup>381)</sup> The very positive report of the Phelps-Stokes commission in 1924 on the DRCM enhanced its

376. CCA S5 15/6/3/4: Copies Reid to Chief Secretary, 18/12/1916; Chief Secretary to Chairman, CBFM (Reid), 27/12/1916; Circular, Reid to members of CBFM, 2/1/1917.

377. Council minutes 39/1921, p. 276; CCA S5 15/6/7/1 ("Diverse" file): Copy Chairman CBFM to Chief Secretary of State, 5/11/1921.

378. CCA S5 15/6/2/17: WH Murray to Mission secr., 21/4/1923; 15/6/8/2: Secr. International Missionary Council to AC Murray, 28/3/1923.

379. MNA S2/10/23: Secretary of State to Governor of Nyasaland, 13/12/1922.

380. CCA S5 15/6/2/17: WH Murray to Mission secr., 17/5/1923.

381. CCA S5 1/1/3: GMC minute 34, entry for 24/2/1925.

stance in the eyes of the Government.<sup>382)</sup> When the Presbytery of Nkhoma joined the CCAP in 1926 this served to remove suspicion as to the motives and loyalty of the DRCM. Henceforth a united front could be presented to the Government.<sup>383)</sup>

It was also the tactful role of WH Murray that helped to bring about these improved relations. His position and influence was reflected in his appointment to the Legislative Council as representative of the Missions for a three year period, beginning on 9 April 1925.<sup>384)</sup> This was the first time a representative of the DRC Mission was appointed as up till that stage it had been policy only to appoint representatives of the other three larger non Catholic Missions, namely Blantyre and Livingstonia Mission and the UMCA, on a rotation basis. When next it was the turn of the DRCM, Murray's successor, Rev. JJD Stegmann was appointed for three years in 1940.<sup>385)</sup> In addition WH Murray was appointed permanent Justice of Peace for Dedza district and was often consulted by his magistrates on African customs and administration of justice when difficult cases arose. For many years he was also Government examiner in Nyanja of the Government officials.<sup>386)</sup> From time to time other members of the Mission served in Government appointments such as the fields of education and health, while several were granted OBE and other decorations and honours, but on the whole it is perhaps true to say that for a long time there was the tendency not to give full recognition to this Mission and its work, both on the part of the Colonial rulers and even of historians, who have "concentrated on the role of the Scots Missions in producing an 'elite'". For this reason ML Chanock states: "the Catholic and the Dutch Reformed missions which did not play this role have been ignored".<sup>387)</sup> Thus, even Church Mission historians such as Groves and Latourette<sup>388)</sup> gave very little prominence to the DRC Mission, in spite of the fact that numerically at least it has been one of the most successful Missions in the country. The report of the Phelps-Stokes commission described the work of this Mission as "wonderfully successful" and singled it out for its work on agricultural training and village industries as having "not its superior in all the

382. See TJ Jones: Education in East Africa, pp. 211-214, also CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual report for Malawi Mission for 1924.
383. DK, 10/7/1940, p. 66; MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, p. 134.
384. CCA S5 15/6/8/2: Chief Secretary to WH Murray, 8/4/1925.
385. MNA Nkhoma Papers, Box 4 (Correspondence file with Government): Chief Secretary to JJD Stegmann, 29/8/1940.
386. MW Retief, op.cit., pp. 134-5.
387. ML Chanock: Development and change in the history of Malawi (in B Pacha (Ed.): Early history of Malawi, p. 436.
388. Cf. KS Latourette: A history of the expansion of Christianity. Vol. V, p. 396, where he devotes only 13 lines to the DRCM in Malawi.

Nyasaland schools visited by the commission".<sup>389)</sup> But this seems to have been lost even on someone like former Governor Sir Alfred Sharpe, who ten years later wrote a foreword to LS Norman's book Nyasaland without Prejudice. When referring to the "wonderful work" done by Missions, especially those "who were there in the earliest time", no mention is made of the DRC Mission, only the Scottish Free Church Mission, the UMCA and the White Fathers are mentioned. Likewise a bit further on, only the Scottish Missions and the White Fathers are mentioned for their work in the field of industrial education. The omission is probably not intentional but perhaps not "without prejudice":<sup>390)</sup>

Be it as it may, the overall effect of the relation between Mission and Govern=  
ment from the beginning of the century onward had certain effects on the general  
policy of the DRCM. Basically this led to an emphasis on a policy of non inter=  
ference in matters which were strictly governmental or political. This coincided  
to some extent with what might be described as an uneasiness or reticence on the  
part of the Mission when having to deal with the Colonial Authorities.

Nevertheless, as far as the work itself was concerned, this would have had a relatively small effect, particularly as appreciation for the work of the DRCM grew in due course. Already in 1939 at the Jubilee celebrations at Nkhoma a speech of the Governor was read by his deputy in which much appreciation for and confidence in the work of the DRC Mission was expressed. Of Dr WH Murray, then already in retirement but present at the celebrations, he had this to say: "together with other leaders, such as Hetherwick, he had devoted his life to the welfare and development of the Nyasaland native". In the speech he also referred to the "farsighted statemanship" by which the affairs of the Mission were being conducted, to the effect that its influence was being felt far beyond the area in which it worked. Allowing for the fact that the occasion called for some positive statements of this nature, it was regarded by those present as proof of the high esteem the Government had come to hold for the work of the DRC Mission.<sup>391)</sup>

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389. TJ Jones: Education in East Africa, pp. 211, 212f.

390. LS Norman: Nyasaland without prejudice, vii.

391. MW Retief: Verowerings vir Christus, pp. 297-9. Quotations transl. from Afrikaans.

## CHAPTER THREE

## THE MULTIPLE APPROACH IN THE WORK OF MISSION AND CHURCH

1. Introduction: Kerygma and diakonia in the task of mission

It is a sine qua non that the task of the Church in the world cannot be limited to a mere verbal proclamation of the Gospel. Taking its incentive from the work and teaching of Jesus Christ, the Church should approach man not as an isolated individual, but as a person who is rooted in a particular and complete life situation. This situation cannot be ignored when proclaiming the Gospel to him. The problem lies in defining the relationship between proclaiming the Gospel and dealing with man and his needs.

It is this question which led to the popularising of the word "comprehensive approach" after the International Missionary Conference in Jerusalem, 1928. The concept as defined by this Conference and followed up by others has led to much criticism for reason of the fact that it tended to demote the proclamation of the Gospel to the same level as the other three "elements" of the so-called Comprehensive Approach, i.e. education, medical services and socio-economic assistance.

To this, Reformed theologians amongst others, have objected, stating that kerygma, the proclamation of the Word of God, is the primary task of mission. In the DRC of South Africa an early emphasis of this is found in the teaching of J du Plessis:<sup>2)</sup>

The purpose which mission sets for itself is the Christianising of the world, and the only instrument which he uses... is the Word of God.

With this he means the Word as proclaimed by word of mouth. In fulfilment of this purpose he continues to deal with the methods of mission under the headings Evangelism, Education, Industrial, Medical and Literary work in which all are to be seen in relation to and as part of the primary task of proclamation. Later the Dutch theologian and missiologist JH Bavinck likewise expressed severe doubts as to the acceptability of the concepts of the

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1. For a New Testament approach to the concept of Comprehensive Approach see AG Honig: Bijdrage tot het onderzoek naar de fundering van de zendingsmethode der Comprehensive Approach in het Nieuwe Testament. On the issue of the task of the Church and its mission in the world from the Reformed point of view see also D. Crafford: Wêreldsending en wêrelddiakonaat; J. Verkuyll: Daar en nu.

2. J du Plessis: Wie sal gaan?, p.159 and ch.XXII - XXIV (pp.197ff).

Comprehensive Approach. The concept of a four dimensional approach in mission is misleading because the mere combining of the proclamation of the Gospel with educational, medical and socio-economic service, as if the four are concepts of equal value in respect one of the other, is a departure from the command of Christ to proclaim the Gospel to all people. From this he argues that proclamation of the Gospel is not merely one of the four approaches, but stands on its own as the only task given to the Church. The other services or approaches only have value and meaning in so far as they explain, concretise and emphasize the proclamation of the Gospel. Mission is not four-dimensional but unidimensional, but in that singleness of approach, life is touched upon in all its aspects. Mission and proclamation of the Gospel can therefore never ignore the problems of disease, poverty and ignorance which it encounters, but will be moved by Christian compassion to do something to help people, and not merely to obtain an opening for the preaching of the Gospel.<sup>3)</sup>

Although more radical in his approach to the socio-political involvement of the Church in the problems of the world, J Verkuyl, another Dutch theologian lays basically the same emphasis, in opposition to the equalising tendencies of the Comprehensive Approach concepts. In stating that the Kingdom of God and the message of that Kingdom lies in the proclamation of the forgiveness unto the conversion of sinners, he has this to say:<sup>4)</sup>

the deepest need of our people is not primarily the economic, or the intellectual, or the social, or the political or even the bodily need. The deepest need is the religio-ethical need, the malevolent estrangement of God and man. The only answer which is relevant to this need is the forgiveness of sins, the hand of reconciliation, pardon for the condemned ... That is why Jesus Christ did not come to us in the stature of a political leader, a social reformer, a philosopher or a man of technical assistance. He came in the stature of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Thus he sees the fundamental message as that of a call to faith, which should in no way be camouflaged. The New Testament calls man to conversion and decision.

The view that kerygma should be the starting point, the caption to the entire task of mission, does of course not exclude the other elements but places them in proper relation to proclamation. Thus diakonia, service or ministry, stands as an equally valid aspect of the task of the Church. Both concepts

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3. JH Bavinck: Inleiding in de Zendingswetenschap, pp.114-116. Transl. from Dutch.

4. J Verkuyl, op.cit., p.26. Transl. from Dutch.

should be seen in their wider context. Kerygma is not only verbal proclamation and diakonia is not only an act.<sup>5)</sup> Diakonia could even be taken in the wide sense of ministry, as encompassing the total task of the Church. Thus Bosch goes further in stating that both the aspects of kerygma and diakonia "belong to the vocation and task of the Church ... they stand as 'colleagues' next to one another, bound in an inseparable 'two-in-oneness'. True, we take kerygma as the main caption over the mission task of the church, but at the most it is a primus inter pares. Or, in the language of the Willingen Conference (1952): 'This witness is given by proclamation, fellowship and service'.<sup>6)</sup>

This later re-appraisal of diakonia as an equal to kerygma in making known the message of God's Kingdom was not fully understood as such in earlier DRC Mission policy, but basically the concept was there. The strong guiding motive in the mission of the DRC, also in Malawi is evident in that it saw its central task in a threefold way. Firstly the proclamation of the Word of God was the supreme task. Secondly the aim of this proclamation was to evangelise, to lead people to conversion to Jesus Christ and thirdly from there to proceed towards building up a Church amongst the believers thus gathered together. This concept was later embodied in the 1935 statement on the Mission policy of the DRC.<sup>7)</sup>

The result was that the traditional view of the other elements of mission work came strongly to the fore, namely that they were auxiliary services, to be carried out where and in so far as they served the primary purpose of evangelism and building up the Church. This becomes particularly clear in the field of education and to a lesser extent in industrial training. Yet the motive of diakonia, of ministering to the needs and suffering of the people, was by no means absent. Medical work, socio-political action, particularly in the early period, followed by an energetic program of training in rural industries and agriculture, as well as many facets of work amongst women all illustrate an element of Christian charity and caring. But it is true to say that throughout, the (Reformed) undertone, or rather overtone was present, namely that all the various aspects of mission should support the basic task of evangelising and building up Christian character

5. DJ Bosch and G Jansen: Sending in meervoud, p.12.

6. Ibid., pp.13f. Transl. from Afrikaans. For addresses, statements and reports of the Willingen Conference see N Goodall: Missions under the Cross.

7. See for example opening speech of WH Murray at 1928 Council meeting quoted by MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, p.133. On DRC Mission policy see above, ch.2.

in people as a sound foundation for the attaining of the ideal of a strong, indigenous, self-supporting, self-governing and self-extending Church,<sup>8)</sup> and to raise a Bible loving and Bible reading people of which the Christian family would form the nucleus and foundation.<sup>9)</sup> Throughout its work the DRC Mission carried a strong spiritual emphasis. The character of this work, set against the background of the spiritual awakenings in South Africa during the second part of the previous century, and prompted by the evangelical emphasis of the Scottish ministers brought to the country sometime earlier, coupled to certain pietistic tendencies within the Church, all combined to give this spiritual emphasis to the work of the DRC Mission, a fact which was recognised and appreciated by other Missions. This spiritual emphasis formed an intrinsic part of all the aspects of the work.<sup>10)</sup>

In the following paragraphs a survey will be given of the various "auxiliary services" or mission endeavours aimed at supporting the task of evangelising and upbuilding of the Church. An attempt will be made to see what the motivations were and how the different aspects of mission were carried out in view of the central aim. In this, explanations will be found for some of the differences in emphasis between the work of the DRC Mission and other Missions. First and largest of all the endeavours of the Mission was its educational program. Then will follow medical work, industrial and agricultural training and the socio-economic effects this had, work amongst women and girls, and lastly literature work in which will also feature the share of the DRC Mission in translating the Bible into Chichewa.

Elements of all these activities were present from the earliest times of the Mission. One of the first things done at Mvera after arriving was to open a school, followed by schools at various other centres in due course. Early missionaries like AC and WH Murray had both followed short courses in tropical medicine in Scotland. Thus a beginning could be made with simple medical services, with medical supplies provided by the Home Committee.<sup>11)</sup> The arrival of the first agricultural missionary, A van der Westhuizen in 1894,

8. Cf. MW Retief, op.cit., pp.142f; AC Murray: Ons Nyasa-akker, p.255.

9. JL Pretorius: An introduction to the history of the DRCM in Malawi, p.372; cf. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1953, par. 38.

10. See for example CCA S5 15/6/7/1: Copy G Prentice to Ashcroft (FMC Secr., Scotland), 29/8/1919, on the DRC taking over the work at Kasungu: "...the spiritual needs will be as well supplied or better...". So also Dr Donald Fraser's appreciation for the fact that the DRC lay so much emphasis on the spiritual life, expressed to the GMC at Cape Town (CCA S5 1/1/3: GMC minute 40, entry for 21-22/8/1923).

11. See CCA V 9 1/1: MMU minute no.5, entry for 31/1/1894.



helped to develop a small agricultural project started mainly by Vlok at Mvera<sup>12)</sup> while local people were engaged and trained for the building programs of the Mission. The first artisan was S McClure who came in 1897. Work amongst women and girls was begun in earnest when the first lady worker, Miss M Murray arrived in 1893, the same year that AC Murray and Robert Blake married and brought their brides to the country. A boarding school for girls was begun in 1895 at Mvera with four girls. By 1899 there were 30 girls, while youth groups and children's groups were started, as well as classes for older women.<sup>13)</sup> The first attempts at providing literature for the people learning to read resulted in several booklets by AC Murray: a beginners' reader Mkhweri first published in 1898 and used for more than half a century, a series of religious lessons, Mbeu za Moyo produced during 1897 and 1898, and a small new catechism compiled from the two Dutch catechisms with a few questions from the Scottish Shorter Catechism in 1898.<sup>14)</sup> A first edition of Robert Blake's Mbiri Yakale (originally called Mwambi za Kale), the story of the Old Testament which was later revised in 1903 and 1909 and has remained in constant demand to the present day, was ready for publication early in 1899.<sup>15)</sup> The Mission also decided to compile its own hymn book to replace one in Nyanja (Chewa) compiled by Laws but which he had refused to allow to be revised in terms of language. The first edition of 1 000 copies was published in 1900, and contained 210 hymns, including ten Psalms.<sup>16)</sup> As the Mission had not yet set up its own press, these publications were printed either at Livingstonia or Blantyre or in Cape Town. By 1901 there was also available two translations of the New Testament, but neither was very suitable for general use, a hymn book by G Henry and a translation of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress published in Aberdeen, Scotland in 1894.<sup>17)</sup>

The real forward movement of the Mission began after the difficult years of

12. Considerable success was achieved during those first years. So, for example in 1894 160 "gallons" of potatoes were sold to Lake steamers and the ALC and during the first six months of 1897, 2 000 lbs of onions and 6 000 lbs of potatoes were harvested at Mvera, while an order for 500 gallons of ground nut oil had been placed with the Mission. A good wheat harvest was in the offing (CCA V9 2/1: AC Murray to JR Albertyn, 6/10/1894; V9 4/1: Half yearly report, 24/6/1897).
13. CCA V9 4/1: Reports by M Murray and L Stegmann in Annual report for 1899.
14. MW Relief: William Murray of Nyasaland, pp.85-6; CCA P3 3/2: Copies AC Murray to Laws, 25/2/1898, 27/4/1898.
15. CCA P3 3/2: Copy AC Murray to Laws, 3/2/1899; CCA V9 1/1: MMU minute 5, entry for 15/8/1902; Council minutes, 17/1909, p.107.
16. Council minutes 2/1899, p.4; AC Murray: Ons Nyasa-akker, pp.131-2; CCA P3 3/2: Copy AC Murray to Elmslie, 11/9/1899.
17. The Aurora, 1/12/1901, p.47; TCB Vlok: Elf jaren in midden Afrika, pp.80f.

1899-1904. An improved financial position, the effects of difficulties with the Government over the hut tax issues and the arrival of a considerable number of new workers including three new agricultural missionaries in 1903 and 1904, a doctor in 1900 and the first nurse in 1904, several lady workers, some with teaching qualifications and seven ordained men between 1900 and 1903, all contributed to the considerable degree of progress the work of the DRC Mission showed during the years which followed.

## 2. Education

The education work of the DRCM naturally falls into several stages. The first stage covers the period up to 1900 when the Mission worked fairly closely with Livingstonia Mission; the second stage from 1901 to 1925 when the DRCM began to develop its education on its own lines, gradually raising its standards; the third stage begins in 1926 when the Government set up a Department of Education and sought to co-ordinate the work of the various Missions by setting certain standards. A fourth stage begins in about 1941 when further Government organisation of educational work once again prompted the DRCM to adapt its policies and methods.

### 2.1 Education up to 1900

One of the first lessons learned from Livingstonia Mission was the importance of concentrating on children in doing mission work. Not only would they be more susceptible to the Gospel, but from amongst them the future leaders of the Church would be found.<sup>18)</sup> Shortly after settling at Mvera, a station school was opened on 27 January 1890 with 22 children. Chief Chiwere personally brought some boys from his village to attend it. The teacher who assisted was Tomani who had been trained at Cape Maclear. A small boarding home was opened for the boys coming from further afield. By 1897 there were 400 children at school of whom half were girls.<sup>19)</sup> In July 1890 Albert Namalambe opened a school on the Lakeshore at Ndindi's village and the next few years several village schools were opened around Mvera the first being at Kanyerere's village followed by one at Msongandeu.<sup>20)</sup> As teachers, men were used who had received some elementary training at the station and who returned daily for further training during the

18. AC Murray: Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen aldaar, p.219.

19. Ibid., pp.221,222; and Ons Nyasa-akker, p.79; CCA P3: ACM Diary, entry for 27/1/1890.

20. WH Murray: Mbiri ya Misyoni ya DRC, p. 31.

afternoons. But there was no great haste to multiply village schools and by 1897 there were only four or five around Mvera.<sup>21)</sup> From the group of teachers and other adults attending school sessions in the afternoons came some of the first and outstanding Evangelists such as Davide Tzirizani, Isake Kapologulani and Solomon Kambere. Almost all the men in the first group to be baptised in 1897 were from this adult school. The same pattern was developing at other stations.<sup>22)</sup>

Meanwhile some of the more promising young boys were sent to Bandawe for training. The first few sent in April 1891 were Pansi, Kamusu, Kalimba and Pangu aged between eight and fourteen.<sup>23)</sup> They stayed for several years and later others were sent as well, including Amon Kambowa, Isaac Mkaca, William Kabanga and David Mкомо. Amon Kambowa also known as Amon Ndiwo was eventually ordained in 1929. In 1899 seven were being trained by Livingstonia Mission which had by then moved its training institute to Khondowe.<sup>24)</sup>

However, by the end of the first decade the Mission began strongly to consider starting its own training to provide in the ever growing need for teacher-evangelists. The missionaries had doubts as to the necessity at that stage of having such a long and extensive training of at least seven years as was the case at Livingstonia. Provided men were given basic training and were well grounded in the Scriptures and the principal beliefs of Christianity, they could for the present serve effectively in evangelistic and even pastoral work. Moreover, as most of the training at Livingstonia was done in English it meant that students had to spend considerable time to learn the foreign language first. This also was not regarded as essential for the work of the Mission at that stage.<sup>25)</sup>

For a few more years boys were still sent to Livingstonia but in July 1901 the DRCM Council decided that in view of the needs of their own work and the increase in workers the time had arrived to begin its own training centre for teacher-evangelists. In view of these plans it was no longer

21. AC Murray: Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen, p.223.

22. Ibid., p.222; WH Murray: Op pad, pp.95-6; CCA V9 4/1: Report by AC Murray on future Evangelist school, 1899.

23. CCA P3: AC Murray Diary, entry for 7/4/1891.

24. WH Murray: Mbiri ya Misyoni, p.56; CCA V9 4/1: Report by AC Murray on future Evangelist school, 1899.

25. CCA P3 3/2: AC Murray to A Murray (Chairman MMU), 28/12/1897.

regarded necessary to send boys to Khondowe.<sup>26)</sup>

## 2.2 The period 1900 to 1925

This decision to withdraw from the Livingstonia Mission scheme of education highlighted a basic difference of opinion as to what the aim and purpose of education at that stage of development of the work and of the country needed to be. The Overtoun Institution at Livingstonia, a life dream of Laws, aimed at concentrating all efforts on the elect few in order to give them the highest and best education the West could offer, at tremendous financial costs. By 1903 a student could complete an arts course replete with classical languages. So idealistic was this method of training that the Livingstonia Mission Council decided in 1909, in the absence of Laws, to recommend that the arts course be abandoned entirely "on the grounds that it is out of touch with the general educational needs of the country". Instead the Institution should concentrate on two main tasks, the training of evangelists, pastors and medical assistants, and the training of teachers for village schools.<sup>27)</sup>

Likewise the type of industrial training at the Institution had as one of its major achievements a brain drain of the Northern Region as apprentices trained at the Institution were seized upon by commercial firms from Blantyre and further afield. The highly theoretical training, with skills taught on sophisticated machinery had little value for the improvement of the living standards of the local people as such. Instead of serving the people of Malawi, it was rather serving the European planters and industrialists.<sup>28)</sup>

The danger the DRCM saw in such a highly sophisticated education was that it would be self-destructive in the sense that highly qualified people would not be retained for the services of the Church and Mission. Great amounts of finance and man-power would also be needed, more than the DRC could provide. Rather, higher education at first should provide only the

26. Council minutes 6/1901, pp.15-16; cf 2/1899, p.4.

27. J McCracken: Christianity and politics in Malawi 1875-1940, pp.146-7. For a critical appraisal of the work of this Institution see *ibid.*, pp.138-147 and for attempts at reform during the 1920s in order to better serve the needs of the people, pp.232ff. Educated Malawians objected to these reforms which were interpreted as a major decline and fall in standards (p.264).

28. *Ibid.*, pp.138-140.

basics necessary for training village teachers, at least for the first generation with gradual raising of standards in course of time. Instead of concentrating on an elect few, education was basically to be aimed at the masses in order to provide basic reading and writing skills to as many as possible primarily to enable them to read the Bible and only giving higher training to those who would continue teaching others. The individual, AC Murray stated in 1897, should not be raised beyond his social class.<sup>29)</sup>

Speaking at the General Missionary Conference in 1910 WH Murray defined the aim of the mission school as follows:<sup>30)</sup>

The primary object of the mission school is to lead the pupils to an intelligent grasp of the Bible truth and through that (under the Holy Spirit's guidance) to a saving knowledge of the way of salvation. To this all else is subservient ... all our school work should tend to and be handmaid to this supreme purpose ... the place of the Bible in the mission school must ever be that of unchallenged pre-eminence, it must be the best taught subject in the school ...

The close relation between school and evangelism remained one of the basic principles in the work of the DRCM. The Mission never saw its task as providing a purely secular education, but to provide an education permeated with and serving the interests of Christianity.<sup>31)</sup> Likewise the training of leaders, teachers, evangelists and pastors was seen as a through going process in which the Mission sought to provide in the needs of the Church above all. For a long time people were accepted for further education and training as teachers only if it was evident that they would be suitable and committed to teaching in the Mission. Only in 1919 did the Council decide in principle also to accept candidates for training at higher level who did not intend to become Mission teachers.<sup>32)</sup>

Thus, the Mission during this period began to develop what was to become the mainstay and seedbed of the Church for many years, namely a widespread

29. AC Murray. Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen, pp.223-4; cf. p.79; AL Hofmeyr: Het land langs het meer, p.145.

30. Report of the Third General Missionary Conference, Mvera 1910, pp.26,29.

31. MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, pp.82-3; CJ Burger: Die sendingbuitepos as sentrum vir evangelisasie in die inheemse Kerk (Op die Horison, XXI/1, Mar. 1959, pp.33-37).

32. Council minutes 36/1919, p.256.

system of village schools.<sup>33)</sup> In the beginning this was barely more than a small village centre where the main aim was evangelism. The teacher-evangelist not only had to teach the basics of reading and writing but was also catechist and preacher on Sunday. The Bible lesson constituted a large part of the daily school timetable. Objectively the educational value of such a school was probably not very great especially in the case of the smaller and poorer schools, but in its primary purpose, namely to be a centre of evangelism and to spread knowledge of the Bible and the fundamental teachings of Christianity in order to fulfil the main aim of training a Christian nation, the village school system doubtlessly fulfilled expectations. "What the church is today in Nyasaland is due to the village schools ..." wrote AC Murray in 1931, quoting JG Steytler, head of the Teachers' Training Institute at Nkhoma.<sup>34)</sup>

In a nutshell the principles involved in this system were spelt out as follows:<sup>35)</sup> It made for a system of decentralisation in education, enabling the entire population to have a school within reach: its aim was to evangelise, but not to detribalise through imposing Western civilization on people removed from home, therefore education took place in a person's home environment and cultural milieu; the important principle of making use of a "native agency" could thus effectively be applied and in this way the ideal of a self-governing, self-supporting and self-extending Church could be more easily achieved as the village school teacher of today was to become through a series of further training courses the Church leader of tomorrow. Meanwhile work at the village school served to prepare and test such future leaders. Finally the village school laid the foundations of the young Church by creating Bible reading Christians and disseminating knowledge of the Word of God.

In order to achieve this aim of setting up a network of village schools as well as centres for further education, the first step was for the DRCM to establish a separate training centre for teachers rather than making further use of the facilities at Livingstonia. After the First General

33. Originally this system was taken over almost entirely from the Livingstonia Mission (JA Retief in DK,16/7/1940, p.66). For a dissertation on the village school system see JG Steytler: Educational adaptations with reference to African village schools with special reference to Central Nyasaland (Short title: African village schools). For a critical evaluation see especially his Preface, ix-xix.

34. AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, pp.85, 274.

35. Cf. AC van Wyk: *Die buitepos in ons sendingwerk* (Op die Horison, Sept. 1943, pp.113-121).

Missionary Conference took place in 1900, the DRC Mission resolved to open such a training school. A Board of Directors was appointed and the school opened at Mvera in July 1902 under the Rev. CH Murray. He was succeeded by Rev. JS Murray who did much to raise the standards. For some years he was assisted by a well-qualified lady teacher, Miss D Lawrie (1907-1910).<sup>36)</sup> The training school provided for a twofold training, a two year course for teachers followed by, for those selected, a one year theological course for evangelists. Candidates would be selected from the highest classes in the mission schools and from amongst assistant teachers. A further provision was that English was to be included as a subject in both courses.<sup>37)</sup> This was a rather contentious matter as far as the DRCM was concerned, but the Home Committee after hearing the reasons for this, granted permission.<sup>38)</sup> The reasons included the following: the teachers themselves wanted to learn English and some had already left the Mission to go elsewhere where this opportunity existed; in addition a spirit of dissatisfaction was threatening. The Mission also saw the danger that it would lose its influence over a section of the population if it failed to provide this facility, while on the positive side, simple hand and text books in English could be of assistance to teachers and evangelists, while their ability to use English would enable them to exert a more effective Christian influence elsewhere, were they to leave the service of the Mission.

The DRCM has been criticised from more than one quarter for not having shown greater eagerness to introduce English into its schools. It was introduced as a subject for teachers in 1902, but not in regular schools, where the policy of education through the mother tongue was strongly supported. It is against this background of the value placed on mother tongue education that the issue over English should in part be seen. There is much to say both from an educational and a missiological point of view for teaching in the vernacular and this policy was also followed in other fields of the DRCM as well as in other Missions.<sup>39)</sup> It was also strongly advocated in the report of the Phelps-Stokes Commission in 1924. There were certain pedagogical advantages which the Mission saw in mother

36. Council minutes 7/1902, p.22; AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, pp.171-2; WH Murray: *Mbiri ya Misyoni ya DRC*, pp.89-90.

37. For scheme for the institution see appendix to Council minutes 10/1903, p.38-40.

38. *Ibid*; CCA V9 1/1: MMU minutes, entry for 3-4/6/1902.

39. Thus also in Mashonaland (Zimbabwe); cf. CCA S5 1/3/1: Foreign Mission subcommittee minute 5, entry for 20/3/1909.

tongue instruction,<sup>40)</sup> but coupled to this was the fear that if English was introduced sooner than necessary the Mission would lose too many of their trainees to higher paid Government jobs, as was happening to Livingstonia Mission. Then again the issue should be seen against the South African background of the DRCM where the Afrikaner had for many years been waging a battle for official recognition of his language and of mother tongue education in opposition to the attempted imposition of English as the only language in schools and even in the Church. Thus the DRC and its people came to put great value on the use of and respect for mother tongue education. Here the possibility can not be ruled out that there was a certain subconscious psychological resistance against English, Afrikaners having suffered its imposition for so long. This was probably the case with many of the DRC supporters of the work in Malawi and the Mission had constantly to defend itself and explain to the Home Church why it was essential to teach at least some English.

Up to 1912 it was policy not to teach English in schools, except at two of the station schools<sup>41)</sup> but the need became so strong to introduce it, on the one hand due to pressure from the people themselves and on the other hand because the Mission was losing ground to the Roman Catholics and other Missions, but especially because Government subsidies carried the requisition that English be taught, that in that year the Council requested permission to introduce English in some schools, subject to certain conditions such as that it would only be taught to approved pupils who could read the Chewa Bible fluently, possess their own English books and pay quarterly school fees. The General Mission Committee granted this request and the proposed conditions as it regarded it necessary due mainly to the pressure coming from the side of students and teachers even though it was realised that the decision would do harm in respect of some of its supporters.<sup>42)</sup> This meant that English was introduced as a subject, but the policy remained that the medium of instruction in the primary as well as

40. For considerations in favour of using the vernacular see JG Steytler: African village schools, pp.22-30; cf. TJ Jones: Education in East Africa, pp.19-22: "... the value of the native tongue is immensely more vital, in that it is one of the chief means of preserving whatever is good in Native customs, ideas and ideals and ... self-respect. No greater injustice can be done against a people than to deprive them of their own language".

41. See for example Council minutes 38/1920, p.270.

42. Council minutes 23/1912, p.152; cf. explanatory letter, CCA S5 15/6/2/15: Unsigned copy (WH Murray?) to AC Murray, 6/1/1913; 15/6/2/9: AC Murray to WH Murray, 18/2/1913.



in the higher primary and training schools should be the mother tongue, i.e. Chewa.<sup>43)</sup> Moreover, the decision to introduce English as a subject did not in practice apply to the elementary type of village schools but only to schools teaching the higher grade. In practice this meant that a relatively small percentage did receive instruction in English. In 1944 it was agreed that English would become an examination subject from standard 1 upwards.<sup>44)</sup>

It should in conclusion also be mentioned that a proposal from the DRC Mission in Zambia to introduce Afrikaans as a subject in the syllabus of evangelists and ministers was also turned down by the Council as being unnecessary and impractical. One of the reasons listed against the proposal was that it would encourage some to want to go to South Africa for further theological studies. It was regarded at that stage that the training received locally within Malawi could meet the needs of the country most effectively.<sup>45)</sup>

But to return to the period under survey, progress was made when the Second General Missionary Conference decided in 1904 to set up a committee of six to draw up an Educational Code for the use of all Missions and appointed an Education Board.<sup>46)</sup> This Board met in Blantyre in May of 1905 and drew up a revised Educational Code for the Missions of the Protectorate which made provision for every kind of training from the most elementary to the highest, university level training. All the Missions except the UMCA accepted the scheme and an application was presented to the Government for a financial Grant-in-aid. In 1908 the Government for the first time approved an annual grant of £1 000 to all Missions jointly.<sup>47)</sup> The DRCM, while reserving for itself the right to comply with the Code only as far as it applied to the more elementary forms of education, i.e. the vernacular code and the Anglo-vernacular lower school code,<sup>48)</sup> felt it had sufficiently improved its standards so as to apply

43. MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, p.84.

44. Council minutes 38/1920, p.270; 44/1924, p.333; 65/1944, p.633.

45. Ibid., 60/1939, p.544.

46. Report of the Second General Missionary Conference, 1904, Resolution no. 21,22.

47. JL Pretorius (Snr): The story of education in Malawi (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds): Malawi past and present, pp.72-3).

48. CCA V9 2/1: WH Murray to J du Plessis, 3/11/1904, 31/12/1904; Council minutes 13/1905, p.69-73.

for a share of the Grant-in-aid. Several appeals were sent to the Home Committee for a qualified tutor for training teachers.<sup>49)</sup>

In 1910 the Code was further revised by the General Missionary Conference and the formation of a basis of federation of all Missions represented as well as the Consultative Board further served the interests of education.<sup>50)</sup> The DRCM had meanwhile set up an annual Teachers Conference to advise the Mission Council on educational matters<sup>51)</sup> and in 1912 when the decision was taken to transfer the Mission's headquarters to Nkhoma, the Normal School, as the Teachers Training School was called, was also transferred. In 1912 it had 52 students training as teachers, while 92 of the 125 who had already completed the course were still in service. In 1916 the intake was doubled so as to accommodate 100 students. Later entrance standards were raised to Std 3 while a one year course for the training of school inspectors was added in 1921.<sup>52)</sup>

Meanwhile the number of village and other schools was steadily expanding. Whereas there were 152 in 1905, the figure had doubled by 1910, increasing to 730 in 1915 by which time there were 43 251 pupils with 1 851 teachers. Most of these teachers were locally trained at various stations to work in village schools. After the slump of the War years and immediately after, (there were only 1 391 teachers in 1919, a decrease of 460, and 29 216 pupils), the work picked up again so that by 1925 schools numbered 804, teachers 1 648 and pupils 50 176. According to statistics published by Roome in 1926 the DRCM had at that stage more than twice as many schools as any other Mission in the country and 30% of all school pupils.<sup>53)</sup> Post-war expansion concurred with increased Government concern for adequate supervision.<sup>54)</sup>

It is true that during and immediately after the War years Mission schools suffered because of a shortage of missionary supervision and a decrease of more than 25% in the number of teachers, due largely to military call-up of missionaries and teachers. The problem of adequate supervision and

49. Ibid., 16/1908, p.97; CCA S5 1/4/1: Nyasa Mission subcommittee minute 12, entry for 30/12/1908; 15/6/2/15: WH Murray to Mission secr., 10/2/1911.

50. JL Pretorius, op.cit., pp.73-4.

51. AL Hofmeyr: Het land langs het meer, pp.152-3.

52. JS Murray: De opvoeding in de Zending der Ned.Geref.Kerk, pp.21,23; Council minutes 31/1916, p.216; 37/1920, p.265; 38/1920, p.269.

53. Statistics compiled from Mission Council minute book and minute book of Council of Congregations, 1903-1919 (CCA S5 15/6/1/4); WJW Roome: A great emancipation, p.66.

54. CCA S5 15/6/2/9: Corresp.between AL Hofmeyr and Resident, Lilongwe.

control was extended to the first few years after the war as well when an effort was made to open as many new schools as possible in order to regain a stronger hold on education work and to increase the influence of the Mission amongst the people which had reached a low ebb immediately after the War. This loss of influence was due to the general effects of the War and the disillusionment of many people with the so-called Christian Western civilization, after having gone through war experiences.<sup>55)</sup>

This increase in schools and what it regarded as lack of adequate supervision and control somewhat perturbed the Government as official correspondence during 1919-1922 reveals.<sup>56)</sup>

What also constituted a major factor and motive in the expansion of schools over the years was the rivalry between the DRCM and the Mission of the White Fathers. There was a constant struggle between them to expand schools and spheres of influence. From the time the Roman Catholics appeared on the scene and began working within the boundaries of the DRCM, problems arose. The Roman Catholics were not prepared to recognise any separate areas although the DRCM tried to come to some agreement with them on this issue in 1901.<sup>57)</sup> During 1911 and 1912 there were renewed attempts to reach some form of agreement, but by then the Catholics were so widely established within the geographical sphere of the DRCM with some stations within a few miles of DRCM stations that neither they nor the DRC were prepared to give up sections of their work to the other.<sup>58)</sup>

In 1912 it was being reported that the RC were opening schools alongside existing DRCM schools, sometimes within a few hundred yards. Yet the RC superior, Bishop Guilleme wrote to WH Murray at that time: "Our line of conduct has always been ... to establish our missions at a great distance from yours ..., 12 to 15 miles." Likewise, he added, schools as a rule were only established in "free parts" where no other schools existed. "We did never try to settle schools near your stations neither in any

55. AC Murray: Ons Nyasa-akker, pp.233-9.

56. For official correspondence re DRCM schools see MNA S1/1575/19 (Dedza); S1/1576/19 (Lilongwe); S1/1577/19 (Dowa).

57. Council minutes (extra-ordinary meeting) 1901, p.17; MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, pp.58,62; AL Hofmeyr: Het land langs het meer, p.155; AC Murray: Ons Nyasa-akker, pp.29f, 35, 142-145.

58. Council minutes 20/1910, p.126; 21/1911, p.137. For correspondence on the 1911-12 negotiations see CCA S5 15/6/7/1. For difficulties in establishing DRCM schools in the Nthaka-taka area of the Lakeshore see 15/6/8/1 and -4 (1911-1922).

village occupied by you neither to disturb the villages where you have schools ...". A "good distance" of "about two miles was always maintained". In great exasperation Rev. AL Hofmeyr commented on this letter: "He lies, and he knows that he lies! and he knows that we know that he lies!". This answer of the Bishop, in Hofmeyr's opinion, could be described with one word only: Jesuitish. They had at least fifteen cases where the two mile limit had not been kept, but this was a matter in which "unfortunately we are also guilty ...".<sup>59)</sup>

The final negotiations took place at Likuni in November 1912 and ended in deadlock, the Bishop neither being prepared to acknowledge any boundary nor make any undertaking which would be binding on his successor nor discuss any breach of agreements made prior to his appointment as Bishop. It was agreed to let matters remain as they were. Both would continue working alongside of each other while trying to avoid friction. Also each Mission would do its best to avoid any of its missionaries entering into discussions with employees of the other over matters of doctrine or practice.<sup>60)</sup>

The result was that rivalry continued unabated and led to both Missions opening more schools than was perhaps really necessary. In due course the Catholic Mission opened several more stations within the geographical sphere of the DRCM. Whereas in 1932 they had six stations within the area where the DRCM worked, the number had risen to twelve by 1944 and to twenty-two by 1957. Some of these were opened as close as three to six miles from existing DRCM stations or other major Church centres.<sup>61)</sup>

The most poignant case was when the Government, incredibly, allowed Kasina Mission to be opened in 1925 only six miles from the DRC head station Nkhoma. WH Murray protested strongly to the District and Provincial authorities pointing out that Kasina itself was a DRCM village school with 45 pupils on the roll while there were 18 DRCM schools within a four mile

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59. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Half yearly report, June 1912; 15/6/2/9: M Guillemé to WH Murray, 3/6/1912; *ibid.*, AL Hofmeyr to AC Murray, 15/7/1912. Transl. from Dutch. A response from A Hetherwick reveals similar problems the Blantyre Mission was experiencing with the Roman Catholics who "plant schools where we are already providing schools" (*ibid.*, Hetherwick to AL Hofmeyr, 17/7/1912).
60. CCA S5 15/6/7/1: Report on interview with Roman Catholic Bishop, Likuni, 13/11/1912; 15/6/11/8: Half yearly report, December 1912.
61. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports 1944, 1957. 15/6/11/7: Annual report on education, 1957; cf. 15/6/11/9: Report of Committee to investigate RC activities n.d. [1957].

radius of Kasina. The lame answer of the authorities was that, while admitting that they had not informed the DRC of the application, the DRC should have followed up certain rumours amongst the natives (which they had disregarded as being just too unlikely) that the RC Mission was planning such a station and have protested to the authorities before permission was granted. In the absence of such a protest the Provincial Commissioner had seen no reason to refuse the application and now it was too late. The promise was however given that in future if a similar situation would arise, they would inform the DRCM before granting permission so that they could lodge any protests they might have. Their best counter action to this latest move of the Catholic Mission, wrote Murray in his annual general report for 1925, was to strengthen their work at the village schools. For this more expatriate teachers were needed to enable them to exercise better supervision over the work.<sup>62)</sup>

It should be noted that similar difficulties were constantly being experienced by the other Protestant Missions with what was termed the "Romanist aggression" and the matter came up in October the following year at the Fifth General Missionary Conference in Blantyre where it was resolved "that this Conference petition the Government in view of Roman Catholic aggression into the spheres of other missions to convene a conference between representatives of the Roman Catholic Missions, the Federated Missions and the Government ..."<sup>63)</sup> A special committee, consisting of those immediately affected by Romanist aggression was appointed to watch over the interests of the Federated Missions. Earlier in the same year on the fourth of March, a delegation from the Blantyre Mission consisting of A Hetherwick, J Reid and JA Alexander had also met the Governor on this issue. In a statement to him Reid pointed out that in the Mulanje district one is reluctantly brought to the conclusion that it is not really mission work the Roman Catholics are bent upon, but a deliberate attempt to destroy the work of the Protestant Missions. He pointed out that of 28 so-called "prayer houses" the Romans had opened, only

62. For correspondence with Government on this issue see MNA Nkhoma Papers, Box 1; also CCA S5 15/6/8/5: Copies WH Murray to Resident, Dedza, 4/7/1925; and to Provincial Commissioner, Lilongwe, 28/7/1925; Kirby-Green (PC) to WH Murray, 30/7/1925. Report of Murray in CCA S5 15/6/11/8.

63. See Report of Fifth General Missionary Conference, 1926.

one was more than three miles from a Blantyre Mission school, while most were only half a mile to two miles away. They exert pressure on the headmen, promise them non-fee paying schools, and offer them beer and prizes in order to gain entrance. According to Hetherwick the same was happening in the Blantyre district but on a smaller scale.<sup>64)</sup> The words of Reid echoed what a Roman Priest had told WH Murray and AG Murray some years before in Mozambique, when he stated that "he had been sent there to keep the Protestants out".<sup>65)</sup>

It is against this background that the almost aggressive fervour of the DRCM to expand its schools should be seen. Counter action was the best method of defence.

The financing of the many village schools was an immense task. The amount received from the Government did not do much to relieve the pressure. Money had to come from the home Church or from other sources. One such source was America, from what was generally known as the American Supporters Band. Founded in 1890 by Dr A Murray in order to raise support for the work of the DRC in Central Africa the organisation bore the weighty name of "The Nyasaland Mission of Central Africa under auspices of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission of South Africa". In later years it branched out into Canada, with a North American as well as a Canadian Council. It interested itself in the work of the DRC in Malawi, eastern Zambia and Mozambique. Several workers also came out to serve with the DRCM, including nurse Hultman, nurse Harrell and Miss Preiss. Originally supporters were recruited for individual evangelists, but later the scheme was changed and supporters were assigned a particular village school. By 1900 names of fifty such schools were forwarded to the USA to be supported by an annual contribution of £5.0.0 each.<sup>66)</sup>

A person was appointed in the field to act as secretary and liaison official whose duty it was to send regular reports on the progress of the work to the supporter concerned and to administrate the scheme. By 1912, £500 was being received annually for village schools. Rev. Liebenberg and

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64. CCA S5 15/6/7/1: Notes on interview with Governor, March 4, 1926. See further in loc. a bundle of documents concerning dealings of Blantyre Mission over this issue, 1926-1929.

65. MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, p.62; see above, ch. 2.

66. CCA V9 1/1: MMU minutes, entry for 7/9/1900.

his wife, Mary Doyle, herself a Canadian with a keen interest in this movement, were largely responsible for this sustained interest. They were granted permission to visit the States in 1913 to further promote the scheme.<sup>67)</sup> In his enthusiasm he inspired renewed interest in the work and formed an "Advisory Council" consisting of, amongst others, AF Gaylard, head of the Moody Bible Institute. Prayer circles were formed in many places and Liebenberg collected over £3 000 in support of the work. In addition, sixty-two persons had volunteered to offer their services in Central Africa.<sup>68)</sup> On the part of the DRC some concern began to arise as to the desirability of the scheme growing to such proportions as it could eventually become too big an affair and get out of hand, the DRC losing some control.<sup>69)</sup> One suggestion which was seriously contemplated for quite some time by both sides was that part of the field in Mozambique, possibly the southern or else the western section previously offered to the Orange Free State Mission of the DRC should be taken over entirely by the American Council for their own responsibility.<sup>70)</sup> Up to 1919 several thousands of dollars continued to be received annually for the work, but after the departure of the Liebenbergs from Malawi following the death of Mrs Liebenberg in 1918, the "live" link disappeared and interest began to wane. A large problem was the difficulty of maintaining meaningful contact and a responsive feedback to the supporters. The GMC secretary, AC Murray visited the States in 1920 to discuss the difficulties and the final outcome was a decision to disband the organisation. In 1921 the GMC in Cape Town, having heard the report of the Secretary's visit, expressed its deepfelt gratitude for the support and prayer and money, as well as its sadness at the fact that due to circumstances this would no longer continue. Continued prayer support was urgently requested.<sup>71)</sup>

Meanwhile the same system of village school supporters was being propagated in South Africa and over the years many hundreds of individuals accepted

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67. Council minutes 7/1902, p.18; 16/1908, p.95; 17/1909, p.108. CCA S5 1/4/1: Nyasa Mission subcommittee minute 13,14, entry for 13/12/1911; minute 9, entry for 29/1/1912. On Mary Doyle see AC Murray: Ons Nyasa-akker, p.312.
68. CCA S5 1/1/2: GMC minute 4-8, entry for 18/9/1913. For reports and correspondence concerning the American supporters see CCA S5 15/6/9/3 and P15 1/1 (Liebenberg file).
69. CCA S5 15/6/2/16: WH Murray to AC Murray, 22/5/1913.
70. Ibid., copy WH Murray to AL Hofmeyr, 26/7/1915; Council minutes 27/1914, p.181; MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 1: AC Murray to WH Murray, 2/6/1916.
71. CCA S5 1/1/3: GMC minute 30, entry for 15-17/8/1921.

for their responsibility, financially and prayerwise, a specific village school, often maintaining contact with it over very many years.

During the first part of the 1920s there was a definite move towards raising the standards and improving the educational work, also in view of Government plans to increase assistance as well as to exercise a greater measure of control.<sup>72)</sup> The Government grant had become pitifully inadequate, amounting to an overall average for the country of two pence per pupil. The DRCM was getting only £200 p.a. in comparison with for example the DRCM in Mashonaland, Zimbabwe which was getting £3 000 p.a.<sup>73)</sup>

In 1922 the Mission obtained the services of a well-qualified educationalist, JG Steytler, who was to do much, not only for education in this Mission when he was appointed head of the Normal School, but also for the country, particularly as a member of the Advisory Committee on Education. One of his early comments after arriving was that the DRCM education system was twenty years behind the time.<sup>74)</sup> His arrival took place at a very crucial time for within a few years a new phase in the history of education in Malawi was to begin.

One more important incident towards the end of this period was the visit of the Phelps-Stokes Commission of inquiry into educational matters in Central and East Africa. The Commission's visit to Nkhoma and its very high praise and appreciation for the work done at this "best equipped" of all the Missions visited, did much to boost the morale of the Mission and to promote educational work.<sup>75)</sup> Apart from what was stated in the report itself<sup>76)</sup> the chairman, Dr T Jesse Jones later wrote to WH Murray to once again express his appreciation for the work of the DRCM:

The basic feeling ... felt towards your work is that of enthusiastic approval and gratitude ... we feel the futility of our efforts in stating our thankfulness for the great work which you are doing<sup>77)</sup>

72. Council minutes 38/1920, p.270; 43/1928, pp.317-8.

73. CCA S5 15/6/3/3: Copy JA Retief to Laws, 30/1/1924.

74. JG Steytler to Fred and Henri, 28/10/1922 (in private collection of Mrs JG Steytler, Stellenbosch).

75. CCA S5 1/4/1: Nyasa Mission subcommittee minute 4,10, entry for 25/7/1924. Quoted from CT Loram in interview with GMC.

76. See TJ Jones: Education in East Africa, pp.211-214.

77. CCA S5 15/6/9/3: TJ Jones to WH Murray, 21/1/1925.



### 2.3 The period 1926-1941

After World War I there was a new forward movement in education in Malawi as elsewhere in Colonial countries. Although the Government in Malawi had begun to support education with a Grant-in-aid of £1 000 in 1908 which was increased to £2 000 in 1918 this was not enough by far. Several factors contributed to the development of education and increased Government participation in it.<sup>78)</sup> The first was the new ideas which developed amongst Western nations concerning their responsibilities towards people in the countries under their control. This was also spelt out in article 22 of the Statutes of the League of Nations. Secondly the British Government set up a permanent commission, The Advisory Committee on Education in Tropical Africa, which drew up an educational policy for British Colonies in Africa. One of the foundations of this policy was that religious education should be a basic principle for all education. The third important factor was the visit and report of the Phelps-Stokes Commission in 1924. Its chief recommendation was that a policy of co-operation between Government and Missions in education be developed "to organise and correlate the splendid educational work of the missions with the various phases of colonial life". This was to include the appointment of a Director of Education and the organisation of a Department of Education, together with the establishment of an Advisory Board of Native Education consisting of representatives of Government, settlers and missionaries and, as soon as possible, Native representation. The most important need was for the Government to provide additional financial support.<sup>79)</sup>

The British Government duly responded to this and to a report of its own Committee issued in 1925.<sup>80)</sup> In November 1925 Mr RF Gaunt was appointed as first Director of Education of Malawi. Shortly after his arrival in the country on 30 April 1926, the Department of Education was formed.

The Fifth General Missionary Conference met in October of that year and discussed various propositions of co-operating with the Government. One of the major difficulties was the question of the measure of control the Government wished to take while more than 90% of the costs of education

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78. AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, p.270f.

79. TJ Jones, *op.cit.*, pp.215-17.

80. JG Steytler: *African village schools*, p.9.

was still to be borne by the Missions.

The Education Ordinance provided for an Education Board, later called an Advisory Committee representing various sections of and interests in the country. Mr JG Steytler became the DRCM representative on this Board. A series of meetings took place during the next few years and resulted in the passing of a new Education Ordinance in 1930 which, while fostering the expansion of a wide base in Education, left not nearly enough qualified staff and funds for higher education. The rules of this Ordinance dealt largely with the management of assisted schools.<sup>81)</sup>

Meanwhile the DRCM agreed to go along with the new plans. Initially it had some doubts particularly concerning the insertion of a conscience clause in the law allowing any person the freedom to attend or not to attend religious instruction, but the assurance was given that this fact would not be publicised and that it would in practice have very little effect. Feeling satisfied that the religious character of education would not be affected the DRCM Council recommended full co-operation.<sup>82)</sup> This would require not only an improvement in the standard of teaching and control of village schools, but also better training of village school teachers. For this a qualified educationalist was required at every station. Their duties would include training of village school teachers, oversight over Central schools and visiting all schools in their respective areas. One expatriate teacher who came out in 1929 was Mr JL Pretorius who was also to play a very important role in education for many years. He succeeded JG Steytler on the Advisory Board of Education.<sup>83)</sup>

With the Government subsidy to the DRCM increasing from £100 in 1926 to £700 in 1927 the work could grow accordingly. To further help in the expenses involved it was agreed to introduce school fees also at village school level in 1929. From 1930 the fees in the village schools were fixed at between one penny and three pence per pupil per quarter from the second class onwards. At Central schools it was higher, reaching a maximum of one shilling and sixpence per quarter for boys in Std III.

81. JL Pretorius: The story of education in Malawi (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds): Malawi past and present, pp.74-5).

82. Council minutes 46/1926, pp.365-6; 47/1927, p.379; 52/1931, p.425.

83. CCA S5 1/1/4: GMC minute 64, entry for 7-8/8/1928; Council minutes 60/1939, p.542.

at a station school.<sup>84)</sup> A matter of some concern was that between 1925 and 1932 a continuous decline in numbers occurred. In 1925 there were 804 schools, 1 648 teachers and 50 176 pupils in village schools, but in 1932 only 728 schools, 1 066 teachers, 31 423 pupils. After that numbers increased again reaching a new peak in 1940 (1 260 schools, 1 475 teachers, 49 673 pupils (1939).<sup>85)</sup> Various reasons are given for this phenomenon.<sup>86)</sup> The decline in the number of teachers was due partly to the resignation of older teachers, partly to the higher standard of teaching required from them and a desire to get away from the rigid discipline of teaching and the responsibilities involved in being a mission teacher and partly because many could get better pay elsewhere, while the upsurge of the tobacco industry drew others away as well. This decline in the number of teachers in its turn had the same effect on the number of schools and pupils, while the introduction of school fees at village level also had a drastic but temporary effect (a drop of 23% took place in 1929). One of the largest problems affecting education was the Nyau cult which was still very strong in many parts of the country. A growing tension was developing between Church and Mission on the one hand and the Nyau cult and its supporters on the other hand. More than one flourishing school disappeared once the Nyau succeeded in establishing its influence in that particular community.<sup>87)</sup>

During the 1930s the situation improved and annual reports indicated progress and improvement in the quality and extent of education. Better trained teachers were doing better work and had more influence. A new spirit of commitment and dedication had become evident by 1935.<sup>88)</sup>

At this stage the Nkhoma Mission was catering for the following schools and training Institutions as specified by the Government: Elementary Vernacular schools, Medium Vernacular, classes I to V (four to five years); Lower Middle schools (Central schools) at central villages or Mission stations, Medium Vernacular, English a subject, standards I-III (three or four years); these linked up with training of teachers for Elementary Vernacular schools (two years); Training Institute for

84. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Report of Mission secr. on visit to Malawi, 1929; Council minutes 50/1929, p.415.

85. Statistics compiled from Nkhoma Presbytery minutes for respective years.

86. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1930.

87. For the contention between the Church and Nyau see below ch.5.

88. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports, 1930, 1932, 1935.

teachers (Normal school) for the Lower and Middle schools. This course accommodated further education from standard four and teacher's grade III and on to standard six and teacher's grade I.<sup>89)</sup> In addition, other forms of vocational training such as theological training, training of medical staff and technical skills and trades were also being undertaken.

A government institute called the Jeanes Training Centre had also been opened at Domasi near Zomba in 1928. This was made possible by an annual donation from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the centre was planned to give two-year courses of training to batches of 24 selected mission teachers and their wives. These teachers afterwards served in a supervisory capacity and by 1937 seventy-five such teachers from the DRCM had been trained while sixty teachers' wives benefitted from the course.<sup>90)</sup> From the beginning the Nkhoma Mission sent four candidates for training every two years and by 1939 the Mission had fifteen Jeanes trained supervisors in addition to twenty-four English certificate teachers and 217 vernacular certificate teachers out of a total of just over 1 400 teachers.<sup>91)</sup> The rest were village school teachers. The task of these village school teachers was still seen as essentially a twofold one, namely that of a teacher as well as an evangelist and soul winner.<sup>92)</sup>

The new dispensation of Government involvement did not prove to be without its difficulties, as the report of the Bell Commission revealed in 1938. One of the main problems was that between 1931 and 1938 there had been no increase in the Government grants for village schools, while the number of schools, especially village schools continued to increase. The DRCM and Catholic Missions showed the greatest increase and accordingly were hit the hardest by the financial strain.<sup>93)</sup>

At the close of the period under consideration it is to be noted that there was a gradual rising in standards of education in the work of the

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89. AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, pp.271-3; cf. JG Steytler: *African village schools*, pp.12-15. For a diagram showing the interrelation of the different types of schools in Malawi during this period, see *ibid.*, p.13.

90. JL Pretorius: *The story of education*, *op.cit.*, pp.76-7; B Pachai: *Malawi: history of the nation*, pp.175-6.

91. Council minutes, 51/1930, p.420; 54/1933, p.452; 58/1937, p.514; *The DRCM in Nyasaland*, p.2-3 (brochure), 1939.

92. Council minutes 59/1938, pp.530f.

93. JL Pretorius, *op.cit.*, pp.75-6.

Nkhoma Mission, but the initial boost of Government support lost its force as the support did not keep pace with the expansion of schools. The basic aim and purpose of education within the framework of the work of the Mission remained the same. Education was to be furthered as a means of promoting the work of the Mission, of evangelism and of building up the Church and providing church leaders. Government requirements concerning higher standards of teaching and supervision were accepted as inevitable in the process of development in the country and conceded to not only because of financial advantages but even more because, if not, education would have gone out of the hands of the Church and become entirely secular. Thus the Mission and the Government co-operated more and more closely while the Government continued to develop its aims in education. The Mission more or less limited its educational activities to the levels of primary education, as the needs of the work did not require more at that stage. This conservative attitude towards higher education was a characteristic of the Nkhoma Mission, but during the period 1941-1961 several shifts in accent were to become evident.

#### 2.4 The period 1941-1961

Education in Malawi during this period is characterised by the development of secondary education and by a considerable rethinking on the aim and purpose of education by Missions coupled to a raising of standards, an educational syllabus more closely controlled by Government and a general reorganisation of education. These aspects are evident in the work of the Nkhoma Mission as well. A further aspect of the work during this period was the growing involvement of the Malawian Church in the work of education.

The introduction of secondary education in 1941 marked a new phase in the history of education in Malawi. Already in 1935 negotiations between the CBFM and the Government were taking place. The Federated Missions were prepared to build a secondary school if the Government would maintain it. The Nkhoma Mission was greatly in favour of such a scheme and authorised its representative on the Consultative Board to continue negotiations for a secondary school provided the Government would bear the financial responsibility. In 1938 the Governor stated that he regarded it as "of the highest importance" that the opportunity for such education should exist. The report of the Bell Commission strongly criticised the Government for not yet having taken steps to facilitate secondary education.

After "much negotiation and endless discussion", and delays caused by the outbreak of the second World War, it was agreed to open two secondary schools, one in Blantyre run by a Board of Governors on which the Protestant Churches (Christian Council Members) would be prominent, and one in Zomba run by a Board of Governors where the Roman Catholics would hold control. The Blantyre Secondary School was opened on 30 April 1941.<sup>94)</sup> A year later the Zomba Secondary School also opened. The Nkhoma Mission went along with these arrangements, recognising the need that opportunity be provided for persons who did not wish to become teachers to obtain further education in view of the leadership requirements of the country and also the future needs of the Church.<sup>95)</sup> From the first year students were sent from Nkhoma to Blantyre, but initially places were limited and just a few went each year. Assistance was given both financially<sup>96)</sup> and by providing several teachers, notably Mr (later Dr) JK Louw who was on the staff of the school from 1945 to 1952 when his services were needed at Nkhoma where a beginning was being made with secondary education. This development at Nkhoma was prompted by the fact that Blantyre Secondary School could not supply enough candidates with Junior Certificate to be trained as teachers and could not accommodate the number of applicants. In 1949 only two of the twelve applications from Nkhoma were accepted.<sup>97)</sup> The school at Nkhoma was launched in 1952 and shortly after secondary education was also begun at Kongwe for Std VII and VIII. On 6 October 1954 a Junior Secondary School was opened at Kongwe with Mr MC Toerien as principal. Negotiations continued to upgrade it to a full secondary school. This need was being felt more and more as time went by since Blantyre could only take a maximum of ten students per year from Nkhoma.<sup>98)</sup> Finally the Government approved a full secondary school at Kongwe, providing 75% of the capital outlay of over £50 000. The Education Committee of Nkhoma Synod together with the local headmen recommended that the school be named the Robert Blake Secondary School.<sup>99)</sup> Dr JK Louw was appointed

94. cf. Minutes of CBFM, entries for 11/6/1935, 19/10/1936, 6/1/1937, etc.; Council minutes 58/1937, p.514 (Council committee minute for 2-3/12/1936); JL Pretorius op.cit., p.78; B Pachai, op.cit., p.180.

95. GMC report to Synod, *Acta* 1940, p.140; CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1942.

96. See Council minutes 65/1944, p.627; 70/1948, p.748; see also 72/1949, p.816.

97. Ibid., 73/1950, p.857; 76/1953, p.985; CCA S5 15/6/2/24: JJD Stegmann to Mission secr., 18/1/1950.

98. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports, 1951, 1954/55, 1956.

99. Council minutes 80/1957, p.1149, 82/1959, pp.1208f; CCA S5 1/4/4: Nyasa Mission subcommittee minute 46, entry for 21/5/1957.

as first headmaster. Construction took place over several years and by 1960 a third stream for Std VII was begun. The Robert Blake Secondary School assumed a very important position in the educational work of Nkhoma Mission and Synod. What is significant is that whereas secondary education was originally begun both at Nkhoma and at Kongwe in order to provide higher qualified candidates for the teaching profession, the Mission Council by 1959 gave its full support to the extension of the school because of the importance of this institution in providing leaders for the nation.<sup>100)</sup> This indicated a new emphasis in comparison with the view held on education in earlier years.

This shift in emphasis on the purpose and aim of education had already become evident some years before when the Mission Council redefined its aim in education as being a fourfold one. The hand of the Mission's educationalist JL Pretorius was evident in this definition.<sup>101)</sup> These four principles encompassed evangelism of society through the teachers, the forming of good church members in furtherance of a self-supporting, self-governing and self-extending indigenous Church, the Christian elevation of the entire society of which members of the Church are part, and lastly a thorough education in practical and intellectual knowledge of which the pupils have a need. The interests of society and the value of education as such for a person as a preparation of the individual for his own benefit therewith received greater emphasis.<sup>102)</sup>

This is not to say that the need for higher education had not formerly been realised or recognised. Rather the Mission saw higher education as the responsibility of the Government and not so much the task of the Mission, where education had its own particular role and function. This was reiterated by the Mission secretary in 1960 in response to an accusation that the Mission was opposed to training Malawian graduates and that this was the reason why there were no graduates as yet. He pointed out that the Mission policy was in line with the Government's own policy, and although not entirely engaged in the full educational program the policy had always been that higher education should take place

100. Council minutes 82/1959, pp.1216.

101. Cf. MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 39 (Miscellaneous papers 1933-1963): Document by JL Pretorius, n.d., later adopted by Council; see Council minutes 69/1947, p.711.

102. JL Pretorius, *The story of education in Malawi* (in Smith, Pachai and Tangri (Eds): *Malawi past and present*, p.78).

and that faster progress should be made in respect of education. But this was seen primarily as the task of the Government.<sup>103)</sup>

Significant progress was made during the 1940s in the education work of the Mission. In 1942 the Government policy was adapted to further raise standards. This included much higher salaries for teachers, stricter requirements for Government supported schools and larger grants. The Mission responded to this in a series of far-reaching educational changes. Outposts were reorganised, and many closed in a new policy of greater centralisation.<sup>104)</sup> Furthermore the Government produced a series of three five-year plans, 1944-1949, 1949-1954 and 1954-1959 to further promote education. The new outpost system soon began to show results, both in standards of teaching and in growing numbers of enrolment in village schools, which had dropped during the preceding few years to 32 933 in 1944 and then rose again to 42 346 in 1947. What was even more important was the increase in enrolment in the lower primary (Central schools offering Std I-III) and higher primary schools (station schools offering Std IV-VI). In the last type 200 were enrolled by 1945, rising to over 1 000 in 1947.<sup>105)</sup> By 1947 the Nkhoma Mission was receiving the third highest grant in the country after the Marist Fathers and Livingstonia Mission.<sup>106)</sup> The annual Council budget for education increased almost fourfold to nearly £22 000 between 1944 and 1948.

The educational branch of the Mission was growing so large that the Council began to fear it would become too much of an independent enterprise instead of remaining a department of the Mission and later of the Church. Thus in 1947 it decided not to allow separate posts to be instituted for the position of head for the William Murray Institute as the Normal School was called since 1939, and the Education Secretary, but only two years later it had to give way to the education section's appeals since the work had grown out of all proportion and was too much for one person. Separate posts were created but the duties of each

103. CCA S5 15/6/1/6: Copy PES Smith to Hugo, n.d. [c. March 1960].

104. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1942; cf. 15/6/11/7: Annual report on education, 1942, 1944; Council minutes 65/1944, pp.631-2; 66/1944, pp.646ff, 651; 68/1946, p.679; 69/1947, p.713.

105. Nkhoma Presbytery 1944 and 1947 (statistics); CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1945, 1947. See also Table III above.

106. Council minutes 65/1944, p.644; 70/1948, pp.780-82.



carefully outlined with a warning added that care should be taken to prevent the educational work from becoming too independent, as well as to avoid at all costs the developing of an attitude of officialdom ("amptenaarsgees") in the Mission as this could harm the missionary spirit of the work.<sup>107)</sup>

The greatly increased activity on the educational front was also reflected in an unprecedented church growth rate during the 1940s. Compared to a mean growth rate of 28% every five years between 1926 and 1976, the growth rate for the five year period 1944-1949 stood at 47%. Church membership increased during these years from 28 103 to 41 211.<sup>108)</sup>

Meanwhile the position concerning Mission run schools in Malawi remained unchanged. By 1951 all African schools except the Jeanes school, a few Native Authority, community and estate schools were still being conducted by Missions.<sup>109)</sup> The visit and report of the Binns Commission to Malawi in 1951 was reflected in the third five-year plan (1954-1959). Of importance was the decision that all training of vernacular grade teachers was to be stopped while the minimum entrance requirement for a teachers' training institute would be Std VI. Local authorities were also vested with much greater responsibility.<sup>110)</sup> In addition to this the Nkhoma Mission and Presbytery were in the process of transferring more and more responsibility to the Church and to involve the Church in educational matters in preparation for an eventual complete take over by the Church.

## 2.5 Specialised aspects of education

Before dealing with the relationship between Church and school it is necessary to point out certain aspects of education which dealt with particular groups in society.

The first concerns the question of adult literacy. In the first schools no age limit was imposed and any adult who wished to do so could enroll. In addition, separate sessions were organised for such people in the

107. Ibid., 68/1946, p.679; 69/1947, pp.714ff; 72/1949, pp.811-14.

108. See ch.4 and Table IV. Calculated from statistical returns in Presbytery minutes.

109. MNA Inventory of Public Archives.Vol.II: Education: Short history of education in Malawi.

110. CCA S5 15/6/11/7: Annual education report, 1951; 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1952, 1953.

afternoons. In the Mission the rule was that all who wished to join the catechumen classes should know how to read. It was, as has been noted, one of the primary functions of the educational programme to teach people to read the Bible. In 1912 the Church itself, through its legislative body, the Council of Congregations (Msonkhano wa Mipingo) decreed that no person would be permitted to join the hearers' class unless he or she could read. Elderly persons and others who had made a genuine effort to learn to read but had failed to make progress were, however, exempted.<sup>111)</sup>

This meant that provision had to be made for adults to learn to read. When the Government established control over education, certain restrictions were laid down concerning the maximum age of pupils and in 1927 the Mission Council ruled that in schools receiving Government support teachers should henceforth teach adults early in the morning. In other schools such people could continue to receive tuition as before.<sup>112)</sup>

It was not before the new educational dispensation of the 1940s that the question of adult literacy received further attention. In 1943 Mr JL Pretorius was authorised to study the well-known Laubach method of teaching adult literacy and adapt it for use in Chewa. Meanwhile classes for catechumens continued as a separate enterprise at Government-assisted schools. The requirement that they be able to read was still very much in force.<sup>113)</sup> The following year saw the launching of a major adult literacy drive during the August holidays which was repeated for several years. The aim of this scheme was not merely to promote adult literacy for Bible reading. The Mission Council was aware of the danger of the younger generation developing too far away from the older through better education, the fast development of the country and the constant labour migration to the south.<sup>114)</sup> To counter this, it was necessary to pay particular attention to the education of adults.

The campaign of 1944 was a great success. Twenty-four thousand adults

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111. CCA S5 15/6/1/4: Council of Congregations minute 3, entry for 11/12/1912.

112. Council minutes, 47/1927, pp.378f.

113. Ibid., 64/1943, pp.612-3; 68/1946, p.683; cf. CCA S5 15/6/2/23: Stegmann to Mission secr., 1/5/1946. Pretorius' research resulted in a M.Ed. thesis: *Leesonderwys aan volwassenes*. See also an article by him: *Leesonderrig aan volwassenes in die Nyasasending* (Op die *Horison*, June 1943, pp.72ff).

114. Council minutes 69/1947, p.712.

enrolled at 600 schools of whom sixteen thousand were quite illiterate. The following year the scheme was repeated with people showing even more enthusiasm. The opportunity was used to distribute large quantities of literature.<sup>115)</sup> So successful was the enterprise that the Council agreed to repeat it for at least three years. This scheme undoubtedly contributed to the record growth rate in the Church during the late 1940s. By 1950 it was decided that it should be an annual event lasting four weeks. Various regulations were laid down and it was agreed to work towards a permanent system involving a general social and community development scheme. A prototype of this scheme, undertaken in collaboration with the Native Authority and the Government had been developed by Mr JL Pretorius at Chipamphale not far from Nkhoma, involving twenty-five villages in which various enterprises were launched, including commercial brick and tile manufacturing.<sup>116)</sup>

So effective was the annual literacy campaign that the Government made note of it in its annual report on Education in 1954:<sup>117)</sup>

The Dutch Reformed Church Mission organised an adult literacy drive in the Central Province in September. All the Mission teachers and a number of voluntary workers assisted in the campaign. Eight thousand primers were stocked for this purpose, but within a week all were sold, although two or more persons shared each book. It is estimated that the number of adults who acquired simple literacy in this campaign ran into thousands. More than 10 000 specially written follow-up readers were subsequently sold.

It was reported that an estimated 4 000 persons acquired literacy.

In 1955 the Nkhoma Presbytery also became involved and minuted that the campaign was to take place during September with Christians participating under the guidance of Graded Teachers and Mission staff.<sup>118)</sup>

Although it was agreed in 1955 to make it a permanent annual scheme, it did not continue long on this high note, particularly after the departure of Pretorius in 1959. But it became the forerunner of the well-known Ukani schools of later years.

115. CCA S5 15/6/11/7: Annual education report, 1947, 1948.

116. Council minutes 70/1948, pp.746f; 73/1950, pp.758f. On the Chipamphale scheme see *ibid.*, p.853; F Debenham: *Nyasaland the land of the Lake*, pp.141f; JL Pretorius: 'n Eksperiment met die opvoeding van volwassenes in die Nyasaland (Op die Horison, Dec.1947, pp.141ff).

117. Quoted in Annual general report, 1954-55 (CCA S5 15/6/11/8).

118. Nkhoma Presbytery 1955, minute 66.

A second specialised field in education concerned work amongst the blind. Although as far back as 1922 a decision was taken to open a school for the blind, nothing came of this and when the DRC Mission in eastern Zambia moved its school for the Blind to Magwero Mission in 1928, virtually on the boundary with Malawi, it was agreed rather to co-operate fully with this enterprise and encourage all blind persons to go there. This remained the position for more than twenty years. In 1931 the Nkhoma Presbytery heard an enthusiastic report of a delegation it had sent to visit Magwero and recommended full co-operation and advised all members to send their deaf and blind to Magwero.<sup>119)</sup>

Twenty years later, correspondence from the principal for the school for the Blind at Magwero, Miss E Botes, led to a decision to start a school for the Blind at Kasungu in October 1952, provided the DRC Mission Council in Zambia was agreeable. The school would have an entirely Malawian staff from the beginning. The school began as planned and the following year the Children's Missionary Guild (Kindersendingkrans) of the DRC in South Africa offered to raise money to support this school. A graduate of the school at Magwero was appointed as first teacher and by 1955 there were 28 pupils under a staff of three. Government aid from the Native Development and Welfare Fund was obtained for buildings and amenities. In appreciation for his personal interest in promoting the school it was decided in 1955 to call it the Keppel-Compton School for the Blind, after the previous Provincial Commissioner for the Central Province.<sup>120)</sup>

By 1958 the school was well-established with 24 pupils of whom 21 were boys, and provided tuition up to Std III, from where students wishing to study further could go either to Magwero or to the training centre at Mulanje. All the usual subjects were taught, including Braille, English, Agriculture and a wide variety of handicrafts. The Malawian staff of four, of whom two were blind themselves, was assisted by a retired missionary lady from Scotland, Mrs M Benzies, who had offered her services for two years.<sup>121)</sup>

119. Ibid., 1931, p.3; Council minutes 42/1922, p.301; 45/1925, p.340; 47/1927, p.379; 48/1928, p.388; 50/1929, p.416.

120. Council minutes, 75/1952, pp.936-7; 76/1953, pp.980,984; 78/1955, pp. 1076, 1089; CCA S5 1/6/5: Financial Mission subcommittee (FSSK) minute 21, entry for 12/8/1953; 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1952, 1955.

121. CCA S5 15/6/11/7: Report of Keppel-Compton school for the Blind, 1958; Nuusbrief uit Malawi, Dec.1969.

A third special aspect of education in the work of the Nkhoma Mission was the establishing of boarding schools both for boys and girls. Apart from the girls' homes opened at many stations, with which a later paragraph will deal, the higher education of girls was a matter to which due attention was also paid. Women had been trained as teachers ever since 1922 in order to serve mostly at station schools and in 1937 a central training school for girls already existed at Nkhoma. Five years later the beginning of a full-fledged Central Boarding School for girls was approved and this was established at Dzenza in 1944, together with a Normal School for training women teachers.<sup>122)</sup> All other schools of the Nkhoma Mission were of course co-educational schools, except later the secondary school at Kongwe. Repeated plans to begin a girls' secondary school have not yet materialised.

Boarding facilities were also provided for boys, first on a more or less unofficial basis, but officially since 1920. Charges amounted to one shilling per month. This decision was reiterated in 1933 with a recommendation that boarding homes for boys be opened at all the stations where possible. This was done in response to a growing demand from Christian parents whose sons were taking advantage of higher schooling. The following two years saw the opening and extension of boarding schools at Mlanda and Nkhoma stations as well as at Malingunde. Later stations like Chitundu, Mchinji, Chintembwe, Kasungu and Kongwe also opened boarding facilities with room for a total of over 800 boarders. The maximum age for admission was fixed at twenty, but exceptions were made at Nkhoma. The facilities at Mlanda and Nkhoma were initially the greatest but later Kongwe surpassed them.<sup>123)</sup>

In this way many were enabled to receive upper primary education. When secondary education was begun, first at Nkhoma and then at Kongwe, boarding facilities were part of the scheme from the beginning.

## 2.6 Education and the Church

From the beginning education was very much an enterprise of the Mission and an instrument in the task of building up the Church. Thus, when the

122. Council minutes 42/1922, pp.302-3; 63/1942, p.595; 65/1944, pp.636,643.

123. Ibid., 38/1920, pp.270f; 54/1933, p.458; 55/1934, p.468; 56/1935, p.469; CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1933, 1935, 1937, 1938.

Church began to emerge, a clear delimitation of duties was laid down which made education the responsibility of the Mission Council. The natural thing to happen then, was that many village school centres in due course developed into sub-centres and even main centres of the Church, so that the situation arose where both Mission and Church had interests in the same place and in the same people. Thus the work being done there being both evangelism and educational, as well as training of Church catechumens, needed to be properly co-ordinated. In due course the Church had to prepare itself to take over more and more responsibility for this work.

Problems were soon to arise. In 1918 the Mission Council appointed a committee to determine what the duties were of evangelists, district school inspectors and church elders in connection with the work being done at such centres. The local church elder and the senior evangelist who was in the employ of the Mission had to work closely together in matters concerning the congregation such as catechetical training and house visitation.<sup>124)</sup> The spiritual decline which was prevalent during and just after the War years caused many teachers to neglect their duties while others left for better paid positions. The Council of Congregations expressed its concern at this phenomenon and the materialistic spirit evidenced amongst teachers, appealing to them to rededicate themselves and not to make demands for higher pay as this would be a greater burden on the Church when in future it would take over the schools.<sup>125)</sup> Thus, the concept was already being established in the minds of the church leaders that this task would one day be theirs.

At that stage not much more could be done and there was little progress for the next twenty-five years towards making the Church more directly responsible for schools, apart from a decision in 1936 to seek ways of letting it take some financial responsibility while regular reports to Presbytery were included in the church statistical returns of each congregation.<sup>126)</sup> From time to time Nkhoma Presbytery did express its concern and encouraged people to come forward to be trained as teachers as this was essential also for the progress of the country, but at the same time

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124. Council minutes 33/1918, p.243; 34/1918, p.248.

125. Council of Congregations, minutes for 9-11/12/1920 (printed copy in CCA S5 15/6/1/4).

126. In Council minutes 58/1937, p.507.

all the spiritual work at a village school centre was still the responsibility of the teacher; such as conducting Sunday school, catechumen instruction and funeral services.<sup>127)</sup> Each teacher was of course an evangelist and the village school as evangelisation centre was meant to function in close co-operation with the Church. The result was that it became more and more necessary for Mission and Church to be in closer touch with each other in these matters. Disagreements over procedure and methods of teaching catechetics were arising as elders opposed new methods being taught to evangelists. Complaints were lodged with the Council that in some cases elders were not willing to allow the teacher to preach although this was part of his duty for which he had also received some elementary training.<sup>128)</sup>

Although education developed into the largest single enterprise of the Mission, the Council was wary of it becoming too independent of Mission and Church. To this effect ordained missionaries had to remain in control of schools so that the authority of the Church as represented by them would be maintained over the schools, thus preventing education from shedding its function as servant of the Church.<sup>129)</sup>

The first real move to engage the Church in the work of education was in 1950 when Presbytery agreed to a request from the Council to appoint an ordained Malawian as assistant to the Education Secretary as well as to appoint representatives on a joint Education Committee. The first persons to serve on this committee were Revs SA Mvula, N Katengeza and A Sendera. In addition, the role and responsibilities of the ministers, qualified evangelists and church elders were outlined. It was their task to see to it that the Christian character of the schools was retained. These decisions were also partly the outcome of a long discussion held at a meeting of Presbytery the previous year in which ways were discussed to bring school and Church closer together and to enable teachers and local church leaders to co-operate in greater harmony. The fact that teachers were being paid was not to create the impression that duties such as teaching Sunday school and catechumen classes were paid jobs.<sup>130)</sup>

127. Ibid., 62/1941, p.575; Nkhoma Presbytery 1941, pp.8-9.

128. CCA S5 15/6/11/7: Annual education report, 1942.

129. Council minutes, 69/1947, pp.711f, 714; see also above, p.173f.

130. Nkhoma Presbytery 1950, pp.17-18, 19, 20; 1949, pp.15-17.

In these ways the Church came a long step nearer to assuming full responsibility for education. The next step was a decision of the Council to form school Committees in each congregation under the chairmanship of an ordained Malawian. Its duties would include dealing with such matters as transferring of teachers, school attendance, relationship between teachers and the public, school buildings and teachers' housing. Presbytery was notified and agreed. At the same time the Council agreed to request Presbytery to take all Central schools under its jurisdiction.<sup>131)</sup> This was done in pursuance of the policy of placing more and more responsibility in the hands of the Church, but also in view of developments in the country's educational policy. Presbytery would become the proprietor, and teachers employees of the Church just like evangelists and ministers. They would be paid from a Presbytery fund. The Assistant Education Secretary, then Rev. KS Kalumo, became the Education Secretary of Nkhoma Presbytery. Presbytery accepted this proposal and agreed in 1954 to take over fifty-four such schools.<sup>132)</sup> Three years later all schools were placed under the jurisdiction of local congregations and the concept of Presbytery schools was dropped. The Mission would continue supporting and helping with funds and personnel but henceforth the work would come fully under the control of the Church. All teachers would be regarded as Church employees and the local Church Session would have oversight over them. A Synod<sup>133)</sup> Education Committee was appointed replacing the Education Committee of the Mission Council and it became responsible for both the administration of schools and for the education funds. This was worked out over the next few years and the transfer effected. The Council continued to conduct some of the work but on behalf of Synod while several Malawians were appointed in important educational positions including Mr John Gwengwe as assistant Education secretary and Messrs Hardwick Kachaje and Moffati Chitedze as school supervisors.<sup>134)</sup> The last responsibility to be placed under Synod was the control of the William Murray Institute in 1960.<sup>135)</sup> With this the transfer of education to the Church was complete, at least in theory, as in some instances expatriates were still holding key positions and the

131. Council minutes 77/1954, pp.1020-21; Nkhoma Presbytery 1954, pp.28,29.

132. Ibid., 1954, p.28.

133. Nkhoma Presbytery was constituted a Synod in August 1956.

134. Council minutes 79/1956, p.1113; 82/1959, p.1209; CCA S5 15/6/11/7: Annual education reports, 1954, 1957, 1958; 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports, 1955, 1957, 1960; Nkhoma Synod minutes 1958, no.18, 50, 61.

135. Council minutes 83/1960, p.1245.



Mission Council was still participating in the work, but in the capacity of assistant to the Synod.

These final moves took place during a period of great upheaval within the Nkhoma Synod, where a number of factors were playing a role in bringing about the final complete hand-over of all the Council's activities and functions to the Synod and the dissolution of the Council in 1962. In this final stage the teachers, notably the Nkhoma Synod Teachers Association, emerged as a strong group not only in exerting pressure on the Council to finalise the process of hand-over, but also in revealing a considerable degree of antipathy towards the established leadership in the Church and Synod, the "gerontocracy" consisting of old ministers, whom they regarded as mere "puppets" of the missionaries, while they, the teachers, the "cream of the Mkhoma Synod" regarded themselves as the ones really in a position to play a meaningful role in shaping the future of the Church.<sup>136)</sup> This aspect will be dealt with in a later chapter.

## 2.7 Conclusion

The educational aspect of Mission has been dealt with in some detail as it not only was the most extensive enterprise of the Mission, but also of the greatest direct significance for the emergence, growth and life of the Church. Schools were literally the seedbeds or nurseries of the Church, providing up to 90% of the new members each year; and the training of teachers and evangelists was only one step in a whole scheme which was in due course to provide the leadership in the Church, a very vital element in pursuing the ideal of a self-governing Church.

Educational work was regarded as an instrument of mission work in promoting evangelism, knowledge of the Scriptures and an ability to read the Bible. To attain these aims a high level of education was not initially regarded as necessary and standards were only raised as the need arose or, and perhaps more so, as Government subsidy requirements prescribed. This conservative approach to education was part of the concept included in the DRC policy on mission which emphasised the need to maintain the social and cultural milieu of a people and not to disrupt society by lifting individuals out of their society to such an extent that they become estranged and uprooted and lose interest in serving their own people. Society as a

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136. For copies of correspondence from the NSTA executive committee during 1960, see CCA S5 15/6/11/7.

whole should rather be raised gradually, which of necessity meant a slower rate of progress towards higher levels of education. Leaders (teachers and others) were trained only far enough to be constantly able to continue helping the wider group to develop. This policy was extremely successful as far as creating a "Bible loving and Bible reading" people and assured a strong and Biblically founded Christianity. The Mission succeeded to a large extent in creating an integrated society where people were able to retain their identity as members of their society. There were some grave drawbacks in such a policy. The most significant was that it did not produce sufficient nor able leaders soon enough, either for the country or for the Church. This, together with a fairly strong paternalistic attitude which was evident in this mission, resulted in delays in the process of establishing effective self-government in the Church. When the time came for the Church to really take the lead in matters there were not many really qualified leaders educationally. Men of experience and wisdom and deep spiritual commitment were there, but what was often lacking was efficient know-how and the ability to cope with the problems of modern Church administration and government. Theologically too, there was before 1960 no single person who had been enabled to take further studies. The Mission did provide scholarships for university training for some of its graduates from Blantyre Secondary School, such as Mr John Tembo who studied at Roma University in Lesotho from 1955 and was appointed to the staff of the Robert Blake Secondary school at Kongwe in 1960, as well as Mr Augustine Mnthambala who studied for a B.A. degree and diploma in education in India from 1954, and afterwards took a M.A. course in the USA, and was subsequently also appointed to the staff of the Robert Blake Secondary School, and in 1963 succeeded Dr JK Louw as headmaster of the school.<sup>137)</sup>

The difficulty with theological training lay partly in the fact that the Church was failing to draw men with higher qualifications to the ministry,<sup>138)</sup> with the result that there were none with a sufficient level of education to qualify for studies at a higher academic level. This, of course, was a problem not only in the Nkhoma Synod but in most of the other missions as well, and was to some extent the fruit of a delayed action on the part of the Colonial Government to provide facilities for secondary education. But it is perhaps true to say that the Nkhoma

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137. Cf. Council minutes 79/1956, p.1111; 80/1957, pp.1144f; 76/1953, p.985; 77/1954, p.1024; 79/1956, p.1112; 80/1957, p.1142. On Mnthambala see Nuusbrief uit Malawi, March 1966.

138. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1951.

Mission was less progressive as far as the higher training of leaders was concerned than the other larger Missions in the country.

While the basic concept remained throughout that education was to be an instrument in the work of evangelism and building up of the Church, there was some broadening of viewpoints after 1940 when the fact also began to be recognised that education had to have a wider aim, namely that of producing leaders with a Christian foundation to serve the country and society as a whole. Although not many of the older generation products of the Nkhoma Mission have featured in national spheres as leaders, several did serve on the Central Provincial and Protectorate Councils. Amongst such Rev. Namon Katengeza is perhaps the most outstanding example. Later Rev. KS Kalumo also served on the Provincial Council for the Central Province. Nevertheless, in modern Malawi there is much more evidence of second and third generation products of the Nkhoma Mission and Synod who play a vital role in the country. It would not be wrong to say that the foundations of a strong Christian family laid by the work of this Mission have born fruit to the benefit of the entire country.

### 3. Medical work

Although this aspect of mission work is of less direct significance for the growth and life of the Church, it was a factor in the general development of the people. As a means by which people could be brought into contact with the gospel it served the additional function of an evangelising agent. Not only the Christian atmosphere in a Mission or Church hospital, but also personal contact between patient and christian worker as well as various ways of directly conveying the Christian message to a patient made the medical work part of the evangelising endeavours of the Mission.

Moreover, as a method of showing Christian concern and service to people in need, it served as a means to convey to people the message of Christ's compassion.<sup>139)</sup> Ultimately the highest reason for this work lay in the example of Christ himself and in his command to heal the sick, Luke 9:2. As such it was seen as an essential part of the Christian message and mission to show compassion and care for the sick and suffering.<sup>140)</sup>

139. JA Retief: Ontdekkings in Midde Afrika, pp.153-4.

140. Cf. RL Retief: Mediese werk in ons Nyasa sending (Die Koningsbode, Oct. 1939, pp.303ff).

### 3.1 Brief historical survey

The first medical work was undertaken by ordained men who had followed a short course in medicine either in Edinburgh or at Livingstone College, London in addition to their theological studies. These included AC Murray, WH Murray, AL Hofmeyr, AG Murray, JS Murray, JA Retief and PA Rens. AG Murray in particular laid the foundations of obstetrics at Mlanda.<sup>141)</sup>

The first qualified medical doctor to arrive was Dr WA Murray, brother of Rev. AC Murray, in 1900. He stayed for twelve years and laid the foundation of the medical work. A hospital was built at Mvera in 1903<sup>142)</sup> and various men and women trained as nurses, including Mrs Sara Nabanda who began training in 1909 and served for 34 years. The first nurse was Miss Durrant who arrived in 1904 but was married to Rev. AL Hofmeyr the following year. In 1905 another nurse came out, Miss Haarhoff, followed by another in 1907, Miss Lawrie, and several more in the next few years.

At other stations only small clinics could be run and the medical work of the Mission developed slowly.<sup>143)</sup> When the sleeping sickness epidemic swept the Lakeshore in 1910-12, Dr Murray collaborated with the Government and supervised a quarantine camp near Mvera.<sup>144)</sup>

After the move of the headquarters to Nkhoma a small hospital was built there in 1915 and expanded in 1919.<sup>145)</sup> The hospital at Nkhoma grew with the years into the large main hospital of the Mission. Meanwhile Dr Murray left the country because of ill health and was succeeded by four doctors in succession, including a son of AC Murray, Dr CLL Murray (1923-1927). Thirteen nurses came out between 1908 and 1927.<sup>146)</sup>

141. Ibid., For an account of medical cases treated see CCA P3: Diary AC Murray; also his: Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen aldaar, pp. 212ff.

142. Council minutes 7/1902, p.19.

143. AL Hofmeyr: Het land langs het meer, pp.146-7. See also his complaint on the slow progress of medical work in the DRCM in Malawi (CCA S5 15/6/2/9: AL Hofmeyr to Mission secr., 12/11/1912).

144. Council minutes 20/1910, pp.122-3; CCA S5 15/6/2/16: WH Murray to Mission secr., 19/12/1910.

145. Council minutes 36/1919, p.255.

146. P Pretorius: Medical work of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission in Nyasaland (The Central African Journal of Medicine, Vol.2, no.6, June 1956, p.234).

Initially very little systematic training of Malawian staff took place, but in 1924 it was agreed to introduce a more thorough training. Entrance qualifications for male staff were fixed at Std IV and for females at Std I. By then medical work was being carried out at several stations, in particular at Nkhoma, Mvera and Mlanda.<sup>147)</sup> In 1925 the first lady doctor arrived, Dr Jeanette Murray, also a daughter of AC Murray, followed by Dr Pauline Murray in 1928, a daughter of WH Murray. In the same year Dr RL Retief arrived and stayed for seventeen years.

With an enlarged staff, expansion could take place. New facilities had already been built at Nkhoma in 1926, by 1930 a new hospital was completed at Mlanda, work also continued at Mvera and a hospital was established at Malingunde. By 1929 medical reports were being received from eight stations. The three doctors in the field were stationed at Nkhoma, Mvera and Mlanda respectively.<sup>148)</sup> Work with lepers was started at Nkhoma for which a small government grant of £100 was obtained for building, plus £15 annually. Otherwise the Government gave no medical grants. A camp was set up on the Katete stream near Madetsa and in 1929 there were 110 patients. Numbers later declined and after ten years the leprosarium was closed mainly because the government grant was no longer sufficient (one penny per patient per day). There were only seven full-time patients by then.<sup>149)</sup>

The 1930s saw expansion of the work particularly at Nkhoma and Mlanda. At the latter the hospital built in 1930 gained repute for its training in midwifery and for its child welfare and pre-natal clinic work. The name of Dr Pauline Murray deserves special mention for this. In 1938 the Government gave recognition to the valuable midwifery and welfare work being done at Mlanda by agreeing to give an annual grant of £100.<sup>150)</sup> At Nkhoma Dr Retief, amongst others, began to concentrate on ophthalmology, particularly in the removal of cataracts which in the course of years became a widely appreciated facet of the work at this hospital.<sup>151)</sup> At the same time the hospital extensively developed its surgery work and extended its maternity and TB sections. The training of nurses progressed

147. Ibid.; Council minutes 44/1924, p.333.

148. P Pretorius, op.cit., p.235; Council minutes 45/1925, p.350; 50/1929, p.411.

149. Council minutes 42/1922, p.301; 59/1938, p.529; MNA S1/1709/24: Correspondence on leper work from 1925 on; CCA S5 15/6/8/2: Director of medical services to WH Murray, 3/1/1928; 15/6/1/5: Stegmann to Mission secr., 25/4/1938.

150. MW Retief: Verowerings vir Christus, p.298; CCA S5 15/6/2/17A: WH Murray to Mission secr., 15/3/1938.

151. P Pretorius, op.cit., p.235.

as well.

Work at Mvera hospital declined in the late 1930s due to depopulation of the area. Plans to extend medical work on to the Salima Lakeshore area never quite came off the ground.<sup>152)</sup>

By 1945 the four hospitals were treating 4 960 in-patients, 74 240 out-patients and 1 037 maternity cases.<sup>153)</sup> After Dr Retief's departure in 1945 there was some reorganisation of the work. Mlanda, Mvera and Malingunde no longer had a resident doctor although Mlanda for long continued to take a major share in obstetrics and training of midwives. New rates for hospital fees were introduced and a medical Committee set up by the Mission Council.<sup>154)</sup>

During the 1950s medical work concentrated more and more at Nkhoma while hospitals were still maintained at the other three centres, with smaller clinics at most other Mission stations. Midwifery training was still being done at Mlanda but in 1956 a maternity ward was erected at Nkhoma as well as a children's ward in 1959. The training of midwives was transferred to Nkhoma in 1958 where general nurses were already being trained. Entrance qualifications for nurses were raised to St VI. The training of male medical aides was discontinued in 1959.<sup>155)</sup>

/An important development, the fruit of Dr Retief's interest in eye surgery was the building of an ophthalmic ward in 1955. The hospital at Nkhoma has gained repute all over Central Africa for its eye surgery and in 1954 a grant of £2 800 was obtained from the Native Development and Welfare Fund. The new ophthalmic department was erected, comprising a theatre and general and private wards of 18 beds. It was opened on 4 August 1955 and was later named the Renaldo Retief Eye Ward. A year after opening, a hundred and three operations had already been carried out. The figure rose to 189 in 1957. Dr JJ Eksteen and later especially Dr CJ Bignaut, who arrived in

152. See various plans in Council minutes between 1935 and 1939. For reasons why plans were dropped, see 60/1939, p.549.

153. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1945.

154. Cf. Council minutes 67/1945, pp.664-5; 72/1949, pp.825-7.

155. Ibid., 78/1955, p.1096; 79/1956, p.1115; 81/1958, p.1184; CCA S5 1/1/10: GMC minute 92, entry for 13-16/8/1956; 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1959.

1956 and has continued to the present, excelled in this field.<sup>156)</sup> In due course Dr Blignaut further equipped himself to become a fully qualified ophthalmologist.

Meanwhile new plans were drawn up to start a hospital in a much neglected and densely populated area of the southern Lakeshore near Khola, where 20 000 people lived within a radius of five miles. A plot of eighteen and a half acres was obtained from the Government as well as grants from the Beit Trust Fund and other sources. Building was ready to begin in 1960. Unfortunately the political throes through which the country was going, the anti-South African feeling evident in some circles, opposition to the Federal Government and a mistake by the Government surveyor who plotted out the wrong piece of land, causing alarm amongst the local people who thought they were going to lose some gardens, led to strong opposition. A certain local teacher and some local Party leaders strongly agitated against the planned hospital, bringing a political slant into the issue, and some very virulent attacks were made on the Boer missionaries. Threatening letters were written, one of which attacked the "devils of South Africa" adding that "Jesus himself was not as evil as Boers from South Africa" for trying to take people's gardens away.<sup>157)</sup> The outcome of all the agitation was that first a smaller scheme was planned and finally all plans were dropped and the Beit money and other grants returned. Instead only a clinic would continue at Malembo 25 to 30 km. away.<sup>158)</sup>

### 3.2 Medical work and the Church

The nature of medical work as a specialised kind of work made it difficult for the Church to become directly involved at an earlier stage. Elders, evangelists and others were involved in spiritual work at hospitals and of course many Malawians trained as medical orderlies, midwives and nurses.

156. CCA S5 15/6/2/24: Stegmann to Mission secr., 20/4/1953, cf. Council minute 77/1954, p.1026; 81/1958, p.1184; CCA S5 1/4/4: Nyasa Mission subcommittee, minute 91, entry for 13-16/8/1956; Die Koningsbode, April 1959, pp.5-7.

157. See copy of a letter purportedly written from the Secretariat in Zomba (CCA S5 15/6/10/6: JL Nyengera to Mission Superintendent, 30/6/1960). The writer possibly used a false name and address.

158. For decisions on the scheme between 1954 and 1962 see Council minutes. For final cancellation of plans see Council minutes 85/1962, p.1321.

When the Government opened a leprosarium at Kochirira near Mchinji the Mission planned to erect a small hall or church building for conducting prayers. Nkhoma Presbytery in 1954 agreed to contribute £150 from its Central Fund and in addition request each congregation to donate not less than one pound. A further sum of £25 was voted in the next year.<sup>159)</sup>

Meanwhile Presbytery had appointed a committee in 1953 to investigate ways in which it could involve itself more in the medical work. The committee reported back the following year with a recommendation to start a Presbytery Medical Fund and look for a possible place to start its own medical enterprise. A committee should be appointed to consult with the Medical Committee of the Mission and report back. As it was evident that the Government was taking more and more responsibility for medical work, it was not feasible to start its own scheme and two years later it was agreed to terminate the fund and transfer the balance to the Presbytery Central Fund.<sup>160)</sup>

One of the first definite moves to place more responsibility in the hands of the Church was a decision in 1958 that the medical department would no longer be responsible for housing patients at stations with clinics but that the local congregation and community could provide and maintain such facilities.<sup>161)</sup>

The following year the Council decided to determine ways in which the various auxiliary services could best be applied for the benefit of the Church and appointed a committee which included Mr Grant Nkhoma and Rev. K Kalumo to advise Council on the best way to incorporate medical work into Church, society and Government. Their report in 1960 led to a further decision that Synod itself be asked to appoint the Malawian member of the medical committee, that a medical report be laid before Synod as well, and that all future expansion of medical work be decided upon by the Liaison or Joint committee of Synod and Council. Synod would also be asked to appoint a person to do the spiritual work<sup>162)</sup> at the hospital at Nkhoma and an evangelist was duly appointed.

159. Nkhoma Presbytery 1954, p.15; 1955, p.5.

160. Ibid., 1953, p.21; 1954, pp.13f; 1956, p.17.

161. Council minutes 81/1958, pp.1184-5.

162. Ibid., 82/1959, p.1215; 83/1960, p.1256.



When all responsibilities were transferred to Synod in 1962 the medical work was placed under it as well, with a medical committee under the General Administrative Committee of Synod.<sup>163)</sup>

#### 4. Agricultural and industrial training

There were several reasons why the early missionaries soon began to pay attention to this aspect - a facet of the DRCM work in Malawi in which it distinguished itself from most other Missions. Apart from the obvious, that the early arrivals had no choice but to provide their own vegetables and build their own buildings with whatever simple tools and crafts they had available, training helpers as they went along, there was the fact of the background of these missionaries. Most came from rural farm stock, men who were born and bred in Africa and made their living from its soil,<sup>164)</sup> becoming experts at improvising where more sophisticated tools or machinery was not available. In this they differed from, for example, the missionaries in the Livingstonia Mission, most of whom came from an artisan background, products of the Industrial Revolution.<sup>165)</sup> This to quite some extent explains the difference in approach to industrial training in the two Missions. The one provided a highly sophisticated, machine orientated training far removed from the needs and environments of rural life, while the other concentrated on developing a form of industrial training which would fit in with the needs and potentials of rural Malawi of half a century and more ago.

What further prompted the Mission was, as has been noted in chapter two, the fact that they found it necessary to teach people such skills and crafts in agriculture and manufacturing as would enable them to pay their taxes and provide in their daily needs without necessarily having to leave their homes to work as migrants. The problem of labour migration remained a strong motivation for agricultural and industrial work in the Mission for a long time.<sup>166)</sup>

The reasons for the importance of this "most essential in Mission work" were given by Rev. JA Retief in a paper read before the Fourth General

163. Nkhoma Synod 1962, minute 100.

164. The word Boer in Afrikaans, or its Chewa derivation (Ma)Bunu means nothing more than this, literally a farmer, as also in Dutch.

165. Cf. J McCracken: Christianity and politics in Malawi, pp.178-9.

166. See for example reports of GMC to Cape Synod, Acta 1919, p.32; 1924, p.70.

Missionary Conference in 1924.<sup>167)</sup> These included matters such as fighting and overcoming indolence, preventing great numbers of people from going to the mines in the South rather than working in their own country, ennobling and civilising people, while also assisting the general development of the individual and preventing the negative influence migrants brought back with them which tended to unsettle and uproot. The overall effect would be the economic uplifting of the people in general.

Instead of following a system of apprenticeship to provide artisans for employment in the European sector, the aim was that a person who entered the service of one of the departments, and received a certain amount of instruction, could then choose to stay on for some years or go to work for another employer or set up for himself in a village. This was in particular the case with carpentry as WH Murray explained:

We do not turn out highly skilled artisans, that is not our object. We would far rather see one of our boys setting up for himself as carpenter in his own village and turn out simple doors, windows, tables, chairs, bedsteads, etc. for sale to his neighbours, gradually rising in the scale of civilisation, than have him enter the employment of a European...

They did not, he added, object to the latter,<sup>168)</sup> but that was not their aim as such.

One further important motivation should be sought in the theological background of the DRC missionaries. The Reformed doctrine concerning the ethics of work, including any form of manual work as an honourable and God honouring activity based upon the Divine command,<sup>169)</sup> was bound to influence their views on encouraging manual and other forms of industrial activity. This was part of the reason why pupils as well as trained teachers and evangelists were taught to work with their hands "so that they should not get the impression that manual work is something degrading".<sup>170)</sup>

The further aim in teaching this to teachers was that they would in turn be able to demonstrate to others how to improve their agriculture and in this way help the country as a whole to develop.<sup>171)</sup> These ideals later

167. Report of Fourth General Missionary Conference, 1924, p.20ff.

168. CCA S5 15/6/11/7 (Diverse correspondence): Copy WH Murray to Secretary, Native Education Committee, S. Rhodesia, 6/3/1925.

169. Cf. Gen.1:28; 2:15; Eph.4:28; 1 Thes.4:11; Mark 6:3.

170. AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, p.181.

171. Report of GMC to Cape Synod, *Acta* 1915, p.65.

also found expression in an attempt to develop an agricultural stream in connection with the secondary school planned for Kongwe,<sup>172)</sup> but at that stage, during the 1950s, the political climate was so averse to a thing like letting a student do manual labour that the scheme was shelved. Yet the ideals of the Nkhoma Mission to encourage and instruct people to develop and improve their agriculture and thus help develop the country were exactly what the political leaders of modern Malawi have repeatedly emphasised ever since attaining independence. In this respect the small scale village agriculturalist is one of the most vital factors in the country's economy.

Agricultural work in the Mission got under way after a gift of £1 000 had been received for this work in 1902.<sup>173)</sup> Agriculturalists were sent out the following year and intensive work could begin at several stations. Attempts at coffee production proved an initial success but due to plant diseases could later only be conducted at high altitudes such as at Chinthembwe. More success was achieved with introducing cotton farming on a large scale and later wheat was also produced, but absence of a ready market and transport difficulties hampered these enterprises.<sup>174)</sup> A large variety of fruit trees was introduced and on the higher stations much success was initially obtained especially with peaches, apples, plums and other kinds. Oranges, guavas, nectarines and paw-paws proved very successful.

For many years, from as far back as 1900 when WH Murray brought the first few cows with him, cattle were brought in from time to time from South Africa. These were mostly thoroughbreds of different breeds, Africander, Friesian, Jersey, Shorthorn, Herefords, Paul Angus and Alderney, obtained with the aim of improving local breeds. The Mission itself built up a considerable stock for its own needs such as transport,<sup>175)</sup> ploughing, milk and meat, but the introduction of the new breeds did not in the long run prove successful. Most of the imported animals sooner or later

172. MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 4: Copy Education secretary, Nkhoma to Director of Education, 6/11/1953 and following correspondence.

173. CCA V9 1/1: MMU minutes, entries for 24/6/1902 and 29/10/1903. Council minutes 8/1902, pp.26-7. For agricultural achievements during the first years see above, p.150, n.12.

174. Cf. AC Murray: Ons Nyasa-akker, pp.182,184.

175. For reports of the Transport Department see CCA S5 15/6/11/12. It was formed when wagons were being introduced into the Mission and situated at Mlanda with a view to transportation from the south. A wagon road was opened between Mlanda and Nkhoma (Council minutes 23/1912, p.161).

succumbed to disease or climatic hardships and even their immediate progeny did not prove very hardy. Of ten thoroughbred breeding stock imported between 1942 and 1945 only one remained in 1948. The mission stock likewise diminished from 429 head in 1931 to 164 in 1947, many losses being due to various diseases such as quarter evil and East Coast fever.<sup>176)</sup>

What Murray had found in 1920 that the importation of thoroughbred bulls "hasn't been a conspicuous success," was still true.<sup>177)</sup>

Other types of stock that were imported were donkeys, horses, pigs and Persian sheep. The last two were quite successfully introduced while white Egyptian or "Muscat" donkeys proved their superior worth as riding animals, compared to horses.<sup>178)</sup>

Amongst the industrial enterprises, the basket and cane chairs industry at Mvera was one of the most successful. Many hundreds of persons were trained to make a variety of wicker and cane chairs and other furniture, as well as all sorts of smaller articles from palm leaf. Apart from those directly employed, many more benefitted from supplying the raw materials required, thus creating an economic chain reaction. By 1925 a large number of people were in private business while by 1928 the workshop of Mvera still received orders for as many as 300 chairs a year from many parts of Central Africa.<sup>179)</sup> Then the Mission began to run out of business - because of local competition, which was exactly what the aim was. The workshop was finally closed in 1930 and the manufacturers were advised to continue on their own.<sup>180)</sup> It had become a genuine independent village industry, so significant that in 1939 the Governor referred to it as "the basket and cane weaving industry of this country".<sup>181)</sup> The industry declined somewhat in the fifties but was revived in the mid-1960s when Rev. P Botha, who was then minister at Mvera, started something like an agency to market the products, selling hundreds of kwachas worth of

176. For further information on cattle farming and related matters see CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports, and 15/6/11/11: Reports on animal stock, 1918-1953.

177. CCA S5 15/6/7/1: Copy WH Murray to D Fraser, 10/5/1920.

178. For the use of horses and donkeys for travelling see MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, pp.110-11. Blake even used a riding ox at Kongwe (Nuusbrief uit Malawi, Apr. 1978).

179. See CCA S5 15/6/11/12: for annual reports of basket and chair industry, 1917-1929.

180. CCA S5 1/1/4: GMC minute 59, entry for 25-26/2/1930; Council minutes 52/1931, p.430. The spinning and weaving as well as the shoe making shop were also closed down during that time.

181. Quoted in MW Retief: *Verowerings vir Christus*, p.298.

goods a year, even as far as South Africa. The "agency" was subsequently taken over by a local shopkeeper a few miles from Mvera and a considerable amount of goods continue to be sold through that and other outlets. Many local markets in the Lilongwe-Dowa-Dedza district still offer goods which had their origin in this industry.

Formal agricultural training was incorporated in all educational work, from the small village school all the way up to the Teachers Training Institute. In addition formal industrial training was also introduced and conducted in connection with the Normal School at Nkhoma. In 1926 an agricultural and industrial school was started, offering a three year course in a variety of handicrafts including agriculture, animal husbandry, carpentry, building, shoe making, smith's work, spinning and weaving and first-aid. In due course agriculture and carpentry became the two main activities of this school.<sup>182)</sup> In 1940 a Trade School was started in conjunction with the William Murray Training Institute to train apprentices in carpentry, building, bookbinding, printing and type setting, clerical work and book-keeping. The Industrial school started in 1926 was subsequently incorporated into this scheme.

From a general point of view the diversity and intensity of training in agriculture and village industries reached a peak during the 1920s and elicited the unqualified praise of the Phelps-Stokes Commission, which visited Malawi in April and May of 1924, that "in these two respects (the Dutch Mission) has not its superior in all the Nyasaland schools visited by the Commission"<sup>183)</sup> At the time of this visit the Mission was requested to supply the Government with a report on what it was doing in this respect. The report from which an extensive excerpt is given below, provides a good overall picture of the situation then:<sup>184)</sup>

Agriculture: Ploughing demonstrations were being given, six ploughs were imported from America while a special plough had been invented by one of the DRC missionaries in Zambia which could be made locally for eight shilling. Visits were undertaken to Central schools giving ploughing and irrigation demonstrations; tree planting, pruning, training oxen and castrating was being carried out. A

182. Cf. Council minutes 44/1924, p.334; 46/1926, pp.360f; 61/1940, p.561; 62/1941, p.579; 68/1946, p.683.

183. T.J. Jones: Education in East Africa, p.212. See in loc. for a description of the various agricultural and industrial activities being conducted at Nkhoma (also quoted in MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, pp.94-5).

184. For copy of report see CCA S5 15/6/8/2: Acting Superintendent to Provincial Commissioner, Lilongwe, 24/4/1924.

beginning had been made with cotton planting schemes and 1 000 lbs of seed had been distributed at Mphunzi, Mvera and Dzenza the previous season. Wheat farming had been introduced to such an extent that the Mission was practically no longer sowing anything for its own use, but buying it from African farmers. Potato farming had become a successful enterprise for village farmers.

Cattle and other stock: Oxen were being trained, as well as the men to handle them, for chiefs and others to use for ploughing cotton and wheat fields, others were sending their cows to the Mission for breaking in for milking while an agricultural missionary paid visits to villages to advise people on breeding and selecting, while at the same time castrating inferior cattle. The progeny of pedigree stock pigs was being distributed at nominal prices.

Building and Carpentry: People were taught brick laying, tiled roofing and improved methods of thatching while thirty five buildings had been erected during the preceding year, using the pisé de terre method. This had elicited widespread interest and requests for moulds were streaming in. Twenty-five men were in training at Nkhoma in carpentry and building while carpentry was also conducted at Mlanda and other stations. The workshop at Nkhoma was manufacturing its own planes and selling them at one third of the price of the imported product, finding an eager market. Spinning wheels and a loom were in use and people were being taught to make them. 185) All types of furniture were also produced.

Wagon building and smith's work: This was being taught at Mlanda with nine men in training and two at the motor garage of the Mission's Transport Department.

Ox wagon drivers: Twenty trained drivers were in service and more apprentices receiving instruction.

Boot shop: Nine people were in training at Kongwe. During the previous year 141 pairs of boots had been manufactured, apart from 380 pairs repaired, as well as 12 hampers for motor cycles, 115 bridles, halters, straps etcetera (for donkeys) and 45 leather suitcases while 18 saddles and harnesses were repaired. People received training in hide tanning and 150 skins were tanned in 1923.

Baskets, chairs and hat making: This had long been conducted at Mvera and here the Mission had attained its object and it had practically become a village industry. The demand was far greater than the supply.

Spinning and weaving: Thirty people were in training of whom 50% were disabled persons, including blind, cripples and deaf-mutes. Headmen from three different districts had sent young men to be trained while a number of villages were ordering hand looms and spinning wheels. Monthly output was 120 yards of cloth, used mainly for manufacturing shirts. In addition knitting, yarn spinning as well as making of door mats and passage runners was taking place.

Soap and oil: Teachers and others were being taught to make soap and to extract oil from castor oil seeds and ground-nuts. During 1923

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185. On the improvisation of spinning wheels see also TJ Jones, loc.cit.

30 000 cakes of soap were made. A hand press oil plant had been obtained for this purpose. Annual circulation of oil seeds amounted to £300.

Tailoring: This had commenced recently and two men were in training.

Lime: Near Nkhoma and elsewhere people had been taught to burn and stake limestone.

Printing and bookbinding: Ten people were in training at the press at Nkhoma.

Medical staff: Male orderlies and female midwives were being trained.

Tree planting:<sup>186</sup>) Twenty thousand bluegum and cedrella tauna trees had been planted during the preceding season and a great many seedlings distributed. Lectures were given to school children on the benefits of tree planting.

Model villages: These existed at most stations where teachers came to stay with their families. <sup>187</sup>) In connection with such a village, agricultural and industrial work was conducted while the wives received instruction in hygiene, soap making, sewing, child welfare, amongst others.

Normal school: The seventy-four students also received instruction in carpentry, building (pisé de terre), hygiene, soap making, horticulture and agriculture, seed selection and soil preparation.

Girls' homes: Five homes, averaging 20 per home offered a three-year course which, apart from formal schooling, also included hygiene, laundry, sewing, knitting, soap and candle making, use of starch, pottery and oil extraction.

Mthenga: This bi-monthly magazine with a circulation of 3 000 regularly included articles on agriculture and industrial work.

The agricultural activities and different forms of industrial training were conducted for longer or shorter periods and with varying success. Some

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186. Forestry schemes were launched at several stations, including Nkhoma, Kongwe, Mlanda and Livlezi. Thousands of seedlings were distributed annually to the people (See brochures: The DRCM in Nyasaland, p.4; Ons Nyasa sending, p.10). The Forestry schemes eventually grew into a large enterprise under a separate department (Council minutes 72/1949, pp.827ff) and Chinthembwe in particular was vastly developed. Hundreds of thousands of trees were planted, mostly Mlanje cedars, blue gum and pine, while a coffee scheme was started with 3 750 trees (CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports, 1948, 1949, 1952). In addition the large Nthunda forest near Ntcheu was bought from the ZIM in 1950 and a big timber sawing scheme established which supplied at least 144 000 cubic feet of timber during the first few years. The saw plant was later transferred to the workshop at Nkhoma. (For annual forestry reports, 1948-1960 see CCA S5 15/6/11/11.)
187. For a description of such a model Christian village see TJ Jones, op. cit. p.213.

industries were more readily adopted into village life, others gradually disappeared as modern technology and the spread of commerce made imported articles more readily available. It would be difficult to assess the overall success and long term effect of this agricultural and industrial enterprise. It is hardly something that could be measured in statistics but the contribution this made to the general agricultural and village industrial development of this part of the country is perfectly evident to this day. From pisé de terre or even burnt brick and tile roofed buildings<sup>188)</sup> found even in remote villages, to scores of village carpenters scattered across the country, from cane and palm leaf products in market places to improved agricultural methods and animal husbandry, from groves of blue gum and Cedrella Tauna trees to one-wheeled ox ploughs, from the small scale village farmer whose plot of fifty orange trees is so successful that he fears reprisal from jealous neighbours to the impressive and ingenious farming scheme of a member of Parliament with 5 000 banana trees planted and preparations under way for another 12 000 to be planted complete with pumped irrigation from a nearby river in addition to a sideline with onion farming which raises K400 annually, and who declares that "everything I know about farming I learnt from S-" (a DRC agricultural teacher), and on to large estate owners making a success of commercial maize and tobacco farming - all these help to fill in the picture of a scheme which has brought about lasting effects in the country. And then mention has not even yet been made of the many successful and educated Malawians of modern Malawi whose education was once paid for from a vegetable patch, a potato field, a carpenter's shop or the sale of home-made baskets and chairs.

It is hardly likely that the assumption of ML Chanock is correct, as far as the DRC Mission is concerned, that the production of cash crops in Malawi was carried out by those least affected by Christianity. It is no doubt correct to say<sup>189)</sup> that this assumption

should only be provisionally accepted until such time as the relationship of the Dutch Reformed Church and leading African farmers is explored more thoroughly. The DRC economic ideology - was almost certainly more appropriate for budding rural entrepreneurs than Livingstonia's industrially oriented approach.

188. The invariable distinction in style of a tile roofed house built by a person with DRCM connections and one with Roman Catholic connections is that the former almost always uses flat roof tiles while the Catholics introduced round shute shaped tiles which interlock by alternately being placed face upwards or downwards. The same applies to schools built respectively by the two Missions.

189. J McCracken: Politics and Christianity in Malawi, p.252, n.140.



Before coming to the end of this paragraph, it is appropriate to mention one more facet of Mission work, namely the introduction of a number of small stores on various stations. Originally this was done to promote local trade as was the purpose of opening weekly markets at several stations where people could barter products and produce.

In early times when cash was not yet available payment was usually made in kind, particularly cloth, where the measure was half a yard or a cubit. The Chewa word was chamkono.<sup>190)</sup> To facilitate payment, the Mission cut out its own tin discs, about one inch in diameter and punched with the letters MM for Mvera Mission. Complete with a hole in the centre for stringing, several thousands of these discs were circulated for a number of years and could be used to obtain various articles of trade kept in stock at the Mission such as cloth, salt, beads, hoes and many others, as well as for bartering amongst each other. It had the equivalent value of a cubit's length of cloth and soon was called chamkono. With the coming of Government regulations concerning payment in cash and the arrival of other business interests who objected to the use of these Mission coins, they were withdrawn in 1909.<sup>191)</sup>

But the small Mission stores remained, mainly because of the fact that they could make goods available to both missionaries and Africans at a reasonable price and particularly because it was a way of protecting people against exploitation by unscrupulous traders coming into the country.<sup>192)</sup> It also had educational value as it could give people an idea of modern trading methods and they could learn the value of cash payments and honest business dealing.<sup>193)</sup> In due course better planning and organisation became necessary and eventually a full-time bookkeeper cum business manager was appointed. After the difficulties of the War years some favoured giving up this work entirely, but in 1920 the General Mission Committee suggested that a limited trading company should rather be formed to take over the entire scheme, something like what the African Lakes Corporation had originally been. The entire Council was completely against this, stating that as a purely commercial enterprise it would no longer serve the original aim of helping people and keeping prices low and would do more harm than good as it would soon

<sup>190.</sup> The word is derived from the Chewa mkono, forearm.

<sup>191.</sup> WH Murray: Op pad, pp.168-170; also JL Pretorius: An introduction to the history of the DRCM, p.373.

<sup>192.</sup> CCA V9 2/1: WH Murray to J du Plessis, 6/11/1905.

<sup>193.</sup> TJ Jones: Education in East Africa, p.213.

deteriorate into a mere business enterprise as the ALC had done. Quite a controversy resulted but in the end the GMC agreed to continue in the way the Council was proposing and that it become a separate department under the direct control of the Mission accountant.<sup>194)</sup> A new business manager was appointed but after some years new difficulties arose, partly because of certain actions and attitudes of the business manager and in 1925 Council proposed possible closing down of the department. After further negotiations with the GMC which was at first not convinced that this was necessary it was finally agreed to do so in 1927. One of the main arguments for this move was that there was now sufficient competition amongst commercial business enterprises to keep prices at a reasonable level and prevent exploitation. It was also felt that it was quite undesirable to continue as there was a growing suspicion amongst many people that missionaries were simply using the store to make money for themselves. Negotiations were taken up with a local business concern, Du Toit Brothers to take over the stock and run its own stores on or near Mission stations.<sup>195)</sup> The small Mission-run store had served its purpose and was no longer necessary.

#### 5. Work amongst women and girls

This aspect of the work in Malawi formed part of the DRCM's wider scheme to build up Christian families which would form the basis of the Christian Church. From the beginning the work amongst women and girls was supported by the Women's Missionary League (Vrouesendingbond) of the DRC in South Africa. All the lady workers sent out to work in Malawi were likewise the financial responsibility of this women's organisation. The lady workers, apart from medical people, were mostly either teachers whose task was to assist mainly at station schools, help with the training of village school teachers and maintain contact with them at their schools, or lay workers whose responsibility was in particular with girls, boarding homes, village evangelism and women's instruction classes. Wives of missionaries also did a great voluntary work in participating in those activities, and later more especially in connection with the Church Women's Organisation

194. CCA S5 15/6/2/17: WH Murray to Mission secretary, 18/2/1920, 28/12/1920; 1/1/3: GMC minutes 22,23,27, entry for 7-9/9/1920; Council minutes 38/1920, pp.273-4, 40/1921, pp.278-80.

195. Council minutes 45/1925, pp.352-3; 47/1927, p.370; CCA S5 15/6/2/17: WH Murray to Mission secr., 23/3/1926, 24/9/1926; 1/1/3: GMC minute no.4, entry for 23-4/2/1926; no.3, 17-19/8/1926; no.4, 22-24/2/1927; no.14, 23-25/8/1927.

(Chigwirizano) and the instruction given to girls at puberty (Chilangizo) which had taken the place of the traditional initiation ceremonies.

The first boarding home for girls at Mvera, begun in 1895 by Miss Martha Murray,<sup>196)</sup> set the pattern for similar boarding homes set up at most other stations in due course. By 1927 there were homes at eight different stations. The aim of such homes which girls could attend for three years, was to seek to lead them to faith in Christ and build up a good christian character by impressing upon them principles of obedience, orderliness and helpfulness, while also training them as future wives and mothers of Christian families and as useful members of society. Thus much attention was paid to practical matters including hygiene, sewing, cooking and handwork, keeping in mind the necessity that the methods taught should be able to be adopted in practice in daily village life. A further need was also met by these Christian boarding homes and that was that men accepting Christianity would be able to obtain Christian wives.<sup>197)</sup> The home at Mvera produced four of the first six women to be baptised in 1897. The aim of the course provided at these boarding homes was defined as being four-fold, i.e. educational, physical (hygiene), industrial and spiritual.<sup>198)</sup>

The impact and influence of these homes was already reflected in the reports at the General Missionary Conference in 1910.<sup>199)</sup> From the point of view of the Christian impact on society this was even more the case because of the significant role played by women in the matrilineal Chewa society. Both Christian and pagan girls were taken in, as far as possible in equal numbers.<sup>200)</sup>

Through the years the value and fruit of these institutions was constantly evidenced while there was much demand on the part of Christian men for brides trained at these homes.<sup>201)</sup> In due course the hostel at Nkhoma was expanded to also cater for boarders attending the girls' Central school

196. For a brief history see MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 36: Nkhoma Hostel register.

197. Cf. Council minutes 16/1908, pp.99-100; AC Murray: Nyasaland en mijn ondvindingen, pp.299-302; MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, pp.78-80.

198. Cf. Council minutes 42/1922, p.304.

199. Report of Third General Missionary Conference, 1910, p.53.

200. Council minutes 41/1921, p.294.

201. For annual reports on Girls' Homes see CCA S5 15/6/11/10; also 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports; MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 39: Miscellaneous papers 1947-1961.

established there in 1942.

The emphasis placed on the work amongst girls by this Mission is also reflected in the fact that it succeeded in enrolling a higher percentage of girls in its schools than other Missions. This was clear already as early as 1906 when the number of girls enrolled in DRCM schools amounted to 44,5% of the total school enrolment compared to an overall average for the country of 35,6%. The UMCA came second with 39%, followed by Livingstonia Mission with 33% and Blantyre Mission with 21%. By 1945 the position was still much the same with the Nkhoma Mission having a 40% girls' enrollment in assisted schools and 47% in unassisted schools. The overall for the country was then 34% and 42% respectively. At that stage the UMCA was slightly ahead with 43% in assisted schools, but behind in unassisted schools with 45%. All the other Missions were lower except one smaller Mission, the SAGM where the percentage of girls was just slightly higher than that of the DRCM, but its enrolment figures as such were of course far lower.<sup>202)</sup> The importance of providing education for girls was also reflected in decisions to establish girls' schools at Nkhoma and Dzenza. This was done in order to avoid the situation developing where only boys were educated, while girls lagged behind, further prompted by an increased demand from girls and their parents for such higher training facilities, as well as the plans of Government to develop educational facilities for girls.<sup>203)</sup>

A problem which was encountered was the, from a Christian point of view, undermining effect of traditional initiation rites for girls which play a very important part in the social organization of the matrilineal Chewa, Chinamwali. Instead of trying to introduce a more Christian atmosphere and Christian elements into it, the unanimous view of Christians was that it would be better to introduce a Christian counterpart altogether separate and distinguished from the traditional rites. Thus a Christian imitation ceremony, Chilangizo, was introduced and developed in close collaboration with the Church and with Presbytery. Because of the involvement of the Church in this matter it will be dealt with more fully in chapter five.

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202. Calculated from tables in J Johnston: Robert Laws of Livingstonia, p.144; and in Report of the Department of Education of the Nyasaland Protectorate, 1945, Table 10, p.19.

203. Council minutes 64/1943, p.612.

Apart from work with girls, much was done from the beginning to meet the needs of adult and older women. Literacy and sewing classes were started, the first one, at Mvera, soon numbering over 70. By 1900 there were 180 in this group, while other groups sometimes grew to over 200. Their position in society was one of considerable importance. They were the instructresses of younger girls while their political influence and even religious roles in traditional rites, as well as the fact that the woman and mother often exercised a stronger influence in conserving traditional concepts and rites, further emphasised their importance. This was so because of living in a society where male influence was not only diminished by the matrilineal system but also by the fact that the migrant labour system which soon became a part of Malawi society, took men away from home for long periods.<sup>204)</sup>

Thus work was done with women through instruction groups, as well as prayer and Bible study groups, from which grew the later well-known and widely practised system of Mlozo classes: Bible study session groups which met once a week. Furthermore, during the winter months lady workers would go out in teams and camp at outlying villages to do evangelistic work.<sup>205)</sup> At these camps contact was made with groups of women and girls of all backgrounds, but especially with former inmates of boarding homes. Some camps took the form of Bible training courses while others specialised in doing knitting, simple cookery and even laundry demonstrations, with an emphasis on religious meetings and personal work with individuals. Malawian Christian women such as teachers' wives also accompanied such teams on occasion. In 1956 it was reported that camps had been held at thirty-five different places.<sup>206)</sup>

This work of the DRCM amongst women and girls was recognised for its quality already in 1910 at which time the Mission had eleven lady workers in the field compared to four in Livingstonia Mission. One of Livingstonia's representatives reported: "In work amongst women they have taken the lead and endeavour to place two lady workers on each station especially for work amongst women."<sup>207)</sup>

204. Cf. Die Koningsbode, July 1939, p.207f; The Aurora, 1/2/1900, p.3.

205. For example of a schedule of workers going to various places for camps see Council minutes 70/1948, pp.758-9.

206. Cf. Report of Sixth General Missionary Conference, 1949 (Women's section), p.16; CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1956.

207. AC Murray: Ons Nyasa-akker, p.211, quoting Dr Donald Fraser.

In due course a Women's Guild (Chigwirizano) was formed under the guidance of lady missionaries<sup>208)</sup> and the Women's World Day of Prayer introduced. By 1941 it was reported that the women already regarded this day as their own. At that stage a beginning had been made with the training of three Malawian women as special social and religious workers in their own Church.<sup>209)</sup> They were called otumikira and worked with congregations. The three who were trained in 1942 did some practical work afterwards. Ten years later another group was selected for training, first at Mphunzi and then transferred to Nkhoma. Afterwards they worked under supervision of local Church councils. In 1955 the training of otumikira was established at Malingunde.<sup>210)</sup>

At the General Missionary Conference of 1949 the following activities were reported in connection with work amongst women: Chigwirizano (Women's Guild), training of social workers, Bible Study (Mlozo) classes, teaching on how to raise children in a Christian family, training of Christian women to evangelise others, child welfare and ante-natal care and instruction at hospitals and camps during August and September. Articles regularly appeared on such matters in Mthenga, the magazine published at Nkhoma.<sup>211)</sup>

During the following years important progress was made towards establishing a school at Malingunde for young girls planning to get married. Plans were developed for appointing full-time expatriate organisers for women's work. They were to concentrate in particular on outlying areas, the training of otumikira, conducting courses and conferences with women and co-ordinating the work in general. They were to work closely with congregations in connection with the training of leaders such as alangizi (instructresses for the chilangizo) and leaders of the Women's Guild. In principle it was hoped to appoint one person for each of the three Presbyteries.<sup>212)</sup> In practise this did not work out. More than two suitable persons could never

208. On Women's Guild see further ch. 5.

209. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1942; cf. Council minutes 60/1939, p.545.

210. *ibid.*, 75/1952, p.959; 77/1954, p.1020; 78/1955, p.1073; CCA S5 15/6/1/5: Stegmann to Mission secr., 28/1/1952.

211. Report of the Sixth General Missionary Conference, 1949 (Women's section), pp.14ff; cf. a booklet written by WH Murray in 1918: Maleredwe a ana a akristu. It has been a favourite for more than sixty years.

212. For a scheme of their work see Council minutes 75/1952, pp.954-5; 80/1957, p.1148; CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1955, 1960.

be found at any one time and after the change-over in 1962 it became even more complicated for an expatriate to continue such work, while there were very few Malawian women who were able or willing to do something like this.

One further aspect of this work was the training given to wives of teachers. This was done while living with their husbands in the model Christian village such as at Nkhoma, in order to enable them to take their place alongside their husbands and later disseminate what they had learned. Emphasis was placed on the usual, such as hygiene, domestic lessons, child welfare and care and nutrition.<sup>213)</sup>

The wives of students studying to become evangelists or ministers likewise received special training almost from the very beginning. This work culminated in the establishment of the Yoswa<sup>214)</sup> school for theological students' wives at Nkhoma where training is given in Bible subjects, the duties of the pastor's wife, domestic science and child welfare and elementary school subjects for those who had had little or no formal school training.

The devoted work done over many years amongst the women of Malawi undoubtedly contributed greatly to the upbuilding of a Christian character and the establishing of Christian principles in the home and family life of Christian families. The role women play in the life of the Church today particularly through the Womens' Guild, is a living evidence of the rich dividends the work done amongst them has paid off.

## 6. Literature work

This "auxiliary" service was very much a supporting ministry in the three main areas where the work of the DRCM was concentrated. The three-pronged attack launched after 1904, namely the development of widespread education and mass literacy through the village schools, the concentration on teaching rural agriculture and village industries and the work amongst women and girls could all be conducted with that much greater effectiveness because of the availability of a variety of literature in the vernacular.

213. For a detailed description see JG Steytler: African village schools, pp.232-4.

214. The school building was erected with money donated by a Mr and Mrs Joubert in South Africa in memory of their three year old child, Josua. See further Nuusbrief uit Malawi, Oct. 1978.

The first booklets produced as early as 1897 by AC Murray<sup>215)</sup> were printed at Livingstonia or at Blantyre, even in Cape Town, until the Mission began its own small printing press at Mvera in 1907. The press was bought in Scotland with a gift from a person at Stellenbosch and the first publication actually to come off it was the Bible reading almanac for 1908. Mr. Anderson Kadzichi, who had been trained to type by Mrs WH Murray, became the first printer. Years later he became the head African printer in the Lusaka Government Printing works.<sup>216)</sup>

After the headquarters were moved to Nkhoma in 1913, the press continued at Mvera for some years. When new machines became necessary, new premises were set up at Nkhoma in 1917. Under the management of Mr Petrus van Wyk who came out in 1915, the printing department grew into one of the largest and most successful departments of the Mission. Over the years it showed regular profit and could continue to expand in size and production. By 1929 it employed 70 people and had equipment and stock to the value of £3 000. Fifteen years later this figure had doubled to £6 000 and the building itself comprised 5 000 square feet (464,5 sq.m.).<sup>217)</sup> By then the press was publishing more titles and greater numbers than any other Mission in Malawi and not only supplied all the needs of the DRCM and the Nkhoma Presbytery but had become so widely known that it also handled printing orders from practically all the Missions in Malawi,<sup>218)</sup> several Missions in Zambia, the Salisbury DRCM, the Nyasaland Government and Churches working amongst the Malawians on South African mines. During the second World War many books and tracts were sent to the front, including 800 copies of each edition of Mthenga. This literature was greatly appreciated by chaplains.<sup>219)</sup> As this work continued to grow, reorganisation became necessary and in 1952 it was decided to set up a separate department, to be called the Bookshop and Publishing department, apart from the Printing department.<sup>220)</sup>

215. For particulars see above, p.150. The first editions of Nyimbo za Mulungu and Mwambi wakale were printed at the Cape, respectively in 1900 and 1899.

216. JL Pretorius: An introduction to the history of the DRCM in Malawi, p.375.

217. For annual reports from 1916 on see CCA S5 15/6/11/3, and 15/6/8/7; also 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1945; AC Murray: Ons Nyasaland, p.28; MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, p.89.

218. For names of at least eight Missions in Malawi supplied with books, see MW Retief, loc.cit.

219. See appreciation expressed by Rev. AB Doig, War chaplain in East Africa, quoted in Annual general report, 1942 (CCA S5 15/6/11/8).

220. For details of arrangements see Council minutes 75/1952, p.958.



The Mission also co-operated closely with the DRCM of the Orange Free State in Zambia, supplying them with virtually all their requirements in the field of literature. In 1958 the magazines Mthenga and Muuni (Zambia) amalgamated and in the following years negotiations took place to form a joint publishing and printing company to be called the Petro Press, in appreciation for printer Van Wyk who had rendered over 40 years' service. The two Missions as well as the Synods of Nkhoma and of the Reformed Church in Zambia (then known as the African Reformed Church) would be shareholders. A joint committee was formed in August 1959 and rules and regulations drawn up.<sup>221)</sup> Nkhoma Synod took out a share of £1 000 which was paid on its behalf by the GMC, with the understanding that it would repay the money out of its share of the profits.<sup>222)</sup>

In view of uncertain conditions prevailing in the two countries the entire situation was to be reviewed in 1964, but even before then it became clear that the changing political conditions in Zambia and Malawi would not make such a joint press a practically viable enterprise. The company was dissolved and the Zambian shareholders were paid out in 1964. Nkhoma Synod became the owner and proprietor of the press.<sup>223)</sup>

The printing and distribution of literature was part of the work of the Mission and Church to build up a Christian society. Not only did the press supply for many years all the readers and other books required in schools of the Mission, but also in the Church. All books except the Bible itself were printed at this press. In due course considerable progress was made towards providing the young Church with religious and theological literature.

The need of providing such literature was recognised from the earliest times and in 1904 AC Murray listed what he saw as the types of books required by the Church: Bible expositions, Scripture biographies, theology, booklets explaining the way of salvation and concerning the Christian life as well as a religious magazine in the language of the people.<sup>224)</sup>

221. For details of negotiations, correspondence etc. see CCA S5 15/6/8/7 and 15/6/9/4. For rules and regulations, Council minutes 83/1960, pp.1260-62.

222. CCA S5 1/4/5: Nyasa subcommittee, minute 25, entry for 23/5/1961.

223. Ibid., minute 5, entry for 10/6/1964; 1/1/11: GMC minute 95, entry for 12-15/8/1963.

224. See his paper in Report of the General Missionary Conference, 1904, pp.30ff. For types of literature required see also JG Steytler: African village schools, p.35.

In due course the Mission set about supplying most of these requirements. The results were not always satisfactory, particularly when translations were merely made, and the necessity was recognised that the ideal to be aimed at was for Africans themselves to produce literature.<sup>225)</sup> Appeals to this effect were made. One outstanding African writer did gain eminence. He was a teacher of the Nkhoma Mission, Mr Samuel J Ntara. In 1933 he submitted a Chewa manuscript Nthondo for a competition sponsored by the Institute of African Language and Culture. His work not only won the first prize but it was also translated and published in English under the title Man of Africa.<sup>226)</sup> The Mission Council agreed to publish 5 000 copies of the Chewa version.<sup>227)</sup> In 1943 Ntara again won a first prize with a book on Chewa history and two years later, following a suggestion from Rev. Stegmann, he published the biography of Andrew Murray Msyamboza, a Chewa chief who had had contact with the earliest missionaries. Nkhoma Press published it in Chewa as Msyamboza and again it was translated into English, this time by Dr HK Banda, later president of Malawi, and Rev. T Cullen Young, formerly a missionary in Livingstonia Synod, under the title A headman's enterprise.<sup>228)</sup> A translation into Afrikaans by Rev. GF Hugo was made, but not published. In 1964 he also published a biography of Rev. Namon Katengeza. Ntara died on 24 July 1979. During his lifetime he had served for 38 years as tutor at the William Murray Teachers' Training College, Nkhoma.<sup>229)</sup>

Over the years the number of published titles increased. Though not spectacular it was more than what other Missions and presses in most of Central Africa produced. The policy of widespread mass literacy, coupled with the requirement that catechumens should possess certain books like the hymn book, the Mbiri Yakale (O.T. History), Catechism and at least a New Testament, assured a continuous market for these books. By 1933, 8 000 Catechisms were being sold annually, 11-12 000 hymn books (Nyimbo za Mulungu) and 10 000 Mbiri Yakale. Fifteen years later annual sales of Catechisms and Mbiri

225. Ibid., p.36; see also paper by same in Report of the Fourth General Missionary Conference, 1924, pp.41ff.

226. For reviews and high praise of this book see quotations in JG Steytler: African village schools, pp.28-9.

227. Council minutes, 56/1935, p.484.

228. For correspondence with USCL concerning the English publication of these two books see MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 4.

229. On the Afrikaans ms. see CCA S5 15/6/12/1: Copy Mission secretary to Church Archivist, 30/3/1965. The translated manuscript is in the same file. See further: Nuusbrief uit Malawi, Oct. 1979.

Yakale had risen to 12-15 000 each and that of hymn books to 25-30 000.<sup>230)</sup>

By 1948 over 100 titles in Chewa were available to Christians<sup>231)</sup> and the degree to which the DRCM in Zambia and Malawi had succeeded in producing literature for the young Church in Chewa can be seen from the list of publications available by 1952. This is apart from school readers and other books on school subjects. With a few exceptions most of these books were published at Nkhoma. The list included the following:<sup>232)</sup>

On Theology and Moral theology:

A book on the Holy Spirit (Mzimu Woyera); one on life after death (Akufa ali kuti?); on Ethics (Cikhalidwe ca mtima); a Chewa version of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress (Za ulendo wamkristu); two Catechisms, including an abbreviated one for elderly people.

On Biblical teaching and exposition:

Old Testament as well as New Testament history (Mbiri yakale; Mbiri ya moyo wa Yesu Kristu); an exposition on the Sermon on the Mount (Ciphunzitso ca pa phiri); a Commentary on Ephesians; a daily Bible reading guide for a whole year (Mlozo); two books containing sermons, both by Rev. Justo Mwale of Zambia (Kusandulika munthu wina; Mphatso yosi-yira otsala).

On Ecclesiology:

General Church history (Eklesia wa Ambuye); history of the Nkhoma Mission and Presbytery (Mbiri ya Misyoni ya D.R.C.), and of the DRCM in Zambia (Kwayera, published in Bloemfontein, RSA); Church Rules and Regulations (Zolamulira za mu Mpingo).

On Practical theology:

Church orders and formularies (Malongosoledwe a mu mpingo); the hymn book containing 334 hymns (Nyimbo za Mulungu); a book on personal evangelism (Makopedwe); for Christian parents (Maleredwe a ana a Akristu); for instructresses at the girls' Christian initiation (Cilangizo ca ana); an enlarged Catechism with notes for teachers; a practical guide for elders (Moyo ndi nchito ya Oyang'anira mpingo, by JS Mwale, Malawi); a refutation of the Watch Tower sect (Ziphunzitso za Acitowala); on Roman Catholicism (Ciroma, published in Bloemfontein).

On general subjects:

Three biographies (Dr Aggrey; Msyamboza; Nthondo; the latter two by SJ Ntara); an English Grammar; a Nyanja Grammar (Cinenedwe); a handbook

230. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1938; GMC report to Cape Synod, Acta 1953, p.388.

231. WH Murray: Mbiri ya Misyoni ya D.R.C., p.70.

232. See notice appended to Nkhoma Presbytery minutes 1952, facing p.26; also JM Cronje: Die selfstandigwording van die Bantoeckerk, p.91.

for Christian teachers (Macitidwe a M'sukulu yachikristu); on agriculture (Malimidwe); on bodily hygiene (Thupi la munthu); on birds (Mbalame zina za m'Nyasaland); a book containing five short stories with a moral content (Coipa citsata mwini), and a Christian magazine called Mthenga.

Most of these books were of relatively small size, few numbering more than 150 pages, some barely a dozen, but they did provide the people with a fair cross section of Christian reading matter. A fairly wide selection of leaflets and tracts were also published, suitable either for evangelistic work or for use by church members.

Two of the above-mentioned publications deserve further mention, the daily Bible reading guide, called Mlozo and the magazine Mthenga. As an aid to encourage Christians to do regular and systematic Bible study, Mlozo originally began to appear in 1903 as a kind of Bible almanac, with Bible readings listed for each day of the year. This almanac was prepared each year. From 1919 short sermon outlines began to appear in Mthenga. First these were only for the Pentecost prayer meetings conducted throughout the Church each year during the ten days between Ascension Day and Whitsunday. Later this was extended to cover the week of Prayer conducted each year during the first week of January and later sermon outlines were regularly published in Mthenga for the weekly Wednesday prayer meetings and the Sunday services. These outlines coincided with the readings listed in Mlozo and it was expected that all who conducted these sermons should follow these outlines.<sup>233)</sup> In addition Bible study groups were formed at all stations, mainly involving pupils and teachers. These "Mlozo groups" met regularly on Sundays and studied the relevant passages from Mlozo. Later a guideline for group leaders was drawn up.<sup>234)</sup> In 1957 the Nkhoma Synodical Committee agreed to publish Mlozo in the form of a 64-page booklet containing not only short expository notes on each day's passage, but also the sermon outlines for midweek and Sunday services for a whole year. Provided 30 000 copies were sold, the price would be only three pennies (two and a half tambala).<sup>235)</sup>

The other and perhaps more significant achievement was the introduction of a religious magazine in 1909. Already in 1904 the General Missionary Conference, in response to an appeal by AC Murray in a paper read before

233. Nkhoma Presbytery 1952, p.18.

234. Council minutes 63/1942, p.592; 69/1947, p.707.

235. In printed minutes of Nkhoma Synod 1958, min.40, pp.11-12.

the Conference, referred to the various Mission Councils the consideration of publishing a monthly magazine as organ of all the Missions.<sup>236)</sup> Nothing came of this until 1909 when the DRCM Council took the following decision.<sup>237)</sup>

Council resolves to publish a Christian Magazine for our evangelists and other Christians, with the object of furthering their spiritual welfare and assisting them in their Christian work, and also of keeping in touch with our Christians outside the country.

It was further agreed to call it Mthenga (The Messenger), to publish it twice per quarter in Chewa at a charge of sixpence (5s) per annum. Rev. WH Murray was appointed as editor. He held this position until his departure from the country in 1937.

The threefold aim of this magazine is clear from the above minute: to help evangelists and other Church workers in their work, to further the spiritual welfare of Christians and to maintain bonds with the many thousands temporarily leaving the country to find employment. In course of time subscribers were to be found in places as far apart as Cape Town and Tanzania. It formed part of the wider policy of the Mission to promote its aims of building up a Christian nation.

Some time after the 1910 General Missionary Conference it became, for a few years, the organ of the CBFM and was published at Blantyre, but from 1915 it was again published at Mvera, and from 1917 at Nkhoma, under the auspices of the DRCM.<sup>238)</sup> After a short break after the War it was once again resumed early in 1922 again under the editorship of Dr WH Murray. He was succeeded by Rev. JJD Stegmann in 1937. Distribution figures rose from 900 in 1911, to 3 500 in 1929, to 6 500 in 1939, to 15 000 in 1959, dropping to under 9 000 in 1960. The 1940s showed very little growth and in 1958 when it amalgamated with its Zambian counterpart Muuni, begun in 1946, there was a considerable drop in the combined subscriptions which threatened the continuation of the magazine, but a grant of £1 000 p.a.

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236. Report of the General Missionary Conference, 1904, pp.30ff. and Resolution no.13, p.110.

237. Council minutes 17/1909, p.109. Transl. from Dutch. For correspondence and other papers related to Mthenga 1909-11 see MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 38.

238. Council minutes 21/1911, p.131; 29/1914, p.190; CCA S5 15/6/8/7: Press and literature report, 1913.

for three years from the GMC helped to tie it over.<sup>239)</sup> Under the joint name of Mthenga ndi Muuni<sup>240)</sup> it continued until a new name Kuunika was adopted in 1960. Since 1951 it had appeared monthly, initially under editorship of Mr JL Pretorius who was succeeded in 1959 by Rev. AC Human.<sup>241)</sup>

Meanwhile African contribution and participation had developed over the years with letters, news reports and short articles appearing. Mr Samuel Ntara as assistant editor also contributed much towards the editing, sometimes virtually carrying all the responsibilities of editing.<sup>242)</sup> In 1960 the Nkhoma Synod Committee agreed that the editor should henceforth be a Malawian, reiterating that it should be an ordained person who had first to undergo some further training.<sup>243)</sup> In 1963 Rev. GA Kachaje was appointed as first full-time Malawian editor.

Although this magazine was never spectacular, at times barely managing to survive, it nevertheless played a very important part in the life of the Church, encouraging lonely village school teachers, enriching the lives of Christians and binding migrant workers to their home Church. Its value was recognised by Victor Murray, writing twenty years after its inception and describing it as "the best magazine of its kind that I have seen in Africa".<sup>244)</sup> He specially made favourable mention of the variety of subjects dealt with in any one particular edition.

Perhaps the greatest literary contribution of this Mission was its share in providing the country with a translation of the Bible in, as it was then called, Union Nyanja. The interest and concern for providing the Word of God to the people of Malawi in their own language, is evidence of the fact that implanting knowledge of God's Word was seen as one of the most important

239. CCA S5 1/1/10: GMC minute 137, entry for 18-21/8/1958; 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports for the respective years. See also printing reports in 15/6/11/13. The figures for 1957 and 1960 include Zambian subscriptions. The total Malawi subscription had dropped to 5 300, only 7% of the total church membership (Nkhoma Synod committee minute 5, entry for 24/11/1960).

240. On the amalgamation see Council minutes 81/1958, p.1180.

241. Ibid., 74/1950, pp.907,909; 78/1955, p.1083; 80/1957, p.1162; 82/1959, p.1228.

242. Cf. CCA S5 15/6/11/13: Report of literature committee, 1955.

243. In minutes of Nkhoma Synod 1960, minute 47, p.35; and Synod committee minute 18, entry for 11 Jan. 1961.

244. AV Murray: The school in the bush, p.89. See also lengthy excerpt in MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, pp.87-8.

aims of the work.

Although there were a few attempts by various Missions prior to 1900 to produce New Testament translations, none of these were very satisfactory.<sup>245)</sup> Laws had completed a Nyanja New Testament by 1886, but it was linguistically very poor, while Dr G Henry translated Genesis in 1893, and AC Murray Esther in 1894. In 1898 the Yao New testament was completed by the Blantyre Mission while the UMCA had by 1900 done most of the New Testament in what was called Eastern Nyanje, a dialect not well known to the west of the Lake.

Thus it was that an important step was taken in 1900 when representatives of several Missions met at Mangoche (then Fort Johnston) to arrange for a joint translation which would be understood in every part of the country where Nyanja was spoken, from Kasungu in the north to Nsanje in the south. All the Missions except the UMCA were in favour of such a venture. A good deal of correspondence and discussion took place on the matter prior to the meeting of 1900. Laws evidently was not quite agreeable to the suggestion of others on what kind of translation was necessary and held a higher opinion of his own translation than did others.<sup>246)</sup>

The first meeting of the "Chinyanja Bible Translations Committee" took place on 26 May 1900. Six persons, representing Blantyre, Mvera, Livingstonia and the ZIM were present with Hetherwick in the chair and AC Murray as secretary. Others present were Revs Mc Alpine and R Blake and Messrs Hamilton and Galloway (ZIM). The meeting resolved that "a fresh translation of the Bible be undertaken with the assistance of such versions of certain portions as are already in use". Various practical details of method and orthography were also agreed upon.<sup>247)</sup> The second meeting took place at Khondowe from 12-27 October 1900.

It was further agreed that different missionaries would translate different books but in practice very little was produced during the next few years.

245. See R Kilgour: The Bible for a million Africans (in WJW Roome: A great emancipation, pp.57-60).

246. See correspondence between various missionaries in CCA S5 15/6/2/16 and P3 3/2; also debate carried on in various issues of The Aurora during 1898 and 1899. Various contributions continued to appear on the Bible translation work during the next few years; also items in Life and Work in British Central Africa, Oct. 1898 and several editions following.

247. For minutes of this meeting see *ibid.*, June-July, 1900. Copies of minutes of first and subsequent meetings also in CCA S5 15/6/12/1.

AC Murray translated Matthew which appeared in print in 1901 and was working on other NT Books while WH Murray was busy on Exodus. The DRCM members however urged their Home Committee to appoint a full-time translator and the committee considered asking AC Murray, who had had to leave the country due to ill health of his wife, to return to Malawi for a year or two to complete the New Testament.<sup>248)</sup> Unfortunately he became ill and the newly formed General Mission Committee of the DRC agreed to relieve WH Murray of his local duties as minister and head of Mvera station and request him to devote himself fully to translation work. For this purpose Rev. AL Hofmeyr was transferred to Mvera.<sup>249)</sup> WH Murray could devote himself more or less full-time to this task during 1904 and 1905 finding that he had to retranslate most of what AC Murray wrote and not do only the remaining New Testament books.<sup>250)</sup> By the middle of 1905 the task was completed and he and Dr Hetherwick together with two Malawians, Thomas Maseya of Blantyre and Samson Bogozi from Mvera spent six weeks at Blantyre revising the work. The entire manuscript was typed by Mr Anderson Kadzichi who became the first printer at Mvera in the following year.<sup>251)</sup> In March 1906 Rev. Murray went to Scotland where he saw the New Testament through the press. It was printed by the National Bible Society of Scotland in collaboration with the British and Foreign Bible Society. In 1907 it was ready for publication and was immediately a great success, the Mvera Mission taking by far the biggest consignment. A second consignment of 10 000 copies had to be printed within two years of printing the first edition.<sup>252)</sup>

WH Murray was subsequently set aside to continue with the Old Testament and the Council agreed to improve and enlarge the Mission rest house on Kaso Hill, near Mvera, which overlooked the former site of Chief Chiwere's capital.<sup>253)</sup>

248. CCA V9 1/1: MMU minutes entry for 27/1/1903.

249. For details of arrangements see Council minutes 11/1903, pp.43-4.

250. CCA V9 2/1: WH Murray to J du Plessis, 17/8/1904. See also several other letters of Murray in this file containing comments on the translation work.

251. WH Murray: Mbiri ya Misyoni, p.68. For accounts of the Bible translation work see the following: WH Murray: Op pad, pp.188-199; Mbiri ya Misyoni ya D.R.C., pp.68-70; MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, pp.96-106; and a brochure to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Bible in Chichewa by EE Katsulukuta and JL Pretorius: The translation of the Bible into Chichewa 1900-1923.

252. GMC report to Cape Synod, Acta 1909, Appendix 13, p.28.

253. CCA S5 1/4/1: Nyasa subcommittee minute 10, entry for 29/11/1906; Council minutes 15/1907, p.86.



There he worked intermittently until 1914, but found progress slow due to many interruptions as well as the move to Nkhoma and shortage of staff. From 1915-1918 he lived there permanently after temporarily resigning as head of the Mission.<sup>254)</sup> One of the reasons which prompted him to resign was his concern over the fact that twenty-five years after beginning the work, the people still did not have the Bible in their own language. He wrote:<sup>255)</sup>

We have been at work ... for a quarter of a century the number of converts as well as those to whom the Gospel is preached is very large, and still the Bible as a whole has not been translated into their own language ... It is more than time that this rapidly growing church should possess the Word of God in its entirety in its own mother tongue...

The UMCA was still not prepared to co-operate. "They have persistently refused our invitations to take part", Murray wrote to the Secretary of the National Bible Society of Scotland. Their translation furthermore was so dialectal that it could hardly be accommodated even in a Union version.<sup>256)</sup>

Once he could devote himself full-time to the work, progress improved. He had the assistance of three Malawian linguistic advisers, Jonathan Sande from Blantyre, Ismael Mwale from Mlanda (later to become court clerk to Paramount chief Gomani) and Wilibes Chikuse, one of Murray's "favourite evangelists" who unfortunately and to Murray's grief, was suspended from Church service in 1925 on a charge of immorality.<sup>257)</sup> Chikuse and particularly Mwale impressed Murray. Later, when writing from his home town while on furlough, he expressed the hope that these two would be brought in on the final revision of the New Testament being done at Blantyre and described them as having become so expert in their work "that they are virtually indispensable"<sup>258)</sup> Their value lay in their knowledge of the language and their ability to find words and forms which would be most widely understood:

What these advisers lacked in formal education they made up for with their wide knowledge of the Chinyanja dialects. When translations were doubtful, they would go out into

254. Cf. CCA S5 15/6/2/16: WH Murray to Mission secr., 14/10/1911, 20/6/1914, etc.

255. Quoted in Katsulukuta and Pretorius, op.cit.

256. CCA S5 15/6/8/6: Copy dated 31/12/1913. This entire file contains correspondence on Bible translation.

257. MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, p.147.

258. CCA S5 15/6/2/17: WH Murray to "Broeder" (AL Hofmeyr?), 12/2/1919 (his italics). Transl. from Dutch.

the villages to ascertain what the people, particularly the older people, said. Their contribution towards producing a Bible understood throughout Southern and Central Malawi and the Eastern Province of Zambia cannot be overemphasised. 259)

There were also several other Malawian collaborators including a Jacob from Mvera, a Benjamin from Mlanda and a Filemoni. The typist who typed the entire manuscript was Gersom Chipwaira who joined the DRCM press in 1911 and continued until 1965 by which time he had become manager of the Press at Nkhoma. 260)

Others also helped with certain books. Rev. James Murray and later Dr WA Murray, the medical doctor at Nkhoma did parts of I and II Kings; Rev. Louis Hofmeyr I and II Samuel; Rev. Robert Napier Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Lamentations and Ecclesiastes; Dr Alexander Hetherwick Genesis, Isaiah and Jeremiah. 261) The rest of the Old Testament as well as the preliminary revision of the entire Bible was done by William Murray. He particularly valued the help of Rev. Napier, an excellent linguist and deeply resented losing him, first when Blantyre Mission wanted to transfer him to Mozambique, then again when he was commandeered for military service first in 1917 though subsequently released but called up again in December of the same year. He had to leave with six to seven weeks of revision still undone. 262) While doing duty he tragically lost his life during a skirmish with German troops in Mozambique in 1918.

By the close of 1919 the end was in sight. The entire Old Testament was complete and revision on both the Old and New Testament done. When the final and completed manuscript reached Scotland, the secretary of the NBSS wrote: 263)

The completion of this great work marks a very decisive stage in the history of Central African Missions. On the line drawn between what was formerly German East Africa and Portuguese

259. Katsulukuta and Pretorius, op.cit. (no p. no.).

260. See CCA S5 15/6/8/6: Copy WH Murray to Hetherwick, 18/12/1922; Secr. NBSS to WH Murray, 24/1/1923. On Chipwaira see Nuusbrief uit Malawi, June 1965; Jan. 1974.

261. CCA S5 15/6/8/6: Copy WH Murray to Hetherwick, 3/4/1922, 18/12/1922.

262. CCA S5 15/2/6/16: WH Murray to Mission secr., 23/1/1917, 9/10/1917, 7/1/1918; 15/6/1/5: *ibid.*, 31/12/1917. On Napier see A Hetherwick (Ed.): Robert Hellier Napier in Nyasaland. References to Bible translation work i.a. on pp.106, 111-113, 126f.

263. CCA S5 15/6/8/6: Copy Secr.NBSS to Hetherwick, 23/1/1920. A duplicate bound set of these final proofs is housed in the CCA Library, Ref.L8, together with the Bible with interleaved blank pages used by Murray to prepare the revised edition of 1936, as well as the corrected proofs of this edition.

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 West Africa, I do not think there is a tribe which has the whole Bible in its own language. If I am correct in this, the Nyanja people will be the first to be put into possession of the full treasury - May they be greatly enriched by it!

The NBSS had agreed to print the Bible and for the next almost three years a bundle of proofs of thirty pages was dispatched from Scotland week by week, first read by Hetherwick, then passed on to Murray and back to Hetherwick who posted them back to Scotland. The first, second and third proofs were done in this way. On 4 April 1922 Hetherwick wrote to Murray: "I have today posted the final proofs to the Edinburgh Society and am singing Laus Deo all day".<sup>264)</sup>

By the end of 1922 the Bible was complete. Fifteen and a half thousand copies were printed. Within a few months of receiving the consignment it was virtually sold out and a second edition had to be printed in 1924.<sup>265)</sup> Early in 1923 the first consignments were in Malawi but it was only by the end of April that they could reach Nkhoma due to heavy rains. It was a day of great joy for the Church and thousands of Malawians were ready to buy their "Buku lɔpatulika ndilo Mau a Mulungu".<sup>266)</sup> In Nkhoma Presbytery a Bible Sunday was arranged throughout the territory for the June communion season.<sup>267)</sup> In September the Council of Congregations resolved to vote £10 from its Central Fund to be sent to the NBSS as a gesture of thanks and appreciation for printing the Bible for them,<sup>268)</sup> while the Mission Council recorded the following minute a few days later:<sup>269)</sup>

Chinyanja Bible 1923: The year 1923 will long stand out as one of great significance because in this year the Bible for the first time appeared in its entirety in the language of the Nyasa people. We realise our indebtedness to the Lord and express our gratitude to Him for the strength, health and powers of mind imparted to those who were charged with this task and in particular to the Head of our Mission to whom, amongst others the work was entrusted.

The minute continued to express the Council's gratitude and appreciation towards WH Murray for this great task which it saw as "one of the most

264. In CCA S5 15/6/8/6.

265. Report of GMC to Cape Synod, Acta 1924, supplement 12, p.70.

266. This was the wording for the title decided upon and means "The Holy (separated) Book which is the Word of God".

267. CCA S5 15/6/8/6: Copy WH Murray to Secr. NBSS, 1/5/1923.

268. Council of Congregations, min.5, entry for 12-15 Sept.1923 (Printed).

269. Council minutes 43/1923, p.314. Transl. from Afrikaans.

important in the history of the Mission". It further expressed its thanks to the GMC in Cape Town for releasing him entirely for three years from other duties, as well as to the NBSS for printing the Bible and making it available at such a reasonable price (the cheapest Bible sold at three shillings and sixpence, i.e. thirty five tambala). It further agreed to send the NBSS "a tangible token of our deep and due gratitude consisting of personal and congregational gifts". In the years that followed it became a regular practice in Nkhoma Presbytery and later Synod to take up a special annual collection in all congregations for the work of the Bible Societies.<sup>270)</sup>

The successful completion of this great task was largely due to the devoted labours of William Murray. Already while reading the proofs Hetherwick realised that they would produce a work which would as he stated in a letter to Murray "stand for a long time", adding prophetically: "So I think you may feel that you have given the Church a thing that will be a heritage for generations".<sup>271)</sup> This version is still in use today more than half a century later.

The NBSS also recorded its appreciation to Murray and the secretary wrote:<sup>272)</sup>

The service you have rendered to the Nyanja people will continue to bear fruit ... you will be remembered in Nyasaland for many a day in connection with your devoted translation labours.

The Society agreed further on an honorarium of £100 each to Murray and Hetherwick together with a special and distinctly bound copy of the new Bible. In response Murray wrote back: "There has been rather an abiding sense of one's unworthiness for the great task and a wondering whether one would be permitted to see it accomplished".<sup>273)</sup>

About the honorarium he felt quite uncomfortable. "This honorarium business is dreadful" he wrote to Hetherwick,<sup>274)</sup> and promptly donated it all to the printing department at Nkhoma for a new roof. He had already been offered a similar sum as gesture from his home synod,<sup>275)</sup> while his Alma

270. For instance in 1926, £4 was sent, in 1928, £14.13.7, and by 1946 the figure had reached £72.19.8 (from correspondence between NBSS and Nkhoma in CCA S5 15/6/8/6).

271. Ibid., Hetherwick to WH Murray, 2/3/1921.

272. Ibid., Secr. NBSS to WH Murray, 15/6/1922.

273. Ibid., 14/12/1922; copy WH Murray to Secr. NBSS 15/1/1923. For decisions re honorariums see NBSS minute 670 (copy, n.d. in 15/6/3/3).

274. CCA S5 15/6/8/6: Copy WH Murray to Hetherwick, 30/1/1923.

275. DRC Acta 1919, p.60.

Mater, the University of Stellenbosch, had conferred upon him a Doctorate (D.Litt. honoris causa) in December 1919 "by virtue of his gigantic task, viz. the translation of the Bible into the Cinyanja language...".<sup>276)</sup>

But it was not yet the end of the road. In order to keep costs down, the Bible Society had decided not to insert paragraph headings. This made reading difficult and there were several appeals for a change in a new edition, in which marginal textual references were also requested to be included. At first the NBSS was not very keen, but Murray could convince them during a visit to Scotland in 1928, when he went to attend the International Missionary Conference at Jerusalem that this was necessary. At the request of the NBSS, the Mission Council once more asked him to devote as much time as possible to this new work<sup>277)</sup> and for the next three years Murray and his wife, who had been his assistant from the beginning, carried out this painstaking task. By December 1931 it was completed,<sup>278)</sup> and included paragraph headings, textual references and a number of small corrections of printing and translation errors appearing in the first edition.

Then came some delays, much to Murray's disappointment and concern. The Bible Society was in financial difficulties and would not start printing until the old stock was entirely sold out. In 1932 the Nyasaland Government decided to make some changes in Nyanja orthography. There was nothing to it but for Murray to once more go through the entire Bible and insert the necessary changes.<sup>279)</sup> Financial relief came when the Rev. and Mrs JF Alexander of Zomba jointly and anonymously offered to donate £1 000 towards the cost of printing the new edition.<sup>280)</sup> Murray offered to proof-read the new edition with Mrs Murray as second reader, a task which had to be done with due care and time because, as Hetherwick wrote to the NBSS, "it will have to last a very long time until the Native Church itself is able to deal with the linguistic problems, which will not be in your lifetime or mine".<sup>281)</sup>

276. MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, p.102.

277. CCA S5 15/6/8/6: NBSS Business Manager to WH Murray, 21/8/1928; Council minutes 48/1928, p.391.

278. CCA S5 15/6/8/6: copy WH Murray to Secr. NBSS, 7/12/1931.

279. Ibid., 16/8/1932; Secr. NBSS to Murray 20/6/1932, 2/6/1933.

280. See *ibid.* for correspondence on this donation.

281. *Ibid.*, quoted in letter of Secr. NBSS to Murray, 13/2/1934.

In order to speed matters up the price of existing stocks was reduced. Printing began and the first proofs were sent to Murray in May 1934. By the middle of 1935 Murray who was becoming more and more impatient with retirement age approaching asked whether proofs coming in weekly batches of 32 pages could not come faster. The printers answered: "We cannot keep these people (the type setters) continuously on the job without endangering their sanity".<sup>282)</sup> Murray had to agree to remain patient. By September 1935 there was not a single copy of Buku Lopatulika left and to Murray's dismay the printers had not yet reached the New Testament. Further delay was caused by a fire breaking out at the printers' premises, but at last on 11 February 1936 Murray could write to the Secretary of the NBSS that he was finished with the last section of the second proof, "the end of the work commenced in 1903".<sup>283)</sup>

A few days before his seventieth birthday, on 2 July 1936, the silver haired missionary and his wife received the first dozen copies of the new edition, an occasion which greatly "enhanced the happiness of that day".<sup>284)</sup> At last the Murrays could turn their thoughts definitely towards retirement. A few months earlier he had written to the Mission secretary in Cape Town that this great task was now completed "and we two old ones ... have laid the work at His feet ... we have prayed Him to use it through His Spirit to the salvation of many more souls".<sup>285)</sup> The task begun in the vigour of their youth was at last complete.

That the DRC Mission was prepared to make so much sacrifice, setting aside some of its workers for long periods, was characteristic of the emphasis it placed on putting the message of the Word of God into the hands of as many people as possible, every one who had learned to read and write. It was very much part of that wider aim of creating a Bible loving and Bible reading nation from which a strong and virile Church would grow, firmly based upon the Word of God.

The effects of this policy which played an important role in the production of the Bible in Union Nyanja so widely accepted and understood, went much further than merely serving the interests of the Church. The effect and influence this Bible had on people, the country and the language are well

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282. Ibid., copy Turnbull and Spears (printers) to Secr. NBSS, 27/6/1935.

283. Ibid., copy Murray to Secr. NBSS, 11/2/1936.

284. Ibid., Murray to Business Manager, NBSS, 3/7/1936.

285. CCA S5 15/6/2/17A: Murray to Mission secr., 12/2/1936.

summed up in the following passage:

The Bible in Union Nyanja, or as we now call it, the Chichewa Bible, gained wide acceptance, not only inside but also outside Malawi. When our young men left our country to find work and adventure elsewhere, the Chichewa Bible went with them - to the Government offices, mines and farms of Zambia, Rhodesia and South Africa; the battlefields of North Africa, Asia and Malaya. It became the cornerstone of the Church of Christ in Malawi; its most precious possession. In 50 years more than half a million Bibles were bought, in addition to hundreds of thousands of New Testaments and Gospels.

The influence of the Chinyanja Bible spread beyond the Church. It brought into being a standardized language which broke through tribal barriers and made the different tribes conscious that they were one. The standardized Nyanja gave birth to a vigorous literature and became one of the most important national languages of Central and Southern Africa, spoken and understood in five countries. After the birth of our republic it was renamed Chichewa and with English became the national language of our country. This is a heritage which we should cherish and develop.

#### 7. Concluding remarks: The DRCM in Malawi

In reviewing the work of the DRCM in Malawi a few remarks need to be made at this stage.

When the first missionaries arrived they had the advantage not only of finding other missionaries already established in the country, but also of being able to learn from them - both from their mistakes and faults and from the methods they had found most suitable. In particular the closer links with the Free Church of Scotland and the Livingstonia Mission led to a very close relationship with that Mission from the very beginning and an oft-repeated acknowledgement by the DRC missionaries of their indebtedness to it.

Furthermore, certain very important and fundamental principles were established in the work of the DRCM. The first of this was to apply the principle of what used to be called 'Native agency'. The fact had already been recognised by David Livingstone that Africa could only be won for Christ by extensive use of the African himself. Apart from a few helpers loaned from

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286. Quoted from Katsulukuta and Pretorius: The translation of the Bible into Chichewa. The fiftieth anniversary of the Bible in Chichewa was aptly commemorated at a three-day memorial conference held on Kaso Hill, 25-28 Oct. 1973. The stone tower erected to mark the spot where the work was actually done has been declared a National Monument by the Government (Nuusbrief uit Malawi, Jan. 1974; Oct. 1974).

Livingstonia Mission in the beginning, the policy was all along that local converts should be trained and sent out to surrounding villages to introduce the Gospel and to evangelise. During the first stage helpers were sent out on Sundays usually in pairs after having been instructed in presenting a message from some or other passage of Scripture, usually a parable or other part of a Gospel.<sup>287)</sup> Later, men were selected and appointed on a more full time basis as evangelists. Another fruitful method was to send a christian Capitao with the teams of porters which later used to travel overland to Blantyre to bring in supplies for the Mission and its stores. Thousands of porters were employed annually and the Capitaos had the opportunity during stop-overs and on Sundays when they did not travel to proclaim the Gospel to those present of whom the majority were heathen.<sup>288)</sup> Furthermore, once formal training of teacher-evangelists was begun, it was found that there were others too old or unable to be trained, yet willing to serve. These were appointed as itinerant evangelists. They travelled for weeks to distant villages and areas where the Gospel had not yet reached, seeking to establish contact and arouse interest. Many a village school was opened following the preparatory work done by such itinerant evangelists.<sup>289)</sup>

Above all, it was the group of men known as teacher-evangelists who really performed the greatest task in evangelising their own people: These men were posted to the village schools which over the years proved the most fruitful method of all in evangelising.<sup>290)</sup> Bolink sums up the position well where he states:<sup>291)</sup>

.... it was to be in the mission fields of those Societies in Central Africa where right from the beginning full use was made of 'Native Agency' that the appropriateness of this approach was to be proved. It is highly doubtful whether the foundation of the Church in Central Africa could ever have been laid by the missionaries alone. A big share of the honour must go to those hundreds of 'Abrahamus', 'Isakes', 'Yakobos', 'Lukasess', and 'Mateyus' who, as teacher-evangelists with little knowledge but often with great zeal, spread the Good Message to the remotest villages...

The DRCM in course of years excelled in this area of its work. The fact that from the beginning it made use of locally trained persons selected from the very people amongst whom the work was being done, rather than

287. AC Murray: Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen, pp.192-3.

288. WH Murray: Op pad, pp.170-2.

289. For a description of their work and experiences see *ibid.*, pp.172-7.

290. AC Murray: Ons Nyasa-akker, pp.190f, 255.

291. P Bolink: Towards Church union in Zambia, p.4.



bringing in "foreign" evangelists from outside doubtlessly further contributed to the success of this system.<sup>292)</sup>

A second principle applied from the beginning was that the Mission station should not become a Christian "compound" or colony where all converts would come to live. Early converts did come with such requests, but they were advised to remain in their villages, because it was believed that in this way Christianity would not only grow much stronger but also be much more effective in permeating society and influencing others through their words and deeds.<sup>293)</sup>

From this followed a third principle, namely that the Mission did not seek to establish any form of civil rule over either their converts or the people amongst whom they worked. Involvement during the early years in civil cases, particularly in matters of slaving or intertribal warring could sometimes not be avoided, but it was policy not to get involved in local 'politics'. When British Administration sought to establish itself, missionaries were willing to act as go-betweens. Insofar as the Mission saw the presence of this new authority as a deterrent to slave trading and civil wars, and as bringing about greater peace and progress, it welcomed it.

Pressure of conscience and concern for the suffering of people with whom they worked, forced them to speak out on issues such as the hut tax and the notorious labour system, but this was hardly an "act of petty revenge" on their part for alleged loss of "wrongfully assumed jurisdiction" over the people.<sup>294)</sup>

Rather, the DRCM saw its task very clearly as being limited to a proclamation of the Gospel in order to evangelise and lead people to faith in Christ and then to gather such believers together in congregations from which an indigenous Church should grow which should be guided towards eventual complete independence and autonomy under its own leadership.<sup>295)</sup>

With this in mind it becomes clear not only why certain 'auxiliary' services were introduced, but also why these were limited in their scope and intent.

292. Cf. *ibid.*, p.91.

293. AC Murray, *op.cit.*, p.100; JM Cronje: *Die selfstandigwording van die Bantoekekerk*, p.89.

294. See above ch. 2, pp.126ff.

295. For DRC Mission policy see ch. 2.

It has been recognised in Reformed theology that such "auxiliaries" or, in the language of international missions, this "Comprehensive approach" should be delimited by a twofold criterium. Firstly it should always remain Gospel proclamation, and secondly it should not develop to such a scale that the young Church will be unable to take it over in course of time.<sup>296)</sup> While on the one hand the Church should not be onesided in its mission and see its task as merely the preaching of a message, it should on the other hand not go beyond the limits of its task by following a kind of Corpus Christianum concept in seeking to exercise control over the whole of society and life and trying to deal with every national problem.

Thus, all "auxiliary" services of mission are subject to the need that they, in a wider sense, would intrinsically be part of the proclamation of the Gospel as it applies to man in his environment. These auxiliaries should concretise the Gospel proclamation and should draw people's attention to Christ.<sup>297)</sup> A Mission should therefore not seek to embark on schemes so grandiose and comprehensive that what in the end would draw people's attention and kindle their interest would be the techniques and achievements of the scheme and not the Person of Jesus Christ. Not only might people be distracted from the real issue by such, but they might well come to think that this is in actual fact what Christianity is all about.<sup>298)</sup> To such the manifestation of Christianity could well appear to be embodied in the impressive schemes and enterprises embarked upon by the technically proficient and financially strong western churches, rather than in the essentials, the Lordship of Christ. It therefore follows that it hardly lies within the scope of mission and its diakonia as such to embark upon enterprises which seek to bring every aspect of the lives of people under its sphere of influence and control, or which seek to raise the entire living standard, provide national health facilities, or even to merely erect bridges, build roads, establish large industries or set up a daily newspaper. This is not the primary task of mission.<sup>299)</sup> Its primary task is to convey the message of salvation and hence to confess the Lordship of Christ in the midst of and over social, political and economic environments and to illustrate this in the application of its "auxiliaries", but not to pretend that it is

296. AG Honig: Bijdrage tot het onderzoek naar de fundering van de Zendingmethode der Comprehensive Approach in het Nieuwe Testament, pp.90ff, 99; cf. D Crafford: Wêreldsending en wêrelddiakonaat, part II, passim.

297. WJ van der Merwe: Gesante om Christus ontwil, p.184.

298. Cf. DJ Bosch and G Jansen: Sending in meervoud, pp.30-31.

299. Ibid., pp.28f.

there with the aim of primarily solving all human and social problems.

It is against the background of these concepts that the work of the DRCM in Malawi should be seen. The educational, medical and industrial training programs were governed by this principle of making them part of the program of evangelism and of proclaiming Christ and his Kingdom. In other words, in so far as they could serve this cause, they were applied.

For that reason education was seen not merely as a service to be rendered to the nation in general, but as one of the primary means of facilitating the spreading of the Good News. The village school system was ideally fitted for this and for giving such a degree of literacy to as many people as possible as would enable them to read the Bible and thereby grow stronger in the faith and as members of the Church. That is also why the Mission was conservative in its progress towards higher levels of education including such an issue as the introduction of English as a subject first for teachers and then in schools. Higher education was not regarded as necessary during the initial stages of the work in order to promote the spreading of the Gospel. Higher education itself was furthermore employed as a means to further the interests of the Church; it was given mostly to those who would continue to serve the Church as teachers and evangelists. Only as the need for better qualified leaders grew, would educational standards rise. It was also only later that the function of education in providing national leaders was more fully recognised. Furthermore higher education in general was seen as the responsibility of the Government rather than of the Church.

As education became an incorporated part of the colonial system of Government, dictated by Governmental aims, the Mission felt compelled to co-operate in order to preserve the vitally Christian character of the schools.<sup>300)</sup>

Rather than run the risk that schools would no longer be of service to the Gospel, the requirements laid down by the Government were accepted. Larger Government subsidies helped to relieve the increased financial strain and was a further incentive to co-operate. This meant raising the standards of education perhaps faster than it would have been done otherwise.

As education developed over the years into a very large enterprise, it was sought all along to uphold the principle that it should maintain its character as a function of the Church and its Mission and not grow into

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300. Cf. H Kraemer: The Christian Mission in a non-Christian world, p.437.

an entity on its own, independent of and separated from the primary aims.

Likewise it can be argued that the industrial and agricultural training programs were likewise primarily aimed at serving the interests of evangelism and of the Church. One of the main motives lay in a desire to counter the negative effects which migrant labour had on the evangelising and church development activities. On the other hand, by teaching people better agricultural methods, introducing cash crops such as cotton, wheat and potatoes and by establishing viable village industries and crafts it was hoped that the Church would benefit by creating a more stable society and also by boosting the income of congregations, thus furthering progress towards the ideal of a self-supporting Church. This also explains why the industries and agricultural methods taught were not the sophisticated machine orientated type which would necessitate the trainee to practise his trade away from home, but such as could effectively be applied or practised locally. This also tied in with the ideal of building up the Christian family in so far as it sought to enable husbands not to have to go away to earn money.

Here another facet of DRC Mission policy comes into bearing, namely that evangelisation does not presuppose denationalisation. Rather than depriving a people of its cultural heritage, the Gospel should permeate and purify it. The preservation of national and cultural identity was something on which DRC missionaries laid considerable emphasis. It sought to avoid estranging people from their own or disrupting society, as far as this was possible within the demands of the Gospel. That also was why the migrant labour system was attacked.

In this context McCracken's argument that the DRCM was not really all that successful in countering the demands of migrant labour requires some comment. In the passage concerned he refers to the Phelps-Stokes report<sup>301)</sup> which made so much of the village industries taught at Nkhoma and then adds:<sup>301)</sup>

But there is little evidence to suggest that the Dutch Reformed Church converts were conspicuously more successful in resisting the demands of migrant labour than were their compatriots trained at the Overtoun Institution further north.

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301. J McCracken: Christianity and politics in Malawi, p.293, cf. also n. 141.

To prove this an analysis is given from a table in a report of the Education Department of the Nyasaland Protectorate for 1943 showing the occupation in that year of all boys who had been enrolled in the upper and lower middle sections of the school at Nkhoma from 1933 to 1939. Out of a total of 239, sixty-nine were serving in the Mission as teachers, fifty-eight living in villages and thirty-six working in South Africa or Zimbabwe. Twenty were in military service, eighteen were clerks and twelve still at school. The remaining twenty-six were variously occupied.

From this McCracken concludes that compared to graduates from the Overtoun Institution the general pattern was remarkably similar, although he gives no comparative figures for the latter. But to argue as he does that this proves that there is little evidence that DRC converts were more successful than others in resisting the demands of migrant labour is begging the question. The fact is that he is here dealing with the very group which could be expected to leave for employment elsewhere because of their higher education which could enable them to find better jobs. Furthermore, those receiving such higher education were not expected simply to go back to their villages. The purpose of such training was still at that stage (1933-1939) very much in order to train future teachers, evangelists and other Church and Mission employees. This particular group was hardly the right group with which to test the success or failure of the Mission's policy in countering migrant labour. That test should be done rather amongst the village school products and amongst those rural Christians who had to make a living either in their villages or else seek migrant employment elsewhere. At that level it is quite likely that a considerably larger percentage of people did remain at home, or at least did not repeatedly engage in migrant labour as a means to make a living. With many of course it had become a matter of prestige to have gone to the mines at least once, but after that they could become self employed or locally employed.

The effect of the DRCM's policies on society as a whole did differ considerably for instance from that of the Livingstonia Mission in one respect. The approach at Livingstonia was to train and educate people to a much higher and sophisticated level. As a result the Livingstonia Mission succeeded much more in revolutionising society, not so much because of the drain of man and brain-power from the local society, although this was bound to have certain negative affects, but rather in the sense that it provided the men who were to play a more significant role in shaping the future of their country politically and otherwise.

While Livingstonia was thus "determined to revolutionise society",<sup>302)</sup> this was not so much the case with the DRCM. Being more conservative in their approach to political developments they did not see their task as that of being in the first place an agent for social change and political revolution. Again the guiding principle was the Reformed view of mission, namely that its task was to evangelise and to introduce into society a new dimension which in a more subtle and indirect way would lead towards change on the wider level. In other words the aim was not to revolutionise but to permeate society with the Gospel.<sup>303)</sup> In proclaiming the Kingdom of God, lay the real "revolutionising" agent because where the Kingdom is proclaimed the radiating power of the Gospel would in due course have its effect upon individual, social and national life.<sup>304)</sup> The aim therefore was rather to strengthen and uplift what was good in society, raise moral and physical standards in village life and improve prevailing conditions as part of the proclaiming of the Gospel. This did of course not mean an acquiescence to every aspect of traditional culture. Certain elements were found to be either outright inimical to the Gospel, such as the Nyau cult as practised in its traditional form,<sup>305)</sup> the traditional attitude towards beer drinking and the traditional initiation ceremonies for girls. In such matters the Church and the Mission either found itself in a position of direct confrontation (Nyau) or of outright prohibition (beer) or of having to seek a Christian alternative (Chilangizo) in which unacceptable elements of the traditional form could be excluded, but positive aspects and elements of value retained.

In the long run this concept of permeating society with the Gospel and of establishing the concept of the Kingdom of God is likely to have as much or even a more profound effect on social, moral and political issues than a more direct revolutionising approach.

With this in view the more limited extent to which the "auxiliaries" were applied, can be understood. The Church's ministry, its diakonia is limited. Its task is to testify to the Lordship of Christ and to make known the

302. J McCracken, op.cit., p.177.

303. Cf. De Koningsbode, Sept.1907, p.92.

304. DJ Bosch and G Jansen: Sending in meervoud, pp.30f.

305. See below ch.5. In present day Malawi there is a form of the Nyau cult which has become much more public and popularised and not secretive as with the traditional form which also still exist. It is a common thing today to see Nyau performers dancing and entertaining people at public gatherings.

Kingdom of God in its transcendental reality. In this the Church, in the words of H Kraemer "cannot pretend to realize ideal cultural, social or political conditions... (it) never can promise the solution of economic, social and political problems... it cannot guarantee a solution ... the unwarranted promise of solutions necessarily breeds disillusionment".<sup>306)</sup>

There were of course other more practical and down-to-earth factors which limited the extent to which the auxiliaries were applied in this Mission. Often financial strain limited extension, shortages of staff, particularly qualified educationalists was a chronic problem, the opposition in certain quarters of the DRC public in South Africa towards giving too high an education to Africans hampered faster progress in this field. The men who came out were more at home in the field of rural industries and agriculture than in setting up sophisticated industrial training schemes. The mission policy of the DRC concerning the preserving and maintaining of cultural identity within the natural diversity of nations, which coincided to some extent with the traditional racial policies of successive South African Governments, also played a role in determining the extent to which the auxiliaries were deployed. It is against this background that the degree of conservatism which was revealed in not developing individuals too fast and thus cause them to become estranged and socially separated from their own people should be understood. In shaping the Church and its leaders it was a matter of, to borrow a common current phrase, a Church of the people for the people by the people, not a Church under an estranged leadership far removed from the rest. Even where the traditional South African concept of social segregation of people of different races was applied and practised as, in the view of one writer, a "healthy principle",<sup>307)</sup> it should rather be seen against this background than as a form of negative discrimination.<sup>308)</sup>

The DRCM saw its task in the field of education, industrial training,

306. H Kraemer: The Christian message in a non-Christian world, p.430.

307. MW Retief: Verowerings vir Christus, p.199.

308. The question of the degree of social relationships between the races and, for instance eating together, was of course an issue in most Missions. For the position amongst Scottish missionaries and the London Missionary Society in Zambia see P Bolink: Towards Church union in Zambia, p.199, n.32. During the late 1950s and early 1960s there was a definite move away from this stance in the DRC Mission.

medical work and literature as limited by the Reformed concept that all such "auxiliaries" should ever remain subservient to and part of the primary task of proclaiming the gospel, belonging "as intrinsically to the category of witness as preaching or evangelisation".<sup>309)</sup> In practice however the danger was perhaps not always avoided of demoting them to mere instruments for "ensnaring" or pressing people into the sphere of influence of the evangelising endeavours of the Church.<sup>310)</sup> But the distinction is a difficult one to draw and more often than not, as Kraemer points out, the accusation that these are offered as baits is born out of malevolence and fails to appreciate the real concern for the ultimate well-being and true interests of people that motivates Christian mission.<sup>311)</sup>

The second basic condition for these auxiliaries, namely that they should be conducted in such a manner as will make it possible for the young Church to eventually take them over was also kept in mind. All along in the work of the DRCM the fact was kept in mind that in the long run the young Church would have to take over the education or medical work and other departments. This also would have exercised a limiting influence on the size and complexity of such enterprises. As it finally ended, the Nkhoma Synod did not take over all of the educational work as much was in the process of going entirely into the hands of the Government. In medical work as in the other spheres, the burden is still being born jointly by the Synod and the DRC. Other "auxiliaries" and departments had either ceased to function as the need for such disappeared, or were entirely handed over to the Synod, such as for example the Printing, Bookshop, Workshop, Transport, Forestry and Building Departments.<sup>312)</sup>

Reference has been made to the extent to which the DRCM was an agent for social change and development. Obvious contributions were made in the field of education, medical and health services, agriculture and industrial training, promoting sound family lives and providing literature to the people. In addition to these some other more incidental contributions to the country's development, deserve mention. The role played by missionaries in assisting the establishing of Law and Order in the country has already been dealt with. In addition to this, the Mission cleared several roads during the early days or rather opened routes which eventually

309. H Kraemer, op.cit., p.433.

310. Bosch and Jansen, op.cit., p.21.

311. Cf. H Kraemer, op.cit., pp.436-7.

312. See also below, ch. 6.



became modern roads. The first roads or bridle-like trails in the Central Region to be opened were those between Mvera and Domira Bay, Kongwe and Mvera, Mvera and Nkhoma and Nkhoma and Dedza.<sup>313)</sup> Later, Government Collectors were assisted by the missionaries in opening 5 to 6-foot wide tracks, the Mission providing most of the supervision and labour. For this a Government grant of £20 p.a. was given. When the Central Angoniland Road Board held its first meeting on 25 May 1898, two of its three members were missionaries, Rev. TCB Vlok and Mr A van der Westhuizen.<sup>314)</sup> What was probably the first bridge over the Dyampwe was built by Vlok in 1909 at a cost of twenty-five shillings, the same year in which a road was made between Mlanda and Livlezi. The following year roads were opened between Kongwe and Ntchisi (Chinthembwe) and Mlanda and Malembo on the Lakeshore.<sup>315)</sup> In 1914 a wagon road was to be made between Mphunzi and Blantyre while a road between Dzenza and Nkhoma was scheduled for 1922 at a cost of twenty pounds. In that year the Council requested Government to take the Nkhoma/Mphunzi road for its responsibility provided Mission wagons could still use it.<sup>316)</sup> For many more years the Mission continued to be responsible for the upkeep of roads between various stations.

Trade and commerce received its first impetus from the Mission. The first commercial stores in the Central Region were the Mission stores, while markets were introduced at various centres by the Mission where people could barter or sell their products.

Finally the Mission played a significant role in promoting and developing Chewa as one of the major languages of the country. The influence of the Chewa Bible on the use of Chewa has already been noted and this was of course largely the work of the DRC missionaries. It was a rule from the beginning that all new staff had to learn to speak the language. A first and from 1904 a second examination had to be taken, the latter after two years in the field. The first literature in Chewa came from the pens of missionaries, of which the DRCM took a large share while

313. The last two were opened by Rev. Du Toit who died in 1897 (cf. TCB Vlok: *Elf jaren in midden Afrika*, p.33.).

314. *Ibid.*, pp.33, 71; PA Cole-King: *Lilongwe*, pp.35-6.

315. Council minutes 17/1909, pp.103, 108; 18/1909, p.114.

316. Council minutes 29/1914, p.189; 41/1921, p.285.

much attention was paid to questions of spelling and orthography.<sup>317)</sup>

When the CCAP Synod was formed, Nkhoma sought to have Chewa accepted as the official language of the Church, believing this to be important in view of a genuine development of a truly indigenous and united Church. The Scottish missionaries were opposed to this, as was Livingstonia Synod, but the DRC section of the CCAP were then still determined that they should achieve this ideal. But the matter was not raised again before 1952 when Nkhoma Presbytery presented an overture that Chewa become the official language of the CCAP Synod. Again the Synod was not in favour of the idea and agreed that the overture be dismissed.<sup>318)</sup> On another front the Mission sought to promote the use of Chewa as a medium of instruction in schools throughout the country rather than have different languages in different parts. Murray wrote to the Director of Education in this respect pointing out that Nyanja (Chewa) was the obvious lingua franca of the country and was sufficiently close to Tumbuka for Northerners to learn to speak it. In this he was supported by JG Steytler, the educationalist who argued in favour of Chewa as lingua franca for the whole country rather than the view of Livingstonia that Tumbuka-Henga should also be recognised.<sup>319)</sup> These ideas appear to have been justified by the later decision of the Malawi Government to decree that the two official languages of the country, to be used in the news media, in official documents and publications and in schools throughout the country are to be Chewa and English.

WH Murray's expert knowledge of the language earned for him the appointment of Examiner of Government officials for many years, while more recently the President of Malawi appointed an expatriate of Nkhoma Synod, Dr JK Louw as vice chairman of a Chewa language advisory committee of which the President himself was chairman.<sup>320)</sup>

Nevertheless, neither these, more incidental contributions, nor the contributions, however valuable they may have been, made towards educational,

317. On Nyanja exams and orthography rules see also in MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 38; on Nyanja language and ethnological studies during later years (1954-61): Box 39.

318. Cf. Report by WH Murray on 1926 Synod (DK, 1/12/1926, p.794); and CCAP Synod 1962, m.33.

319. MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 1: Copy WH Murray to Director of Education, 15/8/1932; CCA S5 15/6/8/7: Copy JG Steytler to Young, 19/4/1935.

320. Cf. Nuusbrieff uit Malawi, Apr. 1972.

medical, industrial and agricultural development of the country should be regarded as the main aim or achievement of the work of the DRCM. Of much more importance is the question as to what extent and how successfully the work has resulted in the establishment, development and up-building of a national, autonomous Church. To the growth and development of this Church, today known as the Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian, attention must therefore now be turned. Three main aspects can be distinguished in the history of this Church up to 1962 and these will form the subject of the three remaining chapters of this study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

## EARLY BEGINNINGS IN THE HISTORY OF THE NKHOMA SYNOD: 1889-1926

## 1. Introduction

The Nkhoma Synod exists today as a largely autonomous church body forming part of the larger Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian in Malawi, which consists of four Synods, three in Malawi and one in Zimbabwe. Out of a total communicant membership of 340 788, as reported in 1977, just over 40% or 137 899 are members of the Nkhoma Synod.<sup>1)</sup> The Synod still maintains links with the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa in virtue of the mission work of that Church in Malawi. These links merely represent certain agreements to supply personnel for service in the Synod and financial and moral support for its work. All personnel thus supplied stand fully under the control of the Synod which alone has authority to decide where and how each shall serve within the Synod. Such expatriate DRC personnel enjoy full membership in the local Church for the duration of their stay and service. Likewise the Synod has control over all financial grants received from the DRC, and no form of external control exists, although since 1971 the annual budget of the Synod has been drawn up by a Joint Financial Committee with representatives of the DRC as members.

The fact that the Nkhoma Synod is what it is today is neither mere coincidence, nor just a by-product of the mission work of the DRC. It is the result of the relatively clearly defined policy concerning its mission work as formulated by the DRC. As mentioned previously, the primary aim of mission work was seen as that of evangelising and leading people to faith in Jesus Christ. To this was inseparably linked the further aim of convening such believers in a church, of which the formation, growth and development constituted the major task of the Mission.<sup>2)</sup> Although this was a process in which the keynote, particularly during the earlier phases, was not to progress too fast towards full autonomy, a clearly delineated development can be traced right from the outset towards the ultimate aim of establishing a fully autonomous Church. In this line of development the ideals of a Church which was to be self-governing, self-supporting and self-extending were very prominent, in fact sometimes so much so that they were almost regarded as criteria for autonomy rather than ideals for a Church.

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1. CCAP General Synod 1977, min. 26.

2. Cf. ch. 2.

In this development a number of phases are clearly discernable. As the first believers were baptised into membership, the embryo Church began to emerge in the form of a number of small congregations. This initial phase was really only a preliminary to the first phase of the Church when, in 1903, a Council of Congregations was formed in which all the basic functions of a Presbytery were present. During this phase, lasting from 1903 to 1926, the Church was still largely under the control and authority of the Mission, but the next phase was already evolving in which the Church was more fully established by the formation of a Presbytery which became part of the CCAP.

During the second stage, starting in 1926, the Church had full autonomy in certain matters, at least in theory, while the Mission retained control over others. This phase lasted for three and a half decades, although some important developments did take place at various stages in between. All along the emphasis was on progress towards an autonomous, indigenous Church under its own leadership, with missionaries in a supervisory and advisory capacity. This Church had to become ever more fully self-supporting, while at the same time it was encouraged to take an active part in extending the Gospel further afield and to expand at local level.

A new phase was reached in 1956 when the Nkhoma Presbytery in conjunction with the other two Presbyteries in the CCAP were elevated to the status of Synods, under a General Synod of the CCAP. This was the outcome of lengthy constitutional developments. At this stage certain basic differences between the DRCM and the two Scottish Missions were fairly evident and the CCAP had come through a period of considerable tension in which the possibility of withdrawal by Nkhoma was contemplated by the DRC on more than one occasion, despite protests that the DRC was not legally justified to do so. The formation of a General Synod with separate Synods under it, each holding a considerable degree of autonomy, was in many ways designed to lead the CCAP out of an impasse it had fallen into.

By 1956 the scene was set for the final phase in which progress was accelerated towards preparing for the final handing over of all responsibility to the young Church. It was the time of awakening Nationalism in Africa and political developments within Malawi were causing much upheaval in the country. This was bound to have its effect on the Church and with the other two Synods obtaining full autonomy, pressure increased on the DRCM to do the same. In the end the final handing over of authority and the dissolution of the Mission Council which took place in 1962 came about perhaps somewhat sooner than anticipated by the DRC. Yet this did not mean that it had not been preparing both itself and the Nkhoma Synod for this event for a long time, particularly during the last phase. Although under considerable

pressures of various natures the final negotiations were conducted in a spirit of goodwill and there was no break between the two Churches as some critics had predicted and even hoped for. Full co-operation could continue and the DRC was requested to continue to supply personnel and render financial and moral support.

In the following chapters the development of the Church will be traced from its beginning through the various phases up to 1962 when it obtained the full status of an autonomous Church. Because the year 1962 marks the beginning of an entirely new era, it was deemed advisable to limit this study to the period from 1889 to 1962. Wherever relevant, references will be made to developments and conditions pertaining to the period after 1962, but a detailed analysis of the history and development of the Church since then should perhaps form the subject of a later dissertation.

## 2. The embryo Church: 1889-1903

The DRCM arrived in the country in 1889 and opened the first station near chief Chiwere's headquarters. Conditions prevailing then were totally different from today. When the Mission started working, an autonomous indigenous Church was something which was only envisaged for the distant future. Faced with total heathendom and with absolute illiteracy amongst a people where only vague reports had been heard about missionaries coming to other parts of the country, the task of introducing to them the message of the Gospel and establishing the first pockets of Christianity was something which called for patient labour. The first years were to produce very little evidence of success.

A previous chapter described the establishment of the first stations, Mvera (1889), Kongwe (1894) and Nkhoma (1896) as well as the take-over of Livlezi and the work at Cape Maclear and Malembo from the Livingstonia Mission (1894).<sup>3)</sup> With this came the first activities of the Church. Regular church services were conducted from the beginning. The first celebration of Holy Communion took place at Mvera on Sunday, 9 March 1890, with four persons participating. These were AC Murray, Vlok, James Sadala (a helper from Bandawe) and a person from Cape Maclear.<sup>4)</sup> This could possibly have been Albert Namalambe who spent some time at Mvera during 1890 helping to get the school work going.<sup>5)</sup> A year later six persons could participate

3. See ch. 2.

4. AC Murray: *Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen*, p. 166. The year is here given as 1889, but obviously this is an error. From the context 1890 is correct.

5. CCA P3: Diary AC Murray, entries for 9-11/7/1890.

in Holy Communion after two young men, who had come with Murray and Vlok as helpers from Bandawe, had received baptism on that same day, Easter Sunday, 29 March 1891. They were David Tomani and Aaron Matepa who had been instructed at Bandawe and later by Murray. Murray had taught them from the Heidelberg Catechism which he was translating into Chichewa. The others attending the communion were James Brown, and a certain Andrew (Mwananjobvu?), both baptised by Laws.<sup>6)</sup>

It is of some historical interest to mention a few facts about this James Brown,<sup>7)</sup> a person whom AC Murray describes as "one of the proofs of the power of the Gospel". He was, after Namalambe,<sup>8)</sup> the second Malawian in the country to be baptised into Christianity. This took place in 1882 at Bandawe and Laws who baptised him gave him the name of James Brown for a specific reason. While still a student in Scotland, a lady had given Laws a gift of £8 which had belonged to her young son, James Brown, who had died shortly before and it was in memory of this experience that he chose the name. The James Brown of Malawi, also known as Moola or Moolu, had been a personal attendant to Prof. Henry Drummond on his journey through Malawi in 1883. Drummond who called him Moolu described him as one of his "three faithfuls" and was much impressed with his deep christian commitment. He regularly conducted the Sunday sermons and daily evening prayers. "I believe in Missions, for one thing because I believe in Moolu", he wrote. Likewise James Brown's testimony of the professor's character and his longing to tell them about Jesus Christ was most striking. Seven years before he had seen white men for the first time when he, like Namalambe, came to Cape Maclear as the personal attendant or "serf" of one of the Kololo chiefs' sons, brought there to attend school. There the Christian message led to his conversion and subsequent baptism in 1882. Afterwards he was in the service of Livingstonia Mission, first at Livlezi and Malembo, probably from 1884,<sup>9)</sup> and in 1896 at Mwenzo at the North End of the Lake. During 1890 and 1891 he worked as a carpenter at Mvera and also

6. CCA S5 15/6/11/4: Mvera Mission Log book, entries for 6/11/1890, 29/3/1891. According to the Malembo membership extracts (MNA Nkhoma Papers, Box 30) Andrew Mwananjobvu was baptised by Laws in 1884 at Cape Maclear.
7. All details and references on James Brown from the following sources: H Drummond: Tropical Africa, pp. 90, 117-118; CCA P3: Diary AC Murray, entries for 27/7/1890, 18/3/1891, 27/5/1910, 14,16/7/1924; AC Murray: Ons Nyasa-akker, p. 181; Nkhoma Presbytery, 1939; p. 6; Die Koningsbode, Apr. 1940, pp. 111-2; DRCM Council minutes 70/1948, p. 739; DRC Acta 1949, p. 219.
8. On Namalambe see p. 23.
9. His name appears in the Malembo membership register under the date 1884 (MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 30), but the register contains several discrepancies about the early years and cannot be taken as absolute proof of his presence there at that date.

helped with preaching at times, a task of which he acquitted himself "fairly well", according to AC Murray in his diary. Although placed under Church discipline in 1895 for making a Livlezi girl pregnant, he was restored, married the girl and henceforth remained in good standing. He returned to Livlezi, presumably as an evangelist, and the names of several of his children can be traced in the Livlezi baptismal register.<sup>10)</sup> AC Murray met him there on two occasions, when revisiting the country in 1910 and again in 1924. Of the second meeting he wrote in his diary: "James Brown comes to see me and falls on his knees, grasping my feet and weeping for joy ...". Two days later the following entry is recorded: "James Brown tells of old times, Drummond, Laws, Black, etc. Very interesting". In 1939 he was able to attend the 50th anniversary celebrations of the DRCM at Nkhoma and was also present at the meeting of Nkhoma Presbytery taking place at the same time. Presbytery recorded his presence with great appreciation, noting that "Moyo wao ukometsa Cikristu cathu" (his life beautifies our Christendom). His death some time prior to April 1948 was recorded in the DRCM Mission Council minutes. He was buried at Livlezi alongside the graves of several missionaries who had died there in earlier times. His descendants still live at Livlezi today.

As the work continued at Mvera during the initial years, the first child to be baptised there was a son of AC Murray's, Charles Leonard Lautré, on 4 November 1894. He later returned to Malawi to serve for some years as a medical doctor at Nkhoma (1923-1927). Murray used the occasion to explain the significance of this ceremony and aroused so much interest that a hearers' class for adults could at last be started with over 30 people expressing interest.<sup>11)</sup> This was seen as one of the first real breakthroughs. The second child to be baptised was James Sadala's son, Timote, at Kongwe on 19 May 1895. The first baptism of the child of a local Christian took place at Mvera on 13 November 1898. This was Enoke, son of Paulos Maondza. Maondza and Moses Kamadia were the first local converts to be received into the Church when they were baptised on 3 March 1895.<sup>12)</sup> Murray was not keen to baptise people until they specifically requested it and had acquired sufficient knowledge concerning God and the way to salvation and had proved through their lives that they sincerely endeavoured to follow Christ. Even so, both these men

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10. Vlok makes mention of an evangelist named Jakobus (i.e. James in English) who in 1900 was in charge of the work at Livlezi. Whether this was, in fact, James Brown could not be fully ascertained, but this is quite likely the case (see: *Elf jaren in midden Afrika*, pp. 73-4).
  11. CCA P3 3/2: AC Murray to Andrew (Murray), 18/11/1894; AC Murray: *Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen*, pp. 282-4. Lautré was the maiden name of AC Murray's wife who had formerly been of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society in Lesotho.
  12. For details on Maondza and Kamadia see AC Murray: *Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen*, pp. 285-7.



238 eventually disappointed expectations and did not remain faithful.<sup>13)</sup> Two and a half years later the real break-through came when a group of nineteen, thirteen men and six women, were baptised in October 1897.<sup>14)</sup> Within the next three years 136 more persons were to be baptised at Mvera. A month before, on 9 September 1897, the first converts at Nkhoma received baptism; Aaron Chimlota and Mariya Chimlota, while the first group of ten converts at Kongwe were baptised the following year on 4 December 1898.<sup>15)</sup>

At Livlezi the first baptism had already been conducted by Dr Henry round about 1890 and the number had grown steadily over the years, with groups receiving baptism from time to time. By 1900 small Christian communities existed at Mvera (233 communicant members), Kongwe (32), Nkhoma (31) and Livlezi (92).<sup>16)</sup> The community at Malembo under the care of Albert Namalambe, was evidently included under Mvera where only 151 names had been recorded in the Membership register by the end of 1900, while at Malembo, according to one record, 85 members' names had by then been entered.<sup>17)</sup>

By that time these communities had already begun to function as congregations. At Mvera the first overseers were Simion Gora (Mgola), Davide Tsirizani, Isake Kapo-logulani, Solomon Kambere and Jonatan Molambola. By 1899 elders and deacons were being appointed and a Church Council instituted. Simion Mgola and Petros Gamadzi, both 45 years of age and the oldest of the Christians, were the two elders.<sup>18)</sup> By 1900 similar developments were reported for Nkhoma as well as for Livlezi which Vlok had visited in June 1900 to form a Church Council of three elders and three deacons.<sup>19)</sup>

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13. Ibid., p. 281: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, p. 98.

14. For further details and on the date see above p. 69f and n. 86.

15. For all names and references to baptisms both of adults and children, see respective registers in MNA Nkhoma papers (not yet filed when consulted). See also entries in Mvera Mission Log Book (CCA S5 15/6/11/4).

16. TCB Vlok: *Elf Jaren ...*, p. 73 (but on p. 48 he gives the figure of 195 for Mvera).

17. MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 30: Church membership register extracts. There are several discrepancies when comparing this Malembo list with the Malembo Register itself.

18. AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, p. 119; for a photograph of the first Church Council, *ibid.*, p. 65; CCA P3 3/2: AC Murray to A Murray: 10/3/1899; of MNA Nkhoma papers, membership register of Nkhoma.

19. TCB Vlok: *Elf Jaren ...*, pp. 74, 78, 79; *The Aurora*, 1/10/1900; of MNA Nkhoma papers, membership register for Livlezi, entry for 15/6/1900.

Up to that stage it appears that appointment of elders and deacons was done informally, but in 1901 the DRCM Council decided that members of the Church Council would be elected according to the rules and procedures of the DRC in South Africa.<sup>20)</sup> The next obvious step was to bring these congregational Councils into a formal connection with one another.

### 3. The Council of Congregations: 1903-1926

The Council of Congregations formed under the auspices of the DRCM was for all practical purposes a Presbytery. Its formation and the pattern of dividing responsibilities and duties between the "Presbytery" and the Mission Council was very much the same as found in the Livingstonia field. In fact, had it not been for the constant promptings of Laws, the DRCM may possibly not have started a Council of Congregations so soon. But Laws, with his dream of a United Presbyterian Church of Central Africa, was stressing the value of such a union as early as 1893.<sup>21)</sup> In 1895 Laws wrote to WH Murray advocating a future Presbyterian Church of Central Africa. Two years later, in 1897, he wrote to him again, stressing his view that the formation of Presbyteries by the three Missions should be of such a nature that the way would be open towards a Central African Presbyterian Church. For that reason he did not believe in having a Presbytery of the Home Church (as was envisaged for instance by Hetherwick of the Blantyre Mission). As far as the type of church union was concerned, he was not committed to any particular viewpoint. In the same letter he expressed approval of an idea put forward by Dr Andrew Murray, then chairman of the Ministers' Mission Union, adding that if three Presbyteries could be formed they could "perhaps carry out your uncle's idea of a Federal Synod of all three".<sup>22)</sup>

Two years later, in 1899, Livingstonia Mission proceeded to form a Presbytery of North Livingstonia of the Presbyterian Church of Central Africa and in November of that year the Livingstonia Mission Council proposed to the Mvera and Blantyre Missions the formation of a Synod with three Presbyteries under the Presbyterian

20. Council minutes 6/1901, p. 13. Assuming that a congregation is in principle established once the office of ruling elder begins to function, it could be argued that the first four congregations were founded before the end of 1900 and Mvera somewhat earlier. But perhaps it is best to take 1901 as the official founding date of all four these congregations. The annual *Jaarboek*, official organ of the DR Churches, is strictly speaking wrong in giving the dates of all the early congregations as being the year in which the respective stations were opened (e.g. *Jaarboek* 1979, pp. 191ff). For the dates of other congregations established after 1903, see section below.

21. J McCracken: *Christianity and politics in Malawi*, p. 247. Already at that stage the MMU had in mind the formation of a Presbytery in the foreseeable future: "Our Committee is anxious to begin a Presbytery as soon as possible" AC Murray wrote to Elmslie of Livingstonia Mission (CCA P3 3/2: d. 30/10/1893).

22. CCA S5 15/6/2/16: Laws to WH Murray, 25/5/1895, 3/2/1897.

Church of Central Africa.<sup>23)</sup> The Dutch Mission Council was agreeable to this idea and recorded the following minute in December 1899:<sup>24)</sup>

The resolution of the Livingstonia Mission Council re the formation of Presbyteries was taken into consideration and approved of. Decided to communicate with our Home Committee on this subject, and to form a presbytery as soon as possible.

Although the Home Committee was more cautious and saw some problems in the matter, preferring first to have a draft constitution before it and also to know how the DRC as a whole would feel about it,<sup>25)</sup> the idea of forming a Presbytery remained alive and two years later in April 1902 the Mission Council agreed to discuss the formation of a Presbytery at the meeting, for which reason all items on the agenda concerning church administration were deferred.<sup>26)</sup> The decision to form a Presbytery was duly taken six months later:<sup>27)</sup>

We feel the time has come for the formation of a Presbytery for our Congregations in Nyasaland. For that we request the permission of the Home Committee.

Nothing was said concerning the question of uniting with the Central African Church. The Home Committee presumably felt the matter was so important that it decided to send its secretary, Rev. J du Plessis, to visit the field in Malawi.<sup>28)</sup>

When the Mission Council met from 13-17 July 1903, Rev. du Plessis was present, having largely been responsible for drawing up the draft constitution for such a Presbytery, to be called a Council of Congregations. Revs. du Plessis, Vlok and AL Hofmeyr had been appointed on a drafting committee. The Mission Council approved the draft and resolved to form a Council of Congregations, humbly requesting the Home Committee for approval.<sup>29)</sup> The reason why the designation Council of Congregations was chosen was that it would not be meaningful to speak of a Presbytery if there was no Synod as well. On the other hand, it was regarded that the Church was not yet ready and did not have enough experienced leaders for the establishment of independent church courts.

23. J Johnston: Robert Laws of Livingstonia, p. 93.

24. Council minutes 3/1899, p. 6. Transl. from Dutch.

25. CCA V9 1/1: MMU minute VII, entry for 6/4/1900.

26. Council minutes 7/1902, p. 21.

27. Ibid., 8/1902, p. 26. Transl. from Dutch.

28. CCA V9 1/1: MMU minute 8, entry for 13/2/1903.

29. Council minute 10/1903, pp. 35-6; cf 56/1935, pp. 486-7. For report of drafting committee and draft constitution as approved by Council, see 11/1903, pp. 48ff.

The day after the Mission Council adjourned, on 18 July 1903, the Council of Congregations convened for the first time, meeting at Mvera. Four of the eight ordained missionaries in the field were present - WH Murray, Vlok, AJ Liebenberg and AL Hofmeyr - as ministers of the four congregations, respectively Mvera, Nkhoma, Kongwe and Livlezi. Also attending was Rev. du Plessis, while six elders attended: Samuele of Kongwe, Petros (Gamadzi) of Mvera, Petros of Nkhoma, Yohane of Livlezi, as well as Albert (Namalambe?) from Malembo and Davide (Tsirizani?) from Mtsala on the lakeshore near Mvera. The meeting was informal, taking no legislative decisions, but agreeing on a number of matters which it would legislate at its next meeting. Rev. Vlok of Nkhoma was elected chairman with Rev. AG Murray from Mlanda (Livlezi) as secretary.<sup>30)</sup>

The aim of the Mission Council in forming such a Council of Congregations was partially to have it function as a Committee of Council, advising it concerning the ecclesiastical affairs of the Mission. The purpose was thus further defined in the constitution: "To ease the burden of the Mission Council; to enable it to make use of the knowledge and advice of native elders in matters involving native customs; and to educate the Native Church towards a correct understanding of her responsibility and duties".<sup>31)</sup>

This meant that the Mission Council was still in a position of effective control over all the decisions of the Council of Congregations. The constitution provided for this as follows:<sup>32)</sup>

The decision and recommendations of the Council of Congregations will as soon as possible be sent by its Clerk to the Secretary of the Executive Council in order to have them approved or disapproved by this aforesaid Council at its next meeting. Only after approval by this Council will the decision have legal power.

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30. CCA S5 15/6/1/4: Minutes of Council of Congregations (Msonkhano wa Maeklesia/wa Mipingo), entry for 18/7/1903. This handwritten copy of the minutes (in Chewa) goes as far as 1919. From 1920 onwards no official handwritten minutes appear to have been kept, but minutes of the Council of Congregations, and from 1926 of the Prebytery of Nkhoma, were printed and issued in pamphlet form. From 1903 to 1925 all decisions of the Council of Congregations were ratified and minuted in the Mission Council minutes and from 1926 to 1928 extracts of the Presbytery minutes were still recorded in Council minutes for notification.
31. Council minutes 10/1903, p. 37; 11/1903, p. 48.
32. Section VII (in Mission Council minutes 11/1903, p. 52). Transl. from Dutch.

This meant that in the last instance the Home Committee would have the last word as all decisions of the Mission Council were subject to approval by the General Mission Committee through its Nyasa Mission subcommittee.

The Mission Council regularly met immediately after the annual meeting of the Council of Congregations so that there was no delay in ratifying its decisions which were then included in the minutes of the Mission Council as its own decisions. This power of veto of the Mission Council was, however, never used in an outright sense, and it never went further than making a recommendation to the Council of Congregations. Likewise the Nyasa subcommittee seldom went further than questioning certain decisions but abiding by the explanations of the Mission Council or, in some instances of discipline, stating that it felt the decision was rather severe but would not ask for a review. In one or two instances it did suggest amendments to a ruling such as to leaving it to the discretion of the minister in charge to decide whatever a person who had been away for a long time and living in unknown circumstances, should first be under observation for some time before being allowed to receive the sacraments, rather than making it a rule that Communion should be withheld for three months. This was accepted by the Mission Council on behalf of the Council of Congregations.<sup>33)</sup>

Between the first informal meeting of the Council of Congregations in July 1903 and its next formal meeting in December of that year, the control of the Mission went over into the hands of the newly-formed General Mission Committee of the Cape DRC Synod. This committee convened for its first meeting on 1 November 1903.<sup>34)</sup> It is clear, however, that this transition was of no consequence as far as the formation of the Council of Congregations was concerned, as the matter had been under consideration for several years prior to 1903 and would have taken place in any case. Though fully in line with the DRC policy of separate Churches for people of different racial or national backgrounds, it would seem to be not so much this policy which led to the decision at that particular stage as the practical situation in the field.<sup>35)</sup> Both Livingstonia and Blantyre Missions had already formed Presbyteries and there had been a repeated encouragement especially from Laws for the Dutch Mission to do the same, while the need for such a body arose spontaneously

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33. CCA S5 1/4/1: Nyasa subcommittee minutes, entries for 14/5/1904, 7/2/1905, 26/10/1905, compare with Council minutes, 12/1904, pp. 56-7; 13/1905, pp. 74-5.
34. See above, P85; CCA S5 1/1/2: GMC minutes, entry for 1/11/1903.
35. NJ Smith (Die planting van afsonderlike kerke vir Nie-Blanke bevolkingsgroepe deur die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Afrika, p. 83) sees a more direct connection between the formation of the Council of Congregations and the transfer of the work to the GMC of the DRC.

as the first congregations began to function. Nevertheless, it was the aim of the DRCM from the beginning to eventually form an independent indigenous Church. On the other hand, there is no evidence to suggest that the separation between the native Church and the expatriate Mission Council came about specifically "because the white personnel could not stand under jurisdiction of the indigenous church".<sup>36)</sup> These sentiments may have been present, but again it was the practical situation as well as the precedent established by Livingstonia Mission which were the decisive factors. In Livingstonia a similar arrangement existed where the Mission Council possessed powers of veto over a Presbytery, not of the Home Church, but of an indigenous Presbyterian Church of Central Africa.

The position concerning missionaries in the indigenous Church was such that only ministers in charge of congregations could sit on the Council of Congregations, although provision was made for the chairman of the Mission council to have a seat ex officio.<sup>37)</sup> A few years later the question concerning missionaries serving as elders in the Church arose. At Kongwe Rev. JJ Ferreira had been elected to this office and the Minister-in-charge, Rev. Liebenberg, requested authorisation from the subcommittee of the Mission Council, explaining that it was done in view of his (Liebenberg's) expected absence on furlough in which case it would be easier if Ferreira were a member of the Church Council, so that it could deal with smaller matters without Liebenberg's substitute at Mvera having to come over each time. The subcommittee felt it could not disapprove of this decision in the light of circumstances, but it would not commit itself to the principle of mission personnel serving on Church Councils. The matter was referred to the full Council which subsequently ruled that it was "not desirable" to choose whites as members of Church Councils "of our mission congregations".<sup>38)</sup> In other words this was not an outright ban, but in view of the purpose of developing an indigenous Church which would eventually be totally self-governing, it was felt undesirable for expatriates to serve on its councils, thus jeopardising the African representation.<sup>39)</sup> Only missionaries in charge of congregations would have right of session.

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36. Ibid., p. 83. Transl. from Afrikaans.

37. Council minutes 11/1903, p. 44. Ordained missionaries not in charge of congregations apparently originally had no session in the Council of Congregations. Later it appears that more than one missionary could be present representing the same congregation. From 1926 onwards all ordained ministers from any congregation had voting powers, but only one elder from each could attend.

38. MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 1: Copy Liebenberg to Secretary, Subcommittee, 10/10/1905; minutes of Subcommittee meeting of 20/10/1905, recorded in Council minutes 14/1906, p. 80; for Council's decision see *ibid.*, p. 82. Transl. from Dutch.

39. Cf. AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, p. 248.

The division of work between the Mission Council and the Council of Congregations was already outlined in the constitution for the Council of Congregations.<sup>40)</sup>

The latter was to "have jurisdiction over the purely ecclesiastical matters of the Mission". These included all arrangements, regulations and requirements concerning catechumen classes, baptism and admission of new members to the Sacraments, responsibilities of such members, discipline, baptism of children of christian parents, arrangements concerning Holy Communion, Church marriages and funerals and the establishment and functioning of Church Councils.<sup>41)</sup>

The Council of Congregations consisted of the minister-in-charge plus one elder from each congregation. It would elect its own chairman and secretary, the former to be elected annually, and meet regularly once a year. It would appoint the first Church Council for any new congregation to be formed. After that, election of Church Council members would be conducted by the existing Council, elders and deacons normally serving for a two-year period, but eligible for re-election for another two-year period after which they were to go into retirement for at least one year. After this they could be re-elected, and at each re-election be inducted in office once again.<sup>42)</sup> This arrangement was in line with the established practice in all (Dutch) Reformed Churches in South Africa, the Netherlands and elsewhere in the world, but differed from the practice in Scottish Presbyterian Churches where elders were elected and ordained in office for life. This practice was transferred to the Presbyteries of Livingstonia and Blantyre and the difference in procedure and practice among the three Presbyteries has remained in force ever since.<sup>43)</sup>

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40. For full text of Constitution see Council minutes 11/1903, pp. 48-53.

41. These functions agree precisely with what J du Plessis lay down as matters in which a young Church should exercise self-government (Wie sal gaan? pp. 240ff).

42. Council minutes 12/1904, p. 60.

43. This difference in practice has often been the source of difficulties experienced in Churches with a DRC background both in Malawi as well as in Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. Elders coming originally from one of the Presbyteries of Scottish origin have sometimes stubbornly refused to step down once they were inducted as elders, even on occasion choosing to form break-away groups rather than to accept the rule of stepping down. Thus, for example, during the 1950s an ex-Livingstonia elder caused so much difficulty in one congregation on the Cape West Coast by adamantly refusing to step down, that the only solution eventually was for the Church Council to seek dispensation from Presbytery to allow him to continue in office (information from the then minister-in-charge). There are indications that one of the reasons why a CCAP congregation was formed in Lusaka, Zambia a few years back had to do with this same difficulty (on this group see CCAP General Synod minutes 27/1977). The same appears to apply to difficulties which have cropped up in the Salisbury Synod of the CCAP in Zimbabwe from time to time, notably at Bulawayo. See also P Bolink: Towards church union, p. 266, n. 72.

The constitution also lay down the respective duties of elders and deacons, further requiring each Church Council to submit a report to the annual meeting of the Council of Congregations on certain statistics and on the life and work of the congregation, using prescribed forms "A" and "B" as they were called.<sup>43)</sup>

Thus, for all practical purposes, the Council of Congregations functioned as a Presbytery, delegates having to submit official letters of credence from their congregations,<sup>44)</sup> and the Council hearing the reports "A" and "B" from and holding oversight over each congregation.

Its first official meeting at Nkhoma on 15-16 December 1903 was attended by the same four ministers in charge of the four congregations and by four elders, of whom two, Zakeyu (Kongwe) and Luka (Livlezi), were present for the first time. Several regulations concerning admission to catechumens' class were laid down, a number of which have remained in force up to the present. These included a stipulation on the minimum age of admission to catechumen classes, the requirement that a candidate should be able to read and be in possession of certain books, including a Catechism and a portion of Scripture. Elderly people were exempted from the literacy requirement as well as any one who proved to be unable to learn to read. Poligamists were excluded from Church membership, as well as all but the first wife of a polygamist, while catechumens were prohibited from taking part in a number of heathen practices such as making sacrifices, divination, the poison ordeal, worshipping spirits of deceased ancestors, indecent activities at funerals, traditional initiation ceremonies (chinamwali) and the Nyau cult. Normally a person had to remain "two rains" in class before being admitted to membership, but for elderly people only twelve months were required.<sup>45)</sup>

Finally the meeting approved the establishment of a congregation at Malembo, instructing the Ministers-in-charge of Nkhoma and Livlezi and the elder of Livlezi to go and do the necessary on its behalf. This was the first congregation thus to be formed under the auspices of the young Church. The Committee duly reported back the following year that the congregation had been established on 24 July 1904 with two elders, Albert Namalambe and Abraham Chinzewere, and three deacons, Lote Zengereta, Andrew Mwananjobvu (baptised about twenty years before at Cape Maclear by

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44. For letters of credence for 1904 see MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 9 (Correspondence General Mission Secretary 1952-57); for 1906-1962 see Box 37. Names and signatures of some of the first Christians are on these documents. For annual congregation reports "A" and "B" see Box 22 (1902-1931) and Box 37 (1932-1961).
45. CCA S5 15/6/1/4: Council of Congregations minutes entry for 15-16/12/1903. In 1911 participation in the Nyau ceremonies was totally forbidden.



Laws<sup>46)</sup> and Andreya Musa (who later became the first Malawian to be ordained in this Church, in 1925)<sup>47)</sup> Apparently Musa was promoted to the status of elder shortly afterwards as he was the Malembo delegate to the Council of Congregations meeting in December 1904.

When the Council of Congregations met for its second official meeting on 13-17 December 1904, five congregations were represented. It had before it a considerable agenda and passed resolutions on a large variety of matters. Rules laid down included that a person going away for a long time should carry a letter of introduction from the Minister-in-charge of his home congregation; that close relatives were not to be elected to the Church Council at the same time; that members from other Churches (Missions) could receive Holy Communion, provided they brought a letter from their Church; that the administering of Holy Communion to newly baptised members would be delayed for at least one month; that members who do not attend services of worship would be disciplined; that it was inadvisable to baptise a child if only one parent was a Christian; that the maximum age at which a child could be permitted for baptism was to be two years and that a period of observation would be in force in respect of any person who had been away for a long time, living under unknown circumstances (Holy Communion was to be withheld for at least three months).<sup>48)</sup> Of importance was the defining of a five fold process to be followed in exercising church discipline: admonishment by the minister; admonishment by the Church Council; withholding of Sacraments for a specified period; withholding of Sacraments for an unspecified period; and ultimately, complete excommunication.<sup>49)</sup>

46. MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 30: Extracts of Malembo membership register.

47. For report of Malembo committee as delivered first to the Council of Congregations and then to the Mission Council see Council minutes 12/1904, pp. 54-5. It was signed by Vlok, AG Murray of Mlanda/Livlezi and elder Luka. Original report in CCA S5 15/6/11/2.

48. This regulation was amended at the suggestion of the DRC Nyasa subcommittee (see p. 242 above).

49. Council of Congregations minutes entry for 13-17/12/1904. It is seldom that discipline is taken as far as excommunication, but as a last resort to bring a person under conviction of his sin(s) this is a recognised practice in Reformed Churches. It was only in 1921, when the Church was experiencing severe backsliding amongst its members, that the Council of Congregations made further rulings concerning excommunication (to take place after five years of persistent unrepentiveness plus a further one to three years of final warning period). It then also requested the drawing up of a formulary for excommunication as well as one for receiving back into the Church a repentive excommunicant (entry for 18-20/8/1921). For further arrangements concerning procedure in receiving back an excommunicant, see Nkhoma Presbytery minutes 1924, p. 3; 1927, pp. 5-6.

All cases of discipline of office bearers were first heard by the Council of Congregations and in the case of employees of the Mission, upheld by the Mission Council by terminating their employment. The Mission Council had full jurisdiction over evangelists as Mission employees as far as their appointment to service was concerned,<sup>50)</sup> but the Council of Congregations dealt with other office bearers, such as deacons, elders and, later, ordained ministers.

A further development concerning discipline which took place during this period was the laying down of specified periods of time during which Sacraments would be withheld for specified moral breaches of conduct such as, inter alia, eighteen months for adultery (1910), six months for going away to work without a letter of introduction from his Church (1914), twelve months for false statements made in writing (1914) and eighteen months for marrying a girl who had not yet reached puberty (1916). No doubt it was necessary in order to achieve uniform practice and justice, but in due course this led to a very legalistic spirit in the Church. The specified period became a "sentence" passed automatically, often with no regard for extenuating circumstances or degree of repentance.<sup>51)</sup>

Although it is to a certain degree correct to say that the official institution of the Church in wider context only took place when it became part of the CCAP in 1926, in principle the Church was already formed in 1903 when the congregations were united in one body with supervisory and legislative powers.<sup>52)</sup> Although missionaries inevitably played a leading and influential role during this period, it provided the opportunity to local church leaders, many of them future ordained ministers, to gain experience in matters of church government. Men like Andreyama Namkumba, Namon Katengeza, Amon Ndiwo, Petro Kachingwe and many others were undoubtedly delegates. Later on it became customary to have all senior evangelists attend as observers with advisory vote. It was from these that the candidates for ordination were always chosen in earlier years.<sup>53)</sup> The experience thus gained served to develop the young Church and to engender a sense of responsibility in the minds of the leaders, positively affecting the congregations.<sup>54)</sup>

50. For example of actions taken see Council minutes 36/1919, p. 261.

51. Cf. CM Pauw: The holiness of the Church in Africa in future perspective (Missionalia, Vol. 2 No. 3, Nov. 1974, p. 141).

52. Cf. NJ Smith: Die planting van afsonderlike kerke ..., op. cit., pp. 84, 86.

53. AC Murray: Ons Nyasa-akker, p. 249. Unfortunately the minutes of the Council of Congregations seldom give the full names of elders, but it can be assumed with relative safety that names which appear in the minutes which coincide with the first names of these men often were, in fact, those very persons.

54. See GMC report to Cape Synod, Acta 1915, p. 66.

In this regard WH Murray always stressed at meetings of the Council of Congregations that the whites should talk less: "Give the Africans a chance to talk. We want to know and ought to know their opinions."<sup>55)</sup>

The DRCM policy on this was quite clear. The aim was to educate and train nationals in the Church in order to become its future leaders, while the white missionary should gradually withdraw.<sup>56)</sup> While steady progress in this direction did take place, it was perhaps marred by the paternalistic attitude on the part of missionaries which delayed handing over of power. When AC Murray wrote in 1930, "we were very careful in the choice of men for ordination and the ordained men feel their dependence upon the missionaries in every respect",<sup>57)</sup> he meant that there was excellent co-operation between the two groups (there were six ordained Malawians by then) and that until then there had been no significant signs of tension. This was, of course, written for home consumption and in the light of the critical attitudes which existed in some DRC quarters concerning handing over authority too fast to Africans, but it also suggests a line of action which would have ensured the superior position of the missionary for a longer period. They were, no doubt, aware of the difficulties Livingstonia Mission had experienced with some of its first ordained men<sup>58)</sup> and would have taken care to avoid similar problems, if possible.

As a formative and preparatory institution, the Council of Congregations proved valuable. In due course elders took an ever greater part in discussions and displayed an ever increasing degree of wisdom. The realisation grew that this was their Church and the work would eventually become their full responsibility.<sup>59)</sup> Although they still depended very much on the missionaries, interest in their Church and its affairs grew. Especially in matters of dealing with church discipline they played a leading role.<sup>60)</sup> To all intents and purposes, WH Murray informed the Mission secretary in 1916, they had already had a Presbytery for years, in that the Council of Congregations functioned as such.<sup>61)</sup>

The Church made definite progress, not only growing in membership and in number of congregations, but also in progressing towards greater maturity and towards the

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55. WH Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, p. 133.

56. AC Murray: Ons Nyasa-akker, pp. 255, 256.

57. Ibid., p. 256.

58. Cf. above ch. 1, pp. 25f.

59. For example Council of Congregations minutes 1920, p. 2: "In future the church will look after the work in this country". Transl. from Chewa.

60. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1915.

61. CCA S5 15/6/2/16: WH Murray to Mission secr., 4/1/1916.

attaining of a greater measure of self-support and self-government. For this the ordination of the first two Malawians in 1925 was of great significance.

When the Council of Congregations met for the first time, the entire communicant membership of the Church stood at 606. The years which followed were years of exceptional growth. Year by year the membership grew - at the remarkable average growth rate of 21,5% per annum for the years 1903 to 1917, by which time there were 8 050 communicant members. The number of congregations had increased from four to eight and there were 10 170 catechumens.<sup>62)</sup>

Of particular significance was a series of conferences, each lasting several days, held throughout the field in 1910. AC Murray was invited from South Africa to come and lead these conferences. They were held at five main centres and were attended by 8 000 Christians. A further 16 000 people, including non-Christians, attended other smaller conferences and meetings.<sup>63)</sup> It was a time of rich blessing and reaping and in the following years the numbers of church members increased at a rate never again equalled in this Church. During the first six months after the conferences one thousand converts joined catechumen classes and in 1911 Rev. Liebenberg wrote:<sup>64)</sup>

Never in the history of Nyasaland have the natives been so ready to listen to God's Word. At all our village schools there is a strong desire to understand the things concerning God. Village schools are filled to capacity ... If ever there was a time in Nyasaland to expand and to harvest, then it is now.

So successful were these conferences which assumed the form of revival meetings, that the Church on various occasions in later years requested similar conferences to be held, usually with some special guest speaker. These conferences became the forerunner of the popular present day Chitsitsimutso (revival) meetings which take place regularly in congregations of Nkhoma Synod.

The years after 1910 were years of consolidation and expansion.<sup>65)</sup> Village schools

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62. In compiling statistics the statistical returns recorded in the minutes of the Council of Congregations were used as basis with reference, where necessary, to statistical tables appended to the Mission Council minute book. All figures are for congregations in Malawi only with exclusion of those in Zambia which formed part of the Council of Congregations for some years.
63. For reports see DK, 11/6/1910, pp. 89-90; 3/8/1911, p. 241; CCA S5 1/1/2: GMC minute 30, entry for 19/10/1910.
64. In DK, 4/5/1911, p. 284 and 2/11/1911, p. 684. Transl. from Dutch.
65. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Half-yearly reports for Jun. and Dec. 1912.

increased from 304 in 1910 to 738 in 1916, with a record number of 1931 village school teachers in service. It should be stressed that the role played by these men trained as teacher-evangelists was of utmost importance. The bulk of responsibility for training the thousands of new converts rested upon their shoulders, while the village school centres where they laboured were the real source of growth in the Church.

By 1917 a turning point was reached. The Church began to feel the adverse effects of the First World War.<sup>66)</sup> A spirit of apathy accompanied a spiritual decline in the Church, while a recrudescence of traditional religious beliefs and practices was experienced. Hundreds of Christians had to be put under discipline and many left the Church. The result was an almost cataclysmic drop in the growth rate of church numbers from 21,5% p.a. up to 1917 to only 2% p.a. for the period 1917-1923.<sup>67)</sup> Enrolment in catechumen classes dropped from 10 170 in 1917 to 6 476 in 1921 and it was twenty years before the figures of 1917 could again be equalled. So serious was the situation that WH Murray wrote: "We seem to have lost hold on the people".<sup>68)</sup> A series of district conferences were planned by the Mission Council and the General Mission Committee in Cape Town issued a call for prayer for the work in Malawi to the entire DRC. By 1920 the first signs that a turning point had been reached became evident.<sup>69)</sup> The Council of Congregations issued an appeal to all teachers to rededicate themselves to their work and to parents to teach their children to love the work of God, setting the example themselves. By 1924 matters were virtually back to normal.<sup>70)</sup> By the time the Presbytery of Nkhoma joined the CCAP in 1926 it had 11 335 communicant members. Catechumens then numbered 8 226.

The Council of Congregations itself had also gone through several stages of development. In 1903 there were four congregations, but the figure rose to five in 1904. Two years later the first congregation in Zambia was formed at Magwero under the auspices of the Council of Congregations. The work of the DRCM in both regions was still under one Mission Council and it was natural for the congregations to

66. See also above, pp. 92f, 159.

67. The Council of Congregations recorded no statistics for the years 1920-1924. In 1919 there were 8 050 communicant members, while the Report of the Fourth General Missionary Conference, 1924 gave the figure of 9 049 for 1923. In 1925 the Council of Congregations recorded a total of 10 501 members, including the new congregation of Kasungu (467).

68. CCA S5 15/6/2/17: WH Murray to Mission secr., 23/7/1919.

69. Council minutes 36/1919, p. 258; CCA S5 1/1/2: GMC minute 48, entry for 24/2/1920.

70. Council of Congregation minutes, 1920; CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1924.

be united in one body as well. The Magwero delegates, Rev. PJ Smit and elder Lukas, were present for the first time at the Council of Congregations meeting at Mvera in April 1907.

It was several years before the next congregation was formed in Malawi. This was Mphunzi in 1912, followed by Ntchisi (later called Chintembwe) formed on 6 March 1915. Meanwhile, three more congregations had been formed in Zambia, Madzimoyo in 1912, Fort Jameson (Chipata) in 1913 and Nyanje in 1914. With the extension of the work into Mozambique a congregation was formed at Mphatso on 28 March 1915<sup>71)</sup> also under the auspices of the Malawi Council of Congregations. Thus in 1915 congregations from three countries, Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique, convened in one Council. At this meeting, which was opened at Madzimoyo, Zambia, on 11 December by the outgoing chairman, Rev. CP Pauw, an important decision was taken. In view of the growing number of congregations and long distances to travel to attend meetings it was resolved to form a separate Council of Congregations for the Zambian Church (a separate DRC Mission Council for Zambia had already been formed in 1909). Yet at the same time the Church was eager to maintain the closest possible unity between the two bodies, as they were very hopeful at that stage of eventually forming a Synod which would consist of the Presbyteries of Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique. These Presbyteries were to develop from the work of the DRCM in these respective areas. The Council of Congregations stipulated that, in order to maintain the bond of unity, any rule laid down by either of the two Councils would only come into force once the other Council had also approved it, while one minister and elder with full voting powers would represent the other Council at each meeting. Each Council would, however, take care of its own administrative affairs and control a separate Central Fund.<sup>72)</sup> The arrangement concerning mutual approval of rules remained in force until the newly-formed Presbytery of Nkhoma rescinded it in 1927 "until the Council of N. Rhodesia has been joined to Synod".<sup>73)</sup> The reason was obvious, it was impossible for an outside church body to have legislative powers over the Presbytery of another Church. At that stage everyone expected the Zambia Council to join the CCAP in the near future.

At the same time, however, mutual representation by a minister and an elder was to continue between the two Church bodies, but henceforth they would have only observer status.

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71. For work in Mozambique see above, ch. 2,

72. CCA S5 15/6/1/4: Council of Congregations minute 4, entry for 11-14/12/1915.

73. Nkhoma Presbytery 1927, p. 7.

After the 1915 decision to separate, Malawi remained with seven congregations, while an eighth was formed at Malingunde on 23 April 1916.<sup>74)</sup> The Council of Congregations convened in 1916 with nine congregations participating, including Mphatso in Mozambique. Mphatso was disbanded after the closure of the work in 1922. Four more congregations were formed before 1926 - Mchinji in 1918, and Dzenza, Mlanda and Kholá between August 1921 and September 1922.<sup>75)</sup> Kholá was the first, and for a long time the only congregation which was not also a Mission station. A fifth congregation, Kasungu, which was then about twenty years old (the first eleven Christians were baptised in September 1903), was transferred from Livingstonia Presbytery at the request of the Council of Congregations meeting in 1924 and was present as the thirteenth congregation<sup>76)</sup> in the Nkhoma Council of Congregations meeting at Kasungu in September 1925.

Apart from this expansion, the Church also showed progress in respect of self-support, self-government and even self-extension.

From the beginning Christians were taught to give towards the work of the Church. By 1893 a regular Sunday collection of cash and kind was being taken at Mvera.<sup>77)</sup> Likewise the annual Masika or harvest thanksgiving festival soon became a characteristic of this Church and has remained one of the more spectacular annual events in the life of the Church ever since. In 1896 it was already reported that such a thanksgiving festival was held at Mvera, seven to eight hundred people attending and giving 1 300 lbs (nearly 600 kg) of grain. The money raised went towards the church building fund.<sup>78)</sup> Three years later 580 lbs of pounded maize meal (ufa) and 1 600 lbs of grain was donated in addition to a variety of other products and items, including twelve dozen eggs. In 1908 Mvera congregation brought in 10 344 lbs of maize and ufa in addition to 600 lbs of ground nuts and various other products. The same year Kongwe congregation also collected over 10 000 lbs of

74. For report on Malingunde see MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 22 (Statistical reports 1902-1918).

75. Livlezi congregation was actually divided into three separate congregations. Up to that time the official name for the congregation was Livlezi, but with the Mission stationed at Mlanda the latter name was sometimes used in the minutes of the Council of Congregations when Livlezi congregation was actually meant (cf. minutes 1920, p. 1; 1921, pp. 1, 2).

76. Council of Congregations minutes 1924, p. 4; 1925, p. 1. This was just after Livingstonia Mission had handed over the work at Kasungu to the DRCM (see above, pp. 96ff).

77. CCA V9 2/1: Copy Vlok to Mission secr., 22/4/1893.

78. Ibid., WH Murray to Albertyn, 18/8/1896.

maize.<sup>79)</sup> These were by no means small achievements for congregations numbering only 602 and 235 communicant members respectively, although this was the one occasion when even many non-Christians often gave something.

The principle of regular and systematic giving was established and the Council of Congregations regularly, from as early as 1904, reminded Christians of their vows to give for the Lord's work.<sup>80)</sup> Total liberality from all the congregations rose from £47 in 1906 to £245 in 1911, to £488 in 1916, dropping to £238.10 in 1921, but rising again to over £500 in 1926.<sup>81)</sup> Where there were a sufficient number of communicants and catechumens at a village school it was agreed in 1913 that they should support the work done at the school themselves. This presumably meant raising funds for the salaries of teacher-evangelists as well as for all expenses concerning buildings and other needs. This was an important step towards self-support, WH Murray wrote, but "we could not get the elders to agree to more than the principle of the matter".<sup>82)</sup>

A year later another important step forward was taken when the Council of Congregations established a Central Fund from which it would pay salaries to trained evangelists, provide for the maintenance of student evangelists and upkeep of the buildings of the Evangelist school. Congregations were expected to contribute two pennies per communicant member and one penny per catechumen.<sup>83)</sup> By then it had virtually become a rule that church buildings as well as other buildings required by the Church should be built by the Christians themselves.<sup>84)</sup>

The idea of local Churches supporting their own teachers and evangelists did not succeed very well initially, but the arrangement that the Council of Congregations should pay their salaries from its Central Fund was more successful. In 1916 the

79. CCA V9 4/1: Annual report for 1897; De Koningsbode Nov. 1908, p. 123; DK, 3/9/1908, p. 446; 19/11/1908, p. 606.

80. CCA S5 15/6/1/4: entry for 13/12/1904.

81. Ibid., Annual statistics. The actual amount for 1926 was £334.15.0, but as this was only for eight months and as the amount for 1925 had been £533.15.0, it is safe to assume the figure of £500 for the full year. In 1927 (sixteen months later) £789.5.0 was recorded.

82. Ibid., entry for 11-12/12/1913; CCA S5 15/6/1/5: WH Murray to Mission secr., 23/12/1913; GMC report to Cape Synod, Acta 1915, p. 67.

83. CCA S5 15/6/1/4: Council of Congregations minutes entry for 10-12/12/1914.

84. DK, 16/7/1914, p. 672. For examples of local congregations being required to bear the costs of building or repairing church buildings, see Council minutes 26/1913, pp. 173, 174 (corrected page No.); 32/1917, p. 227; 36/1919, pp. 256, 259; 38/1920, p. 266.



Mission Council agreed that if the Council of Congregations would support evangelists then it would be given the right to transfer them. Until then all transfers of evangelists were in the hands of the Mission Council. This again was a step forward and WH Murray wrote that giving this power to the Council of Congregations anticipated the formation of a Presbytery.<sup>85)</sup> The initiative proved to be successful and by 1922 all eighteen senior evangelists were under authority of the Church, being paid either by congregations or from the Central Fund.<sup>86)</sup>

Here the principle of self-government was closely linked to the concept of self-support, but it would not be absolutely correct to say that self-support was a prerequisite for self-government as there were still many other aspects of the work where the Church was not required to provide the money. But this principle was strongly established and ever since, the Church was to be responsible for its own church buildings and manses, as well as for the salaries of all nationals serving in congregations, such as evangelists and ordained ministers.

One other aspect concerning the principle of self-support should be mentioned. In 1909 an attempt was made by the missionaries to introduce a system of covenantal giving by which each member would covenant to give a certain sum of money annually.<sup>87)</sup> Initially it appeared fairly successful, but in the long run the Council of Congregations found it repeatedly had to make appeals to members to be more faithful in giving to the Church. Faced with the problem that many gave nothing or hardly anything, it took a decision in 1922 which in retrospect appears to have been a mistake. In that year it decided to lay down a fixed sum of money as the minimum which a person ought to give. For communicant members it was two shilling (20 t) for men and one shilling (10 t) for women per annum, while for catechumens it was half the amount.<sup>88)</sup> This applied to the covenant money: each person was expected to give and was in addition to Sunday offerings where people were also encouraged to give something regularly. Unfortunately the result was that virtually everybody began to give only the minimum amount and the Biblical principle of each one giving according to what he gains was almost entirely lost. In later years the Church has suffered much because of this "rule" and it has been extremely difficult to convince people to give differently. Even after fifty years it was still being found that

85. Council minutes 31/1916, pp. 218ff; CCA S5 15/6/1/5: WH Murray to Mission secr., 26/12/1916.

86. Report in DK, 27/12/1922, pp. 1722f; cf. CCA S5 1/1/3: GMC minute 73, entry for 27/2-1/3/1923.

87. AL Hofmeyr: *Het land langs het meer*, pp. 99-110; DK, 29/4/1909, p. 20

88. Council of Congregations minute 4 entry for 18-20/9/1922.

many church people felt they had done all that is required of them once they had given their twenty tambala contribution.<sup>89)</sup> In the eyes of some it was nothing more than a form of church "tax".

In addition to promoting self-government and self-support, the Church was also encouraged to promote self-expansion. Naturally, expansion took place at the local level where Christians were often directly involved in furthering the Christian faith as well as later supporting the Senior evangelists working in their midst, but congregations were encouraged to support work elsewhere as well. Thus the small group of believers at Mvera were reported already in 1898 to be supporting one of their fellow believers, Davide Tsirizani, working as an evangelist at Chief Dzooli's village in another area. Some years later in 1906 the catechumen class of 38 agreed to send a quarterly donation to support one evangelist, whom they chose themselves to go and work in Zambia at Nyanje Mission, while Mvera congregation as a whole decided in 1911 to add another village school to the four they were already supporting, this time one at Mphatso in Mozambique.<sup>90)</sup> Thus the Church was becoming involved, even though in a small way, in the wider task of spreading Christianity further afield.

In these and other ways the young Church and its Council of Congregations made fair progress in developing towards the ideal set by the DRCM of a church which would eventually become autonomous. By the time the Church was fully established with the formation of a Presbytery in 1926 it had progressed remarkably towards self-government, self-support and self-existence, but there was still a long way to go. Before turning to this new phase in the history of the Church, two more aspects require attention, namely earlier moves towards church formation by the DRCM and, secondly, the ordination of the first Malawians.

By 1914 negotiations between Livingstonia and Blantyre Missions and their respective Home Churches had reached an advanced stage towards forming a united African Church. Two months after the respective Assemblies of the United Free Church of Scotland (for Livingstonia) and of the Church of Scotland (for Blantyre) had agreed to the formation of such a Church,<sup>91)</sup> a special meeting of the DRCM Council took place at Nkhoma on 30 and 31 July 1914. A deputation had been sent from the General Mission Committee in Cape Town to inquire into certain matters and the Council used the opportunity to put forward a motion that in view of the fast development of

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89. Cf. Nuusbrief uit Malawi, Sept. 1965.

90. CCA P3 3/2: AC Murray to A Murray, 3/12/1898; DK, 14/12/1907, p. 84; 16/3/1911, p. 168.

91. For details, see CCAP Synod 1924, min. 4.

the work "the Council is of the opinion that it will soon be necessary to proceed towards the formation of the Nyasa Church".<sup>92)</sup> The deputation was asked to convey the request to the GMC so that the matter could come before the next meeting of the Synod of the DRC.

At the recommendation of Rev. AG du Toit, one of the members of the deputation, the Nyasa subcommittee as well as the GMC agreed to the request and the GMC resolved to request the Synod to make the transitory arrangement of forming a Presbytery under the supervision and control of the GMC.<sup>93)</sup> Meeting in November 1915 the Synod referred the matter to its Judicial Committee which tabled a special report the following day. The finding was that from the point of view of Church Canonical law, it was not conceivable to have a Presbytery without a Synod, according to Par. 6 of the Ordinance No. 7 of 1843 as well as Art. 9 of its Constitution, but in view of the fact that the "Church in Nyasaland" was still in the process of becoming a fully autonomous Church, it recommended, and the Synod duly approved, that in view of the need for regulating the affairs of the existing congregations, only two courts would function during this transitory stage: Church Councils, dealing with all matters relating to the individual congregations, exercising oversight and discipline over its members, and one or more Presbyteries to function according to the regulations of the GMC and the constitution of the DRC, holding oversight over the congregations and exercising discipline over Church Councils and its members. This Presbytery would consist of all ordained ministers and one elder from each congregation, while laymen in the Mission could attend with an advisory vote. It would be regarded as a Presbytery of the "mission work in Nyasaland of the Dutch Reformed Church" and would in all matters be subject to and under the control of the GMC in Cape Town.<sup>94)</sup>

Whether this was exactly what the missionaries in the field had wanted, is not clear, but as the Council of Congregations was already for all practical purposes fulfilling the function of such a Presbytery, there was no apparent haste to apply the decision. WH Murray suggested to the GMC not to hurry with the matter, adding that his idea had always been the establishing of a Presbytery for Nyasaland, one for Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and one for Mozambique encompassing the three DRCM fields. These Presbyteries could then join together in one Church and Synod. They should think of uniting with Blantyre and Livingstonia only after the Orange Free

92. Council minutes 28/1914, p. 184(a) (corrected page No.).

93. CCA S5 1/1/2: GMC minute 16, entry for 5-6/8/1914; cf. report of GMC to Cape Synod, Acta 1915, p. 72, and motivation, p. 66.

94. DRC Acta 1915, p. 56, 57.

State and Transvaal Missions (Zambia and Mozambique respectively) had also formed Presbyteries.<sup>95)</sup>

For some years nothing more appears to have been done, most likely due to the difficulties caused by the War and to other troubles. In 1918 the official organ of the DRC took up the idea in an editorial once more that a Synod should be formed in the not too distant future which would include the three Presbyteries already envisaged.<sup>96)</sup> This ideal remained alive until 1922, but then the work in Mozambique came to an end, and with that the hopes of forming a Synod faded away. The following year the DRCM Council in Malawi turned its attention towards the possibility of entering into the proposed union between the Livingstonia and Blantyre Presbyteries.

Although the decision of the 1915 DRC Synod did not directly lead to Church formation it is of some importance to note the strong emphasis on the subjugative position of the proposed Presbytery. When Nkhoma Presbytery was formed as part of the CCAP, the DRC did not retain such a strong control but it would appear that in the minds of many in the DRC the notion still existed that the DRC could take mandatory decisions for the Nkhoma Presbytery. This led for instance to a decision in later years concerning the withdrawal of Nkhoma from the CCAP, a matter which shall be dealt with in a later paragraph.

The last and perhaps most important development during this period was the decision to proceed towards ordaining some of the Senior evangelists.

In line with its policy of establishing an autonomous, indigenous Church, the DRCM kept the ideal of a native ministry in mind. After ten years of work, AC Murray emphasised that the young Church could not always be served by European ministers, but that the time had to come when the Church would have its own ministers from its midst, but he added that the Church would have to support them from the beginning. Even though ordination still lay in the distant future, this had to be kept in mind and the Church had to be taught to support God's work in their community.<sup>97)</sup>

The next step forward was a resolution by the Mission Council in 1913 to consider the ordination of some of the evangelists and request the GMC to consider and possibly bring the matter to the attention of the next Synod. The main reason

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95. CCA S5 15/6/2/16: WH Murray to Mission secr., 4/1/1916. Copy of same in MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 1.

96. DK, 3/10/1918, p. 945; see also 27/12/1922, pp. 1722f.

97. CCA V9 4/1: Report on future evangelisation, 1899.

given for this request was the fast rate at which the work was growing.<sup>98)</sup> In an explanatory letter to AC Murray, then secretary of the Mission Council, WH Murray emphasised the need for expansion of its ministry in the fast growing Church. In addition to this, Blantyre Mission had already ordained its first men in 1911, while Livingstonia Mission was at the point of doing so.<sup>99)</sup> It appeared from the tone of this letter that AC Murray, who had previously emphasised that this should be a very gradual process, was not yet ready to agree to such a step.<sup>100)</sup> A letter from Laws to AC Murray the following year informing him of the ordination of the first three Malawians in the Livingstonia Presbytery, confirmed this - "I suppose you would object to this ...". This also explains why both the Nyasa subcommittee and the GMC itself moved cautiously even though in principle it was not opposed to the idea.<sup>101)</sup>

The War intervened but in August 1918 WH Murray emphasised to the GMC the need to ordain some ministers within the next five years. This was followed by a further resolution of the Mission Council in 1921 that the time was now ripe to prepare some of the most outstanding Senior evangelists for ordination, which was provisionally set for 1925. This time the GMC was more than ready for this step, even expressing the desire that, if possible, ordination should take place earlier. AC Murray was equally keen for ordination to take place sooner, even questioning whether the further training was necessary.<sup>102)</sup>

At its next meeting the Mission Council referred the matter to the Council of Congregations for further discussion and a final decision. The Mission would examine and select six candidates from whom the Council of Congregations would choose three at its next meeting in 1923. These candidates were to prepare themselves for the course to begin in October 1924. At its meeting in September 1923 the Council of Congregations duly discussed and approved the motion, selecting two men, Andreyo Namkumba and Namon Katengeza.<sup>103)</sup> Both had already served for over twenty years

98. Council minutes 26/1913, p. 176 (corrected page No.).

99. See above ch. 1, pp. 25, 27.

100. CCA S5 15/6/1/5: WH Murray to Mission secr., 23/12/1913; and 15/6/7/1: Laws to AC Murray 3/6/1914.

101. CCA S5 1/4/1: Nyasa subcommittee minute 20, entry for 19/2/1914; 1/1/2: GMC minute 17, entry for 25/2/1914.

102. Ibid., GMC minute 36, entry for 20-22/8/1915; minute 52, entry for 28/2-2/3/1922; minute 55, entry for 29-31/8/1922; Council minutes 41/1921, p. 291; MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 1: AC Murray to WH Murray, 3/9/1922.

103. Council minutes 42/1922, pp. 305-6; Council of Congregations minutes 1923, pp. 4, 5.

as evangelists and were men of outstanding qualities of character and leadership.

After one year of tutelage by Dr WH Murray they were ready. The Council of Congregations agreed to appoint both to their home areas. Their salary was fixed at £24 p.a., of which the congregation where they would serve was to provide £15, while the balance would come from the Presbyterian Central Fund. Namkumba was to go to Malembo where he was to stand alone, as the missionary, Rev. LJ Murray, tragically lost his life in an incident with a lion six months before. Katengeza was to go to Mvera station.

Andreya Namkumba was ordained on 8 November 1925, exactly fifty years after the work of the Livingstonia Mission was first established at Cape Maclear a few miles from Malembo. Namkumba, the son of a chief, was converted under the ministry of Albert Namalambe and worked with him as teacher for a long time. In 1904 he became one of the first deacons, and shortly afterwards an elder of the newly formed Malembo congregation. Subsequently he served as evangelist at different places, including a particularly successful ministry at Chibanzi, the village of chief Msyamboza in the district of Kongwe Mission. He married a daughter of chief Msyamboza.

Two missionaries, WH Murray and MG Uys, were delegated to go to Malembo and ordain him. For WH Murray it was one of the most solemn moments of his life, the fulfilment of what he saw as the aim and result of all mission work - the beginning of an autonomous Church. It was a moment of great significance for the young Church as well as for the sending Church.<sup>104</sup>) Dressed, at his own request, not in his usual long white robe, but in a suit he had inherited from his late pastor and friend, Louis Murray, whose grave lay only a few hundred yards away, he stood with head bowed in his hands as the formulary for ordination was read to him. With tears streaming down his face, his hand still before his eyes, he responded in a broken voice to the questions: "Inde ndi mtima wanga wonse" (Yes, with all my heart). As he knelt with the hands of the two missionaries on his head, his whole body shook with a flood of tears and WH Murray himself could barely proceed.

That afternoon Namkumba baptised some twenty children and served Holy Communion to between four and five hundred Christians, including his two colleagues in the ministry. A week later he had the opportunity of participating in the ordination of his companion, Namon Katengeza.

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104. DK, 2/12/1925, pp. 1594, 1604; 30/12/1925, p. 1749. For further description of his ordination, see JWL Hofmeyr: *Louis Murray die leuehart*, pp. 64-66.

Namkumba served for several years at Malembo, mostly alone, but under supervision of a missionary from Mlanda and fulfilled his task very well, particularly on the practical side of the pastorate. After eight years he was transferred to Mvera Mission, continuing his ministry there from 1933 until 1937. It was a great disappointment when, after admitting guilt to a charge of drinking beer, Presbytery had to suspend him for twelve months. When he was received back the following year, Presbytery agreed to grant him his pension, so that he never returned to the ministry.<sup>105)</sup>

Namon Katengeza Mwale was of chiefly descent. His mother was Khwawe, also mother of chief Ndiingo by a former marriage. Ndiingo's village was situated near Mvera at the time of the arrival of AC Murray and Vlok in 1889. In 1915 Ndiingo and his people moved their village to a former site at the Chipamphale stream closer to Nkhoma. Katengeza's father, also a Chewa village headman, in direct line of descent from chief Karongo Chidzonzi, was formerly known as Kaocha or Chimphepho. He married Khwawe and took her to his own village, Msepe, also in the vicinity of Mvera. He acquired the name of Katengeza when he became a headman. Khwawe bore him several children, one of whom was Kuliyazi, later to be known as Namon Katengeza, who was born round about 1880.<sup>106)</sup> Another son by a second wife was Anderson Kadzichi or Anderson Katengeza, the first printer at Mvera in 1907.<sup>107)</sup>

The young Kuliyazi grew up steeped in traditional religion. As a young man he entered WH Murray's service as a machila bearer. After his conversion in 1898 he began attending school and was baptised in 1900 by WH Murray with the name Leman, but later came to be called Namon. It was Murray's promptings in 1901 which eventually made him decide to become a teacher-evangelist. He served at various places mostly around Mvera and ten years later was one of the first group to be selected for further training as senior evangelist at Nkhoma in 1912. Upon completion of his training he was stationed once more at Mvera. He had widespread influence and built up an excellent rapport with chiefs and headmen. In 1921 he was transferred to Nkhoma and served at Tumbwe village until he was selected for training as a minister in 1924.

105. Nkhoma Presbytery 1933, p. 7; 1937, p. 7; 1938, pp. 4, 7.

106. In 1945 his age was estimated at 65 years (CCA S5 15/6/8/3: Copy JD Stegmann to Provincial Commissioner, 3/1/1945).

107. See above p. 205. On the family history of the Katengezas, see SJ Ntara: Namon Katengeza, pp. 7-20. This book is a biography on Namon Katengeza and unless other sources are mentioned, biographical details are from this book, as well as from a lengthy biographical sketch by Stegmann (see preceding note).

His ordination on 15 November 1925 was a momentous occasion at Mvera.<sup>108)</sup> Twelve to thirteen hundred people attended and Namkumbwa and eight missionaries participated in the ordination ceremony. WH Murray presided, preaching from 2 Kings 4:9 - "Behold, I perceive that this is a holy man of God".

Katengeza served as assistant minister at Mvera from 1925 to 1933 when he was transferred to Machenche, near Mponela, then still part of Kongwe congregation. Under his ministry Machenche progressed extremely well. He exercised a deep spiritual influence upon the congregation.<sup>109)</sup> Under his leadership they began to build their own very large church building which was inaugurated in 1936. Two years later, on 12 November 1938, Machenche was established as a separate congregation, the first congregation to be formed away from a Mission station, apart from Khola in 1921. Meanwhile, in 1934, Katengeza became the first Malawian to be elected chairman of Nkhoma Presbytery. In 1937 he was transferred back to Mvera where for long periods he very successfully managed the large congregation without the assistance of a European minister. In 1944 he was appointed parish minister at Nkhoma where he rendered "invaluable assistance", managing the entire congregation and all its administration virtually single handedly.<sup>110)</sup> He remained minister at Nkhoma until his death in 1955.

In secular and national affairs he also rendered valuable service to his country. In 1927, while at Mvera, he was appointed Chief's Councillor to the District Commissioner, a position he held until the system was changed in 1933 with the institution of Native Authorities. Subsequently, in 1943, he was appointed to the Northern African Provincial Council as representative of the Lilongwe District chiefs.<sup>111)</sup> This appointment was renewed in 1947. Recognition for his contribution to the development of the country was shown when, in July 1950, while the Nkhoma Presbytery was in session at Nkhoma, the Provincial Commissioner awarded him the King's Certificate of Merit for faithful service over a period of fifty years in teaching, in the ministry and in various Government bodies.<sup>112)</sup> At the Queen's coronation in June 1953 he was awarded a further decoration.

108. DK, 9/12/1925, pp. 641f.

109. Kongwe Mission Archives Station book: Reports for 1934, 1935.

110. Nkhoma Presbytery 1944, p. 8; CCA S5 15/6/8/3: Copy Stegmann to Provincial Commissioner, 3/1/1945.

111. Being himself of chiefly descent he was chosen by the chiefs to represent them. Notice of appointment included in letter of Provincial Commissioner to Stegmann, 3/2/1945 (CCA S5 15/6/8/3).

112. Nkhoma Presbytery 1950, p. 16.



Two years later, on 28 September 1955, while leading a Wednesday morning prayer meeting at Nkhoma and speaking, significantly, from 1 Thes. 4:1, he suffered a stroke and died in the Nkhoma hospital two weeks later on 12 October. At his funeral, attended by over two thousand people, two missionaries and several Malawian ministers spoke, including Revs. ZU Tembo, DM Malembo, J Mlozi, W Mwansambo and KS Kalumo.<sup>113)</sup> His death meant the passing away of one of the most remarkable men in the early history of the Church. A few days before his death, Rev. JW Minnaar of Nkhoma wrote of him:<sup>114)</sup>

He is one of the best proofs of the power of the Gospel. He came from total heathendom which then was for the first time coming into contact with the Gospel and became what he is today. It is a literal fulfilment of 1 Cor. 15:10.

He was extremely influential as senior African minister and trusted counsellor of the missionaries as well as his own people and as a man of authority amongst the people of the Central Region and their chiefs, who had once elected him to be their representative on the African Provincial Council. He used this influence in the interest of the cause to which he had devoted his life: "Everywhere he went he always stated and pleaded the cause of the Church and of Christianity".<sup>115)</sup> In expressing its sadness at his death the Mission Council recorded the following minute:<sup>116)</sup>

With the sudden departure of Rev. Namon Katengeza in October 1955 the Mission has lost a wise counsellor and father. He was our oldest minister, to all he was a man of great authority and personality. He was particularly the counsellor of the whites in all matters of policy concerning the natives. For that reason his death is a personal loss. We honour his memory and thank the Lord that the power of the Gospel could be so forcefully revealed in this servant of God.

The Presbytery of Nkhoma likewise expressed its grief, adding:<sup>117)</sup>

Today the Presbytery of Nkhoma realises that it has lost its father who did his best to give wise and valuable counsel to this Presbytery.

One of Namon Katengeza's sons, Richard K Katengeza, born in 1919, followed in the steps of his father and became a Mission teacher. In 1945, at the youthful age of twenty-six, he was already the African Assistant at the station school at Nkhoma,

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113. SJ Ntara: Namon Katengeza, p. 86f.

114. CCA S5 15/6/9/4: Minnaar to Mission secr., 28/9/1955. Transl. from Afrikaans.

115. Ibid., Minnaar to Mission secr., 18/10/1955.

116. Council minutes 79/1956, p. 1108. Transl. from Afrikaans.

117. Nkhoma Presbytery 1956, p. 4. Transl. from Chewa.

and regarded "as one of our star teachers".<sup>118)</sup> He later took up employment with a commercial farmer and businessman, Mr DW du Toit, from where he made steady progress to eventually become Manager both of the Farmers' Marketing Board and of the Malawi Railways. He is currently Mayor of Lilongwe City and successfully runs several large farm estates.

Although only two Nkhoma men had been trained for ordination in 1925, a third was also ordained on 20 December of the same year. He was Lamek Kasuzi Manda, trained at Livingstonia, whom the Church had received with the handing over of Kasungu congregation to the Presbytery of Nkhoma in 1924.<sup>119)</sup> His ordination at Kasungu marked the beginning of a ministry of nearly thirty-three years. Born near Kasungu in 1875, he entered the service of Livingstonia Mission as a teacher. By 1909 he was holding a senior teaching position in that Mission. After his training and ordination as minister he served mainly at Kasungu and also at Chinthembwe for a brief spell as well as in the Thumba area of Kasungu. In 1953 at 78 years of age he volunteered and was accepted as Chaplain to the King's African Rifles, returning to his post at Kasungu in August 1956. Two years later on 19 June 1958 he died in his eighty-fourth year.<sup>120)</sup>

As the period under discussion drew to a close in 1926, the young Church was much better equipped for the new responsibilities of fuller autonomy and participation in a wider union than in 1903 when the Council of Congregations was formed. It had gained valuable experience in conducting its own affairs as far as legislation, oversight and administration was concerned although all the executive work was still in the hands of missionaries and all its decisions were still subject to approval by the Mission Council. The ordination of three men towards the end of 1925 brought closer the attainment of the ideal of establishing African leadership in the Church. Financially, too, the principle of self-support had been firmly established, the Church being responsible for all its local requirements as well as for the salaries of all qualified evangelists and ordained ministers. Teachers were to remain the responsibility of the Mission and in due course, also of the Government. The establishment of a Central Fund for the Church further brought home the awareness of the joint responsibility the different congregations had towards the work conducted in their midst. The Church had also begun to see its responsibility concerning participation in the task of spreading the Gospel further afield. In respect of all these aspects the new phase was to bring further progress.

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118. CCA S5 15/6/8/3: Copy Stegmann to Provincial Commissioner, 3/1/1945.

119. Cf. Nkhoma Presbytery minutes 1925, p. 5. For correspondence on his ordination, see CCA S5 15/6/7/1 (Livingstonia file).

120. Nkhoma Synod 1960, p. 4; cf. CCA S5 15/6/11/9: Annual Report of Nkhoma Synod, 1958.

In this process the DRCM Council saw it as its clear task to build up the young Church. This task involved oversight and guidance in respect of national workers who were to be regarded as "assistants". In the same tone the GMC defined the great task of the DRC in Malawi as the education as well as the organising of the christian congregations and of the Church.<sup>121)</sup>

It has been argued that the DRC did not really follow its own Reformed principles in establishing the young Church.<sup>122)</sup> Instead of recognising it as a fully autonomous Church in its own right from the very beginning, it remained fully subject to the parent Church's authority and control at least until 1926 and even after that there was still much indirect control, while a wide variety of "auxiliary" services remained in the hands of the DRCM for a long time. Yet on the other hand circumstances and the leadership position in the young Church, only established a short time before in a totally alien society, as far as Christianity was concerned, were such that it was not really feasible to establish a fully autonomous body at such an early stage. While this was the most advanced of all the DRC's Foreign Mission fields, a clear policy on mission had not yet been fully defined and in Malawi the strong precedent established by the Scottish Missions, notably the Livingstonia Mission, had a very marked influence on the practical application of the DRCM policy in the field. The establishment of a Presbytery or Council of Congregations as it was called, was done along the same lines as in Livingstonia Mission. In addition it is most likely true that the example and influence of the Livingstonia Mission effected a faster progress towards self-government and the ordination of nationals than might otherwise have been the case.<sup>123)</sup> Nevertheless the charge that the DRCM was much more conservative than other Missions in such a matter as the ordination of nationals cannot quite be substantiated.<sup>124)</sup> When it is taken into account that the DRCM began work several years later than the two Scottish Missions and even the UMCA and that it, like the others, had to begin in a totally virgin field, it is natural to expect more or less the same course of time for the young Church to emerge and for men to be selected, trained and, particularly, gain the spiritual depth and maturity to enable them to be qualified

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121. Council minutes 28/1914, p. 183(a) (corrected page No.); GMC report to DRC Synod, *Acta* 1919, p. 33.
122. Cf. JM Cronje: *Die selfstandigwording van die Bantoekeerk*, pp. 92-3.
123. This was conceded in an article by JA Retief (*OK*, 10/7/1940, p. 66).
124. This notion is for instance expressed in an essay by a University of Malawi student, A Chafua: *The localisation process of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission in Nyasaland 1889-1927*, p. 11.

for the ministry. A perusal of the time which elapsed between the arrival of the various Missions and the first ordination to be performed in each, reveals no significant difference. The Livingstonia Mission arrived in 1875, licensed its first man in 1903, but did not ordain before it had been in the field for 39 years, in 1914. In 1911 Blantyre Mission ordained its first men after 35 years, the UMCA ordained the first Malawian to the diaconate after 21 years and to the priesthood after 28 years, but already had long established facilities in Mozambique and at Zanzibar. In the Mission of the White Fathers 35 years elapsed before a Malawian was ordained to the priesthood. Compared to these figures the 35 year time lapse for the DRCM in Malawi and thirty years for the DRCM in Zambia<sup>125)</sup> is not at all out of line, particularly as the DRCM had already begun contemplating ordination twelve years earlier and would doubtlessly have come to the stage earlier than it did, had it not been for the delaying effects of the World War and other difficulties experienced during the latter part of the 1910s and early 1920s. In this respect it is of further significance to note that Livingstonia Mission had ten ordained Malawians in the field when it celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, while the Blantyre Mission had only six,<sup>126)</sup> compared to the nine in the DRCM fifty years after its beginning. Five years later Nkhoma Presbytery had ordained a further eleven men, making a total of twenty ordinations after 55 years.<sup>127)</sup>

#### 4. The Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian

##### 4.1 The formation of the CCAP 1924

The formation of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian (CCAP) should be seen as one of the more spectacular chapters in the history of the Church in Africa. Its accomplishment was to a large extent the result of the vision of Dr Robert Laws of Livingstonia. Right from the beginning his dream was that of an indigenous African Church which would encompass congregations of many different Missions in Central Africa. It has already been pointed out that as early as 1893 Laws had propagated the formation of a United Presbyterian Church out of the congregations of the Blantyre (Church of Scotland) Mission, the DRC Mission and the Livingstonia Mission.

When six years later, on 15 November 1899, Livingstonia Presbytery was formed by the Livingstonia Mission Council the proposals Laws had put to his colleagues to the south were incorporated in the resolutions taken by that Council. These were

125. The Rev. Justo Mwale was trained at Nkhoma and ordained in 1929, thus the first Zambian in the entire country to enter the ministry (P Bolink: Towards Church union in Zambia, p. 187.

126. B Pachai: Malawi: history of the nation, p. 206.

127. For ordination certificates, names and dates of ordinations of Nkhoma ordinands see MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 38.

as follows:<sup>128)</sup>

1. The Council approve of the early organisation of the Native Church into congregations and regularly constituted courts, viz. Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries and Synod, those congregations being meanwhile represented in Presbytery and Synod, where an ordained minister or elder is in charge.
2. The Church thus formed to be known as the Presbyterian Church of Central Africa.
3. Meanwhile, in the spheres of the Livingstonia Mission, there should be formed two Presbyteries, those of the North and South Livingstonia (i.e. for the Scottish and Dutch Reformed sections of the Mission) and one Synod.
4. To the jurisdiction of such courts, the Native Church as such is to be subject, but that the European agents and the financial arrangements of the respective Missions continue to be subject, as at present, to their several home committees and local councils.
5. From the beginning, the Presbyterian Church of Central Africa should look forward to federation or union with other Christian communities in the country, and,
6. with a view to this, the church constitution and creed be as simple as possible.

A year later the first General Missionary Conference of Nyasaland took place at Livingstonia. It adopted the following resolution: "That the orderly development, the organisation and establishment of a self-supporting and self-propagating Native Church be a chief aim in our Mission work".<sup>129)</sup>

While the resolution did not make specific reference to the formation of a United Church, the spirit of co-operation which marked this conference would, no doubt, have had an effect on the attitude of the various participants.

While Hetherwick had rejected Laws's proposals on union in 1895, he - much to the latter's satisfaction - revived them in 1903. At the Second General Missionary conference convened in Blantyre in October 1904 discussions were held between the representatives of the two Presbyteries of Livingstonia and Blantyre, the latter having been established in 1902. Proposals on union were tentatively discussed, but there were still certain problems to be ironed out such as the theological

128. Quoted in *The Aurora*, 1/12/1899.

129. Quoted by B Pachai: *Malawi: history of the nation*, p. 203. Pachai incorrectly gives the year of the conference as 1901. It is of interest to note that the third of the Venn - trias, self-government is not explicitly mentioned here. None of the participating Missions had as yet ordained any nationals.

basis, the number and variety of Missions to be involved, the disciplinary code to be established and the relationship of European missionaries to the Church.<sup>130)</sup> A further problem was the fact that Blantyre Presbytery was a Presbytery of the Home Church, while Livingstonia Presbytery, at the insistence of Laws, who envisaged an entirely independent and African Church from the beginning, was not. Moreover, quite a number of Europeans were members of Blantyre Presbytery. To solve the problem it was agreed to make the new Synod a purely African Synod, while the European community remained a separate congregation under the jurisdiction of the Church of Scotland.<sup>131)</sup> This remained the position until the later 1950s when the European congregation joined the CCAP. Only in 1959 did the Church of Scotland ministers enter fully into the ecclesiastical structure of the CCAP.<sup>132)</sup>

Two DRCM missionaries, WH Murray and AL Hofmeyr, who were attending the Conference were present at the discussions. At Mvera the Council of Congregations, taking the place of a Presbytery had just been formed a year before and the DRCM was already well-established as an independent Mission. Murray, while appreciating the merits of the union, had reservations about the matter. Writing to his Mission secretary after the conference he stated:<sup>133)</sup>

Blantyre and Livingstonia Presbyteries are forming themselves into the Presbyterian Church of Central Africa with creed, constitution, etc. They would, of course, very much like us to join, but I know how you feel and - I don't know. Amalgamation, Union is in the air. It's Scriptural, it's ideal, will it ever be feasible?

Although present at the discussion "as associates", Murray added, they did not compromise themselves.

How Du Plessis, the Mission secretary, felt about the matter is reflected in a letter written some years later to WH Murray.<sup>134)</sup> The letter marked "Private letter" included the following:

Confederation or amalgamation with other churches - what a large and burning subject! ... In the mission field it is

130. J McCracken: *Politics and Christianity in Malawi*, p. 247.

131. Cf. CCAP Extract of minutes of the Synod 1924-5, p. 4.

132. J McCracken: *op. cit.*, p. 248; cf. P Bolink: *Towards Church union in Zambia*, p. 193 and n. 10.

133. CCA V9 2/1: WH Murray to Du Plessis, 3/11/1904. The version of this letter quoted by Bolink (*loc. cit.*) from MW Retief: *William Murray of Nyasaland*, p. 153 is a retranslation of the Afrikaans translation found in Retief: *Verowerings vir Christus*, p. 231, hence some minor variations.

134. MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 1: Du Plessis to WH Murray, 31/3/1909.

more practicable than anywhere else. The aim there should be not to plant those churches which in the course of history have grown up in the older countries, but to build up an independent native church in which the entrail of the past differences and feuds have been cut off.

On the need for a basis of union and the nature of such a united native Church, he added:

I cannot, of course, go into the details of the question of union or no-union, but I think that some base of agreement should be arranged perhaps along the lines of the recently published "Catechism of the Free Churches". So long as you are connected with a home base for direction, finance and men, so long will it be impossible to unite organically, but the native church as national church of the land with its pastors (if any), evangelists and teachers should have a constitution, one form of doctrine and one form of church government. And when we have reached the goal of a self-governing native church, even though it may take decades or generations, the complete amalgamation of the various sections will be an easy task, and there will be no 'D.R. Church' or 'U.F. Church' but a 'National Protestant Church of Nyasaland'.

These are indeed prophetic words of a visionary with a practical and down-to-earth approach: For the uniting young Church a clear base was necessary, as well as uniformity in doctrine, constitution and Church Government; this Church could well unite without the respective Missions uniting; each could retain adequate influence and control over its work, without this necessarily hindering the young Church from eventually developing to a strong, united indigenous native Church under its own leadership.

The year 1910 was of considerable significance because of the important Third General Missionary Conference which was held at Mvera during August. Apart from the general effect this conference had on missionary co-operation, two significant events took place during the conference. One was the formation of the Consultative Board of Federated Missions which became the basis for long-standing and diversified co-operation between the Protestant Missions in Malawi.<sup>135)</sup> The other was the formal meeting which took place between representatives of Blantyre and "North Livingstonia" Presbyteries on 3 August 1910.<sup>136)</sup> Also present were two observers from the DRCM, AL Hofmeyr and AG Murray. The latter had shortly before pioneered the work of the DRCM in the Angonia district of Mozambique. Under the chairmanship of Dr Laws the meeting "unanimously agreed ... now (to) be united in one Synod of a common church". Several important questions were also settled, which had been

135. For details of the basis and function of this Consultative Board see above, p. 40f.

136. For a copy of minutes of this meeting see MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 18.

matters of contention between various individuals of the two Presbyteries. When Dr Donald Fraser proposed that the name should merely be "The Church of Central Africa", Dr Elmslie, seconded by Dr Hetherwick, moved an amendment that the name should be "The Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian". The amendment was carried by ten votes to three.

The meeting further agreed on the Apostles' Creed as the credal basis for all Church members, while the Nicene creed was added but would apply only to office bearers. This was evidently included at the insistence of Blantyre Presbytery but was later dropped as neither the Livingstonia Mission nor the DRCM were at that stage in favour of including it as one of the official creeds of the Church.<sup>137)</sup>

Concerning the worship and order of the Church as well as its form of government it was agreed to follow the Presbyterian system with Councils, Presbyteries and Synods.

The Presbyteries through their Missions communicated with the Home bodies and in 1914 both the United Free Church of Scotland General Assembly and the Church of Scotland General Assembly approved the formation of such a Synod of the CCAP, both declaring that the decisions of this Synod with regard to all matters within its jurisdiction, would be final. The UFCS, however, added the following: "... the assembly reserving to their missionaries and Mission Council all duties and powers conferred upon them by Act II of Assembly of 1901, Act V of 1902, Acts IX and X of 1906".<sup>138)</sup>

Although the name decided upon implicitly excluded the London Missionary Society in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), as well as the German Missions in Tanganyika (Tanzania) whom Fraser and Laws had wished to involve,<sup>139)</sup> Laws nevertheless continued to negotiate with them in order to include them in the union. The German Missions had been placed under the care of Livingstonia Mission after the Germans were forced to leave East Africa during the War and this gave force to Laws's ideas, but after the Germans had returned to their work this ideal came to naught as did the negotiations with the LMS.<sup>140)</sup>

137. Cf. CCA S5 15/6/2/9: AL Hofmeyr to AC Murray, 14/1/1913; and vice versa, 26/3/1913. In the new constitution adopted by the CCAP in 1956 the Nicene Creed was included together with the Apostles' Creed "as containing the sum and substance of the Faith of the Church" (Article 2). On this new constitution see below, Ch. 6.

138. For the minute of the decision of both the Assemblies on this matter, see CCAP Synod, 1924, min. 4.

139. Cf. J McCracken: *Politics and Christianity in Malawi*, pp. 247-8.

140. For details of the negotiations with the LMS and the German Missions see P Bolink: *Towards Church union in Zambia*, pp. 194-6.



Due mainly to the War and subsequent difficulties, the proposed union could not be consummated until ten years later. But in 1924 all preparations had been made and on the evening of 17 September 1924 the two Presbyteries held a united session in the Church at Livingstonia and the motion to unite "in one common Synod ... was unanimously and with acclamation, agreed to".<sup>141)</sup> Dr Robert Laws was unanimously elected as first Moderator of the new Synod, an honour he justly deserved, but nevertheless an experience which moved him so deeply that for several minutes after being presented to the Synod as Moderator, he was unable to speak.<sup>142)</sup>

The uniting presbyteries had drawn up certain Terms of Union which included a statement on the doctrinal basis of the Church. This was to be "the Apostles' Creed, a brief statement of the Faith as herein set forth, and a distinct acknowledgement of the Word of God as the supreme rule of faith and conduct". It will be noted that the Nicene Creed was not mentioned. The Brief Statement of the Faith read as follows:<sup>143)</sup>

1. The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the supreme rule of faith and conduct.
2. That there is one God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These three are one God, equal in power and glory, and He alone is to be worshipped.
3. All men are sinners and therefore in need of salvation, and can be saved only by the grace of God, through the redeeming work of Christ, and the regenerating and sanctifying of the Holy Spirit.
4. 'God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life'. The Lord Jesus Christ, being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her yet without sin, was true man and true God. To save man from sin, and reconcile them to God, He perfectly fulfilled the Law of God, offered Himself on the Cross a true and perfect sacrifice, died, was buried, rose from the dead, and ascended into Heaven, from whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
5. The salvation thus wrought for us in Christ is applied to us by the Holy Spirit, who worketh faith in us, and thus unites us to Christ, enabling us to receive Him as He is offered to us in the Gospel, and to bring forth the fruits of righteousness. In His gracious work, the Holy Spirit useth all means of grace, especially the Word, Sacraments and prayer.
6. The Sacraments of the New Testament are Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is a Sacrament wherein the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

141. CCAP Synod 1924, minute 5.

142. CCA P3: Diary AC Murray, entry for 17/9/1924.

143. CCAP Extract of minutes of the Synod 1924-1945, pp. 4-5.

doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ and partaking of the benefits of the Covenant of Grace and our engagement to be the Lord's. The Lord's Supper is a Sacrament wherein by giving and receiving bread and wine according to Christ's appointment, His death is showed forth, and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of His body and blood to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.

It is the duty of all believers to unite in the fellowship of the Church, to observe the Sacraments and other ordinances of Christ, to obey His laws, to continue in prayer, to keep holy the Lord's Day, to meet together for worship, to wait upon the preaching of the Word, to give as God has prospered them for the support and extension of the Gospel, and at all times to seek the advance of the Kingdom of God.

Thus came into being a united, indigenous African Church. Although still a long way away from the ideal of Laws, the first step had been taken. The next step was for the Presbytery of Nkhoma to join this Church. To this aspect attention will be turned in the next paragraph.

#### 4.2 Negotiations for the Presbytery of Nkhoma to enter the CCAP

The development of the Council of Congregations under the auspices of the DRCM has already been discussed, as has the preliminary negotiations between the Scottish and the DRC Missions concerning a united Church.<sup>144)</sup> While the Presbyteries of Scottish origin went ahead to form a Synod, the DRCM section held back with the idea of first forming an own Synod consisting of Presbyteries in the three spheres of DRCM work in Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique. The termination of the work in Mozambique in 1922 and the negotiations which led to the handing over of the work of Kasungu to the DRCM in October 1925 were factors which swung the pendulum in favour of the Nkhoma section of the DRCM joining the CCAP. At the hand-over meeting at Kasungu, Church union had also unofficially been discussed and the acting Superintendent of the DRCM wrote home stating that "we feel more than ever the desirability and necessity of a strong Central African Church ...".<sup>145)</sup>

The way to forming an official Presbytery of Nkhoma had already been opened by the DRC Synod and a month before the Kasungu take-over, the DRCM Council had expressed the desirability of joining the CCAP, but it did not feel quite ready at that stage. A committee was appointed to negotiate without delay with the Presbyteries of Blantyre and Livingstonia and with the GMC in Cape Town. The resolu-

144. Cf. above, pp. 265ff.

145. CCA S5 15/6/2/21: Copy JA Retief to Mission Sec., 19/10/1923. Transl. from Afrikaans.

tion reads (partly) as follows:<sup>146)</sup>

The Council has learned with great interest of the imminent founding of the Presbyterian Church of Central Africa by the Blantyre and Livingstonia Missions. We uphold the ideal of a Native Church of Central Africa. After thorough discussion of the desirability of taking part in the founding and being part of such a Church, we realise that we are not immediately ready to take such a weighty step ...

The matter was referred to the GMC together with urgent requests from Blantyre and Livingstonia for the Nkhoma Presbytery to join. At about this time Laws wrote to the DRCM:<sup>147)</sup>

... it seems most advisable and helpful for the cause of Christ that the experience of the DRCM should be made available in helping the Livingstonia and Blantyre Presbyteries ... by their union a strong Native Church would by God's blessing be built up and the risk of isolation and local instead of general action would be avoided.

The General Mission Committee in Cape Town appointed a committee to investigate the matter and draw up a report. It also resolved to send representatives to the forthcoming General Missionary Conference to be held at Livingstonia where the CCAP was to be formed.<sup>148)</sup>

Following this, AC Murray, then Mission secretary, wrote to the Foreign Mission Committee of the United Free Church of Scotland:<sup>149)</sup>

In regard to our Mission (sic) joining the Presbyterian Church of Central Africa, the General Mission Committee is prepared to recommend this to our Synod, if we can come to a satisfactory agreement about the constitution whereby the rights of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission and the purity of the doctrine of the Presbyterian Church of Nyasaland are safeguarded.

The DRC delegates to Livingstonia were the Mission secretary, AC Murray, and Rev. DG Malan. WH Murray was actually on furlough, but came back to Malawi specially for the meeting. Several other DRC missionaries also attended, while

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146. Council minutes 43/1923, p. 313. Transl. from Afrikaans. The committee was to include a member from the DRCM in Zambia, while a request was to be conveyed to them to take part in the scheme.
147. CCA S5 15/6/1/4: Minute to the DRCM regarding the proposed ... of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian, sgd. R Laws, n.d. (caption partly obliterated).
148. CCA S5 1/1/3: GMC minute 47, 48, entry for 26-28/2/1924.
149. Letter of AC Murray dated 6/3/1924, quoted in FMC minute 6867, entry for 15/4/1924. For copy of said minute, see CCA S5 15/6/6/1.

the Nkhoma Council of Congregations delegates, Namon Katengeza and Ashan Malenga, attended as observers.<sup>150)</sup>

The conditions and safeguards the DRC desired were included in a report in which a draft constitution for the CCAP was presented. This draft was an expansion with a few amendments of the Terms of Union. Several long discussions took place at Livingstonia and most of the points raised by the DRC were agreed upon, but as to altering the Terms of Union, this could not be granted because these had already been accepted and could not be changed at that stage. It became clear that Blantyre and Livingstonia would go ahead and unite while Nkhoma could offer to unite later under conditions which all could agree to. When these conditions were discussed two points presented problems.<sup>151)</sup> The one was the wish of Nkhoma that the first Article in the Brief Statement of Faith concerning the Word of God should follow the wording of the Larger Catechism: "The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the Word of God and the Supreme Rule of Faith and Life".<sup>152)</sup> This was not agreed to and in the end the solution was for the CCAP Synod to accept "for the Presbytery of Nkhoma its interpretation of that Article, according to that liberty of interpretation which it claims for itself".<sup>153)</sup>

The other point on which agreement could not be reached was the right the DRC wished to claim for itself to withdraw unilaterally from the CCAP in the event of changes being made to the Terms of Union, if this were to have the effect that the highest interests of its work were no longer being served. On this issue it was agreed to propose to the DRC that the right to withdraw would rest with the Presbytery of Nkhoma as such.

One of the main reasons why the DRCM was hesitant to join was the fear that modernistic teaching would be brought into the CCAP by certain missionaries from Scotland. It is true that in South Africa such missionaries had come "denying the Atonement and various other vital doctrines".<sup>154)</sup> On this AC Murray had written to Laws:

There is another question which may arise, and that is, whether there will be any guarantees that modernist teaching will not be allowed in the Central African Church. As you know, our standpoint with regard to the Inspira=

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150. Council of Congregations, 1924, p. 5.

151. CCA P3: Diary AC Murray, entry for 13 and 16/9/1924.

152. Viz. Article 3, 4, 5 of the Larger Catechism (Westminster, 1648).

153. CCAP Synod, 1926, minute 7. The 1956 constitution (Article 2) accepted this interpretation for the entire CCAP.

154. Cf. P Bolink: Towards Church union in Zambia, pp. 197-9. This and following quotations from a letter of Laws to DR Mackenzie, 12/2/1924, quoted in loc.

tion, the Virgin Birth, and other doctrines regarding our Lord, is a conservative one, and if there is any danger of the Central African Church being open to teaching which conflicts with these views there will be difficulty.

Laws's opinion on the matter was that the new Church should not be tied down "to a credal statement of its faith, which may be suitable today but not in the years hence". For that reason he preferred holding to "a simple statement of faith, suitable to the needs of the Church ... which can be amplified or enlarged according to the needs which may arise, but we ought not to tie down any Church to the Westminster Confession of Faith, or the Heidelberg Confession, or any other document whose historical causes are unknown and cannot be explained to the majority of the church members in a country like this".

The desire for sufficient guarantees that sound Biblical teaching would be maintained in the United Church should be seen as the main motive behind the DRCM position on Scripture and the question of the possible withdrawal of Nkhoma.

The discussions at Livingstonia were very nearly wrecked for quite a different reason, which had nothing to do with theological questions. An arrangement had been made, quite unbeknown to the delegates that everybody, white and black, were to eat together in one hall, with mixed seating. This upset the DRCM delegates considerably as it was something never done before at such conferences and they strongly objected to this arrangement. The Nkhoma Presbytery delegates found the situation just as uncomfortable, having never handled cutlery before and being strange to European food. Some of the Scottish missionaries strongly resented the attitude of the DRC people. But the warning by WH Murray that their delegation would go home unless a change was made, resulted in the arrangement being discontinued after two meals.<sup>155)</sup> Although AC Murray shared the feelings of his compatriots he advised the others not to make too much of an issue of it when writing home, probably fearing negative reactions which could even affect the important decision the Cape DRC Synod had to take the following month concerning entry of Nkhoma Presbytery into the CCAP.<sup>156)</sup>

155. CCA P3: Diary AC Murray, entries for 12,13/9/1924. MW Retief (*Verowering vir Christus*, p. 234) mentions that the Scottish Missions afterwards dropped the idea generally of mixed eating and it appears that for many years, until as late as 1958, Scottish missionaries - at least those in Zambia - did not undertake another effort towards social mixing during Presbytery meetings. The same applies to LMS missionaries (cf. *Towards Church union in Zambia*, p. 199 and n. 32). For further discussion of racial segregation and prejudice in Scottish Missions see J McCracken: *Politics and Christianity in Malawi*, pp. 248f.

156. CCA P3: Diary AC Murray, entry for 24/9/1924.

In spite of all the difficulties the DRC missionaries were all keen to join. "It is fine", AC Murray wrote in his diary, "to see how keen our missionaries are to join".<sup>157)</sup> The result was that the Cape delegation took back with it a very strong recommendation that the DRC Synod should approve union with the CCAP. They intimated to the GMC that its Terms of Union required only minor changes, otherwise the CCAP Synod had approved Nkhoma joining, pending approval by the DRC.<sup>158)</sup> The CCAP Synod had, in fact, mentioned as its hopeful anticipation "the early entrance into the Synod of the Presbyteries of Nkhoma and Northern Rhodesia of the Dutch Reformed Church Missions".<sup>159)</sup>

A month after the Livingstonia meetings the GMC in Cape Town reported to the DRC Synod then in session that the urgent request of the Scottish Missions for Nkhoma to join, was deemed by the DRCM Council not only possible, but also highly desirable. Thus the GMC, "being in full sympathy" with forming a national Church in Nyasaland, recommended to the Synod to grant permission for Nkhoma Presbytery to join, approving the constitution agreed upon at Livingstonia "to uphold the rights of our Mission and to ensure that our missionaries will remain under our jurisdiction".<sup>160)</sup>

After considerable discussion the Synod passed the following motion:<sup>161)</sup>

Synod grants permission to the Presbytery of Nkhoma to join the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Central Africa (sic) under the conditions to be laid down by this Synod with the understanding that the Nyasa Mission shall, as in the past, remain fully under the management of the Synod of the DRC; and that the said Presbytery shall withdraw from the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Central Africa if the General Mission Committee is of the opinion that continued membership is not advantageous to the highest interest of the work.

The Synod then also approved the conditions proposed by the GMC. These were the same as the Terms of Union approved by the Presbyteries of Blantyre and Livingstonia, but with certain additions and explanations. The most important of these, concerning the safeguarding of doctrine, were the exposition of Article 1 of the "Brief Statement of Faith" concerning the Word of God as in the Larger Catechism. In addition to that, in Article 3 of Terms of Union, the functions of the Presbytery were to include "the training, licencing, ordination and appointment of

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157. Ibid., entry for 17/9/1924.

158. For their report to the GMC see CCA S5 15/6/6/1.

159. CCAP Synod 1924, minute 20.

160. DRC Synod Acta 1924, pp. 76-7. Transl. from Dutch.

161. Ibid., pp. 31, 32. Transl. from Dutch.

Native Ministers, the licences of such Ministers, to be operative only within the bounds of the Presbytery".<sup>162)</sup>

The news that permission was granted was received with great joy by both the DRC missionaries and the Council of Congregations. The latter adopted the following resolution:<sup>163)</sup>

This meeting heard the explanation of our chairman stating that our Mother and the Synod in South Africa has approved that our congregations be united with the congregations of Livingstonia and Blantyre Mission in order to be one great Church of Central Africa. We thank our Mother for granting us this permission. We all agree with joy to enter into this Union ...

The Presbytery proceeded to appoint its chairman, Dr WH Murray together with Rev. Andreya Namkumba to the Standing Committee of the CCAP Synod.

With this, the Presbytery of Nkhoma officially came into being and henceforth would be called Presbytery and no longer Council of Congregations.<sup>164)</sup>

The following year, 1926, the Presbytery of Nkhoma appointed Dr WH Murray, Revs. JA Retief, J Jackson, CJH van Wyk, JJ Ferreira and A Namkumba, together with six elders, Amon Ndiwo Phiri, Solomon Mwale, Ishmail Mwale, Andreya Banda, Sam Nyirenda and Joshua Phiri to be its representatives at the CCAP Synod due to meet at Blantyre from 13 October onwards.<sup>165)</sup> The Rev. TCB Vlok of Salisbury, who had actually strongly opposed the entry of Nkhoma at the Cape Synod, was appointed as the GMC representative at this second meeting of the Synod of the CCAP and to convey its greetings to the Synod.<sup>166)</sup>

When the Synod convened it had before it the report of its Synodical Committee in which the "additions or explanations" to the Terms of Union as communicated by the Presbytery of Nkhoma were set out. The Synodical Committee recommended that these be accepted and Nkhoma Presbytery be welcomed into the Synod of the CCAP.

162. DRC Synod Acta 1924, p. 34. For full text of these conditions as also approved by the CCAP, see CCAP Synod 1926, min. 5.

163. Council of Congregations minutes 1925, pp. 5-6. Transl. from Chewa. Cf. also Mission Council minutes 45/1925, p. 345.

164. Ibid., p. 346.

165. Nkhoma Presbytery 1926, pp. 2-3. Cf. CCAP Synod 1926, min. 9. Amon Phiri was subsequently elected to the Synodical Committee (min. 33(1)) and in 1929 became the fourth person to be ordained in Nkhoma Presbytery.

166. Cf. CCA S5 15/6/2/17: AC Murray to WH Murray, 1/11/1924. For Vlok's report see *ibid.*, 15/6/4/1.

The Synod approved this report and "received with great gladness" the communication of the desire of Nkhoma Presbytery to enter the CCAP and "unanimously agreed" to receive the said Presbytery into the CCAP "on the terms proposed". One stipulation was, however, made regarding the wording of Article 1 of the "Brief Statement of Faith" to the effect that "Synod accepts for the Presbytery of Nkhoma its interpretation of the Article according to that liberty of interpretation which it claims for itself" 167)

Later during the same Synod one further safeguard was submitted for the approval of Synod by the Synodical Committee on "Procedure". This was the so-called "Barrier Act" which would provide against "any sudden alteration or innovation or other prejudice to the Church in either doctrine or worship or discipline or government" The Act would provide that before the Synod could pass any act which was to be a binding Rule or Constitution to the Church, it would have to be passed by no less than a three-quarter majority of members present, after which it would be remitted to the Presbyteries. After gaining the consent of the individual Presbyteries, their finding would be reported back to the next Synod which then would pass the Act as a law of the Church.

The matter was remitted to the Synodical Committee on Procedure for further consideration and amendment and in due course became the established practice of the Church. 168)

Thus was carried out a singular union of Churches which grew out of the work of three different Missions and begun as much as half a century earlier. Now Nkhoma Presbytery had come into its own right as a Church body and would no longer be directly under the control of the Mission as the former Council of Congregations had been. Furthermore, this meant that henceforth the Mission Council would no longer include minutes of Presbytery into its minutes by way of approval as "they will no longer belong there". 169) A new stage had been reached in which the control of the Mission over the Church was to change from direct to more indirect and to gradually move towards the goal of an entirely independent Church. At the same time the DRC, as was the case in the other two Missions, retained jurisdiction over its missionaries. 170)

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167. CCAP Synod 1926, min. 5-7.

168. Ibid., min. 27.

169. MNA Nkhoma Papers, Box 1: Copy WH Murray to Mission secretary, 22/11/1926.

170. DRC Synod Acta, 1924, p. 34.



Although now united in one Church, the three Presbyteries still retained a large degree of independence and autonomy in such matters as the training, licencing, ordination and appointment of ministers, as well as oversight and discipline over them, while the functions of the Synod only included "matters pertaining to the general welfare of the Church".<sup>171)</sup> Public worship and Christian life and conduct are quoted as examples. Otherwise only matters referred to it, for example by way of appeal, could be dealt with. In a sense the CCAP had therefore more the character of a Council or Consultative body. It had no legislative powers as far as the life and work of Presbyteries was concerned and through the "Barrier Act" was effectively excluded from imposing any change in the basis of faith, and the Terms of Union upon the Presbyteries. Had this not been the case, the union would definitely not have lasted.

In reviewing the entire process through which Nkhoma entered the CCAP there is one strange discrepancy in the decision taken by the DRC Synod in 1924 which should be noted. While approving the Terms of Union for Nkhoma Presbytery, which included the stipulation that in the event of any changes made to these terms "the Presbytery of Nkhoma of the DR Church in Nyasaland reserves the right of withdrawing from the Synod", the Synod at the same time laid down that the Presbytery of Nkhoma would withdraw if this was deemed desirable by the General Mission Committee of the DRC.<sup>172)</sup> This matter had been one of the difficulties encountered in earlier negotiations and the CCAP was willing to accept Nkhoma only if the right to withdraw rested with itself and not with the Home Church. It is doubtful whether the CCAP was aware of this discrepancy since it had before it the Terms of Union only and no doubt would have protested against the condition that the Cape GMC would effect withdrawal as it had protested against a similar proposed condition by the DRC Synod of the Orange Free State which "was felt to place the CCAP more or less under the jurisdiction of the General Missionary Committee of the Synod of the Orange Free State".<sup>173)</sup>

The question arises as to how this discrepancy came about and whether it was more or less inadvertent, or else not regarded as of particular importance as far as the practical situation was concerned. Whatever the case may have been, this discrepancy did result in a very complicated situation arising some years later when the Cape Synod of 1945 virtually decided that Nkhoma Presbytery should withdraw. This decision termed by one missionary as quite "illegal" on grounds of the Terms

171. CCAP Synod 1926, min. 5.4.

172. Cf. *ibid.*, min. 5.9, DRC Synod Acta 1924, pp. 31f, 34.

173. Cf. P Bolink: *Towards Church union in Zambia*, p. 201 and n. 41. The OFS later withdrew this condition (Cf. CCA S5 15/6/14/1: Copy Pauw to Hetherwick 30/8/1926).

of Union<sup>174</sup>) was clearly the result of considerable confusion on the part of the DRC. Even the GMC was not clear on the position. In 1941 it affirmed that the 1924 decision meant that the GMC had the power to withdraw, but in 1944 it noted that according to the Terms of Union this was the prerogative of the Presbytery of Nkhoma itself.<sup>175</sup>) The source of this confusion evidently was the 1924 Synod itself. The Nyasa subcommittee of the GMC, in trying to disentangle the complications and contradictions of the 1945 Synod decision, found that not only had there been an apparent confusion at the 1924 Synod about the distinction between Council and Presbytery (which could have meant that some understood the decision to join the CCAP as applying to the Mission Council itself), but also that nowhere in the Acta or reports of the 1924 Synod did the actual conditions laid down in the Terms of Union appear in writing.<sup>176</sup>) As far as the Cape Synod was concerned, the decision to withdraw lay in the hands of its General Mission Committee, while this was not what was understood in the CCAP.

There remains one further remark concerning the entry of the Nkhoma Presbytery into the CCAP. The joy of both the Presbytery and the DRC missionaries at being united in the CCAP was dampened by a disappointing aftermath. It has been noted that when negotiations to join were being conducted, it was with the full expectation that the Zambia Presbytery of the DRCM would also join.<sup>177</sup>) This was also the desire of both the Church and the missionaries in Zambia and at the 1926 CCAP Synod a delegation from the Madzimoyo (DRC) Mission consisting of the head of that Mission, Rev. CP Pauw, as well as Revs. F Botha and DP Laurie, was present as well as the Moderator and representative of the Orange Free State Synod, Rev. PS van Heerden. He expressed the hope that soon their Presbytery of Madzimoyo, Northern Rhodesia would be free to enter the Synod of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian.<sup>178</sup>) The Synod of the OFS meeting in April 1928 heard the favourable recommendation of Van Heerden as well as the arguments of Pauw who had come in person

174. See CCA S5 15/6/2/21: Document by JA Retief dated 8/2/1946.

175. Compare CCA S5 1/1/7: GMC minute no. 49, entry for 18-19/2/1941, with 1/1/8: GMC minute no. 46/(f), entry for 22-24/2/1944.

176. CCA S5 1/4/3: Nyasa subcommittee minute 10, entry for 21/3/1946. For further details concerning the proposed withdrawal of Nkhoma Presbytery see below, p.

177. Cf. also MW Retief: *Verowerings vir Christus*, p. 244; and JA Retief (correspondence columns, DK, 9/10/1940, pp. 663-4).

178. CCAP Synod 1926, min. 29(2). The initials of Van Heerden are wrongly given as JP. He was PS.

to advocate union and granted permission on terms acceptable to the CCAP.<sup>179)</sup>

Unfortunately this was not to be, largely through the endeavours of the newly appointed Mission Secretary in the OFS, Rev. JG Strydom. Strydom, a staunch nationalist with a rather extreme outlook on church and national issues,<sup>180)</sup> was a member of the two-man delegation which visited Zambia and Malawi shortly after the 1928 OFS Synod. So perturbed was he by what he observed concerning the theologically liberal views held by Scottish missionaries that the delegation upon its return requested the OFS Synodical Committee to suspend the decision of the 1928 Synod and submit the matter once again to the next Synod which was due to meet in 1931.<sup>181)</sup>

Although the theological objections were more prominent, Bolink points out that nationalist feelings, i.e. joining with an English speaking "foreign Church", as well as the effect of the tragic heresy trial against Prof. J du Plessis<sup>182)</sup> which was discussed at the same 1928 Synod and where Strydom had been "one of the strongest opponents of Du Plessis' teachings", played a decisive role in the issue. When it is noted that Du Plessis had shown a certain predilection for Scottish theology, that he and WH Murray, the head of the Nkhoma Mission, were the closest of friends,<sup>183)</sup> and that he had from the beginning had very close ties with Nkhoma and the development of the Church there, Strydom's reaction and suspicion becomes easier to understand.

In spite of further pleas from Madzimoyo missionaries who strongly refuted Strydom's arguments, the 1931 Synod of the OFS decided after a long debate to rescind its previous decision concerning union with the CCAP.<sup>184)</sup> This was a great dis=

179. For details of negotiations see P Bolink: Towards Church union ..., pp. 200-202. For a very positive report by Van Heerden to the OFS Synodical Committee see DK, 3/8/1927, pp. 165-6. See also correspondence on Madzimoyo union with the CCAP: CCA S5 15/6/14/1; MNA Nkhoma Papers, Box 16.

180. J du Plessis, whom Strydom strongly opposed (see below) even went so far as on one occasion to say of him "He is Afrikaner and nationalist first, then Christian and Mission friend" (Du Plessis to WH Murray, 4/2/1933; transl. from Afrikaans, correspondence in private collection of Dr P Pretorius) Cf. Bolink, op. cit., p. 249 and n. 14.

181. In 1940 Strydom wrote a lengthy treatise to defend the OFS decision on union with the CCAP and used the opportunity to attack and severely criticise the Cape Synod for allowing its mission congregations in Malawi to join a "foreign" and "liberal" Church (DK, 7/8/1940, pp. 240ff).

182. See above, p. 52, n. 27.

183. P Bolink, Towards Church union ..., pp. 202-4. GBA Gerdener: Die boodskap van 'n man, pp. 17, 21, 26, 228.

184. Bolink, op. cit. 204, 249.

appointment to the Church both in Malawi and in Zambia and to the missionaries of all parties concerned.<sup>185)</sup> The African Christians failed to understand why they were not allowed to join with their fellow Christians who spoke the same language, used the same Bible, hymn book, Catechism and liturgy. The result was that in 1939 the Zambia Council of Congregations put forward a new request with thorough motivations for permission to unite. This was again turned down and instead the OFS Mission Committee proceeded to establish a Synod of the "Dutch Reformed Mission Church of the Orange Free State in Rhodesia".<sup>186)</sup>

These actions to block the move to unity became a major factor in the unhappy "Salisbury controversy" when the Malawian Christians in Zimbabwe refused to be placed under the care of a Church (the OFS) which had previously refused to unite with them.<sup>187)</sup>

In concluding, it should be pointed out that in many ways the Presbytery of Nkhoma stood only to benefit by joining the CCAP. Although many saw serious dangers in such a union, not the least of those being the more liberal line of theology followed by many of the Scottish missionaries, the Nkhoma Presbytery could on the other hand contribute a positive influence towards such matters as promotion of evangelism and emphasizing spirituality.<sup>188)</sup> At the same time union meant the Church in Malawi could present a united front. This was the case in its dealings with the Government - a matter which undoubtedly was to the advantage of the Nkhoma Presbytery in view of its links with the "foreign" DRC Mission, foreign, that is, as far as the British Colonial Government was concerned. The united front also provided a bulwark against a proliferation of Missions and sects as well as the concerted competitive endeavours of the Roman Catholic Church on the one hand, and on the other hand against the influence of traditional beliefs and the ever increasing effects of secularism. Again the kind of union entered upon guaranteed

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185. Prof J du Plessis was also deeply upset by Strydom's engineering. Writing to WH Murray after a visit by Strydom to Malawi in 1931, he stated: "And now that fire-brand Strydom has been to you again! Is he going to dig the grave of the OFS? How must I feel who was one of the fathers of the OFS Synod of 1895? (sic)" (letter dated 29/7/1931), in private collection of Dr P Pretorius, transl. from Afrikaans. In 1897 the OFS Synod resolved, upon the proposal of Du Plessis, then in his first congregation, Zastron, to begin foreign mission work - a decision which resulted in work beginning in Zambia - cf. GBA Gerdener: Die boodskap van n man, p. 29.

186. The Synod was established in 1943. In 1957 it changed its name to the "African Reformed Church" and in 1968 to the "Reformed Church in Zambia"

187. See above, ch. 2.

188. Cf. JA Retief (DK, 10/7/1940, p. 66).

continuing co-operation between Presbyteries and their respective parent Missions while also avoiding a duplication of congregations especially in urban centres such as Blantyre, Zomba and Lilongwe. At the same time the necessary safeguards had been built into the constitution of the CCAP, notably in the so-called "Barrier Act" to ensure that the Basis of Faith and other fundamental principles would not be changed without approval by all parties concerned.<sup>189)</sup>

Furthermore, the establishing of a Presbytery of Nkhoma meant that this Church thereby took an important step forward towards greater autonomy and its new status promoted a larger sense of responsibility amongst its leaders, a fact which was repeatedly noted by observers.<sup>190)</sup> In the following chapter the growth and development of Nkhoma Presbytery and its progress in various areas will be traced.

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189. CCAP Synod 1926, min. 27.

190. See for example CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report 1927; CCA S5 15/6/2/15: AC Murray to Mission secr. 16/8/1928; GMC report to Cape Synod, Acta 1928, p. 54.

## THE EMERGING CHURCH 1926 - 1962

With the formation of the Presbytery of Nkhoma a very important stage was reached. In theory at least an autonomous Church was now truly established and during the next three and a half decades it was to develop slowly but surely towards the full attainment of that autonomy. Initially missionaries still held a position of power in the Church and for all practical purposes guided the Church in most of its decisions. But throughout the ultimate goal was never forgotten, namely the setting up of a fully self-governing, self-supporting and self-expanding Church. Hence, slowly at first but with increased tempo during the 1940s and particularly during the 1950s, more and more responsibility came into the hands of the national leaders of the Church. This took place first at congregational level, then at Presbytery level and finally the stage was reached where in 1962 full responsibility was taken over at synodical level for all the facets of the Mission work.

This growth and development of the Church can be viewed from different angles. Firstly there is the physical aspect of the actual growth and expansion of the Church, to which is linked the structural development of the local congregations. Then there is the aspect of growing self-government also involving the ever evolving relationship between Church and Mission, between national church leaders and missionaries. Linked to that are the aspects of growing financial support from within its own ranks as well as the attempts of the Church to carry the Gospel further afield. Another aspect is that of the constitutional development of the Church, both in the narrow context of Nkhoma Presbytery and (later) Synod, and in the wider context of the CCAP as a whole. All these aspects of Church development culminated in the final process of attaining total autonomy, a process which was completed in 1962 - completed, that is, in a relative sense as, from a Biblical point of view, no Church can ever really become "self-"governing or autonomous, the Head and Lord of the Church being Jesus Christ himself who leads his Church through the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit. It is relative also in the sense that no Church can ever become totally "independent" from other Churches. Not only are there closer links with Churches to which it is related confessionally and historically, but also in this ecumenical age all Churches find themselves linked in some way to other Churches and Church bodies, be it on the local level where Churches find the need to co-operate in various ways, or be it through National Christian Councils, as well as wider confessional or ecumenical bodies, councils or conferences.

In the following paragraphs the development of the Presbytery and later Synod of Nkhoma will be viewed from some of these angles, while the last chapter will deal with constitutional developments in the CCAP and the Church political developments

and other negotiations leading to the final arrangements for the Synod to take over all responsibilities for the work in 1962.

### 1. Church growth and structural developments

When looking at the statistics of the Presbytery/Synod of Nkhoma the claim that this field has been one of the most fruitful fields of labour of all the fields of the DRC, appears quite justified. After the initial high growth rate of 21,5% p.a., recorded for the years 1903-1917, followed by the slump of the War and post-War years, 1917-1923,<sup>1)</sup> the growth rate had stabilised to some extent by the time Nkhoma entered the CCAP in 1926. Although there were fluctuations from year to year and periods of faster and slower growth, the average growth rate for the period 1926-1961 was 5,2% p.a. for communicant members. Taking the growth of the Church over five year periods, the Table on the next page gives an overall picture.<sup>2)</sup>

For this period of 35 years certain salient observations can be made. The overall growth rate amounted to 5,2% p.a. or 28,7% per five year period, membership increasing from 11 335 to 66 000. A peak growth period was experienced during the mid 1940s with a record increase in membership of 95,5% between 1940 and 1950 (22 669 to 44 318). The 1940s were the years of exerted mission endeavour in which education in particular was greatly expanded<sup>3)</sup> and many evangelistic activities were undertaken. In one year alone (1944-45) communicant membership rose from 28 103 to 30 976 (10,2%), while catechumens increased from 14 649 to 18 188 (24,2%). A shorter peak growth period was experienced during the early thirties with membership rising from 13 454 in 1930 to 16 692 in 1933 (24,1%),<sup>4)</sup> but this was offset by the slump of the Depression years. From 1933 to 1935 membership only rose by

1. See pp. 249f.

2. Figures in this Table and in the following paragraphs are compiled from annual statistics returned to Presbytery as recorded in Presbytery minutes. Additional information from annual general reports (CCA S5 15/6/11/8); and *Jaarboek van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerke* (official Year Book of the DR Churches). The number of ministers was compiled from the sederunt lists of the respective meetings of Presbytery (1926-56) and of the Synod of Nkhoma (1961) and may, for expatriates, not include those happening to be on furlough or otherwise absent at the time of meeting. In all cases figures and statistics for congregations in Zimbabwe and later the Presbytery of Salisbury were excluded, although these were for a long time included in the statistical returns of Nkhoma Presbytery. Figures for 1961 could not all be traced in the minutes of the respective Presbyteries and are not available, even at the Synod Office.

3. See above p. 173.

4. For reference to this spiritual renewal see AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, p. 298; CCA S5 15/6/2/17A: WH Murray to Mission secr., 27/7/1931; 20/7/1932.

TABLE IVSTATISTICAL GROWTH OF THE PRESBYTERY/SYNOD OF NKHOMA 1926-1961, IN FIVE YEAR PERIODS

Year	Communicant Membership	Percentage growth (5 yrs)	Catechumens	Ordained Ministers serving in Nkhoma		No of Congr	Av. per Congr.	Liberality (in M K)	Av. per Communicant
				Malawians	Expats.				
1926	11 335		8 226	3	11	13	872	K 699,50 <sup>5)</sup>	6,2 t
1931	14 360	26,7	8 015	6	12	13	1 105	2 002,50	13,9
1936	17 931	24,9	9 036	9	9	13	1 379	2 079,01	11,6
1941	25 417	41,7	11 656	8	8	17	1 495	2 838,42	11,2
1946	32 398	27,5	17 699	12	9	20	1 620	4 392,75	13,6
1951	47 223	45,8	22 982	22	10	25	1 889	6 168,31	13,1
1956	55 450	17,4	23 277	26	12	32	1 773	10 852,50	19,6
1961	66 000	19,0	?	29 <sup>6)</sup>	14	49	1 347	?	?

5. The low sum recorded for 1926 is actually only for eight months.
6. This was the number of ministers present at the Synod meeting in May 1961. Six more men were ordained later that year.



1,6% (16 682 to 16 941). From 1936 growth increased again, but after the tremendous growth during the 1940s another low rating was recorded during the 1950s. From 1951 to 1956 membership rose only 17,4% as against the average overall growth rate of 28,7% per five year period. The next five years similarly showed a low rate of increase (19%). The explanation for this should be sought in the effects of the political unrest in the country as it first fought the imposition of Federal rule and then intensified its struggle for complete political independence.<sup>7)</sup> During these years considerable anti-white and especially anti-South African feelings were also generated in the country which, to some extent, adversely affected the work of the DRCM and its "daughter" Church.<sup>8)</sup>

It is interesting to note that after obtaining full autonomy, Nkhoma Synod maintained almost the same average growth rate of 28,7% per five year period. From 1961-1976 the growth rate for the three five-year periods was respectively 29,7%, 24,1% and 29,9%. In 1976 there were 137 899 communicant members in the Nkhoma Synod in 78 congregations served by 51 Malawian Ministers.<sup>9)</sup> This growth rate amounts to an average of 5,0% p.a. as against 5,2% for 1926-1961, and if this trend were to continue, there would be well over 400 000 members in the Synod by the turn of the century.

Compared to the other constituent members of the CCAP, the Presbytery/Synod of Nkhoma showed the greatest growth rate. Between 1932 and 1960 the Livingstonia Synod increased by 42,9% from 25 564 to 36 522, Blantyre by 159,5% from 24 049 to 62 410, but Nkhoma increased nearly twice as fast by 311% (figures for Zimbabwe excluded) from 15 146 to 62 234 thus drawing level with Blantyre Synod.<sup>10)</sup>

From 1964 Blantyre Synod, however, experienced a small "population explosion", its membership increasing by 45,6% within four years. This figure dropped to 28,3% for the next four years and still further to 10,9% for the 1972-1976 period so that by the end of 1976 Blantyre Synod had 143 432 members, while Nkhoma Synod was slightly behind with 137 899 members. Livingstonia Synod reported having 50 902 members.<sup>11)</sup>

7. See ch. 1.

8. See ch. 1 and also ch. 6.

9. CCAP General Synod 1977, min. 26; Jaarboek van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerke 1977, pp. 291-2.

10. For figures see Table II, p. 30. In fact Nkhoma (excluding congregations in Zimbabwe) was slightly ahead of Blantyre in 1952 and 1956, in the latter year recording 54 615 members as against the 50 247 of Blantyre Synod.

11. CCAP General Synod 1977, min. 26. The total membership of the CCAP increased from 64 759 in 1932 to 340 789 in 1976, which amounts to an average growth rate of 3,9% p.a., compared to an average growth rate of just over 5,1% p.a. for Nkhoma.

Yet it is not the members but the spiritual quality which is regarded as important in Church growth and as the Church entered the peak growth period of the 1940s the basic need was clearly seen as the need for spiritual deepening.<sup>12)</sup> In 1940 the Presbytery agreed upon a detailed plan of action to revive, strengthen and extend the Church. Conferences were to be conducted with various groups of Church leaders, while elders were to activate groups of Christians in their wards. Expanding congregations were urged to guard against complacency by remaining active in evangelism, maintaining a Christian pattern of living and by keeping up contributions to the work of the Church. At the same time teachers were reminded of their duty to proclaim God's Word, to evangelise and to promote the interests of the Church in their schools.<sup>13)</sup>

A particularly poor year was experienced in 1944. Membership increased by only 1,3%, church attendance was poor and there was a shortage of volunteers to teach Sunday school. Many elders, too, had succumbed to temptations. "Are we not making a mistake by allowing many people into the Catechumen class and into the Congregation who should have been held back so that they continue to attend classes?", Presbytery asked itself. Thereupon it agreed to hold week long revival meetings in all congregations during the following month. In addition to that, a planning committee was set up to investigate the need of the Church particularly as far as the forming of new congregations was concerned. As a result of this committee's recommendations to the 1945 Presbytery, three new congregations were formed in 1946. The 1944 revival campaign bore good fruits and membership increased by 46,6% from 1944 to 1949.<sup>14)</sup> Recognising the value of such campaigns, the Mission Council sought to make various suggestions to Presbytery to improve their effectiveness.<sup>15)</sup>

The formation of the three new congregations in 1946 followed upon four others formed between 1938 and 1941. This was the outcome of a trend which began shortly after the ordination of the first Malawians. The Mission Council obtained permission from the GMC to buy ten plots of land (although permission for twenty had been requested) at places where Malawian ministers would in future be appointed. Initially these sites still fell under the "mother congregation",

12. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1940.

13. Nkhoma Presbytery 1940, pp. 5-7.

14. Ibid., 1944, pp. 4, 6; and annual statistics of Presbytery 1944-49; CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1946. Cf. also Council minutes, 65/1944, pp. 630-1.

15. For details see Council minutes 67/1945, p. 659.

i.e. the Mission station manned by the missionary who supervised the work of the Malawian minister.<sup>16)</sup> Gradually these "Abusa stations", as they were called,<sup>17)</sup> developed to the stage where they could be formed into separate congregations.

These congregations remained linked to Mission stations and ministers continued to work under supervision of a missionary. Regular reports had to be submitted to the Mission,<sup>18)</sup> and the missionary had the right to attend any session meeting in any congregation under his supervision. This was to enable the missionary to maintain as much contact as possible with such congregations.<sup>19)</sup> The first congregation to be formed thus was Machenche, on 12 November 1938, followed by Chitundu on 30 December 1939, Chikoma on 5 October 1940 and Chileka on 8 November 1941. The next three, formed in 1946, were Kolowiro on 26 October, Mphatsa on 29 October and Lilongwe on 28 December.

This brought the total number of congregations to twenty. In 1926 there had been thirteen congregations and this figure had remained unchanged until 1938. After 1946, two more congregations were formed in 1948 and 1949, three in 1951, two in 1952, one in 1954, four in 1956, one in 1957, six in 1958, three in 1959, two in 1960, four in 1961 and one in 1962, bringing the total in Malawi to 49 at the time the Synod assumed full responsibility.

From Table IV the growth of congregations can be compared to the total number of church members showing how the average number of communicants per congregation rose from 872 in 1926 to nearly 1900 in 1951, but with the virtual doubling of the number of congregations between 1951 and 1961 the average had dropped again to 1347 by 1961. As a matter of interest it can be noted that this figure rose once more after that, so that by 1976 the average number of communicants per congregation amounted to 1768.

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16. Council minutes 47/1927, p. 374; 48/1928, p. 389. Cf. CCA S5 1/4/1: Nyasa subcommittee minute 2, entry for 9/2/1928 and minute 1, entry for 12/7/1928.
  17. Cf. MW Retief: *Ontdekkings in Midde-Afrika*, pp. 182-3; AS Labuschagne: *Selfstandigmaking en superintendensie*. (Op die Horison, March 1954, pp. 20-21). For a list of missionary-manned nucleus stations see Council minutes 65/1944, p. 629.
  18. For these reports see CCA S5 15/6/11/5 (1946-52) and MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 23 (1955-62).
  19. Council minutes 70/1948, pp. 744-5; CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1947/48. See also Nkhoma Presbytery minutes 1947, pp. 3-4 and 1948, p. 13.

Naturally the growth of the Church both in number of members and of congregations was closely linked to the number of ministers being ordained in the Church. The first three were ordained in 1925. Four years later a second group was ready for ordination. Amon Ndiwo Phiri, Petros Kachingwe Phiri and Ashan Malenga Phiri were all ordained together at Nkhoma on 14 August 1929.<sup>20)</sup> They were respectively assigned to Malingunde (Mtongola), Khola and Mphunzi.<sup>21)</sup> Four years later, on 26 July 1933, three more men were ordained, again at Nkhoma. Albert Chiuye Phiri was assigned to Khola congregation, Stephen Bulombola Soko to Chinthemwe and Gideon Kamtimaleka Mwale to Malembo.<sup>22)</sup>

For eight years the number of Malawian ministers did not increase, but in 1941 five more were ordained, namely Abiel Sendera Banda, Baruke Kapachika Phiri, Philemon Chingapa Chanza, Jabez Chimkubwa Banda and Mateyu Katole Phiri. Unfortunately Katole died within a year, the first minister to pass away while still serving.<sup>23)</sup> With Andreyana Namkumbwa on pension there were thus twelve men serving in 1942. Six more were ordained in 1944 of whom one, Whitton Makuwalo Banda, became the first to be sent to Zimbabwe by Presbytery. Ten were ordained in 1947, five in 1951, four in 1956, five in 1959 and six in 1961, bringing to fifty the total number of ordinations since 1925. When Nkhoma Synod convened in 1962 to take over all the work from the DRCM, there were thirty-five ministers present serving the 49 congregations in Malawi and three serving in Zimbabwe as against twelve, twenty years earlier.<sup>24)</sup>

On Presbyterial level development also took place. By 1952 when the number of congregations had risen to 25, in addition to two in Zimbabwe, the Presbytery

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20. This is the date according to their ordination certificates (MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 38). Other reports give Sunday 18 August as the date, cf. Council minutes 49/1929, p. 400; CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Report of General Mission Secretary, 1929.
21. Nkhoma Presbytery minutes 1929, p. 8.
22. *Ibid.*, 1933, p. 7. The dates on their ordination certificates do not agree with other reports which refer to their ordination in the respective congregations (DK, 6/9/1933, p. 440; 18/10/1933, p. 714; Nuusbrief uit Malawi, June 1968). Possibly the certificates actually refers to the date on which they were licensed, but not yet ordained, or else the ceremony in the respective congregations was actually only an induction and not also an ordination.
23. For the congregations they were sent to, see Nkhoma Presbytery minutes 1941, p. 10. On Mateyu Katole's death see *ibid.*, 1942, p. 5.
24. For names and the congregations they were sent to, see *ibid.*, 1944, pp. 3, 7-8; 1947, pp. 12, 13; 1951, pp. 15-16; 1952, p. 5; 1956, p. 19; Nkhoma Synodical committee minute 87, 88, entry for 29-30/7/1959. By 1977 the number of Malawian ministers serving in the Synod had risen to 51, while the number of congregations had increased to 78.

was becoming too large and unwieldy. In that year Presbytery agreed to divide into two, a northern and a southern section, each meeting annually, but without legislative powers. The full Presbytery would meet once every four years. However, the Standing Committee of the CCAP Synod ruled that this decision was illegal since the constitution required Presbytery to meet every year. The Presbytery Standing Committee agreed to convene both sections at one centre in 1953 and there it was decided to retain the two sections rather than form two Presbyteries. Both sections would meet annually at the same venue, constitute as Presbytery but separate for discussion of matters concerning the congregations and their reports.<sup>25)</sup> This arrangement was not satisfactory and the whole question was solved when, three years later in 1956, the CCAP Synod adopted a new constitution whereby the former Presbyteries became Synods under a General Synod, each with the power to form such Presbyteries as it regards necessary.<sup>26)</sup> Nkhoma Synod established three Presbyteries in Malawi, namely the Presbytery of Mvera, Nkhoma and Malembo and one for the congregations in Zimbabwe, the Presbytery of Salisbury.<sup>27)</sup>

Thus, in reviewing the period 1926-1962 it is clear that the Presbytery/Synod of Nkhoma showed a healthy growth pattern, increasing greatly in numbers compared to the other component members of the CCAP. This coincided with a consistent increase in the number of congregations, although the number of communicant members per congregation tended to be rather large, particularly as there were also large numbers of catechumens.<sup>28)</sup> The need for the development of an ordained ministry was fully realised and here too a steady growth in numbers is to be found. In Table IV it is clear that the ordained ministers increased not only in number, but also in relation to the number of missionaries. By 1962 Malawian ministers outnumbered ordained missionaries three to one.

The development of an indigenous or national leadership depended largely on the development of the ordained ministry so that the latter also reflects to what extent the Church was making progress towards autonomy. A later paragraph deals with the development of indigenous leadership, of the so-called "self-government" of the Church, as well as the relationship between Church and Mission and between national ministers and missionaries during the period 1926-1962.

25. See Nkhoma Presbytery minutes 1952, pp. 14-15; 1953, pp. 11, 13-14.

26. See below pp. 297ff.

27. Nkhoma Presbytery/Synod minutes 1956, pp. 12, 32. This meeting at first convened as a Presbytery and then adopted its new constitutions by which it was established as a Synod (*ibid.*, p. 25).

28. Cf. Table IV.

The picture of Church growth is incomplete without a brief look at the Church structures particularly at the grass roots level. Being a Church following a Presbyterian system of church government, the general structure of Synod, Presbytery and local Church Council or session is well-known. Minor variations between differing traditions such as ordination of elders to a permanent office or for a prescribed period of time have already been noted. In Nkhoma Presbytery/Synod the local Church Council presided over a congregation (the term parish was not generally used). A congregation could consist of some hundreds of communicant members, up to even a few thousand and would be divided into from ten to thirty or more wards or sections, each ward usually under the care of an elder, assisted by a deacon. In Nkhoma both elders and deacons have the right to attend Church Council meetings and vote, but only elders are eligible to represent the Council at major Church courts such as Presbytery or Synod.

Each ward functions as a small Christian community and, particularly in the case of wards further removed from the congregation centre, would have a smaller centre for worship and catechetical training. Sometimes a number of neighbouring wards would meet at one such centre. For all practical purposes such centres function as small parishes - the elder(s), assisted by other leading Christians acting under his (their) directions, is responsible for the normal functioning of all aspects of the local Church. In practice this means that the elder is often responsible for all pastoral duties excluding virtually only the administering of the sacraments. It has been estimated in a survey that, on a normal Sunday morning, 95% of the services conducted within Nkhoma Synod are conducted by elders.<sup>29)</sup>

Likewise it is the elder who conducts house to house visitation, visits the sick, buries the dead and pastors to the flock under his care, much more than the minister who may rarely find the time to attend to these basic duties. For this reason the role and function of elders are of great importance for the Church and in Nkhoma Presbytery/Synod this was thoroughly recognised.

Many of these wards or subcentres had originally started off as village school centres manned by a teacher-evangelist working under supervision of the Mission. His duties included teaching primary school grades and daily Bible lessons and on Sundays he was responsible for Sunday School, catechetical classes and preaching. As a Christian community developed around such a centre elders were in due course appointed and it was logical that at some stage or other many of the duties of the evangelist would have to be shouldered by the elder.

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29. Nuusbrief uit Malawi, May 1975.

This integration of Church and village school was not always an easy process. The evangelist was paid for his work, the elder had to do it voluntarily; the evangelist had been trained the elder not; the evangelist worked, initially at least, under supervision of the Mission, the elder under that of the Church.

In order to equip, train and prepare elders for their work, special conferences were held from time to time. One of the first held at Presbytery level was a four-day conference in August 1914 at Linthipe half-way between Mphunzi and Nkhoma. Ninety elders from six congregations attended, including one from Mphatso in Mozambique and two from Magwero in Zambia. In addition there were some teachers and fourteen students from the evangelist school.<sup>30)</sup>

In later years such conferences were to be repeated and by 1933 and 1934 annual training courses were being held in various congregations.<sup>31)</sup>

Perhaps the most important development of all concerning the training of elders and other Church members was the development of a lay training centre at the foot of Chongoni mountain near Linthipe village, 25 km from Nkhoma. The real development of this centre, which was to play a very important role in the life of the Church, actually took place after the period under review.

In 1956 the CCAP Synod had recommended to Presbyteries that regular Bible schools for Church members should be established.<sup>32)</sup> Nothing appears to have been done about this until 1961 when, what was known as Chongoni Estate, the property of a former missionary turned farmer (DW du Toit), came up for sale. A few individual missionaries saw the possibilities of the place as a training centre and when it appeared that Nkhoma Synod was at that stage not prepared to negotiate a purchase, they resolved to obtain the property in their personal capacity, setting up a Mema Trust (inc.) through which to buy the estate.<sup>33)</sup> In the same year the place was already being used for meetings and conference. One of the first large meetings held there was the first ever national Christian students' conference which took place in December 1961. Nkhoma Synod soon saw the potential of the centre and the very next year agreed to purchase it and to appoint Rev. AS Labuschagne as the first principal of the new Lay Training Centre. A constitution for the

30. See printed report: Mau a pa msonkhano, Linthipe 1914.

31. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports, 1933, 1934.

32. CCAP Synod 1956, min. 37(c)(i).

33. Nyasa subcommittee min. 1, 2; entry for 13/3/1962; min. 36, entry for 19/6/1962.

"Bible School" was also adopted.<sup>34)</sup> Du Toit later lowered his price to only K3 000 and an immensely valuable property was thus obtained, including farm buildings, three dwelling houses and a large barn. With very little alteration the buildings could be put to use as a training centre. It was officially opened on 1 July 1962. In due course additions and improvements were to be made and an impressive and efficient new complex, officially known as the Chongoni Church Lay Training Centre, was completed in 1975.<sup>35)</sup>

As the Church grew stronger, the task of evangelising became more and more that of the local Christian community, under the guidance of the elder. Hence Presbytery decreed in 1940 that each elder should organise groups in his ward responsible for various aspects of spreading the Gospel, strengthening the Church and seeking out those who had fallen back. So important did Presbytery regard this matter that the entire minute was repeated the following year.<sup>36)</sup>

With the rapid increase in the number of congregations during the 1940s the need to integrate church and village school centres became ever more urgent. In 1942 Nkhoma Presbytery responded to a resolution of the Mission Council to take over responsibility for Sunday School work, detailing how this was to be organised at presbyterial and congregational level. Two years later when the Mission Council defined the respective duties of Church and Mission, the Church was also made responsible for all Catechetical work.<sup>37)</sup> In 1954 a lengthy minute of Presbytery outlined the aim and function of catechetical training and it was agreed that a new greatly extended Catechism was to be written in co-operation with Blantyre and Livingstonia Presbyteries and the (Reformed Church) Synod in Zambia. A handbook for catechists was also to be drawn up.<sup>38)</sup> In 1949 Presbytery adopted a lengthy resolution outlining how the integration of Church and village school centres was to be achieved. It stressed that the duties involved in Christian education and preaching was the task of the believer and not a form of paid work. The Church would henceforth take greater responsibility in arranging and organising the congregational work at the various school centres, appointing those who should teach or preach on Sunday mornings and arranging how to conduct the afternoons' evangelising activities.<sup>39)</sup>

34. Nkhoma Synod 1962, min. 33, 61, 62, 87, 89; GAC min. 38, 39, entry for 14-16/6/1962, Nyasa subcommittee min. 22, entry for 31/7/1962.

35. Nuusbrief uit Malawi, May 1975.

36. Nkhoma Presbytery 1940, p. 6; 1941, p. 6.

37. Ibid. pp. 6-7; Council minutes 63/1942, p. 592; 65/1944, p. 628.

38. This joint catechism never appeared, but the outcome of the decision was the 332 page Buku la Katekisma produced by Nkhoma Synod in 1965.

39. Nkhoma Presbytery 1949, pp. 15-17 (cf. Council minutes 72/1949, p. 801f).



The following year Presbytery resolved that all new elders should first be instructed concerning their work before being inducted and that a handbook be written concerning the work of the elder. Revs. JS Mwale and JD Stegmann were appointed to draw it up.<sup>40)</sup> There were some delays, but in 1955 this booklet appeared under the name of JS Mwale, titled Moyo ndi Nchito za Oyang'anira Mpingo (The life and work of the overseer of the Congregation).<sup>41)</sup>

The year 1955 saw Presbytery deviating rather clearly from traditional Reformed and Presbyterian practice by deciding that, since it saw no essential difference between the work of elder and deacon, the latter office would be done away with. For quite some years this was the case until Nkhoma Synod finally was to rescind the decision and reinstate the office of deacon in 1972.<sup>42)</sup>

Before concluding this paragraph reference should be made to some further aspects of the life and work of the Church. These include work with young people as well as the women's organisation of the Church. Although youth work as such remained for all practical purposes one of the responsibilities of the Mission Council almost up to the end - youth work only came under the control of Synod in 1960 when a Synod Youth Committee was appointed - the Church was nevertheless involved in it in various ways from much earlier on.<sup>43)</sup>

The need for Christian youth work began to be felt as the children of the first generation of Christians began to grow up and the typical problems of the "second generation" appeared.<sup>44)</sup> In 1917 the Council of Congregations had asked WH Murray to write a book on how to train children in a Christian home (Maleredwe a ana akristu) and from time to time Presbytery urgently emphasised the responsibility of Christian parents. Meetings with parents were arranged in every congregation in 1930. In 1938 ways were discussed in which the confusion of young people could be countered. In 1940 Presbytery again urged parents to honour the pledge they

40. Ibid., 1950, pp. 5, 9.

41. It was revised in 1967 and again in 1979 when a section on the work of deacons was also included. In the title the word oyang'anira (overseers) was replaced in 1967 by akuluampingo (elders). For a summary of the contents see B Sundkler: The Christian ministry in Africa, pp. 333ff. Sundkler called it "one of the most remarkable of such books" (Ibid., p. 162).

42. Nkhoma Synod 1972, min. S821. In 1966 (min. S250) and 1968 (min. S476) Synod still upheld the 1955 decision. One significant ruling in 1972 was that deacons, although full members of Church sessions, could not participate when the session handled cases of discipline.

43. Council minutes 83/1960, p. 1274; Nkhoma Synod 1960, min. 43, 251, 254(v), 255(iii).

44. Cf. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1916; also reports for 1928, 1930, 1938, etc. where this problem was constantly dwelt upon.

made at the baptism of their children. In 1948 a family conference was organised by Presbytery on Christian family life, followed up by a similar conference in all congregations which elicited much positive response as it proved a matter of very deep concern to the Church leaders.<sup>45)</sup>

Another facet of youth work was the work through the Boys' Brigade. Initially introduced in Malawi in 1910, a national council was set up in 1943 and in the same year the Presbytery of Nkhoma agreed to introduce the movement at all Central schools, which it did with varying success over the years.<sup>46)</sup> The Mission Council took full responsibility for the work, while regular reports were made to Presbytery. During the 1950s more progress was made, and by 1954 camps for youth leaders were introduced. In 1958 a full-time National organiser, Mr S McCullough, arrived in the country. Nkhoma Synod agreed to appoint Rev. KJ Mgawi as Boys' Brigade organiser of the Synod and in 1960 he had the opportunity of attending a six months' training course in England.<sup>47)</sup>

For girls a similar organisation was set up when in 1954 Nkhoma Presbytery, learning of two groups which already existed at Dzenza and Malingunde, approved the formation of Girl Guide troops. It lay down certain conditions, including one, that at local level the groups should function under the authority of the Church council. A training course for leaders took place in 1956 at the Lake.<sup>48)</sup> Because of its restriction on evangelising people of other faiths a recommendation was put to Nkhoma Synod that another movement with more definite Christian character and aims be introduced, and in 1961 the Girls' Life Brigade was adopted as a more suitable one for the Church to use.<sup>49)</sup>

As far as Christian work with secondary school students is concerned, it was only towards the end of the period under survey that some significant developments took place. Prior to 1961 independent Christian fellowship groups did exist in a number of post-primary institutions in the country including the Robert Blake Secondary

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45. Ibid., 1930, 1948; Nkhoma Presbytery, 1938, p. 7; 1940, pp. 7-8; 1948, p. 1; Cf. also on the problem of youth, GF Hugo: Die jeugprobleem in ons Nyasaland sendingveld (Op die Horison II/1, March 1940, pp. 38ff).
46. Nkhoma Presbytery 1943, p. 5. For a short history of the Boys' Brigade in Malawi see Lipenga, Jubilee issue 1960, in which year it had over 70 companies in the country. See also CCA S5 15/6/11/10.
47. The movement continued for some time, but after independence the leadership in the country did not see it in a very favourable light and Nkhoma Synod decided to abandon it in 1969 (Synodical Committee min. KS 1520, entry for 23/4/1969).
48. Nkhoma Presbytery 1954, p. 27; 1956, p. 17; cf. Council minutes 75/1952, p. 936; 77/1954, pp. 1019f, 1032, 1037; 78/1955, p. 1099.
49. Ibid., 83/1960, p. 1256; 82/1959, pp. 1207ff; copy of report of committee of inquiry in CCA S5 15/6/1/6; Nkhoma Synod 1960, min. 238; Synodical committee min. 17, entry for Jan. 1961.

School at Kongwe. When the World Student Christian Federation sponsored a leadership training conference for countries south of the Sahara at Mindolo centre in Zambia in January 1961, four young people from Malawi were sent there by the Christian Council. The report they brought back resulted in an effort to draw a number of existing groups together and a planning committee was set up. A conference was planned and took place at the Chongoni Bible School centre of Nkhoma Synod in December 1961 with over seventy students from twenty institutions attending. The following year a formal constitution was adopted at the second national conference and on 30 August 1962 the Nyasaland Student Christian Organisation came into being, later to be known as the Student Christian Organisation of Malawi. The Nkhoma Synod was to give very strong support to this organisation and was to accept it as the organ through which its young people studying at secondary and post secondary institutions were to be served spiritually.<sup>50)</sup>

What has perhaps become one of the most outstanding characteristics of the Church in Africa is the Christian Women's Guild which functions under various names in almost every Church. In her well-known study of this phenomenon, Mia Brandel-Syrier<sup>51)</sup> has shown how this movement which she typifies under the name Manyano has developed and functions within the Church. In Nkhoma Synod a similar movement came into being in 1940 and developed over the years into a strong, active and much appreciated Church organisation, called Chigwirizano,<sup>52)</sup> with branches in every congregation. All women who are Church members and active in Church work may become members. The groups are active in many forms of Christian service, Church activities and witnessing, raise funds for various projects, have their own committees on local, Presbytery and Synod level and generally act as the channel through which the women in the Church are activated. There are certain rather obvious dangers in this movement, such as the tendency to look down upon those who do not join and the tendency to duplicate the Church structure of Presbytery and Synod, in some cases almost becoming something like a Church within a Church. Yet there is no doubt that over the years it has played a tremendous role in the lives of thousands of women, uniting and activating them for Church work and providing a strong formative power in their lives. In many ways it also provided scope for leadership talent to develop within an otherwise totally male dominated Church.

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50. For history of this organisation see: 'Our first ten years (brochure published by SCOM).
51. Mia Brandel-Syrier: Black women in search of God; cf. A Hastings: A history of African Christianity, pp. 114-116.
52. In Blantyre and Livingstonia Synods similar organisations exist, respectively known as Mvano and Umanyano.

The Chigwirizano developed out of the work done with women by the DRCM lady workers. Groups of Christians had early begun to be active in various ways at Mission stations. In 1939 Nkhoma Presbytery gave its official blessing to the formation of a Committee to co-ordinate the various groups and from then on regularly received reports on the work of the Chigwirizano.<sup>53)</sup> The movement grew rapidly, already numbering 909 members in twenty-nine branches three years later, doubling these figures in the next six years and more than trebling them by 1955 to a total of 3400 members in 105 branches. By then it was active in all congregations in both social and spiritual spheres and was an instrument in bringing many fallen believers back to the fold.<sup>54)</sup> There can be little doubt that in Africa this movement is something which plays a tremendous role in the life of the Church and continues to contribute greatly to the Christian witness in many countries.

## 2. Progress in self-government and relations with the DRCM

In the light of the oft repeated and emphasised aim of the DRCM to plant a Church which should become self-governing,<sup>55)</sup> it is of importance to note how progress was made in the Presbytery of Nkhoma towards this goal.

When the Presbytery was established in 1926, the Mission gave full recognition to the fact that it was de facto independent in the decisions it took, and these decisions would no longer be subject to approval by the Mission Council or the General Mission Committee of the DRC. In practice, however, becoming self-governing was a slow process in which missionaries continued to maintain quite firm control over the work and play an influential role in the Church.

Nevertheless, progress was clearly made towards this goal. With the appearance of an ordained ministry and the "Abusa stations", an opportunity presented itself in which to develop leadership and a sense of responsibility. The earliest reports on the work of the new ministers showed great appreciation for what they were doing and for the sense of responsibility they were showing,<sup>56)</sup> although it long

53. Nkhoma Presbytery 1939, pp. 6f.

54. Ibid., 1949, pp. 11-12; 1954, pp. 12ff; CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports, 1942, 1948, 1955, 1956. The work and progress of Chigwirizano featured regularly in these reports.

55. See ch. 2, pp. 49ff. See also MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, pp. 142-3; Idem: Oor Sendingbeleid (Op die Horison, I/1, Jan. 1939, p. 9); Die Koningsbode, October 1939; JM Cronje: Ontstaan van die Sendingbeleid van die NG Kerk (Op die Horison, XXIV/4, Dec. 1962, pp. 7-19).

56 Cf. CCA S5 15/6/2/17: WH Murray to Mission Secretary, 19/7/1927.

remained policy for them to work together with, and under supervision of, an ordained missionary.

Thus, for example, one report from Kongwe Mission on Machenche congregation remarked on the significant fact that the Church Council there, which had so often had to work without the assistance of a European minister, had developed a remarkable degree of independence and initiative. This congregation also had grown much faster than its "mother", Kongwe, membership rising from 1013 in 1939 (the first year it was represented at Presbytery) to 2861 in 1950, as against the increase from 807 to 1624 for Kongwe for the same period. In similar vein the Kongwe Station Report for 1953 expressed great appreciation for the work done by the local Malawian pastor at Kongwe:<sup>57)</sup>

He is fearless in his witness and preaching, keen and hard working, has a talent for organisation, is a true leader, has a humble heart and understands the secret of dealing both with educated people and villagers to attract them and treat them with equal respect. He is someone who can bear responsibility ... always acts with great respect and is treated likewise by whites. His advice is always sought and can be depended upon.

Already in 1932 the DRC Synod in Cape Town heard a recommendation of the GMC to move definitely towards granting greater responsibility to the native ministers. Synod authorised the GMC to consult with the Mission Council and to act as they saw fit.<sup>58)</sup> Prior to that, in 1928, missionaries had discussed the possibility of choosing a Malawian as chairman of Presbytery.<sup>59)</sup> Three years later a Malawian was elected to the Standing Committee or executive of Presbytery. This was Namon Katengeza, who also became the first Malawian chairman of Presbytery, in September 1934. Great appreciation was expressed for the humble and worthy execution of his duty as chairman. "The time", wrote WH Murray, "for such a step is evidently ripe".<sup>60)</sup> Although the missionaries were convinced that this was the right step, a question was raised at the next meeting of the GMC as to the advisability of such a move in view of feelings in South Africa over the question of having an African presiding over a meeting which included white members. But the GMC in no uncertain terms minuted that it "records its joy that matters have

57. Kongwe Station reports, 1950, 1953 (in collection of documents housed at Kongwe Mission). Transl. from Afrikaans.

58. DRC Acta 1932, p. 152.

59. Cf. CCA P3: Diary AC Murray, entry for 7/8/1928. Nkhoma Presbytery convened the following day.

60. CCA S5 15/6/2/17A: WH Murray to Mission secr., 5/10/1934. Transl. from Afrikaans. It is significant that this occurred five years before Blantyre Presbytery elected its first Malawian chairman (cf. p. 27).

already progressed so far".<sup>61)</sup>

Katengeza had been proposed by a missionary and the following year a Malawian proposed one of the missionaries as Chairman of Presbytery and from then on they alternated regularly. The following Malawians were subsequently elected as Chairman of Presbytery: A Malenga (1936), A Ndiwo (1938), P Kachingwe (1942), S Bulombola (1944), F Chingapa (1946), LK Manda (1948), DM Malembo (1950), I Chipiko (1952), A Sendera (1953), F Chikapa (1955) and A Kuchona (1956). The following year all four the newly formed Presbyteries of Nkhoma Synod were chaired by Malawians, but the first moderator of the Synod was a missionary, Rev. AS Labuschagne. He was succeeded in 1960 by Rev. JS Mwale, the first Malawian to be moderator of Nkhoma Synod. He was elected "with an overwhelming majority".<sup>62)</sup> In 1962 he was re-elected and in the four-man standing committee (Moderamen) only the assistant secretary was an expatriate.

Reports on Presbytery meetings regularly emphasised the progress in responsible leadership being experienced. Already in 1927 WH Murray reported:<sup>63)</sup>

The growing share being taken by the native in congregational and church matters clearly shows that there is life and growth in the work.

When the problem arose as to what the attitude of the Church should be towards heathen practices, the Malawian members showed a strong independent attitude: "Even if you missionaries were to compromise with pagans, we would rather die with Christianity and by the teaching of Scriptures."<sup>64)</sup>

In 1933 WH Murray, by then a veteran of nearly forty years' service, could state:<sup>65)</sup>

Year after year it becomes evident how their feeling of responsibility grows, how their insight into the meaning of "church" deepens and how they realise 'it is our church'. And with all this there is no sign that the cordial co-operation between us and them is decreasing. On the contrary ...

61. CCA S5 1/1/5: GMC minute 60, entry for 6-7/11/1934. Although Livingstonia Presbytery had reached this stage earlier, it was only in 1945 that a Malawian was elected as an office bearer of the CCAP Synod. This was PR Mwamlima who became Deputy Clerk (min. 7). The first Malawian to become Moderator of the CCAP General Synod, was JD Sangaya (1907-1979) in 1964 (min. 3). In 1972 KJ Mgawi became the first Moderator from Nkhoma Synod (min. 3).
62. CCA S5 15/6/11/9: Annual general report of Nkhoma Synod 1960.
63. DK, 12/10/1927, p. 533. Transl. from Afrikaans.
64. Report by MG Uys (DK, 19/9/1928, p. 426). Transl. from Afrikaans.
65. CCA S5 15/6/2/17A: WH Murray to Mission secr., 14/7/1933.

In the decades which followed, this process was to continue, but in due course tension did arise and the Mission had to rethink its task and position more clearly in pursuance of the basic aim of guiding the Church towards responsible self-government.

The number of Malawian ministers attending Presbytery first surpassed that of missionaries in 1942, and after that this was the regular pattern. Three years later the Nkhoma delegation to the CCAP Synod meeting consisted of thirteen ordained Malawians of whom five went as elders, and nine expatriates.<sup>66)</sup> This still represented a considerably higher proportion of missionaries compared to Livingstonia and Blantyre Presbyteries, but henceforth Malawians were always in the majority at meetings of Synod or Presbytery.

While the process of developing leadership qualities and placing greater responsibility on the shoulders of the Malawian pastors serving in the various congregations continued, two problems began to crystallize. One was the realisation that the policy followed in education not to provide higher education to people in general except when it was specifically required for further training of workers, was beginning to create a dilemma. Many able and outstanding leaders in the Church found themselves more and more hampered by the fact that their education lagged behind that of some of the leaders in other Presbyteries. This showed up in another way through the difficulty most earlier ministers of Nkhoma experienced in expressing themselves in English. This was a particular drawback at CCAP Synod meetings which were conducted in English in spite of attempts by Nkhoma to establish Chewa as the official language of the Church. The educational level of most ministers put them more and more at a disadvantage compared to the teachers of the Mission whose training and salaries began to outstrip that of ministers, especially during the 1940s and 1950s. This created an unhealthy discrepancy between pastor and teacher which was worsened by the difficulty experienced in drawing the more educated teachers to the ministry where their salary would be much lower.<sup>67)</sup> In 1951 Presbytery fixed the salaries of ministers at K144 p.a. instead of K108. Of this K96 had to come from the congregations and the balance from the Presbytery Central fund. In 1945 ministers had been receiving K62 p.a., but this was gradually increased to the level decided on in 1951.<sup>68)</sup> This discrepancy in:

66. Cf. Nkhoma Presbytery 1945, p. 19; CCAP Synod 1945, min. 4.

67. Cf. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1951, par. 42, 43.

68. Nkhoma Presbytery 1945, p. 19; 1947, p. 12; 1949, p. 14; 1951, p. 11. In 1945 a class "A" teacher could earn K90 p.a. (Council minutes 66/1944, p. 647).

training between teachers and the ministers gradually led to tension between the two groups. This tension was to come to a head during the difficult years of 1959-61 when the Nkhoma Synod Teachers' Association openly attacked the Nkhoma Synod ministers for their lack of education, for their submissiveness to missionaries and for the "gerontocracy" which they claimed was causing the Church endless harm.<sup>69)</sup>

The other problem which arose with the formation of Malawian run congregations away from the original Mission stations was that the latter remained the nucleus and focal point of the work for a long time. Complete with school, hospital and expatriate staff the effect on the growth of the Church and development of independence in "satellite" congregations tended to be hampered. Moreover these stations were all situated in rural areas away from towns and Bomas so that the Church tended to grow less strongly in urban and semi-urban centres at first. All attention and emphasis was focussed on the established Mission stations. It was only in later years, particularly after 1962, that serious attention was to be paid to work in town areas. In this respect Lilongwe was an exception as a congregation had already been formed in 1946, although an ordained missionary was first placed there only in 1958. This took place partly in response to the fact that the Roman Catholic Mission had shown "phenomenal expansion" in its work in Lilongwe.<sup>70)</sup> Likewise it was only in 1954 that a congregation was formed at Dedza.

With the establishment of the Presbytery of Nkhoma as part of the CCAP, the DRCM found itself in a new situation. It saw its task as that of guiding the young Church towards greater autonomy, a process in which the Mission through its Council played the role of guardian and councillor.

This meant that both the Mission Council and Presbytery, to some extent, constantly had to evaluate their task and redefine their respective roles in relation to each other. From its inception Nkhoma Presbytery differed in its relation to its "mother Church" compared to several other "daughter Churches" of the DRC. Whereas in other cases the parent body initially held a clear veto right over all decisions of the young Church, this was not the case with Nkhoma. So, for example, when a Synod of the young Church in Zambia was formed in 1943 it was laid down that all decisions of this Synod would be forwarded to the Synodical General Mission Committee by the secretary or Clerk of Synod within thirty days. Such decisions

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69. See also below, ch. 6.

70. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1957 par. 25; Council minutes 82/1959, p. 1227.



would only come into force if the Synodical General Mission Committee **did not** reserve one or other of them within ninety days.<sup>71)</sup> Similar rulings were initially laid down for the black DR Church in South Africa and for the African Reformed Church in Zimbabwe.

In Malawi the position was different. From 1926 the minutes of the Presbytery were no longer included in the Mission Council minutes "for approval" and hence to be regarded as decisions of Council, nor was the GMC ever specifically informed of all the decisions, apart from merely reporting matters of interest and importance.<sup>72)</sup> Although the Nyasa subcommittee of the GMC still wished to have the minutes of Nkhoma Presbytery presented to the GMC "for approval",<sup>73)</sup> no power of "veto" was thereby implied. Thus, the following year when a missionary sought to appeal to the GMC against a certain decision of Presbytery, the GMC concluded: "this meeting does not feel itself at liberty at all ... to set aside the decision of the Presbytery of Nkhoma".<sup>74)</sup>

Apart from the issue whether the right to decide on withdrawing from the CCAP lay with the GMC or with the Presbytery of Nkhoma itself,<sup>75)</sup> it is clear that a fundamental difference existed in the position of Nkhoma in comparison with other "daughter" Churches of the DRC. The only explanation that can be offered for this is that with Nkhoma becoming part of the CCAP it was legally untenable for the parent Church to retain such control. The fact that the same GMC retained veto powers in the case of others, appears to give strength to this being the only real reason.

Still, it was very much the conviction of men like Dr WH Murray that this must be so and, ironically, much more in line with Reformed principles on the position of the young Church in respect of the parent Church.<sup>76)</sup>

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71. JM Cronje: Die selfstandigwording van die Bantoekekerk, p. 94, and n. 174.  
 72. CCA S5 15/6/2/17: WH Murray to Mission secr., 22/11/1926.  
 73. CCA S5 1/4/1: Nyasa subcommittee minute 4, entry for 4/2/1927.  
 74. CCA S5 1/1/4: GMC minute 48, entry for 28-29/2/1928. Transl. from Afrikaans. The matter was also referred to the Synodical Judicial Commission for consideration, but no answer or further decision could be traced in the Archives and it is likely that the decision of the GMC was upheld.  
 75. See above, p. 278f.  
 76. Cf. JM Cronje: Die selfstandigwording van die Bantoekekerk, pp. 113f.

In this respect the words of the well-known Dutch Missiologist, JH Bavinck, are of importance:<sup>77)</sup>

Experience quickly shows that in general young Churches at first cannot do without the care of the Missionary ... If, as the result of the preaching of the Western Missionary, a Church is established ... it is then greatly in need of supervision for the first years ... although a newly established Church is completely independent, it is still very immature ... With the formation of a classis and of Synods, it is still quite natural for the missionary to preside as moderator.

It was this need for guidance that the DRCM in Malawi recognised and it felt itself called upon to continue giving this guidance for a considerable time. But guidance and the imposition of an opinion or idea can easily be confused and in practice this undoubtedly happened. Nevertheless the principle was repeatedly upheld that it was the Africans' Church and they should be given more and more chance to speak and let their opinion prevail. Yet in practice the missionaries continued to exercise a great deal of influence and power in the young Church for several decades after 1926.

At the same time it should be noted that it never was the aim of the Mission to let this situation continue indefinitely. The Mission saw its task as that of working together with the young Church towards self-government. In 1944 one missionary had the following to say about his African colleagues:<sup>78)</sup>

Our ideal should be not domination, but to win their confidence and co-operation. We must regard them as co-workers, like Paul. Their leaders should also be trained to do more responsible work and they must realise that it is their Church, or rather, the Church of Christ amongst them.

This echoed what WH Murray had often emphasised in what was described as a "forceful conception of African leadership":<sup>79)</sup>

The Africans had to be educated to become the future leaders and we should work in this direction so that later on they would be able to take the entire control of the Bantu Church into their hands.

77. JH Bavinck: An introduction to the science of Missions, p. 196. The phrase "in need of supervision" is perhaps not the best translation for the original Dutch "leiding-behoevend" which rather means "in need of guidance" (cf. Inleiding in de Zendingwetenschap, p. 199).

78. JA Retief (in DK, 10/7/1940, p. 67).

79. MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, p. 133.

In the early fifties a new concept began to develop in certain missionary circles within the DRC, the concept of superintendence or oversight by the "mother" Church over the young Church.<sup>80)</sup> It was propagated that the parent Church had a duty to exercise oversight while at the same time avoiding "concurrence" between missionary and native pastor. A writer working in Malawi responded to this by stating that, in the Nkhoma Presbytery, there was nothing of this "superintendence" by the "mother" Church in the normal sense of the word. Where missionaries had been placed in positions of oversight and responsibility in the Church this had been done by Presbytery. But in no way could the young Church be forced to bow under the authority of the parent Church.<sup>81)</sup> While this is true, it should be kept in mind that the concept of "abusa stations" or satellite congregations manned by African ministers working under the supervision of a missionary was originally developed by the Mission Council and hence introduced to Presbytery.<sup>82)</sup>

In practice therefore the Council, and through it the DRC, continued to guide and effectively steer the young Church in many matters, by its members both serving on Presbytery and acting as supervisors to African ministers, as well as by taking various decisions from time to time concerning the work. These decisions were usually passed on to the Presbytery as "recommendations" or "requests".<sup>83)</sup> Likewise the Presbytery, in discussing matters pertaining to work still under the Council, could send a request to the Council "where such a request would be sympathetically dealt with."<sup>84)</sup>

Basically the two bodies, Presbytery and Mission Council, co-existed and co-operated alongside each other with much the same aim - the building up of the Church, with the Council giving guidance within clearly defined areas of duty and responsibility.<sup>85)</sup> In 1944 the Mission Council outlined the respective duties of the two bodies. The Presbytery was to be responsible for all matters pertain=

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80. Cf. for instance JP Jacobs: *Superwisie en konkurrensie* (Op die Horison, XIV/3 Sept. 1953, pp. 93-116). For list of literature on this see in loc. pp. 93-4.
81. Cf. AS Labuschagne: *Selfstandigmaking en superintendensie* (Op die Horison, XVI/1, Mar. 1954, pp. 16, 28).
82. *Ibid.*, pp. 20f.
83. For examples see Council minutes 60/1939, p. 543; 63/1942, pp. 591-2; 77/1954, p. 1023. The last was a request that the wording of a certain decision of Presbytery concerning teachers be amended, because of possibly being somewhat provocative (see Nkhoma Presbytery 1945, p. 17, min. (g)).
84. JA Retief (in DK 21/8/1940, p. 343). Transl. from Afrikaans.
85. Council minutes 79/1956, pp. 1109f. Cf. opening speech of Council Chairman, 1944 quoted by AS Labuschagne: *Selfstandigmaking en superintendensie* (Op die Horison, XVI/1, Mar. 1954, p. 27).

ing to the affairs of the Church in general, such as the functioning of its congregations, ordination and induction of ministers and transferring of evangelists and African ministers, as well as exercising discipline over them, conducting catechetical training and, important, conducting what was called "church visitation".<sup>86)</sup>

This meant that in the last instance Presbytery was responsible for oversight of work of its ministers, even though it initially used missionaries for this. On the other hand the Mission Council remained responsible for all matters pertaining to the Mission of the DRC. Thus it was responsible for educational, medical, agricultural and other activities, for the printing work, as well as for all buildings except churches and houses of evangelists and African ministers - these were the responsibility of Presbytery through its congregations. The expatriate personnel stood under the jurisdiction of the Council, which also effected all transfers of missionaries. The 1944 resolution brought a degree of change in this respect to the effect that henceforth the Presbytery would conduct the induction of all ordained missionaries in the congregation where the Council appointed them. This was an important development as, up to that stage, the Council acted entirely on its own in this matter, transferring missionaries as it deemed fit. From now on Presbytery would at least be officially informed and would minute the decision of Council as well as conduct the induction. This decision was the outcome of several years of deliberation as to the exact position the missionary was to hold in the Church. The problem was first raised in 1947 by JJD Stegmann very shortly after becoming head of the Mission.<sup>87)</sup> Previously both Malawian ministers and ordained missionaries, respectively posted by Presbytery and Council, merely took up duties upon arrival in their new Congregations without any official induction. This, of course, created quite an untenable position from a Church-political or legal point of view and already in 1934 Council had instructed that in the case of missionaries one or more ministers from other congregations should be present at the first meeting between him and his congregation so as to give this meeting "a more official stamp".<sup>88)</sup>

That this still did not solve the problem is obvious from Stegmann's query in 1937. The Nyasa subcommittee of the GMC discussed the matter on several occasions. The

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86. For a detailed outline of the respective and joint functions of the two bodies as agreed upon in 1944 see Council minutes 65/1944, pp. 627-9.

87. CCA S5 15/6/2/23; Stegmann to Mission secr., 11/6/1937. Cf. GMC min. 78, entry for 17-18/8/1937.

88. Council minutes 55/1934, p. 467.

problem was that such a proposed induction by Presbytery affected the position of missionaries who were sent out by the GMC as its representatives and were under its supervision and jurisdiction.<sup>89)</sup> The question of oversight and discipline was regarded as particularly fundamental. But Stegmann was concerned with the practical position of the relationship between expatriate and national working alongside each other in one congregation.<sup>90)</sup> In practice, Stegmann pointed out, the latter held a very subordinate position although he was supposed to be a colleague rather than an assistant, often taking the chair at meetings of the Church session. This problem Stegmann felt could be solved by establishing separate congregations, but the legal question still remained whether a person sent by Council to a Congregation could be deemed legally the minister of that congregation if Presbytery had no say in the matter and did not induct him.<sup>91)</sup>

This problem was not peculiar only to Nkhoma Presbytery since the same situation still existed in Blantyre and Livingstonia Presbyteries at that stage except that, in the case of the latter, Presbytery gave formal approval to postings by the Council. In neither of these a proper induction took place.<sup>92)</sup>

Thus the decision of 1944 was really a compromise. By letting Presbytery "minute" (not "approve!")<sup>93)</sup> the transfer of missionaries as well as induct them, their legal position in the Church and its courts was slightly clarified. On the other hand they remained fully under the jurisdiction and discipline of the DRC and the Council retained full control over the place and nature of the work they could do.

There were two further important areas where the Council regarded it as its duty to continue to be responsible. One was that initially it saw the task of evangelisation as being essentially the task of the Mission rather than of the young Church.<sup>94)</sup> Although this can be appreciated since it is, essentially, one of the purposes of mission work to evangelise and carry out the Gospel, it did present the danger that the young Church would inevitably be retarded in attaining one of the three ideals set for it, viz. self-extension. To a large extent the fulfilment

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89. CCA S5 1/4/2: Nyasa subcommittee min. 9, entry for 15/6/1938.

90. At that stage the Abusa congregations had not yet begun.

91. CCA S5 15/6/2/23: Stegmann to Mission secr., 11/7/1938.

92. Ibid., 15/7/1938.

93. Ibid., 21/4/1944; cf. Council minutes 65/1944, p. 629.

94. Cf. Cape Synod Acta 1945: GMC Report to Synod, p. 110.

of this ideal was not seen in relation to the immediate surroundings, but was understood to apply rather to areas further afield, such as working in Mozambique or amongst the predominantly Muslim Yao people of Malawi. Thus for a long time the Mission continued to take full initiative in evangelising, albeit involving the Church at various levels, and it was only in 1953 that the following important decision was minuted:<sup>95)</sup>

Council accepts the stage of development which has now been reached, namely that the Church and not the Mission should take the lead in evangelising the population of this country; that the Mission in the capacity of counsellor should inspire, train and equip the spiritual leaders and support them by word and deed and pray for them.

By this the emphasis was put in the right place.

The other important area which remained under the control of the Mission was theological training. When the Nkhoma Presbytery entered the CCAP it meant that the DRC could no longer exercise any direct control over the Church. Hence it came to be regarded as of the utmost importance that full control should be retained over the training of future ministers of the Presbytery.

Strictly speaking this was in contradiction to the Terms of Union of the CCAP as approved by the DRC Synod of 1924. These terms allowed for the Presbytery as such to be responsible for "the training, licensing, ordination and appointing of Native Ministers",<sup>96)</sup> Yet it was the conviction of both the Mission Council and the GMC that theological training was the responsibility of the Mission. This was reconfirmed when new regulations for theological training were approved by the Council in 1943.<sup>97)</sup>

At an early stage the procedure was established that Presbytery selected candidates, usually senior evangelists, who then went for further theological training. The training and final examination was carried out by the Mission which appointed the tutor and the examining committee. After successful completion, the Presbytery once again took over by licensing, ordaining and appointing the candidates to their place of work. Once out of training the Mission as such had no more authority over the men it had trained. They stood fully under jurisdiction of Presbytery and in matters such as their appointment the Mission could only play a role indirectly through its ordained ministers who were members of Presbytery.<sup>98)</sup> Theological

95. Council minutes 76/1953, p. 983. See *ibid.*, 79/1956, pp. 1109f for instructions on this spiritual training. On self-extension see below.

96. CCAP Synod 1926, minutes 5.

97. Council minutes 64/1943, pp. 607-10; cf. 65/1944, p. 628.

98. CCA S5 15/6/2/23: Stegmann to Mission secr., 28/9/1939 (copy in MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 4), cf. Council minutes 65/1944, p. 628.

training was an important factor in the development of leadership in the local Church. Training of teacher-evangelists began at Mvera in 1898 after the Mission had come to the conclusion that the seven to eight years' course at Livingstonia with its heavy emphasis on intellectual training was neither practical nor necessary at that stage. The kind of training required was such as was provided by the French Mission at their Bible School at Morija in Lesotho "where they are well grounded in the Bible and in the principal doctrines of our Church".<sup>99)</sup> These men were trained in successive stages to man village schools as teacher-evangelists, but soon the need arose for those who would be more specifically trained for the work of evangelist and in 1907 a beginning was made at Mvera to train them separately.<sup>100)</sup>

A major step forward came in 1913 when a separate evangelist school was opened at Mvera under the tutelage of Rev. JS Murray. The following year it moved to Nkhoma. The two year course provided a formal training in all the main theological subjects. Candidates were those who had already completed the teachers' course. The first fourteen men completed in 1914. Their work was to oversee schools, pastor to Church members and catechumens and evangelise non-christians.<sup>101)</sup> For more than twenty years groups of men were regularly trained, while standards of entrance and training were gradually raised.

The service these men, known as Senior evangelists, rendered to the Church over the years can hardly be over-emphasised and from centres manned by them grew the many new congregations that came into existence particularly after 1940. When formal training of evangelists was eventually discontinued, assistant evangelists, known as agwirizi, continued to help in congregations. In 1955 Presbytery again agreed to train a group of evangelists in view of the shortage of ministers.<sup>102)</sup>

The next important step was the opening of a theological training school at Nkhoma. The candidates with a minimum of 5 or 6 years' school education and two years of training as senior evangelists and a minimum of six years service were required to

99. CCA P3 3/2: Copy AC Murray to A Murray (Chairman MMU), 28/12/1897; cf. further letters, to A Murray, 30/8/1898, and to Laws, 13/7/1899; CCA V9 1/1: MMU minutes entry for 15-16/2/1898 and 3-4/6/1902.

100. Council minutes 12/1904, pp. 60, 62-3; WH Murray: Mbiri ya Misyoni, p. 92.

101. CCA S5 15/6/2/16: Circular WH Murray to Station heads, 20/10/1914; see Council minutes 21/1911, pp. 139-142 for syllabus, work description and reasons why this step was necessary; for annual reports on this school see CCA S5 15/6/11/7.

102. Nkhoma Presbytery 1955, p. 18.

receive a year's further training before being ordained.<sup>103)</sup> In 1936 the course was extended to two years, while several further changes were introduced in 1943. Henceforth candidates would not be selected by the Church but each one would apply personally through his minister and local Church Council. Persons other than senior evangelists could also apply and the course would consist of a one-year admission course including a number of general subjects (non-theological), followed by a three-year course in theology. Students not qualifying for the final year could become senior evangelists.<sup>104)</sup>

In 1947 a new College building was opened, built with a K1 000 donation from Dr WH Murray<sup>105)</sup> who, for many years, had been responsible for the training of ministers. This building was named Nyamuka-Wala (Arise, shine, from Is. 60:1) and serves as theological college up to the present day.<sup>106)</sup>

Three years later, in 1950, Rev. JW Minnaar was appointed first full-time tutor and the following year it was reported that Rev. N Katengeza was assisting by giving certain lectures on practical subjects. In 1953 Rev. JS Mwale became a part-time assistant tutor in practical subjects. Two years later a second full-time tutor was appointed in the person of Rev. JDH Steytler. In October 1958 Rev. JS Mwale became the first full-time Malawian tutor. This decision had actually been taken as far back as 1952, but various difficulties and the shortage of ministers serving in congregations was the reason why Presbytery had not seen its way clear to release him at an earlier stage.<sup>107)</sup>

Meanwhile extended negotiations had been going on concerning combined as well as higher theological training. Basically two distinct yet related issues were involved. One concerned the setting up of a joint college for the CCAP, possibly also including the Reformed Church in Zambia, and the other the setting up of a higher institution, possibly near Salisbury, involving a large number of Churches from the three Central African States, the present Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi.

103. CCA S5 15/6/2/17: Copy WH Murray to AA Louw, 25/11/1926.

104. Council minutes 57/1936, p. 490; for rules and regulations: *ibid.*, 64/1943, pp. 607-10.

105. *Ibid.*, 67/1945, p. 672; 69/1947, p. 727 (corrected p. no.).

106. With the opening of a new joint Theological College in Zomba in 1978, the Nkhoma college was to be phased out of existence by 1981, and the premises possibly used for a training centre for women Church workers.

107. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports, 1951, 1954-5, 1958; Council minutes 75/1950, pp. 905, 923; 77/1952, p. 984; CCA S5 15/6/9/4: Hugo to Mission secr., 14/10/1958. Annual reports on theological training in 15/6/11/7.



In 1950 Bishop Stephen Neill visited East and Southern Africa. His report on theological training gave impetus to the idea of joint theological training and in 1951 the Standing Committee of the CCAP Synod discussed it and appointed a committee to investigate the possibilities. Its report proposed a joint training for the three Presbyteries at or near Nkhoma. Although there was some hesitancy on the part of the DRCM at the prospect of such a joint enterprise in their midst, the matter received much positive support.<sup>108)</sup> A visit to Southern Africa by Dr Norman Goodall and Rev. Eric Nielsen of the International Missionary Council in 1953 and their report in 1954<sup>109)</sup> further helped to emphasise the urgency of improving theological training. The result was that in 1956 the Synod of the CCAP heard overtures from both Blantyre and Livingstonia Presbyteries for a combined theological school to be set up. Again Nkhoma was mentioned as a possible site and the matter referred to the Standing Committee of General Synod and tutors of the three colleges. In 1958 the General Synod of the CCAP enlarged this committee and asked them to prepare detailed plans for establishing a united college.<sup>110)</sup>

Meanwhile the GMC in Cape Town, although expressing itself in favour of these plans, was cautious and suggested that initially the DRCM should retain control over such a college through the Mission Council. The latter had already recommended a joint college but suggested GMC control over it until the CCAP was ready to take it over. This, however, would have created immediate problems since the other two Synods had already by then taken over control of their respective colleges while in the case of Nkhoma this was still in the hands of the Mission. Nkhoma Synod appealed to the Council to let the control be in the hands of the Church and to this the Mission Council agreed the following year and recommended that the CCAP General Synod should have full control over it through a Theological College Board representing all three the Synods.<sup>111)</sup>

Meanwhile the CCAP Standing Committee met several times during 1957 and memoranda from all three Synods were discussed. The choice of a site lay between Nkhoma and Lilongwe. Other Synods were inclined to favour the latter as a more neutral site,

108. CCA S5 15/6/2/24: Stegmann to Mission secr., 6/10/1951; MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 9: Copy Hugo to Mission secr., 7/6/1950.

109. W Goodall and EW Nielsen: Survey of the training of the ministry in Africa (Part III), especially pp. 57f.

110. CCAP Synod 1956, min. 36; 1958, min. 25; CCA S5 15/6/11/7: Theological College annual reports, 1953, 1954.

111. CCA S5 1/1/10: GMC min. 3, entry for 27/3/1956; min. 82(b), entry for 13-16/8/1956. Council minutes 80/1957, pp. 1138 f; 1140 f; 81/1958, pp. 1176 f. See also explanatory letter CCA S5 15/6/2/10: Hugo to Mission secr., 29/5/1958.

but Nkhoma Synod was adamant that it should be at Nkhoma.<sup>112)</sup> In 1958 the DRCM offered to donate a 30 acre site situated in a plateau above Nkhoma Mission station for the College and this swung the balance in favour of Nkhoma once more. The following year the General Synod committee on combined theological training agreed to plan for this united college to be at Nkhoma, initially using the existing buildings on the station itself until money for new buildings was available. 1962 was set as target date for the beginning of this training. At this meeting Dr CW Ranson of the Theological Education Fund of the World Council of Churches was also present. A meeting of tutors of the two Colleges in May 1958 (Livingstonia and Blantyre had already started a combined college at Livingstonia the previous year), followed by a meeting of the Standing Committee of General Synod in May 1960, endorsed these decisions. The following year the Standing Committee also approved a constitution for the Theological Training Board of General Synod. The doctrinal basis of the Board's work was to be Section II of the Constitution of the General Synod of the CCAP. A three or four year course was envisaged.<sup>113)</sup> The College was finally started in January 1963 on a four year experimental basis, with Rev. CJF Watt as Principal and Revs. SK Msiska, JDH Steytler and SA Faiti Phiri as full-time tutors. Two part-time tutors, Revs. JS Mwale and CJ Burger, were also appointed. Fifteen students were accepted from the three Synods.<sup>114)</sup>

At the same time discussions had also been taking place with the aim of establishing a combined Theological Training for Churches within the then Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in conjunction with the University of Rhodesia, possibly at Epworth College. Several meetings took place, with representatives of the CCAP Synods participating in some,<sup>115)</sup> but in the end the establishment of the Joint Theological College at Nkhoma put this possibility out of the picture for the CCAP.

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112. CCAP Standing Committee minutes, entries for 17/5/1957; 21/11/1957; cf. CCA S5 15/6/11/9: Hugo to Mission secr., 26/11/1957 (reports and memoranda in same file); Nkhoma Synodical committee min. 41, entry for 7/5/1957; Nkhoma Synod 1958, min. 120, 121.
  113. Minutes of the committee for combined theological training, entry for 17/2/1959; minutes of meeting of tutors, entry for 19/5/1959; minutes of CCAP Standing committee, entry for 6/5/1960; 26-27/5/1961; Minutes of Theological Board, entries for 23/11/1961, 22/5/1962.
  114. This joint Theological College continued for eleven years until Blantyre Synod decided to break away and form a separate college in October 1974, with Livingstonia Synod participating. A joint Theological College was once again established and opened in Zomba in May 1978.
  115. For report on Conference for Theological training at the University of Rhodesia, 21-22/2/1961, see CCA S5 15/6/11/7: Theological College Board min. 7, entry for 22/5/1962; CCA S5 1/1/11: GMC min. 50, entry for 12-15/8/1963.

Likewise plans to bring the theological training of the Churches of the Reformed family within the three countries together at Epworth or **else** at Nkhoma, or otherwise to combine training for the Reformed Church in Zambia and Nkhoma Synod, did not materialise. These negotiations were conducted partly under the auspices of the Joint Committee of the DRC Mission in Zimbabwe (Mashonaland), Zambia and Malawi.<sup>116)</sup> Already in 1956 there was a possibility of the school at Madzimoyo closing and moving to Nkhoma with tutor and students. But once Blantyre and Livingstonia expressed the desire in 1956 to combine with Nkhoma, the possibility of Madzimoyo also coming in became more remote.<sup>117)</sup> In the same year a new college for the Reformed Church in Zambia was built at Madzimoyo, thus putting an end to the plans for joint training. The ideal, however, remained alive for a long time and was expressed in various decisions of the Joint Committee for Reformed Missions and Churches in Central Africa and later the Council of Reformed Churches in Central Africa (CRCCA).<sup>118)</sup>

In reviewing this paragraph concerning the relationship between the Church and the Mission Council of the DRC it is to be concluded that this relationship remained basically unchanged up to almost the end of the 1950s. In various ways Malawian ministers were indeed shouldering more and more responsibility as the years went by, but the de facto position of oversight by expatriate missionaries still remained in force.<sup>119)</sup> As prelude to the new situation which was becoming imminent it had become regular practice by 1955 to include Malawians in several of the more important committees of the Council. They were mostly appointed by Presbytery, but sometimes by the Council itself. Committees on which Malawians were serving by then included those for Hospitals, Literature, Mlozo, Education, Language and Anthropology, Admission of candidates for theological training and Women's work. Committees on which Malawians were not yet serving included those for the Bookshop, Forestry and Agriculture, Building, Finance, Youth work, Educational finance, Carpentry shop, Transport and Water schemes. Furthermore Malawians were by then regularly serving as representatives on the Nyasaland Christian Council,

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116. Council minutes, 84/1961, p. 1284; CCA S5 15/6/1/5: Hugo to Mission secr., 19/10/1960.
117. Cf. CCA S5 1/1/10: GMC min. 82(a), entry for 13-16/8/1956; 15/6/2/24: Copy Mission secr. Orange Free State to Mission secr., Cape, 10/1/1956; Stegmann to Mission secr., 17/1/1956; 15/6/2/10: Hugo to Mission secr., 31/1/1956; 15/6/2/22: Steytler to Mission secr., 18/1/1956; 15/6/10/9: Hugo to Mission secr., 4/5/1956: copy Mission secr. to Hugo, 4/5/1956.
118. The CRCCA which replaced the former Joint Committee was established in July 1967.
119. For list of missionaries holding oversight over all 28 congregations in existence in 1955 see Council minutes 78/1955, p. 1098.

the Conference on Women's education and the Consultive Board of Federated Missions. Five years earlier, in 1950, the first Malawian had become assistant Education Secretary.<sup>120)</sup> This formed part of a definite policy of working towards a gradual transfer of responsibility from Council to Church. In practice the position of such Malawians appears to have been rather that of serving in an advisory capacity.<sup>121)</sup>

This policy becomes evident also when noting the series of decisions taken by the Mission Council to the effect of moving ever closer towards the goal of an independent indigenous Church.<sup>122)</sup> That it was regarded as a matter of urgency can be deduced from the fact that in the important opening speech by the Head of the Mission at the annual meetings of the Mission Council the issue of working towards this goal was dealt with very regularly. Between 1941 and 1950 this was the theme of at least six such speeches and during the next ten years at least seven more dealt with this question.<sup>123)</sup> It was Rev. JJD Stegmann in particular, as chairman of Council from 1938 to 1955, who repeatedly sought to promote greater self-government by emphasising amongst other matters that as Church of Christ the young Church and its leaders also stood under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and that this fact should encourage the Mission to work towards the goal without fearing that matters would not go well.<sup>124)</sup>

While the Mission policy was clearly and definitely to work towards greater independence and autonomy of the young Church, the question does remain whether progress towards this goal was fast enough. The authoritative position held by missionaries right up to the beginning of the 1960s possibly reflects a reluctance to come to the point where genuine responsibility would be shouldered by the Church. The growing movement in this country towards political and national independence evident throughout the 1950s was also reflected in the Church where dissatisfaction particularly amongst the more educated persons, more specifically teachers, became

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120. Ibid., pp. 1100-1101; 73/1950, p. 851; cf. 74/1950, pp. 907-8; Nkhoma Presbytery minutes 1950, p. 20; 1951, p. 4. See ch. 3 for details.

121. CCA S5 1/4/4: Nyasa subcommittee minute 9, entry for 20/2/1952.

122. For details of such decisions taken between 1948 and 1955 see AC Human: Verhoudings in Nyasaland (Op die Horison, XVIII/1, Mar. 1956, pp. 36-38).

123. For details of themes see opening remarks in the respective minutes of Council meetings. Cf. also JJD Stegmann: Meer verantwoordelikheid aan naturelle werkers (Op die Horison, VI/3, Sept. 1944, pp. 89ff.

124. Information obtained from Rev. JDH Steytler.

more evident as time went by. In the last chapter these developments will be more fully elucidated.

### 3. Progress in self-support

By 1926 the young Church was already firmly set on a course towards self-support, at least in so far as its needs at congregational level were concerned. By 1930 it was already taking responsibility for the following matters, either through its congregations or through Presbytery funds: The salaries of all ordained ministers and senior evangelists; building and upkeep of all church buildings, with most village school buildings being built by the local community, the Christians taking the largest share; care of the needy and poor where such cases arose; all Presbytery and Synod levies; the cost of supporting students at the evangelist school and an annual donation to the Bible Society.<sup>125)</sup> This fact of specific responsibilities for certain matters, together with the clear demarcation of the duties of Church and Mission respectively, was undoubtedly beneficial. The Church could develop a clearer sense of duty while at the same time avoiding the dangers of too much dependence on foreign aid for its "domestic" needs. Dependence upon the "mother" or appealing to the mother whenever a specific need arises is a natural reaction. Yet in the case of the Church in Malawi such problems as the resultant dominating position of the one who provides, which in its turn leads to the drying up of local sources (noted for instance in certain churches in Indonesia) were certainly more limited.<sup>126)</sup>

While the total amount of money raised in the congregations rose steadily over the years (as shown in Table IV) from about K2 000 in 1931 to nearly K11 000 in 1956, the actual average giving by individuals remained virtually unchanged for more than two decades. Excluding 1926 when statistics given were for only eight months, the average of 13,9 tambala per communicant member for 1931 was, in fact, higher than most other years. In 1951 the average still stood at 13,1 t, but after that a significant increase took place. Over the next few years the average rose steadily year by year to reach 19,6t in 1956. By 1958 the average (including Zimbabwean congregations under Nkhoma Synod) reached a peak of 37t per member. The political unrest which followed had a remarkable effect on the giving of Christians and the average dropped to 25t in 1959, only beginning to rise again

125. AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, pp. 267-8. For examples of churches built by congregations from their own resources see CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports, inter alia 1932, 1935.

126. Cf. JC Gilhuis: *Ecclesiocentrische aspecten van het Zendingswerk*, pp. 53ff.

after 1963.<sup>127)</sup> The average income per family in Malawi stood at K15 per annum in 1962.<sup>128)</sup>

As pointed out earlier, the decision in 1962 to fix a certain sum of money as the amount church members had to contribute annually had an adverse effect on the development of a sense of Christian stewardship in the long run. Already in 1928 WH Murray wrote that they were trying to bring church members to understand that each should give according to his income, and not merely the 20t or 10t per annum laid down as minimum.<sup>129)</sup> In 1930 Presbytery repeated this appeal, but fifteen years later it noted with alarm that members were still adhering to the 1922 stipulation with many giving even less. The following year, in 1946, it repeated the oft emphasised point that Christian giving was part of the worship of believers, appealing to members in particular to increase their Sunday offerings. It was furthermore agreed that that year's spiritual conferences in congregations should deal with the topic of giving to God as a part of worship. Intensive stewardship campaigns were conducted in various parts of all congregations. Yet the old rule had become so much a habit that it was virtually impossible to change while many regarded it merely as a form of church tax.<sup>130)</sup> Nevertheless, Presbytery continued to emphasise the matter and in 1954, when the average contribution had already started rising, it reiterated the fact that giving was part of worship while also recommending the practice of tithing.<sup>131)</sup> This was still a very novel concept and even up to the present day very few Christians have adopted it, although some definitely have.

Compared to the other constituent members of the CCAP, Nkhoma initially was well ahead in average contributions, and only in 1948 did Livingstonia begin to surpass Nkhoma, but Nkhoma remained ahead of Blantyre throughout. The average per communicant as based on the total liberality reported to General Synod in 1962 amounted

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127. For 1958, figures for Malawi alone are not available. Only the total number of communicants has been taken into account in calculating the average contribution. In fact, some of the money came from catechumens and others so that the actual average giving per communicant would be lower, but it is impossible to compute this figure. In all cases statistics for congregations in Zimbabwe were excluded (except the one instance mentioned above). The averages for 1963, 1967, 1970 and 1975 were respectively 24t, 41t, 73t and K1,02 (cf. General Synod minutes). See also n. 132 on the next page.
128. GMC report to Cape Synod, *Acta* 1965, p. 440.
129. CCA S5 15/6/2/17: WH Murray to Mission secr., 13/7/1928.
130. Nkhoma Presbytery 1930, p. 4; 1945, pp. 9-10; 1946, pp. 6-7, 8; cf. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1946; 15/6/7/1 (Mashonaland file); Copy Stegmann to Head of Mashonaland Mission, 6/3/1946.
131. Nkhoma Presbytery 1954, p. 24.

to 46,7t for Livingstonia Synod, 37,2t for Nkhoma (this included congregations in Zimbabwe and was for 1958) and 24,9t for Blantyre.<sup>132)</sup> It also appears that in matters such as paying the salaries of evangelists, Nkhoma was far ahead of Blantyre. It was only in 1948 that the latter reported that the Presbytery had begun taking over responsibility for paying evangelists and that this process would presumably be completed before 1957.<sup>133)</sup>

Over the years Nkhoma Presbytery took more and more items for its responsibility. Its budget for 1930 involved only salaries of ministers and evangelists, a small grant to a congregation and Synod dues. By 1940 a Pension fund (started in 1937) and a special fund for work in Mozambique was also in existence, while work in Lilongwe also received support. Ten years later, in addition to the above items, matters such as Bursary fund, schools, the magazine Mthenga, help to theological students, printing press, travelling, help for Salisbury work, support for an evangelist working amongst Malawians in Cape Town, conferences and work amongst the Muslim Yao people, all appeared as items of expenditure on the budget.<sup>134)</sup>

From this it is obvious how the young Church took over more and more responsibility as time went by. In 1959 one writer could state that "as far as the purely congregational or ecclesiastical aspect of the work is concerned, the synod of Mkhoma has actually already attained total independence".<sup>135)</sup>

The fact that, from the beginning, self-support was regarded as one of the three main ideals for the young Church, does raise one important question. Did the DRC see self-support as an ideal for the young Church, or did it in fact become more or less a condition for granting full independence and autonomy? Criticism has been brought to bear against the fact that the three "selves" propagated by Venn as ideal had, in fact, often become three notae ecclesiae, three norms for recognising the autonomy of a Church.<sup>136)</sup> The question is, can this criticism also be made in the case of the DRCM in Malawi? It is true that the DRCM fully followed the three-fold ideal of Venn and voices were, in fact, raised that financial

132. CCAP Synod minutes 1960, Appendix I. The average is based on the author's own calculation as the averages given in the Appendix do not all tally with the actual figures. In 1977 both Nkhoma and Livingstonia Synods returned an average of K1,02 per member (CCAP Synod 1977, minute 26, author's calculations). Statistical returns in the case of some of the other Synods may not reflect the total giving in that Synod.

133. Life and Work report, Presbytery of Blantyre (CCAP Synod 1948, p. 12).

134. Nkhoma Presbytery 1930, p. 8; 1937, pp. 4,5; 1940, p. 9; 1943, p. 5; 1950, pp. 22, 23.

135. CJ Burger: 'n Selfregerende, selfonderhoudende en selfuitbreidende kerk - is dit ons erns? (Op die Horison, Sept. 1959, p. 32).

136. Cf. JM Cronje: Die selfstandigwording van die Bantoekeerk, p. 67.

independence was essential for granting autonomy.<sup>137)</sup> It is also true that the DRC generally fell in with the idea prevalent in Anglo-American Missions and declared by the International Missionary Council meeting in 1928 in Jerusalem as "being generally accepted as a primary principle in missionary policy".<sup>138)</sup> This meant that a Church could only reach independence and autonomy over a long period of time during which the development towards fulfilling the three "selves"-ideal formed an integral part of the process.

This was also the ideal followed by all the Missions involved in the CCAP the DRC included, and in a sense it would be true to say that self-support was regarded as an essential aspect of autonomy. Yet it is also so that this was never insisted upon as an absolute condition. While the Church was being prepared for eventual autonomy, it was also being encouraged towards ever increasing self-support. At the same time it was well and truly realised that it could hardly be expected of the young Church to take over financial responsibility for all aspects of missionary work, including education and medical work and other departments. While the Church was, in fact, encouraged to gradually take a larger share of responsibility, financially and otherwise, for medical and educational work,<sup>139)</sup> it was also realised that the Mission would have to continue giving aid while the Government would also take over more responsibility in due course. It was further envisaged that some Mission departments should preferably be closed down in due course rather than burden the young Church with the responsibility of running them. To this suggestion the Church was not willing to agree when it came to the final process of handing over.<sup>140)</sup>

Thus it is rather more correct to say that the process of leading the Church to autonomy, as it was envisaged by the Mission, involved an ever increasing financial independence, as a parallel process. Because the Church was made responsible for its own needs at local and congregational level almost from the beginning, financial independence or "self-support" came much more easily and quickly than for example

137. Ibid., p. 65.

138. Report of the Jerusalem meeting of the International Missionary Council, 1928, Vol. III, p. 31.

139. Council minutes 59/1938, p. 524; Nkhoma Presbytery 1938, pp. 5-6. On taking over responsibility for schools and medical work, see Nkhoma Presbytery 1945, p. 11.

140. Council minutes 82/1959, pp. 1215-16; CCA S5 15/6/10/6: Hugo to Mission secr., 22/2/1961; 15/6/12/4: Die toekoms van ons departemente (Memorandum drawn up by the Treasurer, Nkhoma, 23/3/1961). See further below, ch. 6.



in the younger Churches growing out of the missionary work of the DRC within South Africa itself. In the latter case the parent body continued to give financial aid for such matters as manses, church buildings and salaries of evangelists and ministers, in some areas even up to the present day. This has naturally complicated the development of the autonomy of the younger Churches. Because this was far less the case with the Church in Malawi, the question of self-support as being a condition or prerequisite for autonomy was never really an issue. As the Church developed and grew both numerically and in its national leadership, the financial responsibility for its own local needs kept pace. Even in theological training which the Mission reserved for itself as its responsibility, the Church shared part of the financial responsibility for the support of students virtually from the beginning.

#### 4. Progress in self-expansion

In the work of the DRCM the emphasis fell very much on evangelism and on nurturing a spiritual life of prayer and a sense of the presence of the Holy Spirit in believers' lives.<sup>141)</sup> Preaching was Biblical and done mainly through the some thousands of lay preachers, elders and evangelists. Already in 1912 it had been estimated that week by week 4 000 Malawians were involved in preaching the Gospel to 60 000 or more people living in 2 000 or more villages.<sup>142)</sup> Coupled to this were the repeated evangelistic campaigns usually conducted by a visiting ex-missionary.<sup>143)</sup> These all helped to develop a degree of consciousness in the minds of many christians that they had a duty towards others to bring the Gospel message to them. Thousands of lay workers and preachers did this work voluntarily and without pay. There can be no doubt at all that the christianising of the population was to a very large extent, at least at the grass roots level, the result of the efforts of believers working within their own community and also further away. In this process, of course, the village school manned by a teacher evangelist played a key role.<sup>144)</sup>

From this point of view it is evident that virtually from the beginning the young Church was set on the road of self-expansion. The Church grew and continued to grow from this inner spiritual driving motive to spread the Gospel amongst their own people.

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141. MW Retief: *Verowerings vir Christus*, p. 285; CCA P3: *Diary AC Murray*, entry for 10/6/1928, cf. also entries for 22/9/1924, 24/9/1924.
142. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: *Half-yearly report*, Dec. 1912; MW Retief: *William Murray of Nyasaland*, p. 117.
143. Such campaigns took place inter alia in 1910, 1924, 1928, 1934, 1937, 1954.
144. AL Hofmeyr: *Het land langs het meer*, pp.131f; JS Murray: *De opvoeding in de Zending*, pp. 2-3.

Nevertheless the concept of self-expansion was to some extent seen as pertaining rather more towards spreading the Gospel further afield and not so much amongst kith and kin and in the work of the DRCM in Malawi the ideal was set for the Church to develop a sense of responsibility for other areas as well.<sup>145)</sup> Thus in due course Nkhoma Presbytery began to take an interest in work in Mozambique as well as amongst the Muslim Yao people, especially in the hill country of Tambala's land at Chitundu, as well as amongst Mozambicans who were working in Zimbabwe. During the 1950s the Presbytery also took it upon itself to provide spiritual care for the inmates of Kochirira leprosarium near Mchinji Boma.<sup>146)</sup>

The involvement of Nkhoma Presbytery in work in Mozambique was regarded as a matter of great significance. It was deemed a major step forward and as such a sign of how far the young Church had already progressed.<sup>147)</sup>

After the closing of the DRCM work in Mozambique in 1923, there was initially a gradual decline in the spiritual life of the Christians there.<sup>148)</sup> Cut off from direct pastoral and spiritual care and forbidden by the authorities to meet or instruct their children in the teachings of their Church, the only way open was to build up contact with the Church in Malawi. For sacraments, confirmation, school and pastoral care they had to cross the border to the nearest Church centre. Nkhoma Presbytery made official contact with delegates from Mozambique in 1927 and three years later again was deeply moved and distressed by a report it heard from a certain Eliya, a Christian from Benga. Yet at that stage it could see no other way of helping except to pray for them and encourage them.<sup>149)</sup>

Meanwhile renewed efforts had been made by certain individuals in the DRCM to interest the DRC in the work once again. Some, like AJ Liebenberg and AG Murray, both former missionaries in Mozambique, were sure the work could be opened up again. In this they had strong support from Dr GBA Gerdener in Cape Town.<sup>150)</sup> But others, notably WH Murray, saw very little chance for this happening. Writing in response

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145. See above p. 255 for example of how local Christians took up responsibility for work in other parts during the earlier years.
146. Cf. CJ Burger: 'n Selfregerende, selfonderhoudende en selfuitbreidende in= heemse kerk - is dit ons erns? (Op die Horison, XXI/3, Sept. 1959, p. 33).
147. Cf. DRC Acta 1932, p. 249.
148. CCA S15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1925.
149. Nkhoma Presbytery 1927, p. 4; 1930, p. 6.
150. Cf. correspondence in CCA S5 15/6/5/1.

to an inquiry he emphatically stated:<sup>151)</sup>

My firm conviction remains that as long as the Portuguese remain in control of their country here, we can forget about doing Mission work there again. Not before the Portuguese are out can we undertake it again. Portugal together with Rome will see to it that it remains impossible for Protestants to do fruitful Mission work in Portuguese Territory.

Nevertheless Liebenberg petitioned the GMC in 1931 to start again quoting a letter from the Christians in Mozambique to the GMC asking for a missionary. This plea was repeated in 1932 by a group of 200 Christians attending a conference at Mphunzi. Again WH Murray stated his conviction that only when the Portuguese would one day leave those parts could they talk of beginning there again. The recommendation of the GMC was that the work should continue in the way it was already being done, namely that Mozambique Christians seek contact with the Church in Malawi, particularly with the congregation at Mphunzi.<sup>152)</sup>

It was at this juncture that the Presbytery of Nkhoma, meeting in July 1932, responded to an overture from Malingunde asking whether the time had not come for Presbytery to start an own Mission enterprise. Rev. Amon Ndiwo of Malingunde pleaded the case and Presbytery resolved unanimously to start work abroad. A committee, the first "Foreign Mission Committee" of Nkhoma Presbytery, was appointed, and Ndiwo and Ashan Malenga served on this committee. Its task was to determine where work could be started.<sup>153)</sup> Already Presbytery had suggested Mozambique as a possible field.

The following year this committee reported back and recommended working in Mozambique by training Mozambican nationals at the Suisse Romande Mission at Rikatla near Maputo. Zefania Malikebo was sent there in 1933 followed by Paulo Milota Mumba the following year. Presbytery accepted full responsibility for them financially and otherwise. Initially both made good progress, but in the end neither came back to the work they had been chosen for. Malikebo was unable to cope with his studies, particularly the Portuguese language, and thus could not obtain the necessary permission to work as an evangelist and teacher.<sup>154)</sup> Milota successfully

151. Ibid., WH Murray to Mission secr., n.d. (c. May 1930). Transl. from Afrikaans.

152. DK, 29/7/1931, p. 198; 19/8/1931, p. 356; 6/7/1932, pp. 27f; CCA S5 15/6/2/17A: WH Murray to Mission secr., 15/9/1931; CCA S5 1/1/4: GMC min. 73, entry for 16-17/2/1932.

153. Nkhoma Presbytery 1932, pp. 5-6; DK, 24/8/1932, p. 356; MW Retief: William Murray of Nyasaland, p. 152.

154. Nkhoma Presbytery 1934, pp. 2, 5f; 1935, p. 2; 1936, pp. 8, 9.

completed his studies, but then failed to report to Presbytery. He was a headman from a village in Mozambique near Nyanje Mission of the DRGM in Zambia and had been baptised at Madzimoyo and trained there as a teacher, qualifying in June 1933. Just prior to his departure for Rikatla in 1934 he had been a student at a Jeanes School at Mazabuka in Zambia. After completing these studies at Rikatla he was delayed by illness of his wife and subsequently returned to Zambia where he was eventually employed as a teacher at Nyanje Mission. His action deeply disappointed Nkhoma Presbytery who demanded from him a refund of the K48 they had spent on his training.<sup>155)</sup>

Strictly speaking this first Mission enterprise of Nkhoma ended in failure, although the concern and interest in their brothers across the border remained. Mphatso was incorporated into Mphunzi congregation in 1932 and later other groups formed part of Mlanda congregation. Village schools near the border drew many pupils from Protestant homes in Mozambique while in some cases whole villages moved over into Malawi. In spite of reported fierce Roman Catholic persecution in some places, Protestantism continued to grow and by 1944 Mphunzi and Mlanda had four elders living and serving inside Mozambique while Christians were conducting six Mabwalo (open air schools) with unpaid teachers teaching reading and writing. These centres were also used for Sunday School and Catechumen instruction. More promising pupils were given scholarships to attend boarding schools at Mlanda. By 1949 Malawian nationals could occasionally visit Christians inside Mozambique. One such meeting was attended by 257 people. While opposition and even intimidation continued - in 1952 a group of thirty catechumens were reportedly caught and imprisoned - signs of change were beginning to appear by 1953.<sup>156)</sup> By 1956 there were an estimated one thousand communicant members with the border congregations of Mphunzi, Dedza and Mlanda. While the Government and local authority regulations were becoming less stringent, much trouble was still being experienced from Roman Catholic side whose representatives insisted that Mozambique was a Catholic Country. It is alleged that, on many occasions, Catholic teachers brought charges against Protestant Christians, leading to court procedures against them and even imprisonment.<sup>157)</sup>

Nkhoma Synod was to keep up contact with the Mozambique Church all through the 1960s and, finally, in 1973 the Igreja Reformada em Moçambique was to be formed,

155. CCA S5 15/6/7/1: WA Krige to WH Murray, 7/3/1934; and further correspondence; Nkhoma Presbytery 1939, p. 7; 1941, p. 9; 1942, p. 6; for further correspondence with Milota see also MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 14.

156. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports, 1940-1948, 1952, 1953; Council minutes, 67/1945, p. 660; 68/1946, p. 683; Report GMC to Cape Synod, Acta 1949, p. 220.

157. For examples see CCA S5 15/6/2/10: Circular Hugo to Station heads, 17/6/1958.

initially with three congregations, later five, and with a total membership of over three thousand communicants. A sad sequel to this history is that two years later Nkhoma Synod felt compelled by circumstances to break off all ties with the Church in Mozambique leaving it entirely to itself, with not even a single minister to pastor to the Church.

Meanwhile, during the 1950s, Nkhoma Synod had also begun to take an interest in the 50 000 Mozambicans working in Zimbabwe. In 1954 Presbytery resolved to start work amongst these people since it could not work within Mozambique. In conjunction with Rev. MS Daneel of the CCAP in Salisbury work was started, with evangelist Genesis Nowa assisting. Nkhoma Presbytery agreed to pay his salary. In 1957 the South African General Mission which wanted to work amongst the same people, offered its work to the various DRC Missions and their young Churches in Zimbabwe. A joint Committee<sup>158)</sup> representing all these bodies was set up and the services of Rev. U Simango of Mozambique obtained while contact was taken up with a Protestant Mission in Beira. Simango later left the work and according to rumours he had joined the Frelimo Liberation Movement.<sup>159)</sup>

When it became clear that Nkhoma Presbytery would not succeed in establishing an own Mission work in Mozambique, another possibility was in due course considered.

In Chapter two note was taken of work starting amongst the Muslim Yaos in Tambala's land where Chitundu station was opened in 1923.<sup>160)</sup> The difficulty for the Gospel of making any inroads into Islam was immediately evident and the work of the Church actually had a counter effect in that an upsurge of Muslim activities was experienced during the 1920s, with new prayer houses, called Sekiti wa Juma being erected in several villages.<sup>161)</sup> Rev. AC van Wyk was appointed in 1929 and shortly afterwards he went to Cairo in Egypt for Islamic studies. He returned and worked at Chitundu for about nine years until his departure in 1940. Then followed a long spell in which no missionary was appointed to this work. Meanwhile Nkhoma

158. The Joint Committee of Reformed Missions and Churches in Central Africa was set up in Salisbury in July 1958 in order to deal with matters of mutual concern, discuss problems and promote unity and co-operation between its members. On 27 July 1967 it was dissolved and a Council of Reformed Churches in Central Africa set up in its place, involving Nkhoma and Salisbury Synods of the CCAP, the Reformed Church in Zambia, and the African Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (see minutes of Joint Committee, 24/7/1958; Nuusbrieff uit Malawi, Sept. 1967).

159. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports, 1955-1959; Nkhoma Presbytery 1954, p. 26; 1955, pp. 4-5; Nkhoma Synod 1958, pp. 8, 18, 39-40; 1960, pp. 17f, 31.

160. See p. 95.

161. AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, pp. 279-80.

Presbytery had begun to budget for supporting an evangelist working amongst the Yaos as far back as 1929 and established a congregation at Chitundu in 1939. By 1945 growing interest in Christianity by Yao people was being reported and two years later Presbytery resolved to accept the Yao work as its special field of Mission work and place an evangelist at Chitundu.<sup>162)</sup> In 1951 James Kathumba completed his theological training. Being himself a Yao and having formerly worked with some success as a teacher at Chitundu, Presbytery agreed to appoint him as minister working full-time amongst Muslims and stationed at Chitundu. Thus in a sense he could be regarded as Nkhoma's first missionary.<sup>163)</sup> This work progressed slowly and with difficulty, and five years later he reported that amongst the Yao there were twelve communicant members, five catechumens and 167 school children. In that same year, 1956, Rev. JS Minnaar was appointed at Chitundu - the first expatriate to go there since 1940. He was to concentrate on the Chewa people while Kathumba would continue amongst the Muslims. He was also instructed to visit Muslims in other areas. Kathumba disappointed and was transferred the following year and in 1961 Minnaar was also transferred and as far as the Mission Council was concerned, this enterprise was ended but it was hoped that Nkhoma Synod would continue to take responsibility for work amongst Muslims.<sup>164)</sup> During the 1960s and 1970s Nkhoma Synod's work in Muslim areas, especially on the Lake-shore and in particular at Nkhota Kota, was to grow steadily and show encouraging results.

While Mozambique and the Muslim areas were the two main fields in which Nkhoma Synod attempted work in terms of self-expansion into new areas, it is worth noting that from time to time its workers were seconded to work in other countries as well.

The work amongst Malawians working or living in Zimbabwe has already been dealt with.<sup>165)</sup> In view of the fact that it was the DRCM of Malawi which undertook this work on behalf of the Federated Missions it is obvious that the majority of national Church workers such as evangelists and ministers who came to serve in Zimbabwe were also from Nkhoma Synod.

When Salisbury congregation was established in October 1944 Rev. Whitton Makwalo Banda who had completed his training at Nkhoma in July that year, was already

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162. Nkhoma Presbytery 1929, p. 9; cf. Council minutes 69/1947, p. 729; CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports, 1945, 1947, 1948.

163. Nkhoma Presbytery 1951, pp. 9, 15; cf. CCAP Synod 1952, p. 18.

164. Nkhoma Presbytery 1956, p. 17; cf. Nkhoma Synod 1958, p. 27; CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports, 1958-1961.

165. See ch. 2.

serving in Zimbabwe. In 1949 a second Malawian minister came to Zimbabwe in the person of Rev. Patrick Mwamlima, seconded by Livingstonia Presbytery. He worked there for over a year. In 1952 Nkhoma Presbytery transferred Rev. Alexander Kuchona to Zimbabwe. A request to Blantyre Presbytery for a minister in 1953 and again in 1954 was turned down by Blantyre on grounds of having none available, but in 1955 Livingstonia once more seconded a minister, Rev. F Nyirongo who served in Zimbabwe for five years. In 1956 Rev. AA Chirwa was seconded by Blantyre and appointed to Highfield in Salisbury.<sup>166)</sup>

Thus by 1956 when the three CCAP Presbyteries were constituted into Synods, the work in Zimbabwe (with three congregations, Salisbury, Gwelo and Bulawayo) was organised as a fourth Presbytery of Nkhoma Synod. It was at that stage being served by six ministers, two from the DRC, two from Nkhoma Synod and one each from the other two Synods. The total number of communicant members amounted to 5 315 of whom 50% were in Salisbury and at the first meeting of Salisbury Presbytery in 1957 it was agreed to establish Highfield as a second congregation in Salisbury.

Various difficulties erupted during the next few years stemming partly from the fact that the work was now under Nkhoma Synod and no longer being conducted by the DRCM of Nkhoma on behalf of the Federated Missions and partly from tension and misunderstandings which arose between ministers from the other Synods and the DRCM personnel. In 1960 Nkhoma Synod agreed to propose to General Synod the formation of a separate Synod for Salisbury under the General Synod of the CCAP. While approving this in principle there were a number of practical questions to be sorted out, such as responsibility for financial support, the Mission Board this Synod would work with, if any, and how workers would be supplied.<sup>167)</sup> The initial decision by Nkhoma to establish a Synod was premature and unilateral and was rescinded in 1962, but - after further arrangements - the Synod of Salisbury was to be set up on 1 May 1965. The DRC was to co-operate in the work there under a Deed of Agreement with Salisbury Synod. Apart from seconding a few ministers the other Synods were to offer no further support and the major share of this responsibility was to fall upon Nkhoma Synod, supported by the DRC. At that stage the number of communicants stood at about 6 000 in nine congregations. Nine years later, in 1976, this figure had risen to 8 555, while twelve congregations resorting under two

166. CCAP Synod 1948, min. 33; Nkhoma Presbytery 1949, pp. 10, 33; 1952, p. 24; 1953, p. 14; 1954, p. 4; 1955, pp. 3, 12, 16; 1956, p. 20; Salisbury Presbytery 1957, p. 29.

167. Council minutes 82/1959, p.1207; 83/1960, p. 1244; Nkhoma Synod 1960, p. 39; 1962, min. 37; CCA S5 15/6/1/5: Hugo to Mission secr., 27/4/1960.

Presbyteries were being served by four expatriates and six national ministers, of whom five came from Nkhoma Synod and one had been trained by Salisbury at the Nkhoma CCAP Theological College. Forty-eight evangelists were then still in active service, a feature unique to this Synod with its widespread network of small and sometimes isolated groups of Malawians in towns, at mining centres and on farms. Average liberality calculated per communicant member stood at R3,33 per annum, considerably higher than in any of the other Synods.<sup>168)</sup>

Two other aspects of service beyond the borders of Nkhoma Synod deserve to be mentioned. During both World Wars missionaries, including several of the DRCM, served as Chaplains to Malawian troops and porters. During World War II a number of Malawians also served as Chaplains, including some from Nkhoma. Malawian soldiers were serving not only in East Africa (by 1942 there were 20 000 of them), but also in Ceylon, Madagascar, Egypt and elsewhere. For five years Rev. GF Hugo served both in East Africa and in India (1942-1947) and in 1943 Rev. Amon Ndiwo volunteered and was approved as Chaplain in East Africa.<sup>169)</sup> After the War, platoons of the King's African Rifles, continued to function and served in different parts of the world. In 1953 in response to a resolution of the CCAP Synod that a chaplain should accompany them to Malaya, Rev. Lameke Manda volunteered and was accepted. He returned after three years on the front.<sup>170)</sup>

Other workers from Nkhoma Synod went south. As far back as 1905 the DRCM in Mashonaland, Zimbabwe requested three married teachers from the DRCM in Malawi. It is not clear whether any did go, but in 1914 it was again agreed to send six teachers. The wives of the teachers were reluctant to accompany them and when the Government would not give permission for the wives to go, the matter fell through.<sup>171)</sup>

With many thousands of Malawians continuously going to South Africa to work on the mines and elsewhere, there was a need for men from their own country to pastor to them. As far back as 1910 evangelists were being requested to work in the Com-

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168. Nuusbrief uit Malawi, June 1965; Nuusbrief KMAP Rhodesië, Dec. 1976; CCAP General Synod 1977, min. 26 (statistics differ somewhat in the latter two sources and are quoted from the Newsletter).
169. Nkhoma Presbytery 1943, p. 10; CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports 1942-1946; for correspondence from Hugo giving interesting information on circumstances on the front, see CCA S5 15/6/2/10.
170. Nkhoma Presbytery 1953, pp. 10f; 1954, p. 17; 1956, p. 11.
171. MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 1: Du Plessis to WH Murray, 10/6/1905; Council minutes 29/1914, p. 188; CCA S5 1/4/1: Nyasa subcommittee min. 3, entry for 8/2/1916; 15/6/1/5: WH Murray to Mission secr., 26/12/1916.



pound Mission in Johannesburg.<sup>172)</sup> In later years a good number of Malawians were actually trained in South Africa as evangelists and even as ministers. One such was Rev. Steven Njuweni who finally returned to Malawi in 1959. In response to a request from Cape Town in 1946 where work amongst a sizeable community of Malawians had been in progress for several years, Nkhoma Presbytery agreed that Filemon Mwale should go as evangelist. Presbytery further agreed to pay part of his salary, but he was to work directly under the GMC.<sup>173)</sup>

By 1947 an evangelist from Malawi was also serving at Messina in Northern Transvaal. Plans were underway to appoint one in Natal and an application had been made to the South African Government for permission for two more evangelists from Malawi. Special attention was being given to work amongst Malawians not only on the mines of the Witwatersrand, but also in all three other provinces. Former missionaries in Zambia and Malawi were involved in this mostly.<sup>174)</sup>

Finally, it should be mentioned that through the years there were always Malawians from Nkhoma Synod serving as evangelists and ministers in Zambia with the Reformed Church of Zambia. Initially they were trained at Nkhoma, but later training was undertaken within Zambia - for evangelists since 1940 and for ministers since 1951. The last group of Nkhoma trained ministers completed their studies in 1947.<sup>175)</sup>

#### 5. Confessional developments and indigenisation in the Church

It has been noted that one of the aims in the policy of the DRC in respect of mission work and the formation of independent young Churches was that such Churches should become indigenous.<sup>176)</sup> This process towards indigenisation to a large extent coincided with the development of the three "selves" and it would be natural to expect that as indigenous or national leadership developed so would other aspects of indigenisation. A few important aspects require some comment, although

172. Council minutes 20/1910, p. 126.

173. CCAP Synod 1952, p. 18; CCA S5 1/4/3: Nyasa subcommittee min. 3, entry for 3/5/1945; min. 11, entry for 19/6/1945; Nkhoma Presbytery 1945, p. 9; 1947, p. 5. For relevant correspondence see MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 6.

174. CCA S5 15/6/8/3: Correspondence during 1947 on labour chaplaincy in South Africa between Nyasaland Christian Council and the Chief Secretary of State. Relevant correspondence also in 15/6/7/1. See also WA Krige: Die bearbeiding van die Nyasavolk binne die grense van die Moederkerk (Op die Horison, Dec. 1944, pp. 136ff).

175. Justo Mwale Theological College: 1929-1979 Kukumbukira zaka 50 tiri ndi abusa a m'dziko muno, p. 3.

176. See ch. 2. On this subject see also JJD Stegmann: Die eiesoortigheid van die inheemse Kerk (Op die Horison, Sept. 1956, pp. 8-13).

a detailed analysis of the principles of indigenisation and of what the requirements are for a Church to be indigenous will not be made here.<sup>177)</sup>

A young Church generally tends to adopt the same principles and patterns of worship and the same standards and forms of expressing doctrine as that of the parent body. This is to a large extent also the case in Nkhoma. Most of its formularies such as for induction of office bearers, confirmation, Holy Communion and baptism, marriage and others are an adaptation, usually in abridged form, of those used by the DRC, just as those of Blantyre and Livingstonia tend to be more along the pattern of the Churches in Scotland. The earliest formularies for baptism, Holy Communion and marriage were drawn up by AC Murray at the request of the Mission Council in 1898. In 1904 the Council of Congregations appointed a Committee of two missionaries and an elder, Izake (Kapologulani?) of Mvera to revise the five different formularies then in use. Later revisions included a series undertaken by the Mission Council in 1928-30 and accepted by the Presbytery of Nkhoma. Formularies for induction and disjunction of ministers were drawn up in 1945 and an important doctrinal change was made in 1957 in the baptismal formulary for children, the latter henceforth to contain the words "because they also are in the covenant of God", replacing the phrase "so that they also may enter into the covenant of God".<sup>178)</sup>

Furthermore, Nkhoma has taken over the three Reformed Confessions of Faith, also called the three Formularies of Unity, namely the Heidelberg Catechism, the Confessio Belgica (Netherlands Confession) and the Canons of Dordt.<sup>179)</sup>

Upon its entry into the CCAP, Nkhoma accepted the Terms of Union which included the "Brief statement of Faith", the Apostles' Creed as well as "a distinct acknowledgement of the Word of God as the supreme rule of faith and conduct". This formed the doctrinal basis of the CCAP.<sup>180)</sup> When the new constitution of the CCAP was adopted in 1956 and amended in 1958, the Terms of Union were replaced by a con=

177. On this aspect see for example JM Cronje: *Die selfstandigwording van die Bantoekekerk*, pp. 116-146; JJF Durand: *Una Sancta Catholica in sending= perspektief*, pp. 107ff, 147ff; JC Gilhuis: *Ecclesiocentrische aspecten van het Zendingswerk*, pp. 14-52.

178. Council minutes 1/1898, p. 2; CCA S5 15/6/1/4: Council of Congregations minute 5, entry for 13-17/12/1904 (cf. Council minutes 12/1904, p. 57); Council minutes 49/1929, p. 401; 50/1929, p. 412; 51/1930, p. 419; Nkhoma Presbytery 1930, p. 4; Council minutes 65/1944, p. 629; Nkhoma Synodical Committee, entry for 15-16/10/1957 in Nkhoma Synod minutes 1958, pp. 24-5.

179. Constitution of the Nkhoma Synod of the CCAP, Article IV.

180. CCAP Extracts of minutes of the Synod, 1924-1945, p. 4.

siderably expanded set of "Articles declaratory of the fundamental principles of the Church". These articles were of course also accepted by Nkhoma in addition to the three Reformed Confessions.

The first two of these articles are of importance in so far as they express the doctrinal position of the CCAP and reflect the degree to which the Church had by then sought to express its faith. At the same time it recognised the fact that the acceptance of the Brief Statement of Faith was a temporary arrangement until such time as it would frame its own Confession of Faith.

The text of the first two Articles reads as follows:<sup>181)</sup>

Article 1. The Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian, is part of the Holy Catholic or Universal Church; worshipping one God, All-loving, All-wise, Almighty, in the Trinity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the same in substance, equal in power and glory; adoring the Father; infinite in majesty, of Whom are all things; confessing our Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son, Who for our salvation was made man, died upon the cross, was raised from the dead and ascended into heaven, and owing obedience to Him as Head over all things; trusting in the promised renewal and guidance of the Holy Spirit, proclaiming the Gospel of the forgiveness of sins, of acceptance with God through faith in Christ, and of eternal life; and labouring in the communion of Saints for the advancement of the Kingdom of God throughout the world.

The Church receives the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the Word of God and the Supreme rule of faith and life; and avows the fundamental doctrines of the Catholic Faith as interpreted and taught by the Protestant Reformation.

Article 2. The Church received the historic confessions of Faith known as the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed, as containing the sum and substance of the Faith of the Church. Until such time as the Church shall exercise its right to frame its own Confession of Faith in agreement with the Word of God and the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith as set forth in these standards, it also adopts as a subordinate standard the statement known as the "Brief Statement of Faith" adopted by the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian, in the year 1924; Article 1 thereof being understood in the sense used by Articles 3, 4 and 5 of the Larger Catechism (Westminster 1648). The said "Brief Statement of Faith" is as follows: ...

Admittedly this was not yet a very detailed confessional statement and it is true to say that to a large extent it was prepared by missionaries, yet it did represent a genuine attempt, possibly one of the most significant in Africa at that stage, to express the faith of a young Church. Although Oosthuizen, writing in 1958, alleged that "no evidence of independent confessional development does as

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181. For a full text of Articles 1-7 see Constitution of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian, p. 1-3; cf. p. 270 above for text of the Brief Statement of the Faith.

yet exist in Africa" <sup>182)</sup> this constitution was at least an expression of faith adopted by a Church in Africa which fulfilled the confessional requirements outlined by Durand, <sup>183)</sup> namely that young Churches can on the one hand not do otherwise than take over the ecumenical symbols of the early Church, notably the Apostolicum and the Nicaenum, while on the other hand, the Confessions of the Reformation could also not be ignored without upsetting the harmony between older and younger Churches since the young Church also speaks on behalf of the whole Church. <sup>184)</sup>

Although Nkhoma adopted the three Reformed Confessions as part of its Creed, it is interesting to note that it has never attempted to translate them into the vernacular. In 1957 a committee was appointed by the Synodical Committee to co-operate with the Reformed Church in Zambia in translating them, but nothing materialised. <sup>185)</sup> Nevertheless, one of them, the Heidelberg Catechism, has in a different way become very much part of the heritage of this Church through the fact that it was used as the basis of Nkhoma's Buku la Katekisma. Although abridged and slightly altered in a few places it follows the same threefold division of Sin, Salvation and Thankfulness. It has its origin in a small catechism prepared by AC Murray in 1892, called Nsonga, which was printed at Bandawe. In 1898 Murray wrote a new catechism based on "our two Dutch Catechisms", Heidelberg Catechism and its abridged version, Kortbegrip, to which he added a few questions from the Shorter Catechism of the Church of Scotland, which was also printed at Bandawe. A later edition was printed in Cape Town in 1904. <sup>186)</sup> This booklet underwent several revisions. In 1916 a three-man committee was appointed by the Mission Council to revise and improve it as well as to prepare "a book with questions and exposition for use of teachers". The former was put

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182. GC Oosthuizen: Theological discussion and confessional developments, p. 270.
183. JJF Durand: *Una Sancta Catholica in Sendingperspektief*, pp. 108f.
184. See also JJD Stegmann: *Die ontwikkeling van die Kerk in die Sendingveld (Op die Horison, June 1947, p. 49).*
185. Synodical Committee minute 76, entry for 15/10/1957, in Synod minutes 1958, p. 25. When the Reformed Church in Zambia decided anew to prepare a Nyanja (Chewa) translation, Nkhoma Synodical Committee agreed in 1966 that a translation was not necessary in view of the fact that only ministers would ever need to use them(!) and most of them knew English well enough. Yet in 1968 Synod did recommend that all ministers should buy the Zambian translation once it was ready (Synodical Committee 1966, KS.601; Nkhoma Synod 1968, S. 367). To date (1980) this translation, in manuscript form, has not yet been published.
186. CCA P3, 3/2: AC Murray to Laws, 25/2/1898; 28/4/1898; cf. Die reddende regterhand, p. 39; CCA V9 2/1 AC Murray to Albertyn 19/2/1894; WH Murray to Du Piessis, 20/8/1904; CCA P3 AC Murray Diary several entries between 25/5/1892-27/6/1892.

into service in 1918 and the latter, after further simplification, in 1923. In 1922 the Council of Congregations had also approved an abridged version of ten short questions for use by elderly people and those who lacked sufficient intelligence to cope with the larger book.<sup>187)</sup> The Katekisma and the handbook for Catechetical teachers was later combined into one book and this book is today used not only in Nkhoma Synod, but also in the Reformed Church in Zambia and in the Salisbury Synod of the CCAP.

Materially it differs from the Heidelberg Catechism in having 'only 52 questions, one for each Sunday of the year instead of the 129 of the Heidelberg Catechism. The most significant difference lies in the fact that, in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Law is dealt with briefly under the first section concerning the knowledge of Sin, by referring to the summary given by Christ in the Gospels (questions 3-5), and later in length in the third section where a detailed exposition of the Decalogue is made in the context of the life of thankfulness to be led by the saved sinner, thus in an ethical context (ques. 92-115). On the other hand Buku la Katekisma evidently following the Kortbegrip version, deals with the Decalogue in detail only in the first section (ques. 3-16), while nothing is said at all about the Law as a rule of thankfulness in the third section. This leads first of all to an imbalance between the first and the third sections. Whereas Heidelberg devotes only four Sundays to the first section and twenty-one to the third, Katekisma devotes no less than twenty Sundays to the first and only six to the third. The resulting weakness is that there is an over-emphasis in Katekisma on Law and sin leading to a greater danger of developing a legalistic attitude, with an accompanying lack of ethical emphasis. It is true to say though, that some amount of ethical teaching does occur where the Decalogue is dealt with, but as pointed out above, it takes place in the context of teaching what sin is and how a person obtains knowledge of his sin.

On a few other points Katekisma is an improvement on the Heidelberg Catechism. It places more emphasis on the duty of believers to serve God and to help spread the Gospel also through personal witnessing (ques. 34, 35, 49) and gives more details concerning the work of the Holy Spirit (ques. 40, 49). In other respects it carries the same weaknesses such as insufficient teaching concerning liturgy

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187. Council minutes 31/1916, p. 219; 34/1918, p. 250; 42/1922, p. 306; 43/1923, p. 311; Council of Congregations 1922, p. 3; 1923, p. 5.

and the Kingdom of God.<sup>188)</sup>

Theologically speaking this Church did not show much independent progress and development during the period under review. Nevertheless it is of importance to note the strong stand taken in respect of many traditional practices which had a religious connotation. National church leaders and Christians sometimes showed even more determination not to compromise than did the missionaries. It was especially in the struggle against the traditional practices of the Nyau cult that the strongest opposition was experienced. During the 1920s it made a concerted effort to have Nyau suppressed. To this end the Presbytery made strong representations to the Government, at one stage appointing an all black eighteen man delegation which included several Christian headmen to meet the Provincial Commissioner. In this issue Rev. Namon Katengeza played a very powerful role.<sup>189)</sup> On one occasion when he made "a splendid stand" he informed the Provincial Commissioner that "even if missionaries agree (to allow it to continue) they (the Malawian Christians) would still oppose it because they had God's Word and know what was evil".<sup>190)</sup> The suggestion of the Commissioner that a Christianised version of Nyau should be introduced was entirely opposed by the leaders of the Church, while Nkhoma Presbytery refused any compromise, reiterating that anyone involving himself in Nyau would be liable to suspension from the Sacraments for a period of from six to twelve months.<sup>191)</sup>

188. Cf. CM Pauw: *Kategese in Malawi* (Paper read at the Eighth Congress of The South African Missiological Society, Potchefstroom, 1975, unpublished). In 1966 Nkhoma Synod published a revised and greatly extended edition of *Buku la Katekisma* (which included not only the original *Katekisma* and explanatory teaching notes, but also sections on Old and New Testament history, on Church history, the Church, Roman Catholicism, Sects and other Religions, and on aspects of practical Christian living), totalling 332 pages.
189. Nkhoma Presbytery 1927, pp. 7-8; cf. CCA S5 15/6/1/5: Report to GMC on 1927 Presbytery by WH Murray. See also Report of the Fifth General Missionary Conference (Malawi), 1926, Resolution 24. SJ Ntara: Namon Katengeza, p. 56; cf. also draft of a letter in Katengeza's own hand to headmen concerning the issue they had taken up with the Government (CCA S5 15/6/9/4, dated 6/8/1929).
190. CCA P3: Diary AC Murray, entry for 16/7/1928.
191. *Ibid.*, entry for 9/8/1928; Nkhoma Presbytery 1928, p. 5. It should be kept in mind that the Nyau was much more active in the Central Region, particularly the Lilongwe District, than in any other part of the country. This explains why it became such an issue for Nkhoma Presbytery. For a similar protest by the White Fathers of Likuni Mission near Lilongwe see MNA S2/23/33: Short notice about the immorality of the "Nyau" dance in the Achewa country, 8/8/1922. The same file also contains several other RC and DRCM petitions and reports written between 1922 and 1939. For further material on Nyau see CCA S5 15/6/11/9. Correspondence with Government Officials in 15/6/8/2.

The struggle of the Church and the Mission against the negative effect and disruptive influence of the Nyau on the life and the work of the Church reached a climax in 1929. As it became clear that the Governor was unwilling to accede to the claims against the Nyau made by the Church (Katengeza remarked about this that the Nyau chiefs lied to him about what the Nyau does), the DRCM appealed successfully to the CBFM to intervene on its behalf at the next meeting of the Legislative Assembly. A petition signed by one hundred Christians from ten Nkhoma congregations was presented to the Governor.<sup>192)</sup> In a leader article The Nyasaland Times strongly attacked the Governor's biased pro-Nyau attitude expressed in his opening speech at the 39th Session of the Legislative Assembly in 1929.<sup>193)</sup> An inquiry by the Government followed the petition and led finally to the calling of a meeting on 25 September 1929 between four DRC missionaries and about twenty leaders of Nkhoma Presbytery on the one hand and about thirty leading Nyau headmen on the other hand. This meeting at last reached an agreement to the effect that teachers would not teach the children of parents who supported Nyau to despise Nyau ceremonies, while the Vinyau would undertake to send their children back to school after their initiation in Nyau instead of stopping them altogether from going.<sup>194)</sup>

Although the matter was not entirely satisfactory, the problem did become less acute. Five years after that it was reported that the three paramount chiefs of Lilongwe district were all three professing Christians and their positive stand against the destructive influence of the Nyau practices had led to a definite weakening of its power.<sup>195)</sup> Nevertheless the Nyau remained a power to be reckoned with and a matter in which the Church continuously had to make a stand right up to the present day.<sup>196)</sup>

Closely related to and actually forming part of the Nyau ceremonies were the traditional initiation ceremonies for girls called Chinamwali. Already in 1891

192. CCA S5 15/6/9/4: Katengeza to "Omfumu" (WH Murray), 6/8/1929. Minutes of the Federated Board, entry for 24/4/1929. For a Chewa version of the petition presented to the Legislative Council by the CBFM on their behalf on 29/4/1929, see MNA S2/23/29. The petition stated six reasons why the Nyau should be stopped.

193. The Nyasaland Times, 3/5/1929; 21/5/1929.

194. MNA S2/23/29: Provincial Commissioner to Chief Secretary, 10/10/1929; relevant documents also in S2/23/22; CCA S5 15/6/8/2: Provincial Commissioner to WH Murray, 27/9/1929 (Circular). See further correspondence on this in same file and in 15/6/11/9; 15/6/8/4; 15/6/8/6.

195. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1934.

196. Thus, Nyau is still mentioned as one of the main factors causing lack of growth and spiritual viability in some chronically weak congregations (Nuus-brief uit Malawi, Apr. 1980).

AC Murray commented on the disruptive effect Chinamwali had on school attendance, especially of girls.<sup>197)</sup>

In due course the issue became more crucial and when the Church came to a definite stand on the Nyau issue, it also refused to compromise with the traditional ceremony, but instead resolved (in 1929) to forbid Chinamwali and to begin a Christian version to be called Chilangizo.<sup>198)</sup> This was the outcome of some experimental attempts by some of the lady missionaries together with a few Christian women to give puberty instructions to girls on a Christian basis.<sup>199)</sup> Presbytery laid down a detailed outline of how the Chilangizo should be conducted, stating that both boys and girls should receive the instructions. Thus a definite and lasting break was made with a traditional ceremony and a Christian alternative introduced in its place. This has been extremely successful as far as girls are concerned, and has become an integral part of the life of the Church up to the present day.<sup>200)</sup>

Related to the issue of indiginisation was to what extent sectarianism, secessionism and ethiopianism appeared in the Church. On the whole it can be said that Malawi has been relatively free from the proliferation of separatist and sectarian movements, with the result that Barrett has found that "separatism has not been such a prominent feature as in some neighbouring territories".<sup>201)</sup> In the southern part of the country sectarianism has been slightly more prominent, but restricted to tribal rural areas.<sup>202)</sup> Also in the north, in the territory of Livingstonia Synod, several secessions took place from the Church, notably four

197. CCA P3 3/2: Copy AC Murray to J Stewart (Lovedale), 9/11/1891.

198. Cf. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1928; Nkhoma Presbytery minutes 1929, pp. 4-6; 1931, p. 4; cf. 1936, p. 5; 1942, p. 7; 1943, pp. 16-18.

199. Cf. GH Hugo: Aanknopingspunte vir die Evangelie ..., pp. 89-93; P Pretorius: An attempt at Christian initiation in Nyasaland (International Review of Mission XXXIX/155, July 1950, pp. 284-91); JJD Stegmann (Mrs): Kan en behoort die heidense inisiasie deur 'n Christelike vervang te word? (Op die Horison XIII/1, March 1951, pp. 2-12); see also paper on same subject by Mrs JJD Stegmann in Report of the Sixth General Missionary Conference, 1949, pp. 7-10 (Report on Women's Conference). JG Steytler: African Village Schools, pp. 229-31.

200. Cf. Nkhoma Presbytery 1929, pp. 4-6. For a brief discussion of the reasons for the success of this enterprise and its possibilities as an analogy for similar attempts elsewhere in Africa see CM Pauw: Die bearbeiding van die jeug binne die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Bantoekekerk in die Transkei, pp. 193-7; Cf. A Philips: African marriage and family life, p. 390.

201. DB Barret, Schism and renewal in Africa, p. 29.

202. For a detailed study see RL Wishlade: Sectarianism in Southern Nyasaland; cf. DB Barret, op. cit., p. 61.



major ones between 1928 and 1934.<sup>203)</sup> The first of these was the African National Church formed in 1928 by five Institution graduates. They drew a number of entel=ligensia from Livingstonia and spread to other parts of the country, including Lilongwe. Twelve years later they claimed a membership of 3 000. The other three secessions formed during three successive years (1932-1934) united the following year to form the Mpingo wa Afipa wa Afrika (Black man's Church in Africa). Prior to these, two other leading personalities connected to Livingstonia Synod had broken away, notably Charles Domingo who joined the Seventh Day Baptists in 1907,<sup>204)</sup> and Elliot Kenan Kamwana who initially was trained at Bandawe, then went to Zimbabwe and South Africa where he joined the Watch Tower movement in Cape Town. He returned to Malawi in 1906 to start a branch of this movement. He drew his followers mainly from candidates awaiting baptism in Livingstonia Synod and baptised 10 000 adherents in 1908. He was repeatedly arrested, imprisoned or placed in detention at Chinde, Mulanje, Mauritius and Seychelles, returning from the latter in 1937 to found the Watchman Healing Mission at Msuli in Nkhata Bay.<sup>205)</sup>

The effects of Kamwana's movement were quickly felt in other parts of the country. As early as 1909 the Council of Congregations of the DRCM warned its people against the false teachings of Kamwana and stated that it did not recognise his baptism. Some of his followers had by then already visited Mvera region to disseminate their ideas. They administered baptism quite indiscriminately and with other motives and meanings, requiring no prior knowledge or training from candidates.<sup>206)</sup>

After the War the activities of the Watch Tower increased rapidly and by 1922 they were openly proselytising within the DRCM area in Livlezi, Mlanda, Nkhoma, Mvera and Kongwe districts, drawing particularly from amongst the large number of members who had become objects of Church discipline after the spiritual decline of the War years. One of their leaders in this region, one Joswa (alias Moses) was detained in 1923 and after that the movement declined somewhat, but never disappeared, gaining momentum at times. In 1925 the movement received an impetus through the visit of Watch Tower representatives from South Africa and again in 1933 when a Mr and Mrs De Jager visited different parts of the country, and especially the Central Region at Mvera, Dowa, Nkhoma and Lilongwe, holding meet=

203. J McCracken: *Politics and Christianity in Malawi*, pp. 273-5.

204. See p. 25.

205. B Pachai: *Malawi: History of the nation*, pp. 135-6.

206. CCA S5 15/6/1/4: Minutes of Council of Congregations, min. 7(2), entry for 8/12/1909; 15/6/2/16: WH Murray to Mission secr., 18/12/1909.

ings with people.<sup>207)</sup> This movement, "scarcely a religion in the usual sense of the word",<sup>208)</sup> continued to be a thorn in the flesh of both Churches and the Government, preaching anti-Government and anti-Church doctrines, denying the divinity of Christ and proselytising. In later years the Malawi Government found it necessary to clamp down seriously on the movement. This resulted in local outbreaks of persecution of its followers which became so severe in some places that numbers of its adherents fled the country and settled in refugee camps in bordering countries, notably Zambia.

Although the Chilembwe rising of 1915 had little direct effect, the Nkhoma Churches did feel its results later when "Chilembweites" began forming groups in different places. In 1921 a group of twelve Nkhoma teachers had to be deposed because of their sympathy with them. These groups taught "a blasphemous creed and proclaimed free love" basing their teachings on a perverted teaching of the words of Christ.<sup>209)</sup> They were organised into the revived Providence Industrial Mission in 1926.

These and other "Ethiopian" movements such as the African Methodist Episcopal Church continued to exist in Malawi, but never posed a real threat to the established Churches, drawing relatively few members from them, including from Nkhoma Presbytery. Apart from being "very troublesome" at times they made little progress.<sup>210)</sup> The Providence Industrial Mission gained new impetus with the return of Dr Daniel Malekebu in 1926,<sup>211)</sup> but his application to be admitted to the Consultative Board of Federated Missions evidently failed on grounds (inter alia) of the fact that he proselytised amongst members of Churches of the Federated Missions, re-baptised them, accepted censured members and was too easy on morals. In 1929 WH Murray intimated that he "came up here and baptised a crowd of disaffected members of our Mission as well as some actually under discipline".<sup>212)</sup> In 1962 the PIM were reported to have an adherence of 25 528 in Malawi.<sup>213)</sup>

207. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1925; 15/6/2/17: WH Murray to Mission secr., 23/7/1922; DK, 20/12/1922, p. 1692; 4/3/1923; pp. 339ff; 6/12/1933, p. 1053; Kongwe Mission Archives: Station book, report 1923, 1924, 1926, 1950.

208. D Barret, op. cit., p. 57.

209. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports 1921, cf. further reports for 1924, 1925, 1932.

210. Ibid., 1932.

211. See above, p. 33.

212. CCA S5 15/6/7/1 (Blantyre file): WH Murray to Reid, 18/1/1929; 6/9/1929; and further correspondence.

213. D Barret: Schism and renewal, pp. 298f. See in loc. under Nyanja and Tumbuka for various other secessionist movements in Malawi.

Barret has noted that secessions were more likely to take place from Protestant bodies where a wider dissemination of the Scriptures took place; from the older, established bodies with larger communities, and a longer period of incubation for disaffection to grow; and from institutionalised Missions of the Anglican and Reformed traditions rather than from the less rigid traditions such as Pentecostalism.<sup>214)</sup> Yet it is of interest to note that, while all these factors were very much present in the case of Nkhoma Synod, no single secession of any significance or consequence has ever taken place from within its ranks.

Apart from a few local wrangles which never spread very far, and the loss of some members to secessionist groups originating from other Missions and in other parts of the country, Nkhoma has been remarkably free of such experiences. The reason for this lies perhaps in the combination of a number of factors such as a policy of very careful selection and training of candidates as evangelists and as ministers; a very thorough and relatively long catechetical training, with a strong emphasis on orthodox Bible teaching, thus grounding Christians firmly in the faith and teaching of the Church; a sustained high standard of Church discipline; the education policy of the DRCM which normally provided higher education only when it was regarded necessary in the interests of the work, thus avoiding the creation of an intellectualised group easily frustrated in matters of leadership; the policy of demarcation of areas of work followed by a number of Missions thus avoiding rivalry and confusion; and finally it is not unlikely that the aggressive competition which prevailed for many years between the DRCM and the Mission of the White Fathers tended to strengthen a kind of partisan spirit, thus promoting faithful adherence to the own group, a kind of group cohesion, in view of the threatening danger of the opponent.

One further aspect concerning indigenisation should be mentioned. This concerns the question of worship, liturgy, singing and music.

On the whole the Church has followed the pattern of liturgical orders of services found in the DRC.<sup>215)</sup> There have been some independent developments and changes and a number of elements in the liturgy carry characteristic indigenous qualities. Thus it is regular practice for the entire congregation to pray the Lord's prayer aloud. Also the Apostles' Creed is spoken aloud by the whole Christian community present, while the typical responsive "Amen" at the end of every prayer makes for a feeling of more warmth and greater involvement by the entire congregation. A

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214. Ibid., pp. 272-3.

215. On liturgy in the young Church see JM Cronje: Die selfstandigwording van die Bantoekekerk, pp. 130-146.

revised and detailed order of service was adopted in 1954.<sup>216)</sup>

An interesting development as far as official robes are concerned, was the introduction of a white robe for elders in the form of a long loose garment worn over the other clothes when serving Holy Communion.<sup>217)</sup> Otherwise clerical clothing has been particularly unimaginative, everything being merely a copy of the practice followed in the DRC. The only diversion has been a switch to the clerical collar as alternative to the white tie traditionally worn in the DRC and most other Reformed Churches. The collar came via the other two Synods from the Scottish tradition. In 1955 Nkhoma Presbytery resolved that all ministers should wear a black gown or "toga" when preaching and administering Holy Communion and when attending Synod meetings.<sup>218)</sup>

Likewise Church buildings, unless they were of the small village oblong prayer house-type, have followed the typical "cross-church" plan introduced by the missionaries with a ground plan in the form of a crucifix. There has been very little evidence of any development of indigenous or independent church architecture.

In the sphere of hymns and music progress towards indigenous forms was initially very slow. By far the majority of hymns in the older hymn-books were translations, mostly from different English hymnaries and a number from Afrikaans with most of the tunes of Western origin. Only a handful of hymns and tunes were of traditional or local origin. In later editions of Nyimbo za Mulungu more local hymns and tunes were introduced and quite a number of hymns spontaneously acquired local tunes often sung especially at funerals. In the 1967 edition of the hymn-book, fifteen of the 376 hymns are designated as "local" while a further fourteen are translations of Tumbuka hymns composed by North Malawians. A Chewa version of the Xhosa anthem "Nkosi sikelelel Afrika", as well as the Malawi National anthem, is also included.<sup>219)</sup>

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216. Nkhoma Presbytery 1954, pp. 15-17.

217. Ibid., 1933, p. 4.

218. Ibid., 1955, p. 13.

219. For reference to origins of hymns and tunes see Nyimbo za Mulungu (Third edition, 1967), pp. 114-122. All later editions also contain such a reference list. A new Tonic Solfa edition was published in 1975 and contains a very large number of indigenous tunes, often as alternatives to Western tunes, but sometimes entirely replacing them. The Western tunes have also in many cases been amended to fit in with the African pentatonic scale and to do away with half notes (see Introduction to Tonic Solfa edition, 1975, pp. 5-6).

Coming to the close of this chapter on the emerging Church, it is clear that the period between 1926 and 1962 marks for this Church the transition from being virtually under full Mission control to becoming a fully grown Church, ready to assume total responsibility for its own affairs. Numerically the Church had grown faster than any other comparable Church in the country, membership increasing five-fold to reach a total of over 66 000. It had developed a body of leaders who, despite certain distinct shortcomings, were to play their part in assuming this responsibility, although perhaps the greatest weakness of the young Church lay in this area. Compared to other Synods in the CCAP, Nkhoma Synod was at a distinct disadvantage in this respect, a problem which was to show up towards the end of this period in particular. Despite this problem, the Church had to a large extent become capable of caring for its own needs, at least at the local level, and would need financial aid only for large capital expenses and major undertakings such as medical work, theological training, lay training and other new schemes. Furthermore the Church had developed a sense of responsibility towards spreading the Gospel further afield, notably in respect of work in Mozambique, amongst Malawian Muslims and also in such a case as the spiritual care for inmates of a State leprosarium at Kochirira. At the close of the period under survey the Church had also begun to develop certain aspects of indigenisation although here also not very much was yet evident of a genuine development of theological thinking in an African context.

Before concluding this study, two major areas concerning the Nkhoma Synod remain to be dealt with. One refers to its position within and relationship to the CCAP and the other concerns the final process leading towards the agreement for the Synod to take over full responsibility for its own affairs in 1962. These two aspects form the subject of the last chapter.

## CHAPTER SIX

## CONSTITUTIONAL AND CHURCH-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS 1926-1962

In this final chapter particular attention will be given to the developments concerning the Presbytery of Nkhoma and its relationship to the CCAP as a whole, which culminated in the adoption of a new constitution for the CCAP in 1956 by which Nkhoma as well as the other Presbyteries became Synods under a General Synod. This in turn prepared the way for the final stage in the process of becoming a fully autonomous Church and Synod within the CCAP with Nkhoma and the DRCM negotiating the agreement of 1962.

## 1. Nkhoma and the CCAP

The CCAP was formed out of three Presbyteries. Yet these three Presbyteries were independent to such an extent that the Synod could even be said to have been more of a Federated Church than a United Church, each Presbytery retaining its own constitution, liturgy and standing orders. Training of ministers, licensing and ordination were done separately by each, "the licenses of such Ministers to be operative only within the bounds of the Presbytery".<sup>1)</sup> Although the Synod was "the supreme Court of the United Church", its functions only included "matters pertaining to the general welfare of the Church, for example public worship; Christian life and conduct; such cases, whether of discipline or otherwise, as may be brought before it by way of appeal; the promulgation of rules and regulations for the government of the Church; the control of such monies as have been entrusted to the Synod by the respective Presbyteries".<sup>2)</sup> The Synod had no legislative powers and could not obtain such unless the conditions of the "Barrier Act" had been met.<sup>3)</sup>

In fact, it is probably true to say that had this not been so the CCAP would probably never have come into being in this particular composition. It is highly unlikely that the DRC or the Church of Scotland for that matter, would have granted permission for its mission Church to join as a Presbytery if all control and authority over doctrinal and church political matters were in future to rest solely with the Synod of the CCAP.

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1. CCAP Synod 1926, minute 5.

2. Ibid.

3. See above p. 277.

Thus in a way this was a compromise and brought about a situation which in the long run would create constitutional as well as other difficulties. In various ways and with varying degrees of success the CCAP Synod sought to bring about greater uniformity in rules and practice in matters such as infant baptism, formularies and catechism, disjunction certificates, marriage and divorce and the rule against drinking beer observed by the Presbyteries of Livingstonia and Nkhoma but not by Blantyre. In 1943 Nkhoma Presbytery further proposed that Presbyteries should send observers to the meetings of sister Presbyteries in order to enhance their unity.<sup>4)</sup>

Yet these were lesser issues since over the years there were a few major issues which on more than one occasion developed into near crises threatening the very survival of the CCAP. These issues eventually culminated in the formulation of a new constitution for the CCAP which was finally adopted in 1956, with a few further amendments added in 1958.

### 1.1 An uncertain unity

The 1956 Constitution actually had its beginning in a decision of the CCAP Synod in 1945 to start work on the formulation of a Constitution for the CCAP.<sup>5)</sup> This took place on the eve of a drastic decision by the Cape DRC Synod to the effect that Nkhoma Presbytery should withdraw from the CCAP unless certain conditions were met. This decision in turn had its background in a long-standing uneasiness in certain quarters of the DRC about the union into which its "Mission Church" had entered.

It will be remembered that in 1931 the Synod of the DRC in the Orange Free State had rescinded its decision of 1928 to allow the congregations under its Mission in Zambia to join the CCAP. This was largely due to the machinations of Rev JG Strydom the OFS Mission Secretary who saw no good in a union with this "foreign Church"<sup>6)</sup> No secret was made of the fact that there was great resent=

4. For some of these issues see CCAP Synod, 1932, min. 28, 30, 32, 36; 1936, min. 28, 29; 1945, min. 24, 25, 26, 40; 1948, min. 13, 14, 15; cf Nkhoma Presbytery 1943, pp. 4, 6; 1945, p. 10.

5. CCAP Synod 1945, min. 13.

6. See above pp. 279f.

ment towards the Cape DRC which had allowed its Mission Church to join. The OFS views found support amongst certain ministers in the Cape Synod as well.

Dissension about this union was again aroused in 1933 after an inaugural speech by Prof. CF Kies delivered on the occasion of his appointment as professor at the Missionary Institute at Wellington. Kies, who had been a missionary in Zambia from 1912-1916, saw it fit to attack the "so called" CCAP, claiming that while there were countless characteristics and qualities of the Scottish Church to be found in the CCAP, there was no trace of any qualities of the DRC. As an example he cited the fact that English was the official language of the Church and that the hymn book was entirely of foreign origin.<sup>7)</sup>

This unwarranted attack was promptly met with an indignant protest from Dr WH Murray and a strongly worded answer by another missionary in Malawi, Rev. JA Retief. Writing in the DRC organ Die Kerkbode,<sup>8)</sup> Retief pointed out that of the "countless" alleged Scottish characteristics, Kies could mention only one, the use of English, and this was inevitable in a country like Malawi. As for the hymn book, not only had it been produced eighteen years before the formation of the CCAP, but it also contained several Psalms and hymns taken over from the DRC hymnary. In fact it did not belong to the Scottish Church at all, and the very same book was actually being used by the DRCM and its congregations in Zambia. Retief further pointed out that all the characteristics of the DRC constitution were present in the CCAP constitution while the other Synods made ample use of books and literature produced by the Nkhoma Mission Press.

Although Kies later expressed regret at the turbulence his speech had caused and promised to do his best to avoid further repercussions<sup>9)</sup> the seed of doubt had been sown.

Three years later the CCAP Synod responded positively to approaches from LMS missionaries in Zambia for its congregations and those of the Union Church on the Copperbelt to open negotiations once again with a view to a Church union between them and the CCAP.

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7. For report of this speech see: Die Gereformeerde Vaandel, Jun. 1933, pp. 227-231.

8. CCA S5 15/6/2/17A: WH Murray to Mission Secr., 14/7/1933; DK, 2/8/1933, pp. 200f.

9. CCA S5 1/1/5: GMC minute 64, entry for 20-21/2/1934.



"The doors are open" Synod intimated, adding that it "would cordially welcome any proposal ... and give it full and sympathetic support at the next Synod".<sup>10)</sup>

Although there is nothing in the minutes of this Synod to show that Nkhoma Presbytery made any objection to the resolution to start church union negotiations with the LMS Churches, there can be little doubt that the DRC missionaries realised that with the discord about the CCAP already existing in some quarters of the DRC it was hardly likely that it would respond favourably to such moves. The DRC was very concerned about the preservation of the principles of Presbyterian Church order and the effect of such a union on the doctrinal position of the CCAP. Moreover, the unhappy history of the relationship between the Dutch Colonists and certain missionaries of the LMS which started more than a century before with the actions and attitudes of men like James Read, Dr JT van der Kemp and particularly Dr John Philip<sup>11)</sup> had led to a general atmosphere of suspicion between Afrikaners and the LMS in South Africa. The effect of this is described by WJ van der Merwe as follows:<sup>12)</sup>

The impression was indelibly stamped on the minds of the frontier Colonists ... that the LMS was more of a political organisation than a missionary society ...

Nevertheless, negotiations for union with the LMS were set in motion and were well under way by 1939. A Missionary Conference was called to coincide with the Nkhoma Jubilee celebrations while earlier that year the Synodical Committee of the CCAP had discussed issues concerning the extension of the CCAP to include the Churches connected with the LMS in Zambia.<sup>13)</sup> In the same year the Council of Congregations connected to the DRCM in Zambia expressed its unanimous desire to unite with the CCAP, in spite of the refusal of the OFS Synod some years before.

Although the Nkhoma Conference did not take place, due to the War situation, the Synodical Committee did meet at Nkhoma and found that there were "no insurmountable obstacles" to such a union.

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10. CCAP Synod, 1936, min. 30. For details of this approach of the LMS and of further negotiations see P Bolink: *Towards Church union in Zambia*, pp. 210ff.
11. See J du Plessis: *A history of Christian Missions in South Africa*, pp. 131-53; WJ van der Merwe: *The development of Missionary attitudes in the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa*, pp. 98-104, 112-124; cf. CP Groves: *The planting of Christianity in Africa* Vol. I, pp. 228-31, 250-88.
12. WJ van der Merwe, *op.cit.*, p. 124.
13. Cf. CCAP Synodical Committee minutes, entry for 10/5/1939.

The DRC missionaries were also reported to be "quite definite in their approval of the idea of union but at the present not in a position to move forward".<sup>14)</sup>

The problem as far as the DRCM was concerned was further complicated by the difficulties encountered on the home front between the DRC Synods of the OFS and the Cape. Not only were relations at that stage extremely strained over the so-called "Salisbury question", but the rejection by the OFS of the request of the Church in Zambia to be united to the CCAP<sup>15)</sup> caused a further complication. Renewed efforts to bring the union of Nkhoma with the CCAP into disrepute led to a controversy in the columns of Die Kerkbode during 1940 in which the Rev. JA Retief of Malawi defended this union against the attacks of Strydom and his supporters, amongst whom was the Rev. JF Mentz, a member of the Cape Synod.<sup>16)</sup>

Earlier that same year the DRCM Council in Malawi had urgently requested the GMC in Cape Town to send a delegate to speak on behalf of the DRC in view of very important matters to come before the planned CCAP Synod in 1940.<sup>17)</sup> These important matters included the request of certain Churches in Zambia to join the CCAP. Stegman explained that not only were the DRC missionaries in favour of such further unions but, even more important, the Africans themselves desired it. It was very difficult for them to understand the denominational differences between the Europeans and hence if Nkhoma were to withdraw it would put the work back so much, they would never recover the damage. In response the GMC urged the missionaries not to do anything until the GMC itself as well as the Synod had had the chance to express their views on the matter. The Nyasa subcommittee advised all concerned to keep as quiet as possible about the issue as it was not the time to express opinions.<sup>18)</sup> No doubt it had in mind the difficulties being encountered with the OFS Synod and the danger that an eruption of feelings could influence the Cape Synod due to meet later that year.

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14. Ibid., entry for 28-30/11/1939; cf. P Bolink: Towards Church union, pp. 229f. For minutes, reports and other documents on Church union 1936-1945 see MNA Nkhoma Papers, Box 16.
  15. On these issues see above pp. 113ff. and 280; cf. P Bolink: op.cit., pp. 205f, 249ff.
  16. See articles by JA Retief (DK, 10/7/1940, pp. 65-68); and JG Strydom (DK, 8/8/1940, pp. 240-2); also correspondence columns (DK, 17/7, 21/8/, 4,25/9/, 9,16/10/1940.)
  17. This meeting was subsequently postponed several times and it was not before 1945 that the next Synod of the CCAP took place.
  18. Mission Council minutes 61/1940, p. 558; CCA S5 15/6/2/23: Stegmann to Mission secr., 15/4/1940; Mission secr. to Stegmann, 18/6/1940; 1/4/3: Nyasa subcommittee minute 4, entry for 14/6/1940.

As it ensued, the attack by Strydom in Die Kerkbode noted above and the lengthy polemic that followed<sup>19)</sup> left a dark shadow. On the one hand the atmosphere was very volatile in the DRCM in Malawi over Strydom's attack but on the other hand the GMC and its subcommittee wished to keep matters as calm as possible. When the Cape Synod met in October 1940 its decision concerning the Nkhoma - CCAP relationship was to instruct the GMC to see to it that the best interests of Nkhoma Presbytery and the DRCM were served and that Nkhoma should withdraw if the GMC were to feel that further union was not in the highest interest of the work. The response of the GMC, which was very much in favour of retaining union, was that after fifteen years it could see no adverse effects the union had had on the work of the DRCM and that there were many reasons why such a united CCAP was to be favoured. In addition, the Nyasa subcommittee had already stated that the teaching in the congregations connected to the DRCM was still the same as it had been before they had joined the CCAP and that no influence was being exerted upon them by the other Presbyteries.<sup>20)</sup>

Meanwhile negotiations were continuing for some form of union to be established with Churches in Zambia and strong pressure was being exerted from certain quarters to this effect. At the same time the developments in the DRC and the situation on the home front made it quite clear to missionaries of the DRCM in Malawi that it would be most dangerous to proceed hastily with further union negotiations as this could very easily adversely affect the future of Nkhoma as a Presbytery of the CCAP. As a solution Stegmann put forward a new idea of establishing a separate Church of Central Africa in Rhodesia (i.e. Zambia), an idea which while not meeting with much support from the other Presbyteries, did lead to a temporary maintaining of the status quo. He wrote:<sup>21)</sup>

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19. See minutes of Council Executive, entry for 2/9/1940 in Council minutes 62/1941, p. 583; cf. CCA S5 15/6/2/23: Stegmann to Mission Secr., 12/9/1940.
20. CCA S5 1/1/7: GMC minute 49, entry for 18-19/2/1941; 1/4/3: Nyasa subcommittee min. iv(3), entry for 22/1/1941. Cf. AJ van Wijk: *Indrukke in verband met my besoek aan Nyasaland* (Op die Horison, March 1940, pp. 11-14). Rev. van Wijk was then Chairman of the GMC and the GMC fully identified itself with the views expressed in favour of union with the CCAP in this article.
21. Quoted in P Bolink: *Towards Church union ...*, p. 231.

I am feeling more than ever convinced, that the time is not nearly ripe for such an extension. We require more than a formal union, and in spite of our close historical connection I feel that even the three present Presbyteries have a long way to move still before we can obtain the so essential unity of spirit. I seriously think consolidation should be our first aim. There are not only serious practical difficulties but even dangers in an extensive organisation with hardly any contact between the component parts. My own mind still reverts to the idea of creating a Church in N.R. as closely akin to ours, with a view to possible ultimate union.

For these reasons the Nkhoma people were not very anxious to have an early Synod meeting where matters could come to a head. It was thus a considerable relief to them when the CCAP Synod meeting which had already been postponed to 1942 was postponed again. Eventually it did not meet before August 1945 and in the meantime the CCAP Synodical Committee had to accept the fact that "no further widespread negotiations for union could be carried forward".<sup>22)</sup>

Yet it was not only the DRCM which was hesitant to move forward too hastily. Also the Blantyre Mission had its reservations and in 1942 Rev. PH Borrowman of Blantyre expressed his feelings as follows:<sup>23)</sup>

an incorporating union is not practical politics just now,  
and it would be much better to cultivate relations mean=  
time ...

A month before the CCAP Synod was to meet in 1945, Borrowman again wrote to Stegmann on the matter. Union with the LMS and the Union Church of the Copperbelt was to be an important issue and was strongly promoted especially by Dr DM Brown, a Livingstonia missionary at Lubwa Mission in Zambia and "one of the most vigorous advocates of the Church union cause in Central Africa".<sup>24)</sup>

Borrowman noted that Brown "was going bald-headed for union" and was counting on Livingstonia and Blantyre to support him but, "I don't think Blantyre Presbytery will, at least only over my dead body !".<sup>25)</sup> This was said to allay Stegmann's fears that if the union matters were to be pushed too much it would most likely result in Nkhoma Presbytery being forced to withdraw. Writing to

22. CCAP Synodical Committee minutes June 1943, quoted in Bolink, op.cit., p. 232.

23. MNA Nkhoma Papers, Box 3: Borrowman to Stegmann, 3/7/1942.

24. P Bolink, op.cit., p. 215. On negotiations towards union with the LMS and UCCB between 1939 and 1945, ibid., pp. 222-245.

25. MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 3: Borrowman to Stegmann, 20/7/1945.

Borrowman he had said:<sup>26)</sup>

I am very worried over the Union business and have been wondering whether, if we have to step out some-time, the time had not better be now. If we do, I personally shall look for Elija's Juniper tree.

Brown was evidently prepared to risk the possible withdrawal of Nkhoma which Borrowman felt would be a "major tragedy". Rather, Borrowman was favourably disposed towards Stegmann's idea of the Zambia congregations first forming an own Church:<sup>27)</sup>

If the Livingstonians across the border would be got to agree to form part of another sister Church with a Federal Council as you suggest, I think we might encourage a full union before too long.

It was clear that, as the 1945 CCAP Synod approached, Nkhoma Presbytery was finding itself in a very difficult position indeed.<sup>28)</sup> The tighter hold the parent DRC had on it and the opinion prevalent within the DRC that the right to withdraw lay with the GMC in Cape Town and not with Nkhoma Presbytery as such made the <sup>29)</sup> Nkhoma people fear an ultimate forced withdrawal. Although the GMC had admitted in 1944 that this right to withdraw "rested according to the 'Terms of Union' with the Presbytery itself", it did inform Nkhoma a year later, in view of the approaching CCAP Synod meeting, that it (the GMC) "did not seek union with any other non Presbyterian Church Societies".<sup>30)</sup>

There was no doubt in the mind of the Nkhoma people that the situation in the DRC was such that, unless a solution could be found, their future as part of the CCAP was at stake.

As it ensued this crisis was averted. The CCAP Synod met from 22 to 26 August 1945 at Nkhoma. One of the matters to be dealt with was the proposed union with the LMS congregations in Zambia. Before the matter came up for discussion Stegmann, who was ill at the time, called all the missionaries to his house to explain to them the precarious position of the DRCM. Due to the feelings prevalent in the DRC a union with the LMS would have disastrous results for their

26. Ibid., Stegmann to Borrowman, 26/7/1945.

27. Ibid., Borrowman to Stegmann, 31/7/1945.

28. Cf. P Bolink, op.cit., pp. 241-5.

29. On this discrepancy in the 1924 DRC Synod decision see above p.278.

30. CCA S5 1/1/8 and 1/1/9; GMC min 46(f), entry for 22-24/2/1944; min. 59, entry for 27-28/2/1945. Transl. from Afrikaans.

work. A crisis could arise in the DRC, beset as it was with the tensions between the OFS and the Cape Synod over the Salisbury question and the doubts concerning the CCAP. This would almost certainly result in Nkhoma having to withdraw from the CCAP.<sup>31)</sup> While the DRC missionaries were not opposed to a union, the idea already formerly put forward by Stegmann showed that there were doubts about the wisdom and practicability of such a wide union over such a large geographical area.<sup>32)</sup>

When the matter came up for discussion Stegmann put forward some of the reasons why Nkhoma Presbytery found it difficult to support the petition. Thereupon Dr DM Brown put forward the following motion, seconded by Rev. JM Alexander (both were delegates of Livingstonia Presbytery), which was agreed to by Synod:<sup>33)</sup>

In view of certain difficulties which had beset the brethren of Nkhoma Presbytery - difficulties which it is hoped and prayed will be removed within a few years - Synod regrets that it is unable to grant the petition of the congregations connected with the London Missionary Society in North-Eastern Rhodesia to enter into corporate union with the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian, and be received into this Synod. Synod however expresses the sincere hope that this present decision will in no way mar the happy relations and co-operation at present existent between the congregations of the London Missionary Society and the Union Church of the Copperbelt on the one hand and the three congregations about to be formed into the Presbytery of North-Eastern Rhodesia on the other, nor prevent them from entering into union for the furtherance of Christ's Kingdom in Northern Rhodesia, it being distinctly understood however that the Presbytery of Nkhoma is not a participant in this union.

The Rev. WF de Vos who attended the Synod as an observer on behalf of the General Mission Committee of the DRC reported back on the matter advising the GMC to give full support to a Federation of Churches rather than a Union. He also emphasised that for Nkhoma to withdraw would be a disaster and that what was important was not what the home Church wanted but what was best for the Church in Malawi. The desire there was strong and unanimous for one Church.<sup>34)</sup>

As it ensued the CCAP decision was so ambiguous in its wording that Brown took it to mean that the new CCAP Presbytery of North-Eastern Rhodesia which the same

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31. See P Bolink: *Towards Church union ...*, pp. 246f.

32. From Blantyre in Malawi to the Copperbelt it is nearly 1 600 km by road.

33. CCAP Synod 1945, min. 35.

34. CCA S5 15/6/12/4; Copy Memorandum by WF de Vos to Nyasa subcommittee; cf. min. 17, entry for 24/9/1945.

Synod had granted permission to be formed in Zambia (consisting of three Livingstonia Congregations<sup>35</sup>) had at the same time been given permission to unite with the LMS and the Union Churches. Thus the new Presbytery would actually become part of two Churches, the CCAP in Malawi and the Church of Central Africa in Rhodesia (CCAR). But this was not what others understood this to mean and when union between the new Presbytery and the CCAR was actually consummated on 1 December 1945 the Synodical Committee of the CCAP, meeting in May 1946, noted that the "Presbytery of North Eastern Rhodesia" had entered into "corporate union" with the Churches of the LMS and the Union Churches of the Copperbelt.

To this the Committee added:

the Presbytery has acted without the authority of Synod, and quite contrary to the decision of Synod, and it appears that by so doing the Presbytery of North Eastern Rhodesia has put itself outside the Church of Central Africa (Presbyterian), and that the Presbytery is now part of the Church of Central Africa in Rhodesia, but not of the Church of Central Africa (Presbyterian).

To this the Committee added that perhaps this was after all the best step for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God in Zambia.<sup>36</sup>)

In the meantime a development had taken place seriously affecting Nkhoma Presbytery. The Synod of the DRC had met in October 1945 in Cape Town. During the discussion of the GMC work an unexpected motion was tabled by Rev. JF Mentz, a strong supporter of Strydom, that the GMC be instructed to see to it that the quia position be clearly upheld in the confession (statement of faith) of the CCAP and if this appeared not feasible, steps were to be taken to break ties with that Church.<sup>37</sup>) By the quia position was meant that Article I of the "Brief statement of Faith" dealing with the Word of God should clearly indicate the Bible as such as the Word of God, and not merely that it contained the Word of God. In other words, the interpretation which the 1926 CCAP Synod had accepted for the Presbytery of Nkhoma "according to that liberty of interpretation which it claims for itself"<sup>38</sup>) was now required to become the valid position for the CCAP as a whole. If this could not be achieved, Nkhoma should withdraw.

35. CCAP Synod 1945, min. 28.

36. CCAP Synodical Committee minutes, entry for 24-27/5/1946. For details of the formation of this union and the reactions to it see P Bolink: Towards Church union ..., pp. 247-263.

37. DRC Synod Acta 1945, p. 296.

38. CCAP Synod 1926, min. 7; cf. min 5.7.

In what was described as "a whirlwind decision" the motion was carried and became the decision of the DRC Synod. An attempt to amend it by deleting the words concerning breaking ties failed, as did a later request for a revision of the decision. This request was tabled by G de C Murray, a former missionary in Malawi and WF de Vos, Chairman of the GMC.<sup>39)</sup>

In trying to explain the situation to some very upset and indignant members of the mission staff<sup>40)</sup> the secretary of the GMC pointed out that the matter was not as bad as it sounded. The whole issue had been brought about by some "quite out of place" remarks made by the moderator of the OFS Synod in a speech conveying the greetings of his Synod. His derogatory remarks about the CCAP and hints at social mixing taking place between whites and blacks had stirred up much unrest in the Synod.<sup>41)</sup>

This decision placed the GMC and the DRC Mission Council in a predicament and led to lengthy discussions in the meetings of the GMC and its Nyasa subcommittee.<sup>42)</sup> The best solution appeared to be for individual missionaries to approach certain of the missionaries in the other two Presbyteries in order to make clear to them the difficult position in which Nkhoma found itself and to seek their co-operation in finding a way out. The GMC and the Mission Council felt convinced what Nkhoma should not withdraw from the CCAP.<sup>43)</sup>

The matter was further complicated by the old discrepancy found in the 1924 DRC Synod minutes as already noted.<sup>44)</sup> The legal right of the DRC Synod to take a decision to the effect that Nkhoma should withdraw was not at all clear and at least one DRC missionary pointed out in no unclear terms that the decision of the Synod was quite illegal, being nothing less than a breach of contract, since the 1924 Synod had accepted the Terms of Union which placed the right of withdrawal in the hands of the Presbytery itself. Thus the DRC could not enforce

39. DRC Synod Acta 1945, p. 445.

40. From a very strongly worded letter, claiming that "it seems as if there is no confidence in missionaries and their work" (transl. from Afrikaans) see CCA S5 15/6/2/14: Minnaar to Mission secr., 7/12/1945. WH Murray stated that if the decision were carried through it would be nothing but a disaster for the Nyasa Mission of the DRC (CCA S5 15/6/10/9: Document on history of Nyasa Mission and on the decision of the 1945 DRC Synod, n.d.).

41. CCA S5 15/6/2/14: Mission secr. to Minnaar, 18/12/1945. The Moderator had referred to the social mixing as "saamboerdery", a word with a derogatory connotation.

42. For details see CCA S5 1/4/3: Minutes of Nyasa subcommittee, entry for 31/10/1945; CCA S5 1/1/9: GMC minutes, entry for 27-28/2/1946 and subsequent meetings.

43. For a lengthy motivation see CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1945.

44. See above pp.278f.



such a decision upon a constitutionally independent Church, an act which was tantamount to contriving to cause a split in that Church.<sup>45)</sup>

The matter became even more sensitive in the DRC when the news of the union between the CCAP Presbytery in Zambia and the LMS Congregations became known. Since ultimate union between the CCAP and the Zambian Churches was the aim, the GMC, while expressing itself fully in favour of such a union, felt that one condition was necessary namely that such a union would be based on the credal basis and the form of church government already approved in the CCAP.<sup>46)</sup> The GMC was in favour rather of a federal than an organic union.

## 1.2 Towards a new constitution for the CCAP 1945-1956

The one ray of light in the dilemma created by the DRC Synod was the decision taken shortly before by the CCAP Synod, instructing the Synodical Committee "to proceed with its investigations with a view to bringing into harmony the Constitutions of the three Presbyteries, and to formulating a Constitution for the Church".<sup>47)</sup>

Although no direct evidence could be traced to show that this decision actually influenced the Cape decision concerning the quia issue, it is quite possible that this was partly the case since, in drawing up a new constitution, it could possibly introduce a more explicit statement on the Bible.

Between 1945 and 1948 the CCAP Synodical Committee proceeded with its work<sup>48)</sup> and by June 1946 Stegmann could already report to the GMC that it had been unanimously agreed to change the article in the "Brief Statement of Faith" concerning the Word of God to the effect that it would be brought into accordance with the motion of the Cape Synod.<sup>49)</sup>

45. See CCA S5 15/6/2/21: Lengthy document by JA Retief on this decision of the Cape DRC Synod.

46. CCA S5 1/1/9: GMC minute 18, entry for 21-23/8/1946.

47. CCAP Synod 1945, minute 13.

48. For materials on Church constitution and the CCAP see MNA Nkhoma Papers, Box 39 and Box 17.

49. CCA S5 1/4/3: Nyasa subcommittee minutes, entry for 17/7/1946.

Early in 1948 the new Constitution was scrutinised by the Nyasa subcommittee and apart from suggestions for a few minor alterations it found no objections to the wording. It was satisfied that both Article I and 2 of the "Brief Statement of Faith" stated clearly that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, not that they merely contain the Word of God. Thus the GMC could report to the Cape Synod in 1949 concerning the so-called quia issue that "there exists not the least doubt that the wish of our Synod will be complied with".<sup>50)</sup>

This draft which had been prepared by the CCAP Synodical Committee was also considered by all the Presbyteries and by the Foreign Mission Committee of the Church of Scotland. Various suggestions were put forward by the respective bodies. When the CCAP Synod met in 1948 it found that although all had given their general approval,

so many additions, amendments and changes had been put forward that the Standing Committee recommended that Synod instruct the Clerks to prepare a collation of the new suggestions and additions, and send copies to all members of the Standing Committee who would discuss it very thoroughly and send a new draft to Presbyteries for consideration as soon as possible, after which a second new draft would be prepared and put into the hands of commissioners to the Synod due to be held in 1950<sup>51)</sup>

In 1949 the new suggested Constitution for the CCAP was ready. It was based on the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa and had the approval of Nkhoma Presbytery. Similarly the Nyasa subcommittee of the GMC approved the new Constitution provided Article VIII of the 1926 Terms of Union (the so called "Barrier Act")<sup>52)</sup> was guaranteed. The position of missionaries was dealt with in Article 15. Concerning this article it advised that the Church should for the present give full voting powers to ordained European missionaries.<sup>53)</sup>

This Article 15 was to become a bone of contention to such an extent that in the end the entire proposed constitution failed to secure the required majority vote in the 1952 CCAP Synod. The basic issue revolved around the question of the position of expatriate missionaries in the Church, particularly in respect of two matters: Full voting powers for missionaries in the young Church and integrated membership of Mission personnel in the young Church, coupled with the

50. Cf. *ibid.*, min vii(2), entry for 6/3/1948; minute III, entry for 15/5/1948; min. 1, entry for 11/6/1948; min. 1 entry for 18/8/1948; see also GMC report to Cape Synod, Acta 1949, pp.220-1.

51. CCAP Synod 1948, min. 22.

52. Cf. CCAP Extract of minutes of the Synod 1924-1945, p. 7.

53. CCA S5 1/4/4: Nyasa subcommittee min. 6, entry for 7/7/1950.

right of the CCAP to exercise oversight and discipline over them.

The original Article 15 was at first generally supported and was actually largely based upon the wording proposed by Livingstonia Presbytery in September 1948. It read as follows:

This Church welcomes as full partners in its task of evangelisation and its other tasks, all missionaries duly appointed by the Church of Scotland and by the Dutch Reformed Church to work in Nyasaland and in those parts of Northern and Southern Rhodesia where the Church works. To secure effective co-operation, all such missionaries who have been ordained as ministers of the Church of Scotland or of the Dutch Reformed Church, provided that they have promised before the Presbytery of which they are to be members to maintain the Constitution and Laws of the Church, shall have seats in the Synod and in the Presbytery within whose bounds they are stationed, in the capacity of assessors with full voting powers. Their membership of Kirk Sessions shall be determined by the Presbyteries of which they are members. Such missionaries shall be eligible to hold office in any Court of the Church in which they have a seat under this rule. Any complaints regarding their faith or conduct shall be made by the Synod to the Mission Councils

However, it soon became evident that the question of Church membership and particularly the position of ordained missionaries was causing more and more difference of opinion and in May 1951 the CCAP Synodical Committee agreed to postpone the meeting of Synod.<sup>54)</sup>

Two months later Blantyre Presbytery proposed an alternate version of Article 15 which did away with the word "assessors" previously included<sup>55)</sup> and to all effects made them full members with full powers in the young Church.

It was by now very clear that there was a fundamental difference between the points of view of the DRC and the Church of Scotland in this matter. The DRC maintained that the ideal of mission work should be the development of an ultimately entirely independent and autonomous Church. For that reason missionaries should serve in a temporary capacity in the Church and ideally not even have voting powers but play an advisory and consultative role. This was the

54. CCAP Synodical Committee minute 4, entry for 25/5/1951. Author's italics!

55. Blantyre Presbytery min. 11, entry for July 1951.

sense in which they understood the word "assessors". In this way they would more easily become dispensable and thus able to withdraw without causing disruption. Thus it regarded the concept of "integration" (i.e. ordained missionaries becoming full members of the Church and holding full voting powers in its courts) as "principally wrong" maintaining that they should remain members of the sending Church and stay under the ultimate oversight and discipline of that Church.<sup>56)</sup>

On the other hand the Church of Scotland had a few years before taken decisions in connection with the Church in India which it sought now to apply also to the Church in Malawi. These decisions involved the possibility, where circumstances required it, of missionaries becoming members of the young Church and accepting its direction and control, thus for the time being ceasing to be ministers of the Church of Scotland and even coming under the discipline courts of which they were full members.<sup>57)</sup>

In view of these conflicting views, the GMC in Cape Town resolved to send a delegation to Malawi to discuss these issues with the Missions concerned and try to find a way out of the difficulty.<sup>58)</sup> Meanwhile the CCAP Synodical Committee had met towards the end of September 1951 and the new wording proposed for Article 15 did away with the word "assessors" and gave full participatory and voting powers to ordained missionaries in the young Church with the further choice of either remaining under their respective sending Churches in matters of faith and conduct or of applying for full membership in the CCAP, offering themselves "for the eldership or ministry of the Church". This would then also imply that such persons would "be subject in matters of faith and conduct to the Church".<sup>59)</sup>

While willing to accept that, for an interim transitory period, missionaries could be called upon to participate more fully in the affairs of the Church, the Nyasa subcommittee of the GMC was quite definite in its insistence that all its missionaries should remain under the discipline of the DRC.<sup>60)</sup>

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56. CCA S5 1/4/4: Nyasa subcommittee minute, entry for 26/10/1951: cf. also entry for 20/9/1951.
57. Cf. extracts from: Regulations for the appointment of European Missionaries Men-1947 (Church of Scotland FMC); and from: Reports to the General Assembly 1948 (The Church of Scotland), copies appended to letter Stegmann to Mission secr. 4/7/1951 (CCA S5 15/6/1/6).
58. CCA S5 1/4/4: Nyasa subcommittee minutes, entry for 20/9/1951, 26/10/1951.
59. CCAP Synodical Committee minutes, entry for 27-28/9/1951.
60. Ibid., entry to 20/9/1951.

Against this background the Cape delegates, consisting of Prof. GBA Gerdener (Chairman of the GMC) and Rev. AC van Wyk, came to Malawi to hold discussions with a number of European members of the three Presbyteries of the CCAP in Blantyre on 14 November 1951. The discussions were cordial and frank and concerned mainly two issues.<sup>61)</sup>

The first was the question of union between the CCAP and the Churches in Zambia. All along the contention of the DRC and the Nkhoma missionaries had been that organic union was not advisable. For geographical, ethnological as well as theological reasons, a form of federal union was regarded as more suitable. At the time of the discussions this view had come to be shared by the other Presbyteries and a decision to this effect had been taken by the CCAP Synodical Committee in September 1951. For the time being union was no longer regarded as practical while it was also emphasised by the Blantyre and Livingstonia members that they were not prepared to run the risk of losing Nkhoma for the sake of unity with the Zambia Churches.<sup>62)</sup> This danger was quite real since the prevalent attitude in the DRC to the joining of its "Mission Churches" with other Churches was further complicated by the continuing trouble between the Cape and OFS Synods over the "Salisbury question". Such a step by the CCAP could quite possibly have resulted in a renewed decision by the next Cape Synod that at least its missionaries should withdraw from the CCAP. This would have meant in effect that Nkhoma Presbytery as such would also withdraw. It became clear at the discussions that this danger had been averted and the issue over the Church union hence-forth virtually disappeared from the scene.

The second issue proved much more difficult. The respective viewpoints of the Scottish and Dutch Reformed Churches on Article 15 of the proposed Constitution and on the integration of Mission and Church was a matter in which a reconciliation appeared virtually impossible at this stage. The possibility that different Presbyteries follow a different courses as an experiment was considered, but this also was hardly satisfactory as the Nyasa subcommittee pointed out,

61. See copy of draft minutes of this meeting (in private file now in author's possession); also report of DRC delegates recorded in CCA S5 1/4/4: Nyasa subcommittee minutes, entry for 7/12/1951.
62. CCAP Synodical Committee minutes, entry for 27-28/9/1951. See also circular, Stegmann to members of the (Nkhoma) Mission Council and to the Chairman and Secretary of Nkhoma Presbytery, 1/10/1951 (copy in private file now in author's possession).

since the CCAP was one, not two Churches. At the same time the DRC could not accept Church of Scotland regulations to be forced upon its missionaries.<sup>63)</sup> The committee felt that integration would not only violate the indigenous character of the Church, but it would also increase home criticism on the DRCM work in the foreign field and possibly lead to reduced prayer and financial support. In order to explain this position and further seek a solution, the same meeting resolved to enter into correspondence with the Secretary of the FMC of the Church of Scotland.<sup>64)</sup> While this resulted in clearing up certain misunderstandings, the fundamental difficulty still remained.

In the matter of integration of Mission and Church, the Nkhoma missionaries had, to all outward appearances the full support of their African colleagues in the Presbytery. During an extraordinary meeting of the Presbytery which took place on 16 November 1951, two days after the meeting in Blantyre with the DRC delegates, the proposed Constitution and in particular Article 15 was discussed. At one stage all the missionaries withdrew from the meeting to enable the Malawians to talk the matter through. They unanimously agreed then to support the proposal of the GMC to retain Article 15 in its old form whereby ordained missionaries, while having full powers to participate and vote in the respective courts of the Church, would remain members of and under the oversight and discipline of their respective home Churches.<sup>65)</sup>

With such an impasse it is hardly surprising that, when the CCAP Synod met from 16-21 May 1952, neither side could gain the required support. An amendment evidently moved by Nkhoma to retain Article 15 in its older form was lost by 72 votes to 43 and when the entire Constitution as amended in various respects, was put to the vote; 72 voted for it, and 35 against. Evidently some of the

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63. CCA S5 1/4/4: Nyasa subcommittee minutes, entry for 7/12/1951.
64. For this correspondence between members of the GMC and Dr JW Dougall, General Secretary for Foreign Missions of the Church of Scotland see CCA S5 15/6/10/9: See also CCA S5 1/4/4: Nyasa subcommittee min. 1, entry for 30/4/1952 and correspondence between GMC and FMC, copies in MNA Nkhoma Papers, Box 9.
65. Recorded in minutes of Nkhoma Presbytery 1953, pp. 4-5. Cf. CCA S5 15/6/1/5: Stegmann to Mission secr. 17/11/1951. This support was reiterated by Nkhoma Presbytery in 1952 (Minutes 1952, pp. 12-14) and again became clear in discussions at the 1953 Presbytery (cf. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual General report, 1953: "They (i.e. African ministers) firmly believe in the policy of earlier years").

Nkhoma delegates either abstained or voted for the constitution since there were twenty-seven elders and twenty-seven ministers of whom twenty were missionaries. In total 130 delegates attended the Synod. Nevertheless the proposed Constitution was thereby not passed, having failed to gain a three-quarter majority, as required by the "Barrier Act".<sup>66)</sup>

With the rejection of the proposed Constitution in 1952 a stalemate situation was reached in which it was not immediately clear what the next step should be. Meanwhile Nkhoma Presbytery, meeting three months later in August 1952, reiterated its position by emphasising that it could not accept the proposals embodied in the proposed Article 15 and stood by the original arrangement according to which missionaries remained under the oversight and discipline of the sending Church and did not become members of the CCAP. Nkhoma Presbytery also expressed its conviction that it was not advisable for missionaries to have voting and ruling powers in the young Church as this would hinder progress towards autonomy. The Church's authority would in fact be weakened.<sup>67)</sup>

At the same time it soon became clear that the Scottish Presbyteries and their missionaries were not prepared to alter their stance and that the situation there "was far from happy".<sup>68)</sup>

The position was precarious, not only for the future of the CCAP and for Nkhoma's position, but also politically. The refusal by Nkhoma to accept integration and let missionaries become full members was seen as something which could have wider repercussions politically, especially in view of the rising feelings in the country against the Federation plans of the Government,<sup>69)</sup> and against the racial policies of South Africa.

66. CCAP Synod 1952, min. 2, 43.

67. For a motivated statement see Nkhoma Presbytery 1952, pp. 12-14. For English translation of this minute see JP Jacobs: *Supervisie en konkurrensie* (Op die Horison, Sep. 1953, pp. 96-7); cf. Council minutes 76/1953 p. 981f.

68. See correspondence between GMC and FMC, CCA S5 15/6/10/9: Copy Dougall to Gerdener, 30/4/1953. See also response to this letter in same file: Stegmann to Mission secr., 22/6/1953. Stegmann here also mentioned certain observations which could go to prove that the African members of particularly Blantyre Synod were to some extent pressurised by their missionaries to vote the way they did.

69. CCA S5 15/6/10/9: Stegmann to Mission secr., 24/5/1952; 15/6/11/8: Annual general report for DRCM, Malawi, 1952.

At the same time the Presbyteries, especially Nkhoma, found that the large number of congregations and the diversity of responsibilities was making it more and more difficult to function properly as Presbytery. Some or other change was becoming an ever greater need so that smaller units could function more effectively.<sup>70)</sup> One solution would be to upgrade each Presbytery into a Synod and have a number of Presbyteries under it. The respective Synods could then be united in a kind of General Synod or even in a Federal union with each other. These thoughts began to develop in the minds of Nkhoma missionaries and such a possibility was mentioned and discussed at the meeting of Nkhoma Presbytery in August 1953.<sup>71)</sup>

The matter was taken a step further when Rev. Neil Bernard of Blantyre Mission wrote to Stegmann in January 1954 to try to find a way out of "this unhappy present constitutional impasse". It was obvious to him that "another Synod could hardly take place without some action resulting there from".<sup>72)</sup> The letter contained a number of comments and proposals and copies of this letter were sent to several DRC missionaries for their comments. From these a loose consensus of opinion began to appear. Although Bernard appeared very sceptic about the idea of creating Synods out of the Presbyteries, regarding it as "a very dangerous step", the Nkhoma attitude was much stronger in favour of such a move. No one was in favour of breaking up the unity of the CCAP by splitting into different Churches, neither was any side willing to give way to the other on Article 15. At the same time it would have been untenable to have two different arrangements within one Synod concerning the position of missionaries.

The only two acceptable solutions that emerged was to establish three Synods within a kind of Federal Union or else to unite the three Synods under a General Synod. Each would then have its own constitution and make its own arrangements concerning missionaries serving with it, while the General Synod would have authority over such matters as may be agreed upon by the Synods, and over matters of common interest.

The first definite move came from Nkhoma. An extraordinary meeting of Presbytery was convened on 13-14 April 1954 at which a report prepared by the clerk of Pres-

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70. For attempts by Nkhoma Presbytery to divide into regional sections see above pp. 289f.
71. Reference was made to this in correspondence between missionaries, MNA Nkhoma Papers, Box 4: Steytler to Stegmann, 18/1/1954.
72. CCA S5 15/6/10/9: Copy Bernard to Stegmann, 7/1/1954. See also further copy as well as comments by several Nkhoma missionaries in MNA Nkhoma Papers, Box 4; additional copies in Box 9.



bytery, Rev. AS Labuschagne, served as guideline. In this report the entire position was set out, concerning both the practical difficulties Nkhoma Presbytery was experiencing by virtue of its size and the deadlock which had arisen over the position of missionaries. Furthermore the various possible solutions were listed.<sup>73)</sup> In the light of this, Presbytery passed a resolution to make a definite recommendation to the Synodical Committee of the CCAP that the three existing Presbyteries be transformed into Synods with full legislative, judicial and administrative powers under one General Synod with limited powers delegated to it by the respective Synods and laid down in a general constitution. In this way, Nkhoma Presbytery believed, a solution would be found for the several difficulties facing the CCAP and the unity of the Church preserved. Hereby the following difficulties could be solved:

1. The untenable situation in which Nkhoma Presbytery found itself because of its size;
2. the double function Presbyteries had to play in practice i.e. that of Presbytery as well as of Synod;
3. the difference in policy between the three Presbyteries concerning membership of expatriate missionaries;
4. unity of action would be maintained in all matters concerning policy;
5. it would make it possible for other Churches to join the CCAP.<sup>74)</sup>

These were all major issues which needed to be solved if the CCAP were to continue. Nkhoma Presbytery already consisted of 29 congregations and convened with nearly 70 delegates and could no longer function properly. The same applied to the other Presbyteries. Nkhoma's attempt at subdividing the Presbytery did not materialize and the Presbytery could simply no longer cope with all the matters on its agenda. Having a large number of reports and dealing with legislative matters took up so much time that the real task of a Presbytery, namely to hold oversight over the spiritual life and work of congregations, was being neglected. In fact, it was more and more having to fulfill the task of a Synod because of its legislative function. Furthermore the question of expatriate membership was as far from finding a solution as ever while Nkhoma was also maintaining its stance on not entering into further organic union with the Churches in Zambia, a matter which was still being contemplated and if brought to a

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73. See undated Circular: Clerk of Nkhoma Presbytery to all Ministers of Presbytery (copy in private file now in author's possession).

74. The printed minutes of Nkhoma Presbytery do not contain the minute of this decision taken at the extraordinary meeting but it is recorded in Council minutes 77/1954, p. 1018. The Mission Council convened five days after Presbytery, on 19 April 1954.

head, could still result in Nkhoma having to withdraw. By creating a General Synod the way would be open for others to join it as separate Synods while all the member Synods could retain whatever autonomy they possessed and wished to retain.<sup>75)</sup> In fact the Nkhoma missionaries hoped that this would even open the way for the Synod of the DR Mission Church of the Orange Free State in Zambia to join the CCAP.<sup>76)</sup>

The Nyasa subcommittee expressed its approval in principle of this proposal, on condition that the General Synod would hold limited powers in such matters as Church Government, Creeds and Liturgy.<sup>77)</sup> At its next meeting in August 1954, Nkhoma Presbytery reiterated its views and its proposal concerning a General Synod. It proposed a constitution for such a General Synod which was based largely on the previous constitution which had failed to obtain the required majority in 1952, but, with a number of formal alterations and the stipulation that each Synod would make its own arrangements concerning its relationship with the parent body and its missionaries. The authority of General Synod would be limited and would pertain to such matters as would be relegated to it by all the Synods.<sup>78)</sup>

These proposals were put to the other Presbyteries and initially there was a strong negative reaction. Blantyre presented a memorandum to the Synodical Committee of the CCAP criticising the proposals as implying the formation of three different Churches instead of one. This was denied by the Nkhoma representatives who emphasised their strong desire for unity. Their main concern was for administrative efficiency in their very large Presbytery. The proposal by Livingstonia to adopt the 1952 constitution with omission of the controversial Articles 15 and 49 was regarded by the Committee as merely delaying differences of opinion.<sup>79)</sup>

75. On these different points see a document by AS Labuschagne: Die posisie van Ring en Sinode in die KMAP (copy in MNA Nkhoma Papers, Box 4: File "Correspondence Mission Council 1939-1954).

76. In a document by MS Daneel (Insake die KMAP), it is stated that it was the expressed opinion of Rev. JM Cronje of Madzimoyo Mission that such a move would remove the stumbling block for the OFS (Copy in MNA Nkhoma Papers, Box 4).

77. CCA S5 1/4/4: Nyasa subcommittee min. 1, entry for 19/5/1954. See also min. 1, entry for 28/7/1954.

78. For details see Nkhoma Presbytery 1954, pp. 6-11.

79. CCAP Synodical Committee minutes, entry for 3/11/1954.

The initial negative reaction of the Blantyre and Livingstonia Presbyteries was replaced by a much more positive attitude by the time the Synodical Committee met again in May 1955 and the proposals of Nkhoma were approved with only a number of minor amendments.<sup>80)</sup> Further smaller amendments proposed by the GMC in Cape Town and by Nkhoma Presbytery were put forward. Of these, two are of importance.<sup>81)</sup> One was the stipulation that nothing in the Constitution would prevent any Synod from seeking to establish ecclesiastical relations with like-minded neighbouring Churches or societies after consulting the other Synods. This not only would leave the way open for union negotiations with the CCAP but also for Nkhoma to seek closer co-operation with its Zambian sister Church.<sup>82)</sup> The other was the insertion of a provision similar to the old "Barrier Act". This would mean that any change in the Constitution would have to be approved by each of the constituting Synods individually before becoming Law.

The Nkhoma Presbytery Committee made one further proposal to the Synod to the effect that, in the case of this proposed Constitution, the requirements of the "Barrier Act" be temporarily suspended to enable the Constitution, if approved, to come into operation with immediate effect, thus opening the way for establishing Synods that same year.

On 25 April 1956 the CCAP Synod convened at Nkhoma and over several sessions the Constitution and its proposed amendments were discussed. Virtually all the amendments from Nkhoma were approved and the draft Constitution as amended put to the vote on the third day of the Synod. It was a great and joyful moment when this Constitution was unanimously passed by 130 votes in favour and none against. The following minute was recorded:<sup>83)</sup>

The Moderator pointed out that this was a great decision the Church had reached. The Synod rose in prayer and the Moderator led in a prayer of thanksgiving. It was unanimously agreed to add the following words to the adopted Constitution: "This Constitution on receiving in the Synod approval by 3/4 majority vote, shall come into effect immediately.

80. Cf also CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report for Nkhoma Mission, 1954-55.

81. See Nkhoma Presbytery Standing Committee minutes, entry for 28/2/1956 in Presbytery minutes 1956, p. 6.

82. CCA S5 15/6/10/9: Stegmann to Mission secr., 16/3/1956.

83. CCAP Synod 1956, minute 33.

In August of that year Nkhoma Presbytery met for the last time and approved the new Constitution for Nkhoma Synod, thereby constituting itself into a Synod under the General Synod of the CCAP.<sup>84)</sup> As far as ordained DRC missionaries were concerned, the Nkhoma Constitution provided for them to be members of the Synod while they could attend Church Council and Presbytery meetings as well as any other committee as advisors. They would be posted or transferred by the Mission Council with due notification to Synod, while Synod could elect or appoint them to any office in the Church. They would stand under oversight and jurisdiction of the DRC.<sup>85)</sup>

After adopting the new constitution for the CCAP in 1956 it soon became clear that a number of changes would need to be made. Several of these were in order to make the Constitution legally correct, as advised by a lawyer, while others were more of a formal or organisational nature. The Standing Committee of General Synod agreed to call a special meeting of the General Synod.<sup>86)</sup> This meeting took place from 18-21 April 1958 and the necessary amendments were approved and certain sections partly re-arranged.<sup>87)</sup> After thirteen years the work on the Constitution was finally concluded.

### 1.3 Concluding remarks

One of the most crucial issues over all these years of constitutional conflict had been the position of European missionaries in the Church. In this, Nkhoma in consultation with the DRC, had taken a very definite stand against the so-called "integration" idea. This was also the position taken up by the DRC in its belief that the indigenous Church would best develop towards full autonomy if missionaries did not integrate fully but remained slightly aside as far as membership, voting rights and authority in the Church was concerned. In this way indigenous leadership could develop at a greater pace, concurrence or competition for leadership and positions of authority would be avoided and eventually

84. Nkhoma Presbytery 1956, p. 25. For full text of Nkhoma Synod Constitution see *ibid.*, pp. 25-32.

85. Nkhoma Synod Constitution 1956, Section IX, XIV and XV. The entire section XV, later changed to XVI, was removed by Nkhoma Synod 1968 (S 464) at the advice of General Synod that the arrangement concerning the position of missionaries should be included in the Deed of Agreement rather than in the Constitution (cf. Nkhoma Synod 1966, S 269). The authority to appoint or transfer missionaries had in any case come into the hands of Nkhoma Synod when the Mission Council was dissolved in 1962.

86. CCAP Standing Committee minutes, entries for 17/5/1957; 21/11/1957. Cf. CCA S5 15/6/2/10: Hugo to Mission secr. 23/4/1958. The report of the lawyer is appended to this letter in the form of a "memorandum on the Constitution of the CCAP".

87. For details see CCAP Synod 1958, min. 8, 17, 18.

the missionaries would be able to withdraw entirely without causing too much disruption.

In a sense it is true to say that in this matter the DRC sought only the highest interest for the proclamation of the Gospel by seeking also to lead the indigenous Church to a correct realisation of her responsibilities and duties as well as by upholding the spiritual interests of the young Church as a priority.<sup>88)</sup> On the other hand the fact cannot be denied that the GMC of the DRC was also forced to take this stand because of strong pressure from certain quarters in the DRC against the idea of integration, motivated no doubt by the racial concepts prevalent in South Africa. The great fear of the GMC was that the DRC Synod might in the end force its missionaries in Malawi to withdraw from the CCAP, and the GMC wished, as far as possible, to retain unity in the interest of the Church and the Kingdom, hence its endeavours to negotiate with the missionaries of the other Presbyteries and with the Church of Scotland in order to find an acceptable solution. In this it can rightly be said that it sought the highest interests of the Church in Malawi because it knew that an acceptance of the controversial Article 15 could have had disastrous results for the unity of the CCAP.

Although the policy of the DRC had always been that of developing separate Churches for different racial or cultural groups, this policy was essentially based upon practical considerations.<sup>89)</sup> Thus, when some years later Nkhoma Synod did request that missionaries be integrated into the Church, the GMC did not hesitate to recommend that this request be granted again because this time it saw it as being in the highest interest of the young Church to do so.<sup>90)</sup>

In connection with this matter of membership and integration of missionaries it will be remembered that the Malawian members of Nkhoma Presbytery unanimously supported the DRCM in their view and almost all voted against this matter at the

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88. Cf. NJ Smith: Die planting van afsonderlike kerke ..., pp. 84ff.

89. This becomes evident when the matter is taken right back to the original decision of 1857 to create separate church facilities for believers from the coloured population groups. In addition to finding this a necessary step "because of the weakness of some" the motivation for it lay in a desire to better and more effectivly promote the cause of Christ amongst the heathen (cf. DRC Synod Acta 1857, p. 60. Transl. from Dutch).

90. See below p.385 f.Cf.NJ Smith: Die planting van afsonderlike kerke..., pp. 87-8.

CCAP Synod of 1952. The missionaries were certain that they had the full support of their colleagues. In a sense this was undoubtedly true.

Nevertheless matters did change in due course as will be shown in the following paragraph dealing with the final phase towards granting full autonomy and jurisdiction to the Synod of Nkhoma.

That the feelings of the Malawians had changed became clear during the period of tension within the Synod in the late fifties. Finally it was the respected Samuel Ntara, author, senior teacher and influential elder in the Church who came to the Head of the DRCM early in 1960. Rev. Hugo makes reference to this in a postscript of a letter to the Mission secretary:<sup>91)</sup>

S. Ntara was in my office a while ago re the overture on membership of European workers. He wanted to know the feelings of the Church in South Africa because since 1952 things have changed a lot and they now think it will be advantageous if we become members.

It was no doubt a revelation like this which prompted Hugo to remark in his opening speech at the 1961 meeting of the Mission Council that the Malawians probably voted the way they did in 1952 partly out of respect for their missionaries. In this speech entitled "Our Mission at the Cross-Roads" he made it very clear what the choice was. They could either cling desperately to old methods and refuse to budge one inch, or they could withdraw systematically leaving the indigenous Church to itself and thus forcing it perforce to take up its responsibilities, or else they as missionaries should give themselves to the young Church and identify themselves with the people. This, he pointed out, would obviously entail that they would have to revise their entire policy on mission.<sup>92)</sup>

The DRCM chose the last recourse and this process, which involved reaching the agreement of 1962, will be dealt with in the following paragraph.

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91. CCA S5 15/6/1/5: Hugo to Mission secr., 22/2/1960. Transl. from Afrikaans.

92. Council minutes 84/1961, p. 1279.

## 2. Towards an autonomous Synod: The final stage 1956 - 1962

### 2.1 The Church and the political scene

In his book on African christianity Adrian Hastings states that "The 1950s could well be judged the last great missionary era in Africa's history".<sup>93)</sup>

This is quite true, and as such the 1950s were also the prelude to the emergence of autonomous churches as well as independent nations throughout Africa. By the end of this decade change was imminent and when Harold Macmillan delivered his now famous speech to both Houses of the Parliament of the Union of South Africa in Cape Town in January 1960, few probably realised how his prediction was to be realised.<sup>94)</sup>

The most striking of all the impressions I have formed since I left London over a month ago is of the strength of African National consciousness. In different places it may take different forms, but it is happening everywhere. The wind of change is blowing throughout this continent.

In Malawi too this national consciousness had over the years become a factor to be reckoned with. As far back as 1930 this fact had already been recognised by the DRCM.<sup>95)</sup> When the Nyasaland African Congress was formed in 1944,<sup>96)</sup> one of the first aims it set for itself was, in the opening words of its chairman, "a standard and degree of education such as can be accepted to be the best for any race", and two years later the Annual General Report for the DRCM in Malawi stated that the Congress was one of the many indications of the strong national direction in which matters were moving in Africa and for this reason "deserves serious attention".<sup>97)</sup>

When the first moves began to take place towards bringing the people of the then Nyasaland, Northern and Southern Rhodesia towards a closer political unity, the position of the black people of the two northern territories in particular was quite evident from the start and reports from the Nkhoma Mission regularly carried comments on this fact.<sup>98)</sup>

93. A Hastings: A history of African Christianity 1950-1975, p. 108.

94. As quoted in *ibid.*, p. 132.

95. AC Murray: *Ons Nyasa-akker*, p. 296; CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1930.

96. For further details on these developments see ch. 1.

97. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports, 1944, 1946. Transl. from Afrikaans.

98. *Ibid.*, 1948, 1951, 1952.

The death of Paramount Chief Gomani in detention in 1953, then a resting elder of Nkhoma Presbytery who had been detained for instigating active resistance against Federation, brought the matter closer to home for Nkhoma. His funeral at his home near Mlanda Mission was conducted by a DRCM missionary and attended by 6 000 people.

The entire political situation, reported the Superintendent of the DRCM, placed the Mission in a very unenviable position. Working as a "foreign" entity in a country under British rule, the DRCM tried to adhere as strictly as possible to a policy of non-interference in matters of higher politics. This inevitably caused bad feelings on the part of some of the opponents of Federation but, on the other hand, other leading Christian members of the Congress had intimated to them that they had acted wisely - "We have as yet had no reason to lament our position".<sup>99)</sup>

This was undoubtedly reported with reference to what had taken place during a meeting of the Nyasaland Christian Council in 1953 where a memorandum<sup>100)</sup> to be sent to the Governor of Nyasaland concerning the Federation issue, was laid before the Council. The DRCM (expatriate) members present felt they should abstain from voting, but the Malawian delegates from Nkhoma were free to decide their own action and, in fact, voted in favour of the proposal which was passed. The DRCM Superintendent explained this action to the Christian Council by stating that, as citizens of a Commonwealth country, their policy was to interfere as little as possible in the political matters of another territory and not at all in matters of higher politics such as the question of Federation. The DRCM was committed to maintain a position of absolute neutrality.<sup>101)</sup>

This placed the Malawian members of Nkhoma Presbytery in a difficult position, even a dilemma, since they could hardly be expected to take up a similar position of non-interference and had to face the choice of two loyalties, i.e. the will of the legal Government and the will of their own people and national leaders.

The older ordained ministers tended to follow the line of the missionaries, but some of the younger men, particularly some higher educated teachers, were not at

99. Ibid., 1953.

100. For copy of draft memorandum drawn up by the select committee see MNA Nkhoma Papers, Box 7.

101. CCA S5 15/6/2/24: Stegmann to Mission secr., 23/6/1953; 15/6/2/19: JL Pre-torius to Mission secr., 18/8/1955; Kongwe Mission Archives (File S/V): Circular Stegmann to Heads of Stations, 11/7/1953.



all happy with this state of affairs. By 1957 the position was becoming more and more tense and when Dr HK Banda returned to the country the following year to take up the struggle for national independence, it was reported that

an unexplicable expectation has taken hold of the people that they are now going to get a freedom which will let them have everything they desire.<sup>102)</sup>

Towards the end of 1958 the DRCM became involved in trouble of a new and unexpected nature. It involved the Mission educationalist, Mr JL Pretorius, a veteran of thirty years' service in the country, who had long come to be regarded by the people as a person not only of great dedication and love, but who felt great concern for their interests. In 1954 Pretorius had been asked by the Nyasaland Governor to represent the interests of Africans on the Legislative Council. Although hesitant because of the political colour this might give to the Mission, both he and the Mission Council felt he should accept. At his own suggestion the salary he would receive was to be paid into the Church Youth Work account.<sup>103)</sup>

Then, in 1958, Pretorius wrote to the Mission secretary that for some months the Governor and other officials had been pressurising him to allow the Governor to appoint him as Native representative in the Federal Parliament. Although reluctant at first, he decided after much prayer to state what he regarded as a number of difficult conditions and, if the Governor would accept all these, he would regard it as a sign that he should accept. All these conditions were, somewhat to his surprise, accepted and hence he tendered his resignation to the Mission with effect from 26 January 1959, "exactly thirty years to the day that I have served this Mission".<sup>104)</sup> In his own words, he had accepted this appointment purely because he had felt that he could serve the interests of the people and elucidate their feelings. But he had neither consulted the Mission Council nor the Home Board and the decision was entirely his own and had nothing to do with the Mission.<sup>105)</sup>

The reaction was as violent as it was unforeseen by those concerned. Malawian Christians were most indignant over the decision. The national leaders saw op=

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102. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general reports, 1957, 1958. Transl. from Afrikaans.

103. CCA S5 15/6/2/19 (Pretorius file): Stegmann to Mission secr., 15/1/1954; cf. Nyasa subcommittee min. 39, entry for 15/2/1954; Council minutes 77/1954, p. 1 043.

104. CCA S5 15/6/2/19: Pretorius to Mission secr., 20/10/1958.

105. CCA S5 1/4/4: Nyasa subcommittee, min. 8, entry for 20/1/1959.

portunity in this to further discredit the Federation which had appointed, of all things, a Boer from South Africa to serve their interests. The DRCM in general and Pretorius in particular was violently attacked from political platforms. The incredible hatred and virulence revealed against the person whom "they had just before regarded as the best and greatest missionary of us all" appeared partly due to the burning hatred the people had against Federation, but also due to ignorance on the part of many Christians who believed that Christians should have nothing to do with politics. Many honestly believed that his was an act of outright blasphemy and that he had thereby forsaken the Church.<sup>106)</sup>

Partly as a direct result of this decision by Pretorius, but also as part of a wider scheme of resistance by the Nyasaland African Congress leaders to disrupt the stability of the country, Nkhoma Mission was shortly afterwards overtaken by new troubles. On 9 February 1959 the 192 students of the William Murray Institute went on strike, ostensibly because of the expulsion of three students. The strike spread to most other Mission departments. All attempts at restoring order failed and eventually the students were all sent home and the Institute closed. In due course all applied for re-admission and all but thirty were accepted.<sup>107)</sup> The General Mission Committee felt that, under the circumstances, it was no longer wise to make further use of Pretorius's services. He continued in Parliament until 1961 but early in 1962 he left the country to take up an appointment in Zambia as head of the Christian Council Teachers' Training School at Serenje.<sup>108)</sup>

Less than a month after the strike at Nkhoma a State of Emergency was declared by the Government and Dr Banda, together with other leaders, arrested.

This led to even more violence in the country.

A month later again, in April, the Mission Council convened for its annual meeting and during this meeting formulated its position concerning the political situation:<sup>109)</sup>

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106. MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 23: Mvera Station report, 1958 (also in CCA S5 15/6/11/4); cf. CCA S5 15/6/2/19: Hugo to Mission secr., 2/12/1958.
107. CCA S5 15/6/2/10: Hugo to Mission secr., 16/2/1959; 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1959.
108. CCA S5 1/4/4: Nyasa subcommittee, min. 2, entry for 23/2/1959. He returned to Malawi and the service of Nkhoma Synod in 1966 and from January 1968 took up an appointment by Pres. Banda as Chairman of the newly established Censorship Board (Nuusbrief uit Malawi, Dec. 1967). He died at Blantyre during that same year and was buried at Nkhoma.
109. Council minutes 82/1959, p. 1207; The Nyasa subcommittee endorsed this decision, regarding it as a correct statement of the position of the (DR) Church (min. 3, entry for 23/4/1959); cf. also GMC min. 39, entry for 18/8/1960.

Council lays it down as its policy that where political concerns conflict with Christian principles, negotiations would be conducted with the Government rather than making use of the Press.

Council instructs its representatives on the Christian Council that, if this body wishes to issue a statement on current situation in the country, they should insist on a positive Christian message to calm down feelings and should withhold themselves from any direct political statements or interference in the technical aspects of politics.

In commenting on the statement the official organ of the DRC, *Die Kerkbode*, stated that, while the statement was appreciated, it was not to be understood that the DRC was siding with the authorities and added, quoting Rev. Hugo, Chairman of the DRCM Council - "we must try to understand their aspirations and be sympathetic towards that which is good in them". This, the editorial added, meant that, while the Church could not merely identify with revolutionary movements, it could neither evade the demand to be Church of the people. The Church should not be too Western otherwise it would fail as it had failed in certain countries in the East.<sup>110)</sup> Some months earlier another editorial, also commenting on the situation in Malawi, stated that the ANC (sic) and nationalism "had a right to our attention and to an answer from Christendom as to the future of Africa and its peoples".<sup>111)</sup>

In similar vein the Home Committee of the DRCM gave full support to the statement of the Mission Council as a clear expression of the position required of them. The Nkhoma Synod was advised to refrain from making any pronouncements concerning "any technical political aspects" concerning either the present or the future political status of the country, since it was regarded as not being within the authority of the Church to give guidance on such matters either to Government or to its members.<sup>112)</sup>

This advice was given in view of a pending interview between representatives of the three CCAP Synods and the Government.<sup>113)</sup>

This statement of policy was an expression of the concept of the sovereignty within its own sphere which Reformed theology recognises for State and Church respectively. In this concept the Church as a spiritual entity is responsible for

110. DK, 27/5/1959, p. 868. Italics by editor.

111. DK, 4/3/1959, p. 340. Transl. from Afrikaans.

112. CCA S5 1/1/5: Nyasa subcommittee 1, entry for 27/11/1959.

113. The Nkhoma delegation to this interview with the Governor and the Secretary of State Iain Macleod, included Revs. KS Kalumo and AS Labuschagne and elder S Ntara (Synodical committee min. 128, entry for 2-3/12/1959 and 135, entry for 30/3/1960 incorporated in Nkhoma Synod minutes, 1960.

matters pertaining to religious and spiritual matters while the State is responsible for the upkeep of justice and law and order in state and society. While one should not seek to prescribe in practical terms to the other how it should handle its own affairs, the Church is called upon to act as the conscience of the State and must address the rulers if injustice takes place or is incorporated in a constitution, but it is not called upon to spell out what it should do in the realm of practical politics.

No doubt the position taken up by the Nkhoma people was as such sincere and in correct adherence to Reformed principles. Those concerned did not seek thereby to imply in any way that their sympathy lay with the Federal Government. On the contrary, many were sympathetic to the national cause. Yet it is quite clear that in the eyes of many Malawians this was exactly the impression given, namely that DRC missionaries favoured white supremacy as built into the Federal concept. This impression was enhanced by the fact that the Nkhoma missionaries were from a country whose racial policies of apartheid were becoming increasingly repugnant to black Africa, as well as the fact that, at this stage, missionaries were still to a large extent committed to a practice of social segregation as far as this was practically possible, only mixing socially where conditions of work necessitated it.

It would further seem that the DRCM, in giving guidance to the young Church on such matters, was initially somewhat one-sided in that, while correctly stressing the Reformed principle of non-interference in practical politics, it did not sufficiently envisage future developments and prepare Christians and Church leaders for their role once their own people would take over the rule of the country. It is true to say that they did not bind the consciences of their black colleagues, but left them free to do as they felt as, for instance, in the case of voting for the memorandum of the Christian Council (see above). Yet, the leaders, particularly the older men, were very deeply under the influence of the missionaries and tended to follow their example. This was one of the main reasons for the tension which arose between the Nkhoma Synod Teachers' Association and the leadership in the Church, as the next paragraph explains. The result was that the policy stance of Nkhoma was severely criticised from more than one quarter, as exemplified by what one Nkhoma Synod teacher wrote to the Chairman of the Mission Council early in 1960. He condemned the Nkhoma Synod for not revealing her stand on the Federal issue as Livingstonia and Blantyre Synods had done. As the "State Church in Nyasaland" (sic) he expected the Synod to take up a more outspoken position.<sup>114)</sup> The concept of a

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114. CCA S5 15/6/2/10: Copy HA Kacaje to Mission Council Chairman, 20/2/1960.

State Church is of course entirely strange to Reformed theology and contrary to the essence and confession of a Church based on Calvinistic principles, and therefore it was felt the Nkhoma Synod should not interfere in the technical aspects of politics. Moreover the DRCM missionaries, while residing in the country as guests, being neither settlers nor citizens, did not feel at liberty to "interfere" in the state machinery, but chose rather to remain neutral towards the Governments of countries where they work.<sup>115)</sup>

This restraint on political issues rubbed off, as can be expected, on the national leadership within Nkhoma Synod and initially at least, led not merely to a position of non-interference, but even to an outspoken antipathy towards the nationalist cause in some cases. Somehow the concept that anything concerning politics was evil and that a Christian should not be involved in it, had gained some support in certain quarters. This was neither correct nor what the DRC missionaries had taught their people.<sup>116)</sup> The Synod then felt itself called upon at this juncture to give some instructions to its people. The Synodical Committee, meeting in April 1959, did not go further than a middle-of-the-road appeal to its members to remember that they were to act as the salt of the earth and the light of the world and "therefore we should set a good example amongst our brethren which will be a testimony to the Lord".<sup>117)</sup> Clearer guidelines were given by the Synod when it met in April 1960. This was during the very days when Dr Banda was released from custody and returned to take the lead in the political struggle. Synod advised all who participate in discussions concerning political issues to do so in a truly Christian spirit, and to pray both for nationalist leaders and for the Government that they will not agree to anything which will bring confusion and destroy the peace. At the same time Synod emphasised that no one should be excluded from the Church merely on grounds of political views, and followers of Christ were free to belong to any (political) party, provided such a party did not support views conflicting with the teachings of Scripture. In the current situation the supreme task of the Church remained to proclaim the Gospel, as well as to be true witnesses concerning all that was happening in the country, ever showing the love of Christ, acting as salt and light and loving one another.<sup>118)</sup>

115. CCA S5 1/4/5: Nyasa subcommittee min. 13, entry for 11/3/1960 which was partly in response to Kachaje's letters; cf. 15/6/1/6: Copy Mission secr. to Hugo(?), n.d., containing comment on the abovementioned minute.

116. Cf. JF Botha: Mkristu ndi ndale za dziko (which contains some positive guidelines based on a study of the life of Nehemiah).

117. Incorporated in Nkhoma Synod 1960, min. 74. Transl. from Chewa.

118. Nkhoma Synod 1960, min. 250.

The fullest pronouncement on the Christian and politics came a few months before the general elections of August 1961 when Synod convened from 1-4 May 1961 for an extraordinary meeting.<sup>119)</sup> Stating that Christians had a duty to see to it that the right people<sup>120)</sup> were found who could serve in the Government, it warned against two extreme viewpoints which were both wrong. On the one hand it was wrong to think that politics was an evil thing which Christians should avoid. Such a view would only result in the government of the country being left in the hands of non-Christians. On the other hand politics should not become a religion, thus displacing the Christian faith in people's hearts. From this followed that every Christian had a duty to participate in politics and in electing the leaders and hence should also participate in political meetings, acting as salt which preserved Christian principles. Synod noted with joy that some political leaders wanted a sufficient number of educated and believing persons to stand for elections. Christians should feel free to support whichever party they wished to. For these reasons Synod emphasised that entering into politics was the duty and right of every Christian, but this should not separate Christians. In conclusion Synod reiterated that it was the duty of the Church to uphold Christianity and that it had a God-given authority through its courts to oppose any one, including the Government, if in action or legislation it went against the Word of God.<sup>121)</sup>

With this statement the Synod of Nkhoma was on the right path from a Reformed point of view. These statements were made during a time in which there was indeed much confusion and misunderstanding on the part of both Church members and political activists. Reports coming in from congregations manned by Malawian ministers during 1959-1961 revealed the confusing effects of the political ferment of that time.<sup>122)</sup> On the one hand there were many who were falling away from the Church and reverting to beer drinking, *nyau* ceremonies and polygamy while attendance at Sunday services declined, on the other hand there was intimidation, from various quarters. In some places houses were burnt down and crops destroyed by

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119. For full text in Chewa see *ibid.*, 1961, min. 29; also *Zolamulira*, 1970, Z.421, p. 110.
120. The Chewa "anthu eni-eni" is slightly ambiguous here and could also mean the real (representatives of the) people, or even possibly the proper people (implying Christians?).
121. In 1963 the General Administrative Committee of Nkhoma Synod laid down a set of practical guidelines on the relationship of Church officials and employees, including expatriate workers from South Africa, and the Government of Malawi (min. E.202, entry for 24/6/1963; cf. Memorandum presented to the Hon. Prime Minister by a delegation of Nkhoma Synod, G.222, entry for 21-24/5/1963).
122. See MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 23: Annual reports from African ministers, 1955-1962.

warring political factions; elsewhere it was reported that Church officials were being forbidden by local leaders of the Malawi Congress Party to officiate at funerals unless they held Party membership cards. Political meetings were being held on Sunday mornings and Christians intimidated and threatened if they stayed away. Christians were being accused of being anti-nationalist and pro-Federation while others accusingly stated that "Cikunja ca Malawi Congress Party cameza cikristu" (the paganism of the MCP has swallowed Christianity). Some ministers forbade Christians to wear a badge with Dr Banda's picture on it in Church, while elsewhere MCP officials intervened in Church matters and in one case allegedly suspended a group of elders from their Church office. Some ministers were accused by their members of co-operating with the MCP while elsewhere Christians stopped giving Church contributions, claiming that they now had ufulu under the MCP and need no longer give to the Church.

The situation appeared particularly serious during 1959, but by 1961 matters began easing up and reports were becoming much more positive. Reports from Mission stations manned by expatriates showed a similar tendency.<sup>123)</sup> A great political awakening and awareness during 1958 and 1959, coupled with strong anti-white feelings in some places and "a silent hatred against all whites", including missionaries, followed by an easing of the tension towards the end of 1960 and more even in 1961 when political leaders were again advising people that they should respect the Church and that they would still need the co-operation and assistance of whites, and requesting Churches to provide God-fearing men in all the spheres of life from amongst whom the political leaders of the future could be chosen.<sup>124)</sup>

## 2.2 Prelude to ecclesiastical autonomy

It was particularly during this Federal period of unrest and ferment that it became clear to all concerned that the time had come for Nkhoma Synod to take over full control and exercise true autonomy in respect of all aspects of the work. The writing was on the wall and the old order was past. The position of power held, at least de facto, by the missionaries was no longer acceptable nor expedient. At the same time anti-South African feelings were increasing in the country. The Sharpeville troubles and killing of 69 people on 21 March 1960 and the resultant protests, arrests and bannings of black politicians in particular was fuel to the propagandists in Malawi. Even within Nkhoma Synod there were those who saw the presence of South African missionaries, who still held a position of power, as an

123. Ibid., Mission station reports, 1953-1961 (station reports also in CCA S5 15/6/11/1-4).

124. Cf. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1960 (dated 12/5/1961).

attempted perpetuation of apartheid and white rule. Demands for change became all the more adamant.

While it was the policy in the DRCM to work towards establishing an autonomous Church, definite preparation had been taking place for this stage in the course of time. During the 1950s in particular the Mission realised the time was approaching for this to come about. Yet when it came to the actual handing over of power, there was reluctance and hesitance on the part of some. In the light of the prevailing political atmosphere the hesitance over these demands can perhaps be understood. There may have been ulterior motives, since many of the demands for transfer of power were coming from persons not directly involved in Church and Synod leadership. While preparations were indeed being made for enactment of autonomy, they were hampered by a lack of sufficiently trained and qualified leaders to whom the reigns could be handed over - a result of the earlier policy of the DRCM not to provide higher educational training than was deemed necessary for the work itself.<sup>125)</sup>

Nevertheless, the need for change was apparent and after Rev. GF Hugo had taken over as Chairman of the Mission Council in 1956, every opening speech at the annual meeting of the Mission Council from 1956 to 1961 dealt with one or more aspects of this issue.

Already more than a decade earlier Rev. Stegmann, then Superintendent of the Mission, had remarked that the plans of the Government to increase levels of education had certain implications for the Mission. Higher educated persons in the country would not only bring about greater social equality, but would require the raising of standards of training in the Church itself as well as make it necessary to place increasing responsibility on the shoulders of trained teachers who, for example, should begin to take charge of schools still under expatriate control.<sup>126)</sup> Yet at that stage the GMC advised the Mission that progress towards greater participation was to be made "as slowly as possible", though every step towards this was to be "a timely one".<sup>127)</sup>

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125. The problem of a lack of trained and well equipped Africans was given as one of the main reasons why the process of transfer progressed so slowly (Die Koningsbode, July 1959, pp. 4-6).

126. CCA S5 15/6/2/24: Stegmann to Mission secr., 26/9/1947 (copy in MNA Nkhoma Papers, Box 6); cf., in same file, copy ("confidential") JL Pretorius to Mission staff, 28/9/1947 in which the same views were expressed.

127. Report GMC to Cape DRC Synod, Acta 1949, p. 219.



The Mission Council had by then already agreed to take positive steps towards placing more responsibility in the hands of better trained workers, while also seeking to keep abreast of the development of national feelings. These aspirations, it was pointed out, were to be guided in a healthy direction which was to include proper appreciation of the people's own language and culture. At the same time the Council realised the need for development of leadership, for better housing for those in service of the Church and for missionaries to seek at all times to act in a dignified way when dealing with Malawians.<sup>128)</sup>

From 1950 onwards consideration was regularly given to the question of handing over greater responsibility in various aspects of the work and by October 1957 the Nkhoma Synodical Committee had agreed to take over responsibility for the running of all the schools in congregations and to appoint a Synodical Education Committee.<sup>129)</sup> Two years later the responsibility for the appointment of members on several further committees was transferred from the Mission Council to the Synod.<sup>130)</sup> The General Mission Committee initially expressed doubts concerning the advisability of such a step and requested the Council to reformulate its decision, since in practice the Mission would still be largely responsible for sponsoring the work. But it fully accepted the decision after the Council had explained that it was an essential step in the process of transferring responsibility to the Church, and was based on good relationships and the maintenance of mutual trust and that, whereas in the past the Church had to trust the Mission, it was now time for the Mission to place more and more trust in the Church to do the work, even though financially it would still depend in many respects upon the parent Church.<sup>131)</sup> At this same Council meeting of April 1960 two observers from Nkhoma Synod were present for the first time, at the request of Nkhoma Synod, these being Rev. KS Kalumo and Mr N Chitedze, a teacher in the Synod. They presented a memorandum to the Council which contained a list of complaints and grievances concerning the way matters were being run. Apart from complaints about various discriminating practices by missionaries, they mentioned such things as the poverty of Malawian ministers, a lack of Mission bursaries for overseas studies

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128. Council minutes 72/1949, pp. 829-30; cf. *ibid.*, 70/1948, p. 744; 75/1952, pp. 959-60; 79/1956, pp. 1109f; 80/1957, pp. 1136, 1143.
129. For details of scheme see Synodical committee min. 61, entry for 15-16/10/15-16/10/1957 in Nkhoma Synod minutes 1958, pp. 18-21.
130. These were Youth work, Literature, Theological school, Women's work, Admission committee for Theological school, School for the Blind, as well as the William Murray Institute. Cf. Council minutes 82/1959, pp. 1215, 1216.
131. *Ibid.*, 83/1960, p. 1253; cf. Nyasa subcommittee min. 26, entry for 9/6/1959 and min. 14, 16, entry from 19/5/1960.

and a fear that if missionaries were suddenly to leave, the Church would be inadequately prepared to carry on on its own.<sup>132)</sup>

Meanwhile there was progress on another level as well. For a long time very few, if any, in Nkhoma Synod had had the opportunity of going abroad for study or training or even for educational visits, local training being deemed sufficient for local needs. This had led, particularly amongst more educated people such as teachers, to resentment and criticism.<sup>133)</sup> But by 1960 change was imminent. One of the first to go for training abroad was Rev. KJ Mgawi. During the latter part of 1960 he attended a six months' course on Youth work and Boys' Brigade work in Great Britain with the help of a British Council Grant and aid from the General Mission Committee and from local congregations.<sup>134)</sup>

At that stage negotiations were already in process for a group of ministers from Nkhoma Synod to visit South Africa for a two months' tour. Initially planned for 1959 it could eventually not take place before September 1961. Accompanied by Rev. AS Labuschagne the group of six Malawians<sup>135)</sup> undertook an extensive tour of main centres, Churches and Church institutions throughout the country. The itinerary included a visit to the DRC Synod which convened in Cape Town in October 1961, where Rev. JS Mwale, Moderator of Nkhoma Synod, had the opportunity of addressing the assembly and conveying the greetings of Nkhoma Synod.<sup>136)</sup> During the same period the group was invited to participate in a service of Holy Communion together with the DRC congregation of Stellenbosch.

In October that same year two teachers of Nkhoma Synod, HA Kachaje, then a Manager of Schools, and Mr J Gwengwe, then Assistant Education Secretary of the Synod, were sent to Woodbrooke College in Selly Oak, England for a three months' training course.

One important aspect in the final course of matters leading to the eventual take-over of all responsibility by Nkhoma Synod was the role played by the teachers of

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132. Cf. notes made by GF Hugo of Kalumo's speech, mentioning 19 points of dissatisfaction (in private file now in author's possession).

133. The Mission Council had during the mid fifties provided scholarships to enable at least two secondary school graduates to take university studies abroad, cf. p. 183 above.

134. Cf. Nkhoma Synod 1960, min. 161; Nyasa subcommittee min. 35, entry for 19/5/1960.

135. See minutes of Joint Committee for Nkhoma Synod and Mission Council, entry for 11/1/1961; cf. Council minutes 84/1961, p. 1284.

136. Cf. DRC Synod Acta, 1961, pp. 70, 73, 552; GMC report, *ibid.*, p. 491.

the Synod. Much could be said in criticism of their methods in bringing pressure to bear on the issue as well as on the fact that the actions of certain individuals appeared to some extent to be motivated by political and anti-white, particularly anti-South African feelings. There can be no doubt, though that not only were many of their proposals sound and well considered, but also that their activities, particularly once they began acting as a group under the auspices of Nkhoma Synod Teachers' Association, served as a catalyst to bring about the necessary changes more quickly and more completely than might have been the case otherwise.

For a long time a "kind of feeling"<sup>137)</sup> had been developing between the Synod teachers on the one hand and the elders and ministers on the other hand. At the same time the teachers were becoming more and more dissatisfied with the fact that the Mission was still in effective control of the work while expatriate ministers were serving in Synod posts without being full members of the Church. A particular thorn in the flesh was the continued practice of various forms of social segregation by missionaries, especially by those from South Africa.<sup>138)</sup>

In 1960 they formed themselves into the Nkhoma Synod Teachers' Association (NSTA) and Nkhoma Synod approved their constitution in April of that year. Their aim as laid down in this constitution was to unite all teachers of Nkhoma Synod and to discuss and promote matters concerning the teaching profession as well as to promote good Christian principles amongst teachers, strengthen their spiritual lives and speak on behalf of all the teachers of the Synod.<sup>139)</sup>

The NSTA now provided a channel for those teachers, who wished to see changes, to voice their ideas, even though right from the beginning it was clear that they were going far beyond the limits of the aims laid down in their own constitution. Their activities amounted to nothing short of virtually imposing a blueprint on the Synod of what they wanted to see established. Barely two months after being formed they put forward certain proposals to the Synodical Committee, but were advised that such proposals should come through the right channel, in their case the Synod Education Committee.<sup>140)</sup>

137. See explanatory letter CCA S5 15/6/11/7: Hugo to Mission secr., 28/11/1960.

138. For an example of these complaints see CCA S5 15/6/2/10: copies HA Kachaje to Nkhoma Synod moderator (AS Labuschagne), 1/1/1960; and to Chairman of Mission Council, 20/2/1960; see also 15/6/12/4: copies memorandum "on behalf of all the members of Nkhoma Synod" (sgd. N Chitedze, a teacher) to Chairman, Mission Council, 18/4/1960 (English) and 20/4/1960 (Chewa).

139. Nkhoma Synod 1960, min. 212. The name Nkhoma was then still spelt with an M, thus actually MSTA.

140. Synodical committee min. 5, entry for 8-9/6/1960 and min. 10, entry for 25-26/8/1960.

Meanwhile the Mission Council and Nkhoma Synod had agreed to set up a Joint or Liaison Committee consisting of the executives of the two bodies. The Synodical Committee which met in August 1960 discussed how this Joint Committee should function and approved the appointment of a four-man committee to draw up a description of its powers and functions. Its members were Revs. JS Mwale, GF Hugo, JDH Steytler and Mr J Gwengwe, Assistant Education Secretary. The latter, being a teacher, provided an opening for the NSTA to introduce their suggestions and at his insistence this committee proposed that, amongst others, the Joint Committee should also include teachers as members. In November 1960 the Synodical Committee met and approved the recommendations. Gwengwe, not being a member, was not present. The Joint Committee would provide a platform for direct discussion and joint planning of the work by the two bodies concerned and, subject to their respective approval, prepare the way for the Church to take over the work the Mission had been doing.<sup>141)</sup> The proposal of direct representation of teachers on the Joint Committee was, however, turned down as this had gone beyond the terms of reference given to the small committee. The Synod was not prepared to establish a committee acting on its behalf with the majority being teachers not appointed by the Synod.<sup>142)</sup>

When the NSTA learned that their scheme had failed they were most upset and requested that a NSTA deputation should meet and hold discussions with certain individuals, i.e. Revs. Kalumo, Hugo and Steytler. The latter party felt it would not be right for them, not being representatives of any specific body, to negotiate as individuals with an official body and the NSTA was once again advised to channel their proposals and complaints through the Synodical Education Committee - which was due to meet ten days later. The NSTA deputation was outraged and warned that there would be no further co-operation between NSTA and the Church.<sup>143)</sup> The next day the eight man executive of NSTA produced three letters, one to the General Mission Secretary, Cape Town, one an open letter to three missionaries, Revs. Labuschagne and Steytler, and Dr JK Louw and one addressed "to all European ministers and African ministers of the CCA of Nkhoma Synod".<sup>144)</sup> Copies of this last letter were also sent to two local newspapers. The letter to Cape Town which was followed by a telegram, protested strongly against the unwillingness of the

141. Ibid., min. 4 entry for 25-26/8/1960; min. 3, entry for 24/11/1960.

142. Cf. CCA S5 15/6/2/13: Labuschagne to Mission secr., 20/12/1960 (copies also in 15/6/1/5 and 15/6/1/6).

143. CCA S5 15/6/1/6: Copy Hugo to Mission secr., 28/11/1960.

144. For copies of these letters dated 26/11/1960 see MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 17; CCA S5 15/6/1/6 and 15/6/11/7.

missionaries to meet them, but "are doing everything to thwart our advancement" and requested the GMC to intervene immediately, 15 December being "the dead-lock date" (sic).<sup>145)</sup> The three missionaries to whom the second letter was sent were scathingly attacked because of being a "hindering block against our advancement" and for sabotaging "our progressive scheme". An example of this was the alleged rejection "of the present Constitution of the proposed Administrative Body".<sup>146)</sup> The third letter condemned the DRCM for dividing the young against the old whom the missionaries allegedly had indoctrinated in pursuance of the principle of "gerontocracy" by which young, educated men (i.e. teachers) were being excluded from "the ranks and files (sic) of top synodical committees". This, together with the philosophy of "a noble savage", was allegedly used to suppress development and for that reason teachers were being excluded from the Joint Committee on which were found only the aged with "no eyes to see, no ears to hear and no minds to know", whom certain missionaries, but not all, were "wheedling and coaxing" to extend and solidify dominance and control of the Church, combining apartheid with religious imperialism. Hence the demand of the writers was for young ministers and teachers to be put on Synod Committees: "This is our age and our demands must be met".

The tone of these letters was arrogant, and in some places insolent; it contained unwarranted allegations, even falsehoods and was an open challenge to the leadership of the Church. They revealed a certain ignorance as to the real state of affairs as shown by the fact that they were greatly surprised when they learned later that the very missionaries whom they were attacking had no objection to their proposals concerning an administrative body as such, the problem lay with the unorthodox procedure they had followed. In addition to all this, what they were doing could be seen as a deliberate attempt to impose their ideas on the Church through fair means or foul. It is important, though, to see further than this. There were real problems and these people, with a closer understanding of the national and political feelings in the country, felt a way had to be found to bring about change. They were frustrated because it appeared to them as if there was no way for them to bring their proposals to the attention of those concerned through legal channels; "we could find no legal way to put our views before you, so we made use of illegal ways", one teacher admitted.<sup>147)</sup> The fact that white

145. For Mission secretary's response that they could only intervene at the request of Nkhoma Synod see CCA S5 15/6/10/6: copy dated 5/12/1960.

146. This accusation was, of course, not true since only the proposal concerning membership of teachers was rejected. Neither had any proposal concerning an administrative body as yet been discussed by any committee. The proposals concerning the Joint committee were fully accepted.

147. CCA S5 15/6/2/13: Report on meeting of Education committee, 8/12/1960 in letter AS Labuschagne to Mission secr., 20/12/1960.

missionaries were still managers of schools, thus holding a position of power, the absence of sufficiently well trained Malawians, the administration and handling of finances of which very little was known or understood, as well as lack of housing for school managers while Mission houses stood empty, were all problems which required a solution. In addition to all this there was the increasingly irritating presence of various forms of racial discrimination still apparent within the Synod; Whites living in better houses, separate from others, sitting separately in Church, needing no attendance cards to be permitted to Holy Communion and last, but not least, the policy of missionaries not being members of the Church.

A further incentive to the teachers' agitation was the fact that during the preceding few years both Blantyre and Livingstonia Synods had already entered into new arrangements with their respective Mission Boards by which General Administration Committees were established under the auspices of the Synod (the last meeting of the Joint Blantyre Council took place on 13 July 1956). These committees were responsible for running all the departments formerly under the control of the Mission Councils. Furthermore, the other two Synods had already received their missionaries as full members, followed by the next step whereby ordained missionaries took the necessary vows and were transferred from their Home Church and were received into the ministry of the CCAP. In the case of Blantyre Synod, five ministers of the Church of Scotland were thus received on 2 September 1959, followed by two more a year later. At the 1961 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland its Blantyre Presbytery was dissolved.<sup>148)</sup>

These were crucial issues for the Church, and the teachers, in spite of their threats not to co-operate any longer, met the Education Committee in December 1960 and matters were discussed thoroughly. Consensus was reached on a number of important issues and it was agreed that three Malawian Managers of Schools would be appointed, ordained Europeans would no longer be involved in school matters and, most important, a "General Administrative Committee" would be established consisting of members of the Mission, the Synod, teachers and representative of the various departments. Now that the teachers had at last followed the right channel the Joint Committee of Synod and Mission approved this proposal in principle, appointed a committee to draft a constitution, decided to convene a special meeting of Synod on 28 April 1961 and requested the General Mission Committee to send a deputation to participate in the deliberations. For the Mission this had far-reaching implications. The Council would have to decide about its own future

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148. Cf. CCA S5 15/6/10/6: Copy N Bernard (Foreign Mission Committee, Church of Scotland) to Hugo, 10/3/1961.

and how ordained missionaries would in future relate to Nkhoma Synod. These were, in fact, the two basic issues in the matter and the Council sanctioned the request for the GMC to send a deputation.<sup>149)</sup>

It was quite clear to the Mission that they would have to revise their entire policy concerning the question of "integration", i.e. membership of missionaries in the CCAP, as well as the entire spectrum of race relations. Traditional views and practices could no longer continue, adaptation and change was essential, all possible forms of racial discrimination in the Mission had to be done away with otherwise, as one missionary had written more than a year before, "we (have to) pack our things and go home".<sup>150)</sup> These matters had already been discussed in depth by the General Mission Committee in a series of so-called Joint Policy Discussions. At a closed meeting in August 1960 at which the Chairmen of the various Mission Councils were present, a number of important decisions were taken which were also to be put to the DRC Synod with the necessary motivation. Firstly the GMC reiterated that in principle there was no objection to an ordained missionary becoming a member of a young Church if that Church desired it. Concerning social and personal relationships, mission workers were called upon to act in the interest of the Kingdom, according to whatever guidelines the local Mission Council might lay down and with due consideration for local circumstances and Government policies in the country concerned. Finally the GMC approved and laid down guidelines for the practical implementation of the autonomy of young Churches, joint administration of the work by Church and Mission and a transfer of auxiliary services to the young Church. Other practical issues which were recommended were the simplification of Mission administration and financial systems and putting houses formerly occupied by missionaries at the disposal of the Church for occupation by Synod officials.<sup>151)</sup>

The request for a deputation to visit Malawi was approved. Three delegates, Prof. AC van Wyk, then Vice-Chairman of the GMC, Prof. WJ van der Merwe, Professor in Missiology at the DRC Theological Seminary, Stellenbosch, and Rev. PES Smith, General Mission Secretary were appointed to go during April and May 1961 in order to attend both Council and Synod meetings, and also to hold discussions with other groups and persons including representatives of the other Synods. One of its

149. Cf. CCA S5 15/6/2/10: Hugo to Mission secr., 12/12/1960.

150. CCA S5 15/6/1/5: Copy Labuschagne to Chairman Mission Council, 26/8/1959; cf. 15/6/2/13: Labuschagne to Mission secr., 20/12/1960.

151. See CCA S5 1/1/11: GMC min. 39, entry for 18/8/1960. See also entry for 16/3/1961 (Extraordinary (strictly confidential) meeting of committee for urgent matters (Spoedeisende komitee), with members of Synodical General Mission Committee of the Orange Free State Synod, and other representatives of Missions and of younger Churches).

tasks would also be to try and determine the way in which the new administrative body should function.<sup>152)</sup>

Meanwhile there was one further question over which clarity and consensus was to be reached before the Synod took over all the reigns. This concerned the various "departments" still under Mission control, and included Agriculture and Forestry, Bookshops, Building, Carpentry, Transport and Mechanical and Water and Electricity departments. Other departments such as Printing, the William Murray Institute and Medical, were in a certain sense already under their own managements. Several possibilities were open concerning the future of these departments. Some felt it would be best to convert them into separate and independent business enterprises. Alternatively they could be closed down entirely, or else be placed under the proposed General Administrative Committee. On the one hand some missionaries felt that to lay all these burdens on the young Church might only hinder the spiritual growth of the Church. On the other hand, when it was discussed in a Joint Committee meeting, Synod representatives insisted most strongly that all be handed over to the Church. The argument for this was that, over all the years the Mission and, in the opinion of many, the missionaries personally, had benefited from the profits of these departments and closing them down would not only cause much negative feeling but - as one person stated: "If you are not willing to give these departments to the Synod, it would seem to be an act of bad faith to many people".<sup>153)</sup> After further discussions and negotiations a memorandum drawn up by the Synod Treasurer, Mr GC Reyneke, was adopted that neither conversion to independent business enterprises nor closing them down was practical or advisable in the circumstances and the best would be to transfer them all, including all assets and stocks, to the Synod to be controlled by the new General Administrative Committee.<sup>154)</sup>

At this stage a meeting of the Mission Council Executive and its Financial Committee was convened. Heads of stations and Mission doctors were also invited and in order to discuss matters without hindrance or interruption and to provide the necessary background information to the GMC, the meeting took place at the Salima Lakeshore. While it was undoubtedly very necessary for these people to reach

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152. CCA S5 1/4/5: Nyasa subcommittee min. 1, entry for 10/4/1961.

153. See CCA S5 15/6/11/6: Hugo to Mission secr., 22/2/1961.

154. See CCA S5 15/6/12/4: Die toekomst van ons departemente (memorandum on future of Mission departments), 23/3/1961.



clarity and consensus on what was required of them in the new dispensation<sup>155)</sup> and to know how to advise their Council and the GMC, the fact that they met thus on their own and away at the Lake caused some indignation and protest from Malawians in the Church. Nevertheless, as can be seen from notes made of the discussions,<sup>156)</sup> the group reached clarity on a number of issues. Matters discussed concerned the implications of the proposed General Administrative Committee (GAC), the fact that in future it would have to be the Synod that would ask for workers from the DRC, that Mission personnel would have to integrate fully into the Church and become members and that hence the Council would cease functioning as it had thus far, since all that remained was the handling of certain practical arrangements concerning salaries, travelling and possibly housing for expatriate personnel.

Less than two weeks later a meeting of the Joint Committee of Synod and Mission Council heard a report of a small committee that had been appointed three months before to work out details of a GAC. It approved all the recommendations<sup>157)</sup> which included proposals concerning the transfer of all authority and control to Synod and the dissolution of the Council in the place of which a Committee, to be appointed by Synod, would conduct the work. Further proposals concerned personnel from the DRC and their relationship to the CCAP and how to continue mission work, i.e. evangelisation of non-believers. The small committee was instructed to draft a constitution for the GAC. This was presented to the next meeting of the Joint Committee on 20 April 1961 which approved their proposals and forwarded them to the Mission Council for discussion. Finally the entire issue was to be discussed by the extraordinary meeting of Nkhoma Synod due to assemble early in May. From there the proposals would go to the GMC and to the DRC Synod for their approval as well.

### 2.3 Final negotiations

In the meantime the three-man deputation from Cape Town had arrived in the country with a mandate to work out details on how the work should be handed over to Nkhoma Synod and to advise on how proposals to this effect should be drawn up and pre-

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155. A month before, Hugo had written to the Mission secretary that not all were agreed on the question of membership, some still standing firm on the principle that they were there as advisers and that they could no longer do so if they became members (CCA S5 15/6/10/6: letter dated 22/2/1961). This had also still been the view of Nkhoma Synod a year before (1960, min. 159).
  156. Notes of these discussions (23-25/3/1961) in private file now in author's possession. See also CCA S5 15/6/10/6: Hugo to Mission secr., 27/3/1961 for comments on the meeting.
  157. Joint committee min. 10, entry for 11/1/1961; min. 3, entry for 6/4/1961. For Afrikaans translation of the report contained in the above minute, see CCA S5 15/6/12/4.

sented to the DRC Synod due to meet in October that year.<sup>158)</sup> After meeting and discussing with several members of Blantyre Synod, both expatriate and Malawian, they met the Nkhoma Synodical Committee on 19 April. One of the main issues discussed here was the question of membership of expatriate personnel in the Church. Reasons were given why the Church now desired their membership while this had expressly been rejected in 1952 and 1956 and again in 1960 when some missionaries had actually proposed this to the Synod.<sup>159)</sup> Some of the reasons given at this and at a later interview with the Joint Committee were that they now saw the advantages of expatriates becoming members. From a Church-political point of view it also was not right for persons to hold office in a Church of which they were not members. In addition it would bring about a true unity and greater mutual trust in the Church, make the expatriates more acceptable to the people and silence critics and enemies who wanted to use the fact of non-membership of missionaries as a means to get rid of them. In spite of political pressure it was emphasised that this was not the reason for asking for expatriates to become members. It was rather because, as members, they could be of so much more help to the Church.

Later that same day the deputation met representatives of the NSTA and were informed that the matter between themselves and the three missionaries to whom they had written an open letter had now been cleared up. In a lengthy discussion all their complaints and objections as well as their proposals were heard, and these were later put in writing as a memorandum to the deputation.

At this stage it is perhaps necessary to point out again that in spite of the many negative aspects of the role of the NSTA they did in a way contribute positively to the entire process. In a sense their claim of being "the cream of Mkhoma Synod" can be justified in that they were generally the best educated persons in the Synod and therefore its ablest members. To a large extent the GAC constitution was based upon suggestions put forward by them and once the GAC was established they did make valuable contributions to its work, even though they bitterly opposed certain aspects of the agreement between Nkhoma Synod and the DRC.

During the following week the Mission Council convened and on 24 April it recorded a lengthy motivation concerning the replacement of the Council by the GAC and

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158. CCA S5 1/4/5: Nyasa subcommittee minutes, entry for 11/4/1961. For copies of lengthy report of Deputation (in Afrikaans) containing i.a. a memorandum (in English) of NSTA see MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 23 and CCA S5 15/6/12/4.

159. Cf. Nkhoma Presbytery 1952, pp. 12ff; Nkhoma Synod 1956, min. 48; 1960, min. 159.

membership of expatriate personnel in the CCAP.<sup>160</sup>) In the latter case it was clear to members of the Council that the time had come for them to become members and no longer merely act as advisers. To this, they noted, the GMC had already given its approval the previous year. The Council unanimously proposed to transfer all work to Synod. Then the Council should be dissolved and a GAC established under the auspices of Nkhoma Synod. Hence all DRC workers would work under instruction of Nkhoma Synod, all ordained workers as members of the Church and all others as well if the Church desired this. In future the DRC would only send such workers as may be requested by the Nkhoma Synod.<sup>161</sup>)

The proposed GAC would consist of representatives of departments, certain Church officials, including the Education Secretary and Clerk of Synod and two persons, members of the expatriate staff who would represent the DRC, namely a Liaison officer and the Treasurer. The GAC would administer all the departments on behalf of Synod. This would include bearing all financial responsibility, staffing and co-ordinating the work, while in future it would provide the channel through which Nkhoma Synod and the DRC would undertake joint missionary work. All DRCM property, buildings and other assets would be transferred to Nkhoma Synod. Changes to its constitution could only be made by Nkhoma Synod, provided such changes were not in conflict with the terms of agreement between the Synod and the DRC.

All these proposals were brought to Synod which convened for an extraordinary meeting at Nkhoma from 1-4 May 1961, with the DRC deputation attending. After "hearing all the words concerning this (General Administrative) Committee and having discussed the issue for some length of time (Synod) agrees with its whole heart as follows: ...".<sup>162</sup>) The three decisions which followed were indeed of historical significance. The Mission Council would be dissolved; in its place a GAC would be appointed by Synod to administer the work, for which the proposed constitution was approved; thirdly, all ordained missionaries sent by the DRC of South Africa would become members of the CCAP while it was also deemed "good and very necessary" that other DRC personnel should become members as well, but they would not be forced to do so.

These decisions were then forwarded to the GMC for approval by the DRC Synod in Cape Town prior to its implementation.

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160. Council minutes 84/1961, pp. 1293f.

161. For full text of proposed GAC constitution (in English), see *ibid.*, pp. 1293-7.

162. Nkhoma Synod 1961, min. 6. Transl. from Chewa.

Pursuant to the decision concerning a GAC, Nkhoma Synod furthermore undertook to draw up a Deed of Agreement, as referred to in the GAC Constitution.<sup>163)</sup> This was to be a formal Deed, to be agreed to and signed by official representatives of the two Synods of Nkhoma and the DRC, entered into as equal partners since Nkhoma Synod would no longer be regarded as a "Daughter Church", but as "a full and worthy Sister Church".<sup>164)</sup> The Joint Committee representing Nkhoma Synod and the Mission Council was instructed to proceed with the drafting of this Deed of Agreement.

As the deputation returned to report and recommend to its GMC, one important matter still lay ahead. The Synod of the DRC, due to meet later that year, still had to agree to all that had been decided. The decisions taken at Nkhoma were drastic, but most necessary, as Hugo commented:<sup>165)</sup>

We could hardly have waited any longer ... now the big hurdle still lies ahead - i.e., the GMC and the Cape Synod. We shall still have to pray much for the deputation especially when they have to present the case.

To this he added in his next annual general report that the decisions were not taken under pressure of agitators, but - so they believed - "under guidance of God's hand". Seen within the framework of a developing Church within a country which was striving for self-government, there was no other way. It was, after all, exactly the ideal for which they had worked for all the years - an autonomous Church.<sup>166)</sup>

After hearing the report of the deputation, both the proposals concerning Church membership of expatriates and the GAC were wholly accepted and recommended by the GMC.<sup>167)</sup> It gave much time and thought to a carefully worded and motivated overture to the DRC Synod, pointing out that it had already in principle approved workers' membership of the Church where they were sent to serve.

The GMC noted that initially a considerable number of Mission staff would still be heading departments, thus making them members of the GAC. This meant the

163. Ibid., min. 7.

164. CCA S5 15/6/12/4: Report Deputation to Nyasaland, 1961, p. 13.

165. CCA S5 15/6/10/6: Hugo to FJ Human, 5/5/1961. Transl. from Afrikaans.

166. CCA S5 15/6/11/8: Annual general report, 1960, par. 38; cf. par. 7.

167. CCA S5 1/4/5: Cf. Nyasa subcommittee min. 10, entry for 23/5/1961; 1/1/11: GMC min. 64, entry for 11-14/7/1961; min. 2, entry for 21/8/1961. See also further discussions with Synod Judicial committee on the issue of transfer of membership, CCA S5 1/3/5: Foreign Mission subcommittee, min. 3, entry for 27/7/1961.

change was not as radical a step as it would appear and the Church in Malawi would gradually take over more responsibility. Parallel situations could be found not only in the sister Synods in the CCAP, but also in the Reformed Churches in Indonesia where the Dutch Reformed Churches of the Netherlands worked.<sup>168)</sup> The same Churches provided precedents for membership of the young Church - a matter which was the more urgent because of the policies of the Government in Malawi and the views of political leaders. If the DRC missionaries would not become members, not only would their work and influence be restricted, but they might soon have to leave the country.

From this last point it is clear that the decision to approve membership of the CCAP, while fundamentally being an approval in principle was very strongly motivated by a pragmatic view of matters. It was indeed at that stage a total deviation from the traditional DRC policy on mission, but it was at the same time seen as a logical outcome of that same policy. From this is to be concluded that the question of membership was not, fundamentally, argued on principial or ideological grounds, even though very definite views were formerly held concerning membership in the young Church. Rather, the DRC believed on pragmatic grounds that it was in the greater interest of the young Church in its growth towards full autonomy or self-government if missionaries did not become members. Once the young Church did reach that stage and indicated its desire for workers of the older Church to become members, this was agreed to, once again as being in the best interest of the Church and the Kingdom. In addition it was pointed out that in principle there could be no objection to ministers of the DRC becoming members of Nkhoma Synod since in essence the two Churches were one, under one Head, Jesus Christ and thus members one of another.<sup>169)</sup> The new situation into which the two Churches were now moving was that of working together in a kind of partnership as two fraternal bodies co-operating and one rendering assistance to the other on terms prescribed by Nkhoma.

On these grounds the GMC put its overtures to the DRC Synod. After due consideration and hearing an explanation of the situation by Prof. AC van Wyk in a fraternal interview, the entire proposal, incorporating the GAC Constitution and the question of membership was passed by general vote on 1 November 1961. The GMC was authorised to proceed with the draft of the Deed of Agreement in consultation

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168. For information on Indonesian churches, see CCA S5 15/6/12/4: Prof. JH Ba=vinck to Mission secr., 27/6/1961.

169. CCA S5 15/6/12/4: Report Deputation to Nyasaland, 1961, p. 11.

with the DRC Synodical Committee for Oversight and Control.<sup>170)</sup>

Perhaps it was merely a point which had not been sufficiently cleared up between the two Synods, but it should be noted that each Synod authorised its own committee to draw up a Deed and present it to the other for approval. While the Joint Committee of Nkhoma Synod took the initiative in drafting the first copy, the Nyasa subcommittee merely considered this as a recommendation since it regarded it its own commission to draw up the Deed in, if necessary, consultation with Nkhoma.<sup>171)</sup> Fortunately, however, no significant problems arose in this regard.

The Joint Committee in Malawi took quite some time to start its work, and did not meet before December 1961. It then appointed a small drafting committee which met for a series of discussions during the following February. The actual draft had been made by the Treasurer, but when the Joint Committee met on 21 February 1962 it was immediately clear that some major differences of opinion existed between the DRC representatives and those of Nkhoma Synod. These concerned such matters as the use of profits from Departments and the motive for maintaining various departments (Nkhoma objected to the phrase "the motive shall never be material gain only"). In some instances consensus or at least agreement was reached, in others the division was so strong that the draft Deed coming from the Joint Committee was really the view of the black members of Nkhoma Synod and not of the Joint Committee as such.<sup>172)</sup> On the whole it was clear that any point which seemed to show that the DRC wished to retain control was totally unacceptable to Nkhoma. This applied especially to any moral bindings of Nkhoma to first reach consensus with the DRC, or even to consult them before taking important decisions such as disposing of the property to be handed over to them or using buildings for purposes other than what they were originally erected for.

On the question of handing over property the original idea of doing so gradually (as in the GAC Constitution) was found to be unacceptable, impractical and complicated. All felt it would be best if everything was taken over simultaneously.

170. DRC Synod Acta, 1961, pp. 78, 79, 552. For GMC intimations, motivated explanations and recommendations see pp. 553, 572, 605, 663f; on fraternal interview, p. 79; GMC report to Synod, p. 494.

171. CCA S5 1/4/5: Nyasa subcommittee min. 2, entry for 13/3/1962.

172. MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 39: Copy Steytler to Mission secr., 24/4/1962.

With these "recommendations" before it the Nyasa subcommittee of the GMC and later members of the GMC, in consultation with the Synod Actuary, Dr JD Vorster, and the DRC Synodical Committee for Oversight and Control drew up a Deed and finalised it for approval by Nkhoma.<sup>173)</sup>

Meanwhile the GMC had been requested to send another deputation to attend the Synod of Nkhoma due to meet in April 1962 and the same delegates who formed the 1961 deputation were reappointed with the addition of Rev. PJJ S EIs, then Home Mission Secretary. In addition a list of names of all DRC personnel serving in Malawi had been drawn up as well as a formal document, a "Deed of Transfer", by which all the ordained missionaries would be handed over to Nkhoma Synod to serve as ministers of the Synod in the ministry of the CCAP. For the lay workers a "Letter of Commendation" was drawn up by which they could transfer their membership to the CCAP while serving under Nkhoma Synod.<sup>174)</sup>

On 19 April 1962 the Mission Council convened for its eighty-fifth and last meeting. The DRC Mission in Malawi had come to the end of an era and would henceforth cease to function as an entity in its own right. While this was so, the Council minuted that this did not mean that it regarded the task of the DRC in Malawi as completed, but would continue in a joint witness with the local Church.<sup>175)</sup> The Council discussed the proposed Deed of Agreement which, with a few minor alterations, was forwarded as its proposal to the Nkhoma Synod.<sup>176)</sup>

The Council held its last session on 23 April. Prof. AC van Wyk conducted the closing ceremony and used 2 Tim. 2:13 as his text. The next morning Nkhoma Synod convened and less than two months later, from 12-16 June, at its first meeting, the new General Administrative Committee took over the task of the Mission Council.

The Deed of Agreement was approved by Nkhoma Synod with only a few amendments. One of these was that the word "missionaries" was to be replaced by "personnel". This signified their new status as workers seconded to serve within and under a sister Church and no longer as missionaries of a sending Church. Another important amendment was the alteration of the wording in certain sections so that there would be no binding of Nkhoma Synod, legally or even morally, concerning the

173. CCA S5 1/4/5: Nyasa subcommittee, min. 2, entry for 13/3/1962; 1/1/11: GMC min. 7, entry for 20/3/1962.

174. The greatest majority of lay workers subsequently requested a transfer of membership (MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 25: Nyasa subcommittee report, 1962).

175. Council minutes 85/1962, pp. 1330 f.

176. For final text of the Deed with further amendments by Nkhoma Synod included in a footnote see Council minutes 85/1962, pp. 1331-36. For text of Deed in Chewa see Zolamulira, 1970, pp. 223-30.

future use or possible disposal of properties to be received from the DRC.

The Deed covered the relationship between Nkhoma Synod and the DRC, personnel supplied by the latter and their relation to the Church, including procedure in event of a case of discipline arising against one of them, transfer, administration, control and use of property and financial assets formerly held by the DRC, and the representation of the DRC on the GAC.<sup>177)</sup>

Thereafter, on Friday 21 April 1962, followed a very solemn moment when Prof. AC van Wyk, shortly before elected Chairman of the General Mission Committee of the DRC, read out the Deed of Transfer of thirteen DRC missionaries to the ministry of the CCAP. Each were given a copy of the Deed to be handed in at the congregation where he was serving and thereupon the Moderator of Nkhoma Synod, Rev. JS Mwale, received them into the ministry of the CCAP to serve within the Synod of Nkhoma. In a short address he expressed gratitude and appreciation for all that had been done adding the plea that the door to the mother should not henceforth be closed, but that assistance and co-operation should continue.<sup>178)</sup>

The ceremony was concluded by singing from Hymn (Nyimbo) No. 221:1 and 3 (Psalm 134) and a prayer by Rev. LN Mataka, Vice-Moderator of Nkhoma Synod. The Deed of Transfer was signed on behalf of Nkhoma Synod by the Moderamen, Revs. JS Mwale, LN Mataka, KJ Mgawi (Secretary) and PR Smit (Vice-Secretary). The four representatives from the GMC had been authorised by the DRC of South Africa to sign on its behalf.

Finally Nkhoma Synod recorded a vote of thanks to the DRC for the work that had been done ever since AC Murray and TCB Vlok had arrived bringing the Gospel into their country.<sup>179)</sup>

Although it was an occasion of great historic significance for Nkhoma Synod, not all were equally happy with what had occurred. The NSTA immediately expressed its dissatisfaction in the following telegram to the Moderator: "Constitution and Deed not acceptable MSTA Teachers and royal (sic) members will urge end DRCM

177. The final Deed as amended by Nkhoma Synod was in due course approved by the GMC and signed by the four members of the Moderamen of the DRC of South Africa on 12/2/1963 and by the Moderamen of Nkhoma Synod on 9/11/1963. Certain further amendments were negotiated in 1964 and 1965 and a revised Deed signed in 1971. Signed copies in CCA S5 15/6/11/9.

178. For text of his speech as well as that of Prof. van Wyk and of the Deed of Transfer and names of the thirteen ordained persons see document in CCA S5 15/6/12/4 (in Afrikaans). Signed copies of the Deed of Transfer in 15/6/9/4.

179. Nkhoma Synod 1962, min. 23.



Nyasaland".<sup>180)</sup> There were some who evidently wanted to see the DRC completely eliminated in Malawi and who saw in the GAC constitution and the Deed of Agreement a perpetuation of the old DRCM. Three days after adoption of the Deed of Agreement and the transfer of the thirteen ordained missionaries, a member of NSTA by then holding an important position in the Government, wrote to the DRCM Superintendent that "all people (who are) interested in the progress of the C.C.A.P. Mkhoma Synod, and are members of the same, emphatically reject the present Constitution and the Deed of Agreement". Hence, the letter continued, their intention was "to totally affiliate ourselves with Livingstonia Synod and have nothing to do with the D.R.C.M.". Three days later a report appeared in the Malawi News of 3 May 1962 stating that "sources close to Malawi News in the C.C.A.P. had revealed that African members of the CCAP had "rejected the Constitution for union with the Dutch Reformed Church Missions". The DRC allegedly rejected the constitution drawn by the CCAP and tried to impose their own constitution on the Africans, but the CCAP members rejected it and decided to exclude the DRC and "join hands with Livingstonia Mission into C.C.A.P.". <sup>181)</sup>

It is not difficult to see the obvious connection between the NSTA, the letter and the news report. It is also clear that, reading the letter and the report together, the meaning of the report was that a group of individuals were not happy with the decisions of Nkhoma Synod and were threatening to transfer membership to Livingstonia Synod. On the other hand the newspaper report on its own created the impression that Nkhoma Synod as such had rejected unity with the DRC and had decided to join Livingstonia Synod. It was in this sense that news media in South Africa took over the report, and furthermore made it to appear as if the DRC had handed all its work in Malawi over to another Mission, that of the Presbyterian Church and had totally withdrawn. These impressions caused much confusion and consternation in Malawi and even more in South Africa where the reports made news headlines. Immediate steps were taken by the DRC Mission Office, the Council of South African Churches of Reformed Confession and the DRC Information Service to rectify the situation and put the whole matter in the right perspective. The Editor of the Nkhoma Synod Magazine Kuunika likewise published a statement to this effect. <sup>182)</sup>

180. Quoted in CCA S5 15/6/10/6: Hugo to Mission secr., 9/5/1962.

181. Ibid., Hugo to Mission secr., 9/5/1962 with attached copy: JZU Tembo to Hugo, 30/4/1962.

182. Cf. MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 25: Nyasa Mission subcommittee report, 30/6/1962. For statement of Council of SA Churches of Reformed Confession see DK, 13/6/1962, pp. 800F.

In spite of such protests the GAC convened for its first meeting on Tuesday, 12 June 1962, with 25 members present, twelve of whom were Malawians, and took over control of all departments and other auxiliary services on behalf of Nkhoma Synod. The first office bearers were Revs. KJ Mgawi, Chairman, GF Hugo, Vice-Chairman, AC Human, Secretary and Mr AW Mnthambala, Vice-Secretary. Additional members on the Executive were Mr J Gwengwe and Dr CJ Blignaut. The DRC was represented on the GAC by the newly appointed Liaison Officer, Rev. GF Hugo, and by the Synod Treasurer, Mr GC Reyneke. A variety of matters concerning various departments were dealt with and a budget for the remaining half of 1962 drawn up. It was also agreed to record all minutes in English.<sup>183)</sup>

In the meantime the necessary arrangements for the transfer of the DRCM assets to Nkhoma Synod were also completed and on 1 July 1962 the Synod took over all properties, stocks and assets, valued to a total of K628 986.<sup>184)</sup> The Incorporation of Nkhoma Synod took a while longer, but by March the following year this had also been finalised and all free and leasehold properties duly registered in the name of the Synod.<sup>185)</sup>

The decision taken by Nkhoma Synod marked the beginning of a new era in its history, and the establishment of its GAC a new phase in the work of the Church. But it soon became evident that neither the GAC constitution nor the Deed of Agreement could be regarded as final and both were amended and revised several times in the course of the following decade. There were several areas which soon showed up as weaknesses in the original constitution. The first one, highlighted by the renewed agitation of NSTA, was the continued presence of the DRC and the relatively high proportion of DRC personnel represented on the GAC. The initial protest of NSTA appeared to be aimed particularly against the wording in section III(2)(a) of the GAC constitution: "The GAC will be a channel through which the Mkhoma Synod and the DRC in South Africa undertake joint missionary work". In their eyes this constitution only changed the name DRCM, but it was still the DRCM.<sup>186)</sup> In open defiance and in a spirit of rebellion the NSTA went further than ever before and announced a boycott of all Church activities by

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183. The Mission council minutes had been recorded in Afrikaans. From November 1964 on, all minutes were to be kept in Chewa, following a decision of the Nkhoma Synodical committee (GAC min. E.597, entry for 30/11/1964).
184. CCA S5 1/4/5: Nyasa subcommittee min. 3, entry for 29/1/1963. This excluded the Printing Dept stock of K24 000 which at that stage was still tied up in the joint enterprise with the DRCM in Zambia (cf. Zolamulira, 1970, p. 231).
185. GAC executive, min. E.26, entry for 1/3/1963.
186. CCA S5 15/6/10/6: Hugo to Mission secr., 9/5/1962 and 11/6/1962.

teachers in the Synod until their demands for a new constitution and for greater representation of teachers in the GAC were met.<sup>187)</sup> While the Synod would not give way to such demands, certain changes were proposed in the GAC constitution concerning representation and membership of the GAC which effectively reduced the numerical presence and effective influence of DRC personnel. These changes were brought about by "an almost abnormal fear for anything which might seem like dual control or domination by the home Church".<sup>188)</sup>

This also affected a second problem area, namely the position and role of the Liaison Officer. Initially this was not clearly set out and defined and in due course Synod set about to rectify this matter. His position as official correspondent with the DRC was to be changed as well, all correspondence becoming the task of the General Secretary of Synod.

A third problem area was the fact that the GAC was such a strong committee with so much influence and power that there was the danger of it dominating even Synod itself, thus undermining the authority of the latter. Changes to the effect of bringing the full Synodical Committee into the GAC were to be introduced later, and eventually, in 1971, the GAC itself was to be abolished and replaced by a Joint Financial Committee of Synod on which the DRC was also to have direct representation.

Finally, an interesting aspect of the new order which was introduced in 1962 was the creation of the post of General Secretary. This was a semi-permanent full-time appointment and replaced the former Clerk or Secretary of Synod. The duties of Secretary of Synod were outlined by Nkhoma Synod in 1960,<sup>189)</sup> but when the GAC was established he was also appointed as its secretary and the name of the post changed from Secretary of Synod to General Secretary, the post becoming a full-time post with offices at Nkhoma and salaried by Synod.<sup>190)</sup> The General Secretary was appointed permanently until such time as Synod might deem it necessary to replace him, but according to the Synod Constitution the Synod Secretary was elected at every meeting of Synod. While this appeared to be a discrepancy, Synod was to declare in 1966 that there was no contradiction since it would be up to Synod to decide at each meeting whether to replace or keep the General Secretary.<sup>191)</sup>

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187. Tension between the Church leaders and NSTA was to continue, several times flaring up into open confrontation over some or other issue. The NSTA was finally banned by Government Order in August 1970.

188. CCA S5 15/6/10/7: Burger to Mission secr , 28/11/1963.

189. Nkhoma Synod 1960, min. 258.

190. Ibid., 1964, min. S3; GAC constitution, Section II 4(b).

191. Nkhoma Synod 1966, min. S214(a).

This was still not satisfactory since he confronted the General Secretary with the prospect of possibly being ousted from his post after only two years. Hence Synod was to agree in 1972 that election of a General Secretary would take place only every six years when a person could either be re-elected or replaced.

This was a compromise in which the obvious danger could be avoided of a person holding the post permanently as was the case with Blantyre and Livingstonia Synods where the General Secretary became not only extremely powerful, but could not be dismissed easily. Thus it could become possible for the General Secretary to act in an autocratic or even dictatorial way, or take decisions on his own which should be the prerogative of Synod, thus flouting some fundamental principles of the Presbyterian Church order.

As a matter of fact, this office of General Secretary combined with Synod Secretary was, from a Reformed as well as Prebyterian point of view, something alien. In neither the DRC nor in the Church of Scotland does this exist. The rudiments of Presbyterian and Reformed Church orders do not provide for any such permanent or semi-permanent office, which is akin to episcopalian rule. The govern=ment of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches is in the hands of the presbyters, or elders, meeting in Synod. Furthermore, the Synod Secretary in Reformed Churches is neither a permanent nor a full-time office, but a post held by a person, normally a minister who, as a member of a Synod, represents a particular congregation and is elected to this office for the course of the meeting of Synod and normally thereafter continues as secretary of the Standing and Synodical Com=mittee until such time as Synod shall meet again to elect its next office bearers.

For the administrative side of its work Reformed Synods usually appoint an administrative officer (Saakgelastigde in the DRC) which is a permanent and full-time appointment, but this person is an employee of Synod, does not have session with voting powers on either Synod or Synodical Committee meetings and can only execute such duties as are conferred upon him by Synod. In this way it is not possible for one person to hold a permanent, virtually legislative position of power in the Church, something which Reformed and Presbyterian Churches have always sought to avoid.

This development came about partly because of the precedent already set by the other two Synods in the CCAP and partly because the erroneous notion existed that this General Secretary was to replace the former Superintendent of the Mission which had been a permanent and full-time appointment<sup>192)</sup> (even the house formerly

192. Nkhoma Synod in 1979 in so many words stated its view that the General Secretary "took the place of the Mission Superintendent" (min. S1411. Transl. from Chewa).

occupied by the Superintendent of the Mission at Nkhoma was allotted to the new General Secretary). It perhaps also satisfied a more deepseated desire in the Church within the African traditional context for a figure they could regard as the leader and to whom power is more or less willingly delegated. This desire to create an office akin to that of a bishop can be appreciated especially in the context of the Church in Africa, but then perhaps not as a permanent appointment, and with the emphasis on the pastoral and spiritual functions of such an office - a kind of spiritual father figure.

Nevertheless, this is an area in which the Church will have to take careful stock of its position, because - from Biblical and Reformed points of view - there is only one Head of the Church, Jesus Christ. Hence one of the most fundamental motives in the Reformation had been to do away with a human headship as exemplified in the Pope. No Moderator or General Secretary should ever assume the position of, or be called "head" of the Church and for one member of the Church to hold a position of power and authority in a permanent or semi-permanent capacity could bring this about. It would appear that the solution to this problem would be to separate the office of Synod Secretary from that of administrative officer of the Synod, the latter being merely an employee of the Synod and not holding any voting executive or legislative powers (assumed or real). He would act only upon instruction of the Synod and exercise his administrative duties under supervision of Synod to which body he remains responsible.<sup>193)</sup>

The concept that the General Secretary is necessary because he replaces the former Superintendent of the Mission is equally erroneous and should never have arisen. Perhaps here the Mission is more to blame for so long having remained a powerful and authoritative structure, independent of the Church. When the Mission was finally dissolved and the Church took over the work the powerful and influential status of Superintendent was assumed by the General Secretary on the presumption that the Church had now taken over the Mission. Mission and Church ought rather to have grown more closely together over a longer period, the functions performed by the Mission integrating into the Church in a more gradual way. Then it would have been easier to avoid such an unfortunate development since the Church would have already been in a position of greater authority and would not have required the status symbol of a General Secretary to prove its newly acquired power.

193. In 1977 Nkhoma Synod did in fact agree (min. S1169) that the post of General Secretary was not in accordance with Reformed principles and that the General Secretary should become a permanent employee of Synod, while one of the delegates to every Synod would be elected to the separate post of Synod Secretary. Since this necessitated a change in the Synod constitution, the matter was to be finalised at the 1979 meeting of Synod, but nothing to this effect appears in the minutes of this meeting and the status quo appears to be continuing.

### 3. Concluding remarks

The fact that the Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian took over full control of the work in 1962 was neither incidental nor unforeseen. When the DRCM started work seventy-three years previously the ideal of one day seeing an African Church established in its own right was already present. Thus, in 1903 already, the first steps towards establishing a Church organisation had been taken. The presence and influence of the two Scottish Missions, particularly that of Livingstonia Mission as well as the development of a detailed Policy on Mission by the DRC in 1935, helped to crystallise the ideal of a self-supporting, self-governing and self-expanding Church. Also it has been noted that in Reformed Theology the concept, that a Church, once established, was essentially autonomous from the beginning, was somewhat blurred by the Anglo-American Missionary concepts of the "three-selves" as an ideal to be striven towards and only reached over a relatively long period, so that these became to some extent conditional for genuine autonomy.

Nevertheless in the case of Nkhoma Synod it was already clear in 1926 that this was a Church in its own right and no longer subject to any veto power of an outside body. Although missionaries continued to play a role which not only put them in the position of guiding and leading the Church, but of still controlling it to a large extent, the course was nevertheless clearly set towards the goal of a Church which should become fully and truly autonomous. This was the basic reasoning behind the earlier policy of the DRCM of not having missionaries become members of the young Church, but of remaining more to the side as advisers who could gradually withdraw. Then the national leadership in the Church would come into its own right. Had the missionaries become full members, a situation might have been created wherein the expatriates could continue to dominate and compete for leadership.

In this respect the DRCM differed from the two Scottish Missions and so conflicting were the views that the CCAP was, in fact, at one stage in danger of splitting. A crisis was averted by the compromise reached in the Constitution of 1956.

The fact that the DRCM changed its policy not many years later should be seen not as an admission of bad judgement, but as a recognition of the autonomy of the Church that had grown out of its work. Once the Church indicated that it was in the best interests of the work and to the greater well-being of the Church if missionaries become full members, this was granted in spite of it being a strange and new concept in DRC mission thinking. By granting this the General Mission Committee had emphasised that it was not to be seen as a departure from its es-

established policy, but rather as the logical conclusion to that very policy. With the establishment of an autonomous "sister" Church, that Church fully upheld its right to determine for itself in what relationship fraternal workers from the older Church would stand to itself. From a principal point of view the essential spiritual unity of the two Churches provided the grounds for such an arrangement.

Yet this attainment was not something which came about smoothly and without tension and stress. The young Church was eager to take over the reigns, the older reluctant to hand over too quickly. It is obvious that the DRCM had made mistakes in this process, while certain individuals in the Nkhoma Synod were perhaps too impatient and perhaps to a certain extent politically motivated in campaigning for autonomy.

In 1961 the Chairman of the Mission Council pointed out a number of the more serious failures in the work of the DRCM.<sup>194</sup>) Of these the first and perhaps one of the more serious shortcomings was that the DRCM had not progressed fast enough in training and qualifying leaders to take over the work, thus seriously hampering progress towards full autonomy.

Secondly, the paternalistic attitude of missionaries revealed in their wanting to do too much for the people and too little with them had led to increasing resentment. In the initial stages of the work paternalism might have been understandable but it became a major stumbling block in due course. Coupled to this is the particular ideological bias in the area of racial and social relations which caused the DRCM to be rather slower than other Missions in accepting the fact that there was need for change in attitude as well as in many practical aspects.

Thirdly, the Mission organisation had grown so large that it made the DRCM all the more hesitant to hand over. At the same time the burden the young Church would have to shoulder could have had dire effects on its life and progress. In this respect the apparent position of power held by the Mission Council and its handling of so many funds gave further offence and raised questions in the minds of people.

Finance as such was a further problem. The financial system of the Mission had become far too complicated, making it so much more difficult to hand over. The Central Fund of the Mission to which all profits of Departments were channeled, wrongly created the impression that it was there also for the personal benefit and comfort of the missionaries, hence the tension which arose over the purpose

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194. Cf. opening speech: Ons sending by die kruispaaie (Council minutes, 84/1961, p. 1279). Copy of full text in CCA S5 15/6/10/6.

and use of these profits in the negotiations for establishing the General Administrative Committee.

The very fact of the continued existence of so many departments under the control of the Mission was a fifth problem. Some had long served their purpose, others ought perhaps to have been transformed into limited companies sooner, yet their continued existence created not only wrong impressions as to their purpose, but were a further cause of resentment when the Mission was not prepared to hand them over. Once they were handed over, the fear of the DRC was largely realised. They became a great burden to the Church and many soon became a loss financially, contributing very little to the real progress of the Church, both materially and spiritually.

Perhaps a further mistake was to have allowed so many Mission schools to lose their Christian character, becoming mere institutions of secular learning. This was partly due to the Mission having stopped training teachers for unassisted schools. Furthermore the continued existence of unassisted schools under the care of the young Church was to become an added burden. In due course the obvious thing to do was to hand over all education to the Government. The problem of losing influence over the schools, which had always been the traditional cropping fields for recruiting Church members, should have been tackled more emphatically from the angle of Christian education, Bible teaching through various other channels open to the Church and through the faster development of youth work, particularly at congregational level.

A last negative factor mentioned in the speech of the Chairman of the Council was the fact that missionaries tended to give the impression that they were going to stay on indefinitely. Because there was so much blessing upon their work and because they found a deep happiness and satisfaction in their labours, the notion was perhaps created that they had dug themselves in so much they would never leave. Furthermore large numbers of workers continued to flow in, whether the Church desired their presence or not. This was, no doubt, another cause of resentment. Hence one of the points clearly laid down in the Deed of Agreement was that the DRC would in future only send workers as and when requested to do so by Nkhoma Synod and that the Synod had the right to terminate the services of any worker if such a person became redundant or could be replaced effectively by a Malawian.

In spite of such failures and weaknesses of the DRCM the Nkhoma Synod had by 1962, after seventy-three years of work, grown into a strong and virile Church counting 80 000 communicant members, with 34 000 catechumens undergoing instruction, while 200 000 souls were estimated to be in the care of fifty-two congregations under



the leadership of thirty-seven ordained ministers and 1236 elders.<sup>195)</sup>

In comparison to other fields of the DRCM work, Nkhoma Synod had been the most fruitful of all, with an average 5% annual growth rate in membership over half a century, thereby outstripping even its two sister Synods.

In other ways Nkhoma Synod also gained pre-eminence in the family of Reformed Churches which grew out of the mission endeavours of the DRC. It was the first to take over control of all work as a fully autonomous Church. It had developed a high degree of self-sufficiency being financially totally independent on congregational and presbytery levels, paying the salaries of all national workers, i.e. ministers, evangelists and certain categories of teachers. It was at that stage, in 1962, more capable of taking over the reigns than probably any other of the younger Reformed Churches in Southern Africa. Furthermore it had broken new ground in negotiating the matter of membership of DRC personnel and was the first to secure such an arrangement. It was to be more than ten years before the General Synod of the DRC agreed (in 1974) to such an arrangement as a general principle for work with all of the younger Churches in the family of Reformed Churches.

The establishment of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian in 1924 with Nkhoma joining in 1926 should be seen as one of the more significant events in the history of Christianity on the African continent. A church union was thus negotiated which was able to stand the test of many years, in spite of severe tensions and differences both on practical issues and on theological matters amongst the constituent Presbyteries and later Synods, as well as their respective Missions. Moreover, this union was of great mutual benefit to all concerned. Nkhoma was able to contribute an evangelical and spiritual emphasis as well as provide a certain theological conservatism and orthodoxy not always so evident amongst some of the other Synods. At the same time the experience of growing within one strong Church in which the other Synods were generally speaking a step ahead in leadership and autonomy was doubtlessly a continuing incentive to Nkhoma. The methods and approach of the Scottish Missions and the particular imprint they left on their respective Synods, as well as the precedent of successfully implementing the handing over of all responsibility to the Church and of missionaries becoming members, was an excellent preparation for Nkhoma when it chose to follow the same road. This opened the way for other Churches within the family of Reformed Churches in Southern Africa to follow the example of Nkhoma, notably those in

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195. Cf. MNA Nkhoma papers, Box 25: Nyasa Mission subcommittee report, 30/6/1962. Figures include congregations in Zimbabwe then still under Nkhoma Synod.

Central African states such as Zambia and Zimbabwe and to a lesser extent - and at a slower rate - within South Africa itself.

On the national front the work in and through Nkhoma Synod had over nearly three-quarters of a century contributed in many ways to the development of the people and nation of Malawi. Not only was the light of the Gospel spread over a large portion of the country, bringing with it the liberating effects innate in Christianity,<sup>196</sup>) but the cause of Christendom was also served in no small way as a Church with a strong Biblical foundation came into existence, drawing members from a considerable portion of the population.

The work done in the field of education was equally significant. Criticism can be brought to bear on the fact that not enough was done towards higher education, which - particularly in later years - proved to be a growing disadvantage towards the goal of establishing a capable leadership in the Church. Yet the educational program was of such a nature that it brought basic education and literacy to a very large proportion of the population which fell within the sphere of Nkhoma Synod. It could be said that there was a time when a higher percentage of school age persons did, in fact, acquire at least some degree of literacy than in later years when education had largely come into the hands of the Government. The Bible reading migrant worker from Nyasaland, carrying this Book with him wherever he travelled, was recognised and praised all over Southern Africa for his honesty, dependability and hard work.

Contributions were made in other fields as well. Over the years medical work had gained widespread repute and the hospital at Nkhoma became one of the best known in the country. The emphasis on producing and distributing literature especially in the vernacular brought booklets on a wide variety of subjects within reach of many peasants and rural dwellers. The translation of the Bible into Chewa was undoubtedly one of the great achievements of the Church, and in this respect the Synod of Nkhoma has the right to be proud of the contribution by its people and its missionaries.

The emphasis on industrial work and the development of industries and agricultural methods suitable to the local environment and village life, undoubtedly contributed to the general development of the people and helped enhance an industrious spirit amongst them. Likewise the emphasis laid on work amongst girls and women bore its fruit over the years, improving both the spiritual and the material standards of individual and of family life.

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196. Cf. H Berkhof: Christ the meaning of history, p. 81ff.

There are also areas of weakness in the contribution of Nkhoma Synod. Although there were notable exceptions, a relatively small number of its people contributed to the national and political development of the nation. This was undoubtedly due to the policy of providing education on a wide base, but not to a very high level. The emphasis on promoting and upholding the cultural identity of the people (e.g. the mother tongue was used in education) had merit, but the limited education provided in English limited the role people from Nkhoma Synod could play in national affairs.

The political processes of the fifties and early sixties revealed another area of weakness. The emphasis on the Reformed view of the sovereignty of State and Church limits the role of the Church to that of the prophetic voice of conscience to the State, but not endeavouring to prescribe in matters of practical politics. Yet it became clear that not enough had been done to prepare the people for their role as Christian citizens of the State, especially once they were to attain political independence. The result was that even amongst some leaders in the Church there were those who initially took up a negative attitude towards politics and refused to participate in any way.

In spite of such points of criticism there can be little doubt that the contribution of Nkhoma Synod to the national development and thus to the history of the nation was by no means insignificant. It is equally clear that it was to continue making a manifold contribution towards the development of the nation of the new State, Malawi. Likewise it should in future continue to do so as it seeks to fulfil its task and role as Church of Jesus Christ in this world, in obedience to Him who is the Head of the Church and in response to His example as the Servant who came to seek and to save those who were lost and thereby to set up His Kingdom which, while becoming visible on this earth, "is not of this world", John 18:36. Herein lies the supreme task and vocation of His Church. For this Kingdom the Church must live and for this Kingdom its people must be prepared to die.

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